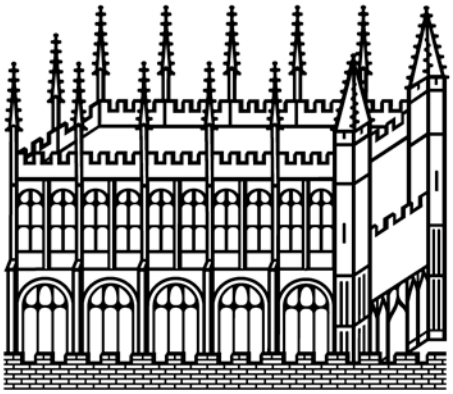


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Literary Detection

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LITERARY DETECTION

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

THE STATE OF SHAKESPEARE STUDY: A Conspectus

MARLOWE: A Conspectus

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CROCE AS SHAKESPEAREAN CRITIC

ELIZABETHAN LITERATURE

LITERARY DETECTION

A SYMPOSIUM ON "MACBETH"

by

J. M. ROBERTSON

LONDON
GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN LTD.
MUSEUM STREET

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1931



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PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
UNWIN BROTHERS LTD., WOKING



PREFACE

As the author cannot reasonably expect to live long enough to complete his work on *The Shakespeare Canon*, it has seemed to him worth while to make the experiment of dealing with one play, *Macbeth*, in the form of a four-handed symposium of Shakespeare students. In any case, *The Shakespeare Canon*, whatever may be thought of its critical quality, is in the financial sense a thoroughly unprofitable undertaking. If, then, open-minded students can be induced by a more popular mode of inquiry to take an interest in the method and the object, his end may be furthered.

The thesis is, first and mainly, that there is clear literary evidence of the past existence of a lost pre-Shakespearean *Macbeth* by Kyd, pairing in this respect with his pre-Shakespearean *Hamlet*. That established, by tracing the obvious survivals of his phraseology and his dramatic method in the Shakespearean part of our play, the inquiry aims at a discrimination of the non-Shakespearean matter by other hands, whether or not on a Kyd basis, in the Folio drama.

With regard to the rhymed witch-scenes, which have been the most generally suspected as of late insertion, it is submitted that the "orthodox" editorial attitude is irrational, in that it imputes to the old theatre management a quite irrational procedure. One confident editor, for instance, by consenting to eliminate only one irrelevant rhymed scene, and one or two of the most obviously inept passages elsewhere, has in effect ascribed to that management in its dealings with Middleton the principle: "We want a few worthless and inappropriate insertions, but we will accept nothing that shows a gleam of dramatic competence even on that plane." Thus to assign to Heminge and Condell and the rest a wholly absurd principle in the manipulation

of a play in their repertory, is to impose gratuitous absurdity on the business of present-day editing.

The rational inference in the matter is that either the contaminator who had been allowed to insert the worst irrelevances had served the theatre by contributing something that, from its point of view, was useful, the worst passages accompanying the rest, or a second contributor had collaborated. Only thus can we account for the manifold vitiation of a Folio play, a vitiation which includes a large sprinkling of couplets, singly or in series, lowering at once the poetic and the dramatic levels.

A good deal of the play has been weightily challenged by previous inquirers, including the Clarendon Press editors; but more remains to be dissected out. Thus the Malcolm-Macduff scene, which Clark and Wright let pass as inspired by a feeling on Shakespeare's part that more space had to be given to those speakers, but which even orthodox critics, including Brandes, admit to be tedious, is disallowed as plainly non-Shakespearean in respect of its versification, as also of its diction. The Sergeant scene, strongly and rightly impeached by the Clarendon editors, is tentatively accounted for in respect of a pressure brought to bear on the theatre for the production of a play by way of compliment to King James.

Other non-Shakespearean matter is either on negative or positive grounds disallowed; and in particular the Porter scene, which was rejected by Coleridge and the Clarendon editors, and has been defended as genuine by Hales, Chambers, Brandes and Bradley, is definitely and confidently assigned to Middleton, whose special phraseology it embodies. That writer is, further, necessarily saddled with the contamination of most of the rhymed witch-scenes, and, tentatively, with the insertion of the many spurious couplets in Shakespearean scenes.

Confident assignment does not, so far, seem to be attainable in respect of the serious non-Shakespearean matter in

the later Acts, but reasonable hypotheses are offered as such. The pre-existence of a Kyd *Macbeth*, in which Peele may have collaborated, complicates the inquiry; and some tolerable matter, it is suggested, may be adaptation of scenes in Kyd's manner and taste. A study of his dramatic method, at all events, serves to indicate a solution of the "third murderer" mystery, on which there has been some strange à priori speculation.

On the negative side, further, Shakespeare is at least relieved of the closing speech, as well as of much worse matter.

As to the method of inquiry and solution, it is to be said that the Symposium form has, so to speak, its literary rights; and these the author has sought to respect. Variety of attitude, temperament, angle of approach, and mode of comment belong to the conception; and the old one-sided method of didactic dialogue is happily discredited as a propædeutic. Finally, the method of symposium happens to preserve the progressive but occasionally unpremeditated movement of the actual research.

It seems possible, then, that the result may be found by some more acceptable than a bookish exposition. And the study, it would appear, can well bear some stimulation. Students of Shakespeare, as distinct from readers, are still not a numerous tribe. The late J. M. Dent informed the present writer that when, in 1898, he published, at a moderate price, impressions of the *Romeo and Juliet* and the *Macbeth* of Furness's Variorum edition, the sales were so small that the plan of a complete issue of the series in that form had to be abandoned. A generation has passed since that episode, certainly without attainment of any critical consensus on the larger problems presented by the Folio, but surely with the accompaniment of some new investigation. Yet perhaps the following pages may make clear to some that a great deal of fresh study is required.

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LITERARY DETECTION

FIRST SITTING

THEY had been talking lazily but tolerantly of "thrillers."

"I was reading a thriller the other day," said Jones—"a thriller with a quite fresh sort of murder in it; and when the man who suspects there had been a murder begins to put the idea to those concerned, every man jack of them, medical and lay, refuses to think that there could be anything in it. It seemed to me overdone. Are people really like that?"

"Most emphatically they are," said Brown.

"Of course," interjected Robinson, "there are some that will believe anything right away—the last appearance of the Sea Serpent, or any revelation from the cloud-land of spirits. But these are the born believers. Put a really new theory to the world, something that affects ordinary beliefs and doesn't stand on mathematics, like Einstein; and nine men out of ten, even of the people with brains, will just jeer and disbelieve, playing good old Pilate and declining to wait for an answer."

"As men did with Copernicus and Galileo," added Brown; "and as our fathers did with Darwin."

"Even so," chimed Smith.

They were four old friends, linked by a love of books, which, for years past, had caused them to find their four-handed talk more interesting than bridge. (Smith, in a dyspeptic moment, had alluded to that illustrious recreation as *pons asinorum*.) There are, happily, such unprofessional bookmen, withheld by the economic Fates and common sense from trying to make a living by serious writing, and unwilling to try to do it by fiction. The reminiscence of their

youthful bias and their actual lives had made them perhaps collectively hard-hearted towards the more obtrusive professional men, and little interested in the poetry of self-analysis and self-proclamation. And this perhaps because of their common love for the most self-concealing or "impersonal" of all poets.

But their love of books, active since their young days, made for them a world of "joy in widest commonalty spread." "After all," as Jones observed, "you can find everything in books, if you know where to look. In your club, every third man is in that respect an ignoramus. In your library, every silent sentinel, at a touch, can talk to you *ad libitum* on something he knows or feels about." The sentiment was bookish, lyrical, and perhaps sentimental; but nobody had protested. For it was their common merit that they could be controversial together without being cantankerous; as it was perhaps their common demerit to have no habitual hobbies—which are things conducive to mental digestion.

Yet they had in common a redeeming vice. Collectively, under the impulse of Smith, they denounced "collecting"—that is, the hunt for rarities. But, singly and a little shamefacedly, they all, Smith included, did a little private collecting—on this side idolatry.

To-night they were more sequacious than usual, perhaps because they were dining at Smith's, where logic was apt to dominate as against the levity that was natural at Robinson's. So Smith duly demurred to the cynicism of the talk above cited. "Of course you must recognize," he observed, "that there is a big stream of scientific tendency, which is changing the whole face of things. It isn't only Einstein who gets attended to. You remember how Loeb's most disconcerting experiments were silently or eagerly accepted. He grew a rat's tail on its back; and so on.

"Science is a tremendous gymnastic. It is rather a remarkable thing, isn't it, that the largest output of new ideas is in the field in which men most rigorously test all. They know

there that they are not being lied to; and after due study they just take down their old boundaries. For that matter there was a good deal of relativity talk long before Einstein. I can remember the finite universe theory a generation ago—the 'determinant skew,' the cindered star, and all the rest of it. And the latest suggestion that the cosmos is a fluctuation, running down and then reconcentrating, is at least as old as Spencer's *First Principles*. I suppose Darwin himself would have stared at Loeb at first. But nobody stares now."

"It's all very well in the scientific world," grumbled Robinson. "That is a world by itself, inhabited by men who are scientific *there*. But they can be as sloppy as other people outside. I know a man in the Linnaean Society who pumps out the merest bilge in economics as a member of the same body did a hundred years ago; and I deny that either Crookes or Lodge knew any more than I about spirits, or showed any scientific sense in discussing them. How many of the scientific men realize that *belief* is very much like Loeb's rat-tails, a product of given environmental conditions, growing up anyhow? The rat would reckon Loeb a madman."

"And I suppose," mused Brown, "it is just as well that he should. What is it that saves most of us from being the victims of the crank on one side and the crook on the other, in the uncharted world of general beliefs, outside of the laboratory? Look, for instance, at those four literary sects —the Baconians, the Rutlandists, the Derbians, and the Oxfordians—each proclaiming that *its* man wrote all Shakespeare. They all run straight ahead, like so many mad dogs, or mad hares in blinkers, none ever looking at or listening to the others, though each by implication convicts the rest of lunacy. Who is going to size them all up? We just peacefully disregard the lot. Isn't that the best way?"

"You two," grumbled Smith, eyeing Brown and Robinson, "aren't talking in character. What are you both driving at, anyway? Can't we get to some preliminary footing like

this, that—outside of the sciences, where men breathe a higher air of truth—we mostly react to new doctrine in terms of the discomfort that it sets up? Our opinions, so to speak, are our property; and the neologist comes along telling us to surrender part of it. I can understand all sorts of stupidities and conservatisms and even crookeries of reasoning, on that conception."

"The synthesis," interposed Jones, "would seem to be this: men commonly reject new truth, just as they reject new or old error, in terms of the shock it gives to their mental habits. That comes before any testation. Darwinism they at first rejected just as they did 'Flat-earthism'."

"Granted," said Brown; "but that's a poor compliment to educated human nature at this time of day. We ought to have got past Athens, to say nothing of Gotham."

"Well, what are you all driving at?" demanded Jones, who had been smoking peacefully since he started the ball. "You, Smith, can't be meaning to pat men's backs for being stick-in-the-muds; and you, Brown, are avowing that the 'safety-first' men are a feeble folk, who back off from every new theory alike, good or bad, just because they canna' be fashed. Can't we be a bit concrete, and try to find a new truth somewhere?"

"All right: start a hare," said Smith, grossly mixing his metaphors: "I'll be Squaretoes."

"And I'll be Sobersides," said Robinson, whose qualifications for that part were notoriously doubtful.

"That's just it," said Jones sadly, "I've no hare to run. I've been reading that book by the Master of Jesus College, Arthur Gray, propounding the theory that Shakespeare in his 'teens was a page-boy along with Drayton at Pooley Hall, Polesworth, in Warwickshire. And I can't for the life of me see anything in it. There's no evidence worthy of the name. There's not a word in Drayton that gives a hint of any such juvenile acquaintance: if they had been boy pals Drayton didn't want to remember it. The real motive for

the theory seems to be Gray's notion that there must have been some sphere of culture for Shakespeare between leaving school and turning up in London. As if being a page-boy in a nice country house would account for anything that makes Shakespeare Shakespeare; and as if it needed that particular sort of boyhood to qualify him to write the *Midsummer Night's Dream* or rewrite *King John* or *Hamlet*."

"Don't you allow anything for the culture theory?" asked Robinson.

"I can't see anything in that kind of *notion* of culture," protested Jones. "Many thousands of men, leaving school at thirteen, or even earlier, have read hundreds of books by twenty-one, and turned journalists or bookmen or men of science in consequence. If they, not being men of genius, could gather culture enough from books without any special machinery, why should not Shakespeare, who *was* a genius, gather all that there is to find in the early plays and the poems? Doctor Johnson thought he could. Men don't seem to realize that self-acquired culture can often be more vital than college-culture, because it is eagerly absorbed and perfectly assimilated. As to classical scholarship, I can't see that he had much of that; and Ben Jonson bears me out."

"In the capacity of Squaretoes," said Smith, "I'm afraid I must agree. Then if we find the Baconians and post-Baconians just dealers in mares' nests, are we to say that there is nothing new to be said or believed about Shakespeare?"

"Don't go too fast," urged Robinson. "My cousin Lucy, who is a diligent reader in Elizabethan literature, has pointed out to me that there is a line in 'Amour 34' of Drayton's *Idea's Mirror*, published in 1594 and never republished in any of the *Idea* editions, which is almost exactly identical with one in a revised speech in *3 Henry VI*—that speech of Queen Margaret's in Act v, scene iv, about the doubtful state of her cause. The line is:

Her cable broke, her surest anchor lost

The only difference is 'The' for 'Her' in the play, and 'the holding' for 'her surest.' What do you make of that?"

"Now, *there's* something concrete if you like," cried Jones. "Fleay, I remember, found a plain echo from Drayton in an earlier scene, also a bit of revision, in the same play. Could the solution be that Shakespeare was attending to Drayton at the time he was revising the old *Contention* plays, and picked up things he liked?"

"Or that Drayton had a hand in the revising?" asked Robinson. "Wouldn't either view help Gray's theory? What say you, Squaretoes?"

"I don't see that it helps Gray," said Smith musingly. "Shakespeare could meet Drayton in 1594 or earlier, as he had probably met Marlowe before 1593. Fleay noted long ago that Shakespeare's Sonnet 144 clearly echoes one in Drayton's *Idea's Mirror*—the 20th, I think. Drayton had come to the front with *Idea's Mirror*; and he might do some revising work for the theatre independently of any acquaintance with Shakespeare. But I think this echoing of lines of his in *3 Henry VI* is important in itself and should be investigated. You remember there are other echoes in *Julius Cæsar*, implicating both Drayton and Jonson."

"Quite so," interposed Brown. "Beware of thinking that you have got Shakespeare in one of those old composite plays. The first thing to look to is the verse-movement. And I don't see the verse-movement of Shakespeare in that speech of Queen Margaret's, either in the old play or the revision. How Drayton wrote blank verse I don't pretend to know; but I think I know how Shakespeare did. And I don't find him anywhere in that play at all. Some bits in Part II, certainly; but nothing in Part I, or Part III. Isn't that so, Squaretoes?" he asked Smith.

"As Sobersides," observed Robinson, "I have my doubts about you two in your happy hunting-ground. You're just

digging it all up. What are you going to leave us of the Folio?"

"The old *noli me tangere*," scoffed Brown. "Have you found anything attacked that you specially valued? What *do* you value, now, in the Folio? Would you tail after Chambers, crying 'Hands off *All's Well*' after you have been showing that *All's Well* runs mainly to failure? What makes Shakespeare Shakespeare? Other men's strained couplets and tortured verse?"

"It's all very well for you to work your gambit," retorted Robinson. "But it does look a bit queer to demonstrate that the man who after his opening years never wrote a whole play of his own was the greatest playwright of all."

"True, O King," agreed Smith. "There *is* something queer about it. But isn't it, firstly, still queerer if the greatest Master has actually made a set of motley plays in which gold and brass, silver and lead and clay, are all mixed up; and, secondly, is it really outrageously strange that, on the other view, the Supreme Master *should* go to work differently from the others? Must we count on his doing just what they did—that is, those of them who wrote whole plays of their own? Men used to think that Nature ran in fixed biological grooves. Darwin startled them by showing that she didn't. Loeb came along and showed an infinite variability that nobody had suspected. Why must genius compose according to a ramshackle bibliographical tradition?"

"In other words," added Jones, "why not as a stranger give the idea welcome? Why should not the Master be one who had small hankering after personal fame, and was concerned first and last just to make the best of the company's plays, altering little or much as the spirit moved him?"

"Quite so," assented Smith. "The 'why' of the orthodox tradition is just that most men always prefer simplified notions of their problems. As in religion, so in secular

literature, where a problem presents itself. Settle the thing à priori, as men did with the theory of the creation of species warranted to go on for ever as they stood. The moment you substitute induction for deduction, you see the facts won't fit into your Noah's Ark at all."

"And may I point out this," suggested Brown. "Those who will not accept the Transfigurer of plays are left with just an Imitator. While orthodox souls are disturbed by what they call the disintegration of the Folio, it is precisely on the basis of the Folio tradition that Shakespeare is being most effectually disparaged. Take the work done by two eminent American scholars, the late Professor Barrett Wendell and Professor Ashley Thorndike, good scholars and critics both. Taking for granted the authenticity of the Folio almost as a whole, they impeach Shakespeare, not as assailants but as vigilant students, all along the line. And by drawing their honest inference of perpetual imitation, they give Shakespeare the status of arch-imitator in the matter of play-making—certainly no appealing service to his fame.

"Wendell begins with the early plays; and he shows that in general Shakespeare goes to work just as other men had done before him. On the Folio basis you cannot rebut this. Now, if his high critical power had been freed from the unitary tradition, so that he could work inductively, Wendell would have seen that precisely where *we* recognize the first complete Shakespeare play, that is the *Dream*, Shakespeare is not imitative, but curiously original.

"Wendell, I believe, was one of the first to recognize the high constructive skill of that unpretentious play. Ker has done the same; but I think Wendell was the earlier—publishing his book in 1894, and putting the point earlier still in his lectures. To some extent he is partly led astray by his own thesis, as when he says that the first Act of the *Dream* is only a new use of the Elizabethan device of the Induction. But even there he unsays himself when he

calls it 'a *very skilful development* of the conventional Induction.' In simple sooth it is a dismissal of the conventional device.

"Now we are faced by this issue. How could a born imitator do such an entirely original piece of construction as well as of sheer poetic charm, new and surprising (for us, though not for his day) in both respects? The fairy juice is an original advance on the old disguises of garments. Had Wendell's capable mind been free of the deductive fetters laid by the Folio, he would inductively have at least suspected that plays like the *Errors* and the *Two Gentlemen*, which are so different, are as wholes not of Shakespeare's planning at all.

"But as his case stands, what is the result? He is either held by the orthodox to have disparaged Shakespeare as being the chief of copyists, or held by men of his own school to have pricked a critical bubble. And he was assailed accordingly by a devout pro-Shakespearean who in his turn, saddling Shakespeare with the whole Folio, proves to the hilt the other man's charge of imitation."

"I remember," said Jones. "That was Francis A. Smith, who wrote 'The Critics *versus* Shakespeare: A Brief for the Defendant.' He regarded Wendell and Thorndike as in the succession of blackeners of Shakespeare, which of course they were not. For the more competent American readers, about 1907, they would carry their point; and F. A. Smith strenuously saddled Shakespeare with the invention and composition of the whole of *Cymbeline*, insisting that it antedates *Philaster*, which is now being dated, in its first form, 1609."

"There again," said Brown, "Thorndike in all good faith was making Shakespeare out a possessed imitator, just because he himself was possessed by the Folio mystification. Had he been freely inductive, he would have faced the possibility that the 'romances' so-called—the *Tale* and the *Tempest* and *Cymbeline*—might be adaptations by Shake-

speare, either of Fletcher plays or of older plays recast by Fletcher."

"And so," summed up Smith, "those two good men and true, who are among the most able and independent of the Shakespearean critics of their time, earned for themselves the status of disturbers of the peace, as such outside the true idolatrous faith, when it was their very foliolatry that impaired their work, by keeping it imperfect and misleading. Their reputation would really gain from a recognition of their misfortune in taking the Folio for granted. Their high powers were in part unfruitfully applied."

"There I think I am entirely with you," said Jones, "up to the point of the proving of the disintegratory theses. The American critics should at least have faced the inductive alternatives. What causes *me* searching of heart is just the problem of proving the *provenance* of those plays which you say were drafted by alien hands. My sympathies are with you. I prefer the Transfigurer to the Imitator. I prefer your Shakespeare to those of Wendell and Thorndike and F. A. Smith. But I want proofs."

"Well," sighed Robinson, "in my capacity of Sobersides I have to admit one thing. The homogeneity of the Folio is already gone when you admit that *Henry VIII* is by two hands, or let in *Pericles*, or drop *Titus*. And everybody *does* admit that about *Henry VIII*, it seems to me, while most men put away *Titus*. In all this stampede 'Back to the Folio' I don't yet hear any voices—save Peter Alexander's—claiming the integrity of *Henry VIII*."

"Then I should say you disintegrators have them in a cleft stick there," chuckled Jones.

"But over and above that," replied Smith, "there are any number of chinks in the orthodox armour. In fact, it is not now a question of whether the Folio *is* a miscellany, but of exactly how far. Brown's confidence is not widely shared, I am afraid."

"I know that well enough," admitted Brown. "And I

don't pretend to look for much consent till men begin to learn to recognize rhythms. And perhaps that will never be."

"Well," said Jones soothingly, "I bring an open mind. I don't know what my spiritual ear is like. The donkey, as Coleridge hinted, has ears; and, judging from his bray, he has some sense of metre; not, I should say, of rhythm. He seems to run unduly to iambics."

"This hopeful ribaldry . . ." began Brown; but Jones placably interrupted.

"Look here, start a fresh hare for us and we'll course it. Keep Drayton out of it for the present—though it might be rather jolly, Robinson, if you brought your cousin Lucy to discourse to us on that text. But take up a fresh problem, if there is any left. They have been mauling over the *Henry VI* plays for a hundred and fifty years. *Henry VIII*, you say, is practically disestablished, even for the orthodox crowd, though Peter Alexander agonizes. Let us take one where we have no leads to speak of, and work it out for ourselves, without fear or favour."

"It wouldn't be easy to find a perfectly fresh problem," mused Brown; "but you might choose between *Love's Labour's Lost* and *Coriolanus*, or *Othello*, or *Macbeth*. Though you couldn't say you had no leads on *Macbeth*. My view is that we need more."

"It's all one to me," said the open-minded Jones.

"You'll find *Coriolanus* the simplest, I fancy," suggested Smith.

"Well, leave it at that," said Brown. "When you fellows dine with me next week, I'll have an agenda for you. In the meantime I would suggest that you read up a rather interesting old book—Adolphus's *Letters to Heber* on the authorship of the Waverley novels. Some of you must know it; Lockhart has a chapter on it."

"I remember," said Smith, "Lockhart wrote that he was persuaded the book would be revived hereafter for its own sake. But it never has been. And now it is a hundred and

ten years old. The reading world doesn't seem to care about these things. Besides, the book is rather heavily written in the diffuse and formal old style—the style in vogue before Lamb and Hazlitt."

"Of course," said Brown, "the debate was ended by Scott's avowal; and there was nobody left to convince. But there is another side to the thing. What Adolphus showed, with perfect amiability, was that in an enormous number of places in the novels Scott worked up notions that he had used in the poems, making them do duty at will. He would repeat situations and types, and the appropriate sentiments, again and again. The plot of *Rokeby* was duplicated in *Guy Mannering*. There never was, in fact, a man so plagiarized as Scott was plagiarized by himself. And that isn't exactly a flattering fact."

"Why not?" asked Jones.

"Well," argued Brown, "it exhibited a certain intellectual indigence, with all the full-handed productivity. Or perhaps I should say we find a heedless haste to produce saleable books for the market. The same stock-in-trade of situations and sentiments, heroes and villains, dogs and men, was worked for almost any historic period. There were new costumes and new names; but with the old ideals and catchwords, tags, topics, and well-worn reflections. Mind you, I'm not going for Scott with any malice. He was a great, lovable, living repertory of all sorts of historic lore: and he entertained a whole generation or two. His towering monument in Princes Street, Edinburgh, nevertheless, doesn't say much for the intellectual standards of his folk; and it will look odder as time goes on; for he was no great writer, and not even a great artist, though he was good at an old story, and loved to 'put a cockit hat on it,' as he said. But the point is that his admirers couldn't take much joy in seeing how constantly he had 'made cauld kail het again.' "

"I don't know that I should have minded," said the

tolerant Jones. "He turned the old stuff to better purpose. When he made fresh use of matter in the story-poems he knew they were mostly moribund as poetry; at least things like *Rokeby* and *Harold the Dauntless* and the *Bridal of Triermain*. To give them a fresh run in simple prose, with new stories that everybody could read, was to do the public a good turn."

"I agree," nodded Brown; "and I'll go further, though I can't pretend to see much good in Scott's prose apart from his best character-work. I should never worry even when a man like Scott used other people's ideas. There's my friend McGovern, who I believe is positively pained to think that Burns got the idea of *The Jolly Beggars* from Brome, and many another idea from Ferguson. I tell him that what finally counts is whether the borrowed ideas are turned to better account, as with Burns they always are. But that doesn't adequately soothe McGovern. It's a pity to love the status instead of the work, and put the eidolon above the man. I'm mixing the metaphors, I know, but you can see what I'm driving at."

"You imply, I suppose," commented Smith, "that the people who wince at being told how Shakespeare transfigured other men's work are valuing a traditional status of originality above the actual work of art that has been given them."

"Exactly—more or less," nodded Brown. "I don't know that we have worked out the psychology. Men do have an instinctive feeling that to make a play out of your own head is an achievement; though in strict fact a mere play, as a literary product, doesn't amount to a row of pins. They work up for themselves a figure of a wizard who wrought all that 'pell-mell of life'; they spread the aura of the greatest work over the whole; and then they resent the upsetting idea that the wizard mostly transfigured, sometimes only in part, the poorer stuff of other men. And the upshot is that they go on cherishing work that is

positively bad, and never truly realize what makes any of the work great."

"But it isn't only that," urged Robinson. "They call on you to prove your point; and how are you going to convince them that they *are* reading other men's work in the Folio—Clarence's dream, say?"

"All right," smiled Brown beatifically. "What do they say about *Henry VIII*, to begin with? I grant you that Fletcher's double-endings are fairly obvious to anyone who knows verse from prose; but what about Marlowe's and *his* line-endedness, which is about as fixed as Fletcher's?"

"Don't you have to produce more clues besides rhythms?" queried Smith. "That book of Adolphus on Scott, for instance, had nothing to do with rhythms: it was a piling up of parallels and tags and echoes and repetitions of plots and situations, turned from verse into prose. Mostly it was a case of finding the poems reproduced piecemeal in the novels, in different words."

"Quite so," said Brown. "And I want you all to realize how a man *can* be traced in different sets of writings. I don't suppose anybody ever took such trouble as Adolphus did to read all that a voluminous author had written, with a perfect memory for nearly everything. I should say it was a harder job than the tracing of any one alien hand in the Folio. For there you have mostly always the great clue of verse movement, *plus* great diction. But there too you find the various writers betraying themselves by tics and tags and sentiments as well. And our business is just to note everything."

"I wonder," remarked Jones thoughtfully, "whether we should find in *any* voluminous writer of fiction or drama, in our own day, repetitions of ideas that would give him away if he tried to be anonymous in one book?"

"If he had any characteristic style at all," suggested Smith, "he could hardly miss writing like himself. Do you

ever get away from the aura of Thackeray or Dickens or George Eliot or Meredith in reading *them*?"

"Didn't Trollope write an anonymous novel that nobody guessed to be his till he avowed his experiment?" asked Robinson.

"Nobody had ever any reason to take the trouble, I fancy," grunted Brown. "But even the unremarkable style of Trollope *could* be analysed and traced, I believe, if there were any occasion for it."

"Oh, but you are both wrong in saying that nobody took the trouble," cried Jones. "Trollope tells that he was traced by W. H. Hutton, who found some trick of style that he remembered in Trollope. Sadleir tells the whole interesting story. And probably, as you say, the traces could be found again if it were worth while to try. And so with any problem of the kind, ancient or modern."

"It might be a long chase," yawned Robinson. "Didn't somebody find that the Brontë books were all written by one of the family?—I forget which. Anyway, old son, the proof of the pudding is the tasting; and you had better be well armed with clues if you want to make out any other hands in the poor old Folio! You disintegrators make it a van-load of ghosts, 'pon my soul you do!"

"Now," interposed Smith benevolently, "is that really so? Critics tell you that the analytic method reduces the Shakespeare element in the Folio 'to a minimum'; but what is that phrase but a vacant *cliché*? What sort of minimum is it that is made up of the great bulk of the great tragedies and comedies, and of the best in the rest? And what sort of critical mind is it that says a mere half of a big Folio is 'exceedingly little'?"

"I confess," added Jones, "that I prefer to see *Titus* as a spurious ghost rather than as a work of Shakespeare. And I could cheerfully part with a good deal more."

"Remember, too," said Brown, "that the Beaumont and Fletcher canon *has* been largely disintegrated, likewise in

some degree the Chapman and Middleton canon, with the consent of the very men who refuse to look into the Shakespeare canon. And not one of them scruples to see alien matter in Marlowe's *Faustus* and *Massacre at Paris*. Yet the tests are substantially the same. What do you say to Heywood in the Second Part of *Henry IV*?" he added, provocatively innovating.

"If you'll saddle him with the priggeries of the pious Prince Hal I shan't be sorry," returned Robinson.

"False test! false attitude!" declaimed Brown. "You must first look to style and technique, not to sentiment. Never let your dislike of the ethic of a passage decide your judgment."

"We won't," said Jones propitiatingly.

"Don't forget, by the way," urged Smith, "that Adolphus began by scoring a lot of bull's-eyes when he pointed out that the author of the novels, like him of the poems, was visibly a Scotchman, an Edinburgh man, a professional lawyer, knowing all about Scots law, a man devoted to dogs and horses, an antiquary, a historian, a man of wide English reading, a hunter, a reader of Spanish and German, a student of popular superstitions, and I know not what else. Adolphus had largely won his case before he came to the parallels, I should say. You don't have such a primary case in disintegrating the Folio."

"But what do you make of the old orthodox view that Shakespeare too was a lawyer?" asked Robinson. "Don't the Baconites work that gambit still, for all it is worth?"

"A red-herring trail," growled Brown. "It is the proof that none of them ever went watchfully through the Elizabethan drama, where law obtrudes everywhere. The way they tried to make out that the use of 'purchase' and 'colour' in their 'legal' sense pointed to a lawyer is a prodigy of ignorance. Both words occur literally hundreds of times through the whole drama of the generation. But I'll tell you what you do find, when you go into this research. You very clearly

find that you are dealing with a Man of the Theatre, always revising and improving. And that fact, which emerges in every exploration, is the dismissal of all the monomanias of the Baconites, Rutlandites, Derbyites, and Oxfordites, literary Bedlamites all!

"Imagine any one of those aristocratic personages doing perpetual and recasting revising work for the theatre, yet never being known by Ben Jonson or Heywood to do so! Evidence for evidence, if you don't find mine as sane as theirs is insane, I will throw up the sponge. I won't ask you to listen to equations like 'Romeo without his roe = M E O = me the Earl of Oxford'; or, 'Valentine = Alençon,' because Alençon was Oxford's friend, who got out of detention on Valentine's Day, and because both names have *alen* in them! or that 'water' means Sir Walter Raleigh, because Elizabeth called him 'water,' as so many people then pronounced Walter."

"And didn't the latest Baconite," inquired Jones, "find 'Bacon his mark' in the last stanza of *Venus and Adonis*, where '*be* seen' and 'is *con*veyed' = 'Bacon seen, because in that age they would pronounce *becon* bacon? No, we won't pull your leg with those tomfooleries, Brown: we'll keep Robinson in order. But on this side balderdash, you've got to give us something worth thinking about."

"Something worth thinking about?" exclaimed Brown. "That wouldn't be a very hopeful quest if you put 'thinking' high. Hadn't we better be humble, and say we apply the modest thinking apparatus of the detective novel to styles and hands instead of crimes? Can't we look for finger-prints in literature? Who wants metaphysics nowadays, save metaphysicians?"

"Oh, but there's a golden mean," protested Smith. "Is it all finger-print work? Do you know that very book of Adolphus sets me shaping generalizations apart from all speculations about authorship. One of the things that date Adolphus is his conception of poetry and the poetic, which

enables him to find in Scott a 'true poet' all along the line. Now, if you take Scott's poetry 'by and large,' you'll find that it is predominantly a reaction to the visible, the external. He is a landscapist and a *genre* painter. Well, to cut the thing short, I should say that Scott's poetry is visual; Shelley's the visual spiritualized or etherealized, so to speak; and Shakespeare's predominantly spiritual—always at the heart of things. I suppose that was what Carlyle was thinking when he said that Scott wrote 'from the teeth outwards' and Shakespeare 'from the skin inwards.' Could that be made one of your clues, Brown?"

"Hardly," drawled Brown. "I know your point was made long ago by Forsyth, a Scotch writer. And I don't say it isn't broadly true. But I have seen it recently averred that the worst speech in Shakespeare is Gertrude's about the drowning of Ophelia, beginning:

> There is a willow grows aslant a brook
> That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream.

It is a lady who makes the charge, and far be it from me to answer with her inspired certitude. But anyhow, there it is, poetry of the visual, with a vengeance. And yet would you say the versification is not Shakespeare's?"

"Most unkindest cut of all," sighed Smith. "But at least they can't accuse you of keeping only the best if you allow that to be Shakespeare's."

"The men who make that accusation," said Brown acidly, "would say anything. They fancy their opponents to be logically as corrupt as themselves, a thing impossible. Nothing à priori in mine, if I know it. Unless you call it à priori to hold that the greatest verser will not write in all the other styles of the day, including the worst; and I don't see any of these in Gertrude's lines. I should rather suspect that Shakespeare wanted to psychologize on Gertrude, for once. He certainly didn't give her much attention. And there is nothing about the willow and the

brook in the old German version of Kyd's play, though you find it emerging in the First Quarto. I think he was just revising."

"Perhaps," grinned the mercurial Robinson, "he wanted to show how unspiritual she was, looking to the external first and foremost. Or couldn't you manage to bring Drayton in?"

"Get out!" said Brown; "and good-night all. I'm for bed." But Jones delayed him.

"There's another thing," he suggested. "We might usefully look into H. C. Candy's book of 1924 on the newly discovered stanzas written by the juvenile Milton on the engravings illustrating an edition of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. We shall see there, if I remember rightly, how Milton, at about fifteen, in 1623, wrote a long series of careful stanzas which are shown not only to be in his handwriting and spelling, but to have a whole lot of word-clues and phrase-clues to his later poetry."

"A good idea," said Smith approvingly. "And then there is the old question about Thomson's authorship of the anonymous poem in memory of Congreve, published, I think, in 1729. It is by parallelism of idea and verse-style and special modes of phrase, I think, that the case is made out. You will find that all these literary detections are just cases of the logical use of common sense on a basis of observation."

"I don't suppose it matters much about good old Thomson now," said Robinson compassionately. "What was it Carlyle said about 'Who wrote *Junius*'? But, you know, it is a rather memorable thing that Shakespeare and Milton, in their youth, seem both to have been specially attracted by Ovid."

"Thomson," reproved Smith, "was in his time a broken-hearted lover, 'rendered indifferent to life,' they tell us, by his disappointment."

"A better lover than Ovid, then," cheerfully assented

Robinson. "Well, let's have a look all round to cultivate our common sense, for Brown's behoof."

"If you can," grinned Brown. "But let me just remind you that besides repeating himself Milton echoed many other poets, from Spenser downwards. Both facts will help to quicken your common sense. Good hunting, and good night."

SECOND SITTING

"THAT's that," observed Robinson, throwing down a second-hand bookseller's catalogue with unnecessary violence.

"What's the matter?" inquired Jones.

"A catalogue of books about Dorsetshire, and Fungi, and Heraldry, and Topography. Things like that," said the disillusioned one.

"Don't forget that every one of these is a branch of study for many devotedly studious folk," rumbled Smith. "It would take a lifetime to read all the books on Devonshire and Yorkshire; and many a single-hearted searcher has given his life to the lepidoptera or the fungi or the History of British Ferns. What are we all but mites, crawling about on the vast globe of knowledge and picking up our own specks of nutriment?"

"Here endeth the first lesson," intoned Robinson. "I cave, as they say, or used to say, in the States. I am a worthless worm seeking esculents. And I like them succulent."

"Then I have small chance of interesting you as to who began or contaminated or finished *Macbeth*," sighed Brown, the host of the evening. "But you will have to face the music. I have decided to concentrate on *Macbeth*, for three reasons. First, just because it has been quite definitely challenged at many points by a long series of respected critics, including the Clarendon Press editors, and more or less defended by other critics.

"It is full of structural and stylistic anomalies, from bad or poor scenes to a long string of bad couplet-tags. After E. K. Chambers and Bradley had defended the Sergeant scene, the 'Arden' editor rejects it; though he holds on doggedly to the Porter scene, and to the closing speech, which the Clarendon editors had impugned.

"Secondly, I choose this problem because I undertake to show that none of the critics has faced it all round. Thirdly,

because I argue that the play is much more of a composite than has yet been realized; and that Shakespeare must be held to be not only rewriting, in great passages, but probably only revising in the Malcolm and Macduff scene, which even Chambers admits to be tedious. And yet we all count it, in the main, a *very* great play. What do you say to the selection?"

"Oh, it should be very interesting," mused Jones slowly. "I remember Coleridge's rejection of the Porter's speech was argued over in my youth; and men talked a lot about De Quincey and the knocking at the gate, and all that. I always leant to Coleridge."

"And that would not be a bad point of entry," assented Brown. "There you start at the ordinary point of departure: 'Would Shakespeare have written *that*, drunk or sober?' There were many discussions, long ago. Then the speech was elaborately defended by Professor Hales as genuine; and Professor Bradley, further, took his view, following Chambers and Brandes. And now Peter Alexander pronounces it 'a dramatic stroke of the greatest genius.' He naturally would. He perhaps admires the genuine in Shakespeare, but he positively dotes on the spurious."

"I remember Hales," observed the pensive Smith: "a careful, well-read scholar, who edited Spenser very creditably indeed, though he never attempted the Variorum edition which we ought to have had long ago. Yes: an examination of that argument by Hales might take us a good way into the problem. He had the courage to combat Coleridge while acknowledging him as the greatest Shakespeare critic—a status which now rightly accrues, I believe, to Bradley."

"So be it, then," agreed Brown. "Hales was a scholar and a gentleman; though you'll find that his defence of the passage ends with its tail between its legs, so much so that I always felt the essay to be a conscious exercise in special pleading rather than a critic's exposition of his faith. I

have his points noted here; and they are clerkly put, I admit. Here they are:

(i) That *a* Porter's speech is an *integral* part of the play.
(ii) That it is necessary as a relief to the surrounding horror.
(iii) That it is necessary according to the law of contrast *elsewhere obeyed.*
(iv) That the speech we have is *dramatically relevant.*
(v) That its style and language are Shakespearean.

"This is neatly schemed, to show a continuous critical logic, compelling our acceptance. Yet in the very first step of exposition the term 'integral' is shifted from the Porter to the knocking, which *is* the effective factor, though not so uncommon as De Quincey and the rest seem to suppose. The 'awful effect,' Hales argues, is produced by *that*: even he will not contend explicitly that it turns on the Porter. Then he goes on to claim that 'as' Macbeth leaves the stage the Porter enters. But it is plain that the Porter must appear in another part of the castle, since Macbeth and his wife cannot have been talking at the main door; and whatever they may have done on the Jacobean stage, no reader to-day imagines the Porter was within hearing of the preceding dialogue. When, then, Tom Taylor argued that the *knocking* was required to get Macbeth off the stage, he was *not* proving that a talking Porter was required.

"But Hales goes on to insist that the Porter '*must* make a speech of some sort.' I can see no 'must.' An actual Porter, stealing silently on the stage in the gloom, would be a rather more thrilling figure; and the argument here merely slides on to the 'necessary relief.' *That* certainly was a common conception with the older dramatists; and we may be said to have it in the Polonius-Reynaldo scene in *Hamlet*, which some pronounce non-Shakespearean. But the theory that the usage was originally justified only by supreme scenes of intense psychological strain and terror, and that Shakespeare 'elsewhere' recognized an æsthetic necessity for '*comic* relief' at such crises, is simply not true.

"In *Hamlet* we have the killing of Polonius. There is no comic relief there; unless you say that 'I'll lug the guts into the neighbour room' is such. In *Othello*, after that dreadfullest of all scenes, the killing of Desdemona, where does the relief come in? And what comic relief do we get in *Macbeth* after the terrific scene with the imagined phantom of Banquo, which after the hundredth reading makes me shiver more than the murder scene?

"In *Lear* we have the tearing out of Gloucester's eyes, the entrance of Lear carrying the slain Cordelia, and then the death of Lear. In the teeth of all Hales's rhetoric about the situations in which 'Nature can bear no more,' we get no more hint of comic relief than when Romeo dies by Juliet, and Juliet slays herself. They are imputing to Shakespeare's genius a device of the normal pre-Shakespearean stage."

"Perhaps," interrupted Jones, "we should distinguish between wind-up scenes and earlier ones. At the end of a tragedy, we are near the relief of the close."

"Well," returned Brown, "what about the slaying of Julius Caesar? Or Polonius? Or, if you take extreme tensions in general, like that of the Banquo phantom scene, what about Othello's agony of jealousy? The simple fact is that the comic relief which Hales claimed to be a fundamental necessity was merely a common old stage device for the common audience, which Shakespeare did *not* recognize. The gravediggers' scene in *Hamlet*, which he may or may not have drafted, comes *before* the great crisis, not after it. Even in the old pre-Shakespearean plays it was not always employed. You have it in *Locrine*, at its worst, but hardly at all in *Titus*.

"When Brandes, who had no eye for differences of hand, goes about to vindicate the scene, he does absolutely nothing beyond reiterating the praise of comic relief or contrast. He is nearly always thus deductive."

"I should say," commented Smith, "that Hales's case simply breaks down there; as it does again when he argues

in his third item that the comic relief 'is necessary according to the law of contrast elsewhere obeyed.' You can surely have dramatic contrast without making the farcical, cheek by jowl, relieve the terrible. And Hales simply loses hold of the case when he goes on to say that Romantic tragedy 'delights in the meeting of extremes,' and that the dramatist 'laughs everywhere and cries everywhere,' and that 'for him the very jaws of death are capable of laughter.' "

"A case of straining a formula to tatters," added Robinson. "He would be thinking of Hamlet's fooling at the close of the ghost scene, which was part of the old business of Hamlet's madness. Speaking impartially, I should say that the theoretic vindication so far comes to nothing. But I can remember that many people thought Shakespeare had here made a concession to the popular taste."

"As to that," returned Brown, "Hales had so little grasp of his own theory that after all that argument about intolerable strain and necessary relief, he obliviously goes on to deny that the comic relief in this case *would* have gratified the groundlings! He actually writes that 'The thoroughbred sensationalist would surely vote the Porter to be an obnoxious intrusion. He would long for a draught of raw terror; and it is from such a potation that the Porter debars him.' "

"Then I give him up," cried Robinson. "He plays fast and loose; and leaves us neither a popular need for comic relief nor a higher psychological need. This is simply Sergeant Eitherside."

"And we might add," interposed Smith, "that the editors who argue *both* with Hales for comic relief, and on the other hand that time must be given to Macbeth to wash his hands, are only stultifying themselves."

"Yes, Hales breaks down," assented Jones; "but when all is said, *somebody* put in that scene, which means that dramatist or management, or both of them, thought an interlude of some sort to be necessary or at least desirable. Granting

that Hales has been wasting our time, shouldn't we go straight to the question whether the judgment that called for the scene, or the hand that penned it, was Shakespeare's?"

"I agree," said Brown; "but when so esteemed a critic as Bradley says that Hales's 'admirable paper reprinted in the *Notes and Essays on Shakespeare* seems to me quite conclusive,' it is at least as necessary to rebut the panegyric as Hales thought it necessary to rebut Coleridge's protest that only a scrap of the Porter's speech could have been penned by Shakespeare.

"Somebody—I forget who first—has inserted, in a note in the current edition of Coleridge's lectures, an expression of astonishment at his failure to 'see the *absolute necessity* of interposing *just such* a scene.' It is time that the mere mendacity which critics thus allow themselves by way of argument should be exposed. Here you have the grossest possible apriorism; and Chambers, who profess to disdain the à priori, endorses it.

"But let us go on now to the critical issue. Hales claims that the Porter's speech is 'dramatically relevant,' inasmuch as, for instance, when he says, 'If a man were porter of hell-gate' *we* may 'well say' that in that dreadful place he actually was such.

"Now it is quite unnecessary to debate over either this or the really countervailing pleas that a janitor of hell was a common conception, made familiar alike in the classics and in the Mystery plays. So be it. We shall actually find the phrase in a play *before* ours, thus constituting part of the proof that the scene is not by Shakespeare. The idea might be a reason for any other dramatist's planning some such scene. But the real questions are, first, whether it would have been a reason for Shakespeare; and, second, whether the speech is reasonably to be regarded as Shakespeare's. And when I find Hales's data followed up by Bradley I conceive that we are near the issue. Here is what Bradley writes in a note on p. 397 of his *Shakespearean Tragedy*:

The Porter's soliloquy on the different applicants for admittance has, in idea and manner, a marked resemblance to Pompey's soliloquy on the inhabitants of the prison, in *Measure for Measure*, IV, iii, 1 ff.; and the dialogue between him and Abhorson on the "mystery" of hanging (IV, ii, 22 ff.) is of *just the same kind* as the Porter's dialogue with Macduff about drink.

"Now, I would respectfully ask Professor Bradley whether he feels critically certain that Shakespeare *did* write all the Pompey and Abhorson stuff in *Measure for Measure*; and whether he would meet that challenge by replying that the Pompey and Abhorson stuff is just like the Porter's? If so, it would seem to me to be an argument in a circle. Another hand or hands may have penned both."

"I am with you about the *Measure for Measure* farce stuff," interposed Jones; "but I should say you would have to indicate a likely hand for the coarse farcing in both plays before you could eject Shakespeare."

"There again I agree," said Brown; "but it would put us entirely off our course on *Macbeth* if we thrashed out just now the case for Chapman's hand in *Measure for Measure*, overwritten at main points by Shakespeare. So I will just stipulate that if the coarse stuff in *Measure for Measure* is not by Chapman, it may be by Middleton, who has been shown, I think, to have a hand in *Timon*, where also, with Professor Parrott, I find Chapman's hand at the outset. In point of fact, I directly accuse Middleton of having written the Porter scene."

"Very well, then," said Jones, "can you rebut the claim of Hales and Bradley that there are Shakespearean touches in the Porter scene, taken by itself as apart from *Measure* parallels; and can you show reasons for thinking that it might have been done by Middleton, who is generally admitted to have had at least *something* to do with the Witch scenes? Even Chambers grants so much in his 'Warwick' edition of *Macbeth*, I remember."

"I am coming to that," said Brown, warming to his work. "And perhaps I ought to begin by observing that

where even Hales visibly hedges about the 'intrinsic inferiority' of the Porter scene, asking whether the inferiority is 'so signal and admitted,' after having confessed that the coarse foolery is 'to our taste highly offensive,' a strictly impartial criticism would pronounce the whole scene quite crude. Instead of relieving a tension for a sensitive spectator or reader, it simply shatters the whole impression just before achieved. And let Hales argue as he will, I simply cannot conceive that the artist of the great scene just passed would *want* to plunge us head first into a drunken hullabaloo."

"Exactly," cried Robinson. "A stage manager afraid that the audience may find the play too serious, and a dramatist who didn't mind barging in on a scene that was wholly beyond his own psychological range, might want or draft that plunge into cheap farce. But I agree that Shakespeare, at the top of his power, would want no such thing. He could have handled the change of scene in twenty other ways: and as many dramatists would write twenty different scenes."

"But we ought to guard," nodded Brown, "against taking it for granted that the Porter scene was deliberately *added* by another hand. I think it was; but we must keep open for the present the possibility that the Porter scene had been in a previous form of the play before Shakespeare recast it; and that he left the old 'comic relief' standing. You will see the reason for leaving this open here when we come to the total problem of the origination and authorship."

"But how could he leave that crude farcing to mar his effect?" challenged Robinson.

"Aren't you going too fast in taking it for granted that he did *not* write it?" queried Jones. "We were to prove that in detail. I always leant to Coleridge's view myself; and the very fact that *he* was disgusted with the scene is a rebuttal of Hales's doctrine about necessary relief for all, to say nothing of the unbridled sensationalist whom Hales so inconsistently calls up, without once asking whether Coleridge

could possibly be *that*. But still it seems to me that you must come to the à posteriori issue."

"I suppose," interposed Smith, "the neo-orthodox critics would deny that Shakespeare should be expected to have any sense of either historic or dramatic congruity. They believe in the bleeding sergeant staggering along for a hundred awful miles, up hill and down dale, to carry the news of battle ahead of well-mounted noblemen. And so I suppose they would think a Porter in the taste of Jacobean Cheapside a perfectly likely figure in a Shakespeare play, as warder of the Castle of Inverness in the Dark Ages.

"But I should hold with you, Brown, that the Shakespeare who made all the higher characters just poetically human, for good or evil, would have kept the warder relevant in that key, in his degree. However, we cannot so decide. We must come down to diction and ideation. It is a coarsely bad scene; but as the orthodox insist that Shakespeare *could* be coarsely bad, we must 'fight the course.' Men who believe that Shakespeare wrote, 'Flies may do this, but I from this must fly,' will never conceive that the Porter scene is too bad to be his."

"Especially," added Brown, "when such a scholar as Hales and such a critic as Bradley argue that after all it is not *too* bad. So we have just to face their arguments, in so far as these do not merely vindicate one disputed scene by citing another. And they *have* some arguments. To begin with, Hales, like so many others, claims that the echo of the 'primrose path' from *Hamlet*—which is preceded by 'the flowery way . . . to the broad gate and the great fire' in *All's Well* (IV, v, 56)—is confidently to be taken as a case of Shakespeare echoing himself. And even Coleridge thought that Shakespeare had inserted *that* in an alien speech that was otherwise unworthy of him."

"A weak solution, surely," said Robinson. "It makes Shakespeare *accept* a piece of bad art."

"To *that* compromise, I may say," agreed Brown, "I

cannot aesthetically assent. To add the echoed poetic touch is just to complicate the intellectual incongruity. Rather I would point out that (as was partly noted long ago in the *Shakspere Allusion Books* and *Shakspere's Centurie of Prayse*; and recently by two American scholars of Lehigh University in *Shakespeare Allusions and Parallels*) such echoing of Shakespearean phrases is a thing constantly practised in the Jacobean drama not *by* Shakespeare but *of* Shakespeare by contemporaries, that is to say, by Beaumont and Fletcher, Chapman, Massinger, Ford, Webster, Marston and Middleton, to name no others. Jonson, I should say, introduces *allusions* rather than echoes. But when you realize that tags from the great plays were always flying about on the Jacobean stage, you will see that, given an alien hand or two in *Macbeth*, those hands were really much more likely to echo Shakespeare than he was to echo himself. For I really cannot admit that the genuine Shakespeare is given to repeating his own special phrases, though, like all men, he could not miss repeating some of his ideas."

"Hear, hear," applauded Robinson, for the time bent on disintegration. "Conceive Shakespeare himself wanting to turn Ophelia's 'primrose path of dalliance' into a drunken Porter's tag."

But Jones, bent on business, pleaded for some note of the actual practice of the other dramatists in the matter of echoes. "And you might begin with Middleton," he suggested; "since there seems to be admittedly more chance of Middleton than of anybody else coming in here."

"Middleton," said Brown, "is perhaps not more given that way than Beaumont and Fletcher. But here are a few instances from him, which probably could be multiplied by anyone who would sift the entire mass of his work. Those lines in *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside* (v, i):

> Still my adulterous guilt hovers aloft,
> And with her black wings beats down all my prayers
> Ere they be half way up,

are a very plain echo, in sense, from Claudius in *Hamlet*; and perhaps 'the round world,' immediately afterwards, is an echo of *Antony and Cleopatra* (v, i, 15); though Jonson also has it in the *Poetaster* (v, i). More certainly, 'the secret consumption of my purse,' in *A Trick to Catch the Old One* (I, i), points back to Falstaff. 'Holds me with fear and wonder,' in *The Roaring Girl* (I, i) is likely to be an echo of Horatio's 'Harrows me with fear and wonder'; and again, 'the best part of man, Reason and judgment' (II, ii) might be from *Macbeth* (v, vii, 18), though some such phrase was common. And 'Of all the wonders I e'er met withal' in *Women Beware Women* (II, i, end) echoes a line in *Julius Cæsar* (II, ii, 34): 'Of all the wonders that I yet have heard.'

"And, apart from literary echoes of phrase, I may add that Middleton's *Blurt, Master-Constable*, appears to be in large part an imitation of *Much Ado*, as to Dogberry.

"Mind you, I don't say Middleton is the most frequent echoer: I say simply that he does echo the Shakespeare plays; and in this connection let me point out that Middleton in his own practice, as in *The Changeling*, acts on that rule of 'light relief' which Hales claims as Shakespearean. For there, after the savage murder of Alonzo by De Flores (III, ii), which is the highest point of physical tension and terror in the play, the next scene opens with light chatter between Isabella and Lollio. So that what Hales says Shakespeare *would* do is just what Middleton actually did, and Heywood, often, likewise. And, observe, there is in that case in *The Changeling* a plain change of scene, from a vault to a room."

"A hit, a hit, a palpable hit!" cried Robinson.

"But hadn't we better now consider the other possibilities too?" pleaded Jones.

"Of course," said Brown. "Perhaps Robinson will recall his confidence. After all, Beaumont and Fletcher, and even Chapman, may be counted possible candidates for the Porter scene. A priori, I wouldn't put it past any of them. Now,

see how Beaumont and Fletcher—both of them, mind you—echo Shakespeare. Putting aside the parody about the perfumes of Arabia in *The False One* and the parody of Hotspur's speech in the *Burning Pestle*, take Fletcher's work in the fifth Act of *The Maid's Tragedy*, scene ii: Evadne's phrase about the night and her 'black purpose' points to the Pyrrhus speech in *Hamlet* (II, ii); her telling the King that she is killing him unprepared goes to the same play source: and this is quite clear in her other lines which recall the scene of Claudius praying:

> Yet I must not
> Thus tamely do it as he sleeps—that were
> To rock him to another world.

In the same play (III, i) Beaumont makes Amintor tell the King:

> There is
> Divinity about you, that strikes dead
> My rising passions,

which also comes from *Hamlet* (IV, v, 123); as his 'Hold, hold, my breast,' in the same scene, recalls Hamlet's cry (I, v, 93); and yet again, when he warns Evadne that he is dangerous when vexed, he distinctly recalls Hamlet warning Laertes. It is as if the partner poets had been seeing *Hamlet* together.

"But in the same play there is a curious echo by Beaumont, not merely of the words but of the idea in a passage in *Macbeth* (IV, iii). Malcolm there, you remember, laboriously sounds Macduff by avowing exorbitant vices; and after he has declared his voluptuousness, Macduff replies (IV, iii):

> Boundless *intemperance*
> In nature is a tyranny; it hath been
> Th' *untimely* emptying of the happy throne,
> And *fall of many Kings*. But fear not yet . . .

At the end of *The Maid's Tragedy*, Lysippus says, looking at the slain King:

> May this a fair example be to me
> To rule with *temper*; for on *lustful Kings*
> *Unlooked-for* sudden deaths from Heaven are sent;
> But cursed is he that is their instrument.

"Now, *The Maid's Tragedy* dates 1611; so that the *Macbeth* passage, which is but a transcript from Holinshed, is certainly the earlier. Thus Amintor's phrase, earlier in the same scene, 'My soul grows weary of her house,' is a probable echo of the cry of Macbeth: 'I 'gin to grow aweary of the sun.' But yet again, in *Macbeth* Macduff says to Malcolm: 'I am not treacherous'; and in Act I, scene i, of *A King and No King*, Tigranes says: 'I am not fickle.' Yet again, at the end of Act III of *Macbeth*, Lennox speaks of 'our suffering country,' and Arbaces in that scene with Tigranes speaks of 'his suffering land'; and, still in the same play (v, iv), Arbaces speaks of 'hardened murderers of infants and their mothers,' which again seems to hark back to the massacre scene in *Macbeth*. All that is in Beaumont work.

"And yet again, in a Beaumont scene in *Philaster* (III, i), we have the hero saying:

> Nature too unkind,
> That made no medicine for a troubled mind;

and, again (III, ii) echoing Macbeth:

> Hast thou a medicine to restore my wits,
> When I have lost 'em?

Now, *Philaster* is held to have been acted in its first form about 1608 or 1609; so that we are still posterior to *Macbeth*. And presumably Belario's phrase (v, ii)—

> He was not born of woman that can cut
> It and look on

—may be yet another echo, though a slight one.

"And that is not all. Fletcher, in his *Valentinian* (v, vi), has the phrase:

> By Heaven, 'tis all
> The world has left to brag of;

which again is from *Macbeth*. There are yet other echoes in Beaumont and Fletcher, which I may as well spare you, just noting that in the last scene of *A King and No King* the line

> On a horse cut out of an entire diamond

suggests Othello's 'entire and perfect chrysolite'; and that in Fletcher's *Faithful Shepherdess* (I, i) the words 'prick my hand and it will bleed' recall the *Merchant of Venice*, as does a speech by Cleremont in a Fletcher scene in *Philaster* (I, i):

> This speech calls him Spaniard, being nothing but a large inventory of his own commendations.

"Much of all this I cite merely to show how commonly the other dramatists echoed Shakespeare's lines; thus barring, so far, the assumption that the phrase about the primrose way in the Porter's speech must be Shakespeare's when it is at least as likely to be another man's echo. For the genuine Shakespeare, observe, does not echo *his own* phrases in the way that the others echo him. Need I go on to give examples from Chapman and Marston? I easily could; only I can't see any likelihood of Marston sharing in *Macbeth*, which, as Bradley shows, he echoes twice in *Sophonisba*; and I can't see any clear trace of Chapman except perhaps about some of the witch-stuff."

"Then," said Jones, "you put Middleton, and possibly Beaumont, on a different footing from those, in the fore-front, finding in Middleton the probable author of the Porter scene? Do you suppose Beaumont can have had any hand in the Malcolm-and-Macduff scene?"

"I would rather leave that last point open at this stage," returned Brown; "as I may have to leave it open when all is said. But I do strongly suggest that the Porter scene is much more like Middleton than anyone else I can think of. Hales, you may remember, claimed that the Porter's talk 'is written in the rhythmic or "numerous" prose that is so favourite a

form with Shakespeare': and he goes on to cite as a parallel Mrs. Quickly's account of Falstaff's end."

"Surely that was another very bad shot," ejaculated Robinson, jerking himself up in his easy-chair. "To compare rollicking tipsy babble, out of all character, with a bit of exquisitely pathetic naïveté, with no phrase-making *cursus* in it at all."

"I agree," said Brown. "I cannot think why he did not refer to Falstaff's own prose. But the main point, I think, is that that kind of rollicking prose you have in the Porter's speech, with its voluble vernacular jostling with the scholastic, is 'just like,' as Bradley would say, a hundred prose speeches in Middleton. Go through him, if you can, and you will find them by the dozen in most of his plays. You can indeed find partly similar stuff in Jonson and Chapman; but the flavour of language I specially note here seems to me pure Middleton.

"There is a Porter, to begin with, who enters into a single scene in *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside* (I, i); he talks bogus Latin. Now, I don't say Middleton is specially given to repeating himself; but he appears to be fond of introducing porters in a momentary way (see *Michaelmas Term*, II, iii, near end; and *The Roaring Girl*, II, ii); and it happens to be the fact that that Porter in the *Chaste Maid* gets 'pay the Porter' twice into the Latin of his letter; while the Porter in *Macbeth* winds up his soliloquy with 'pray remember the Porter.' "

"Almost thou persuadest me!" cried Robinson, again jerking himself up in his chair.

"Of course," mused Jones, "that would be a tag of the day—the tag of all porters. Yet I don't deny that it backs up your ascription so far as it goes. The *Chaste Maid* dates when?"

"Unknown," said Brown. "It was printed in 1630 for the first time; but it is then stated to have been acted at The Swan on the Bankside by the Lady Elizabeth's servants;

and that would place it at least before 1613, when the Lady Elizabeth was married and went abroad. Chambers puts it in 1611; Fleay in 1612.

"But before we go further, let me note another Middleton clue in our Porter's speech. You remember his sentence: 'I'll devil-porter it no further: I had thought to have let in *some of all professions*, that go the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire.' Now, consider this, from Middleton's *Women Beware Women* (IV, ii):

> Nay, an' you be damned for that, be of good cheer, sir, *you've gallant company of all professions.*"

"Gad," cried Robinson, "that seems to clinch it. The 'all professions' and 'remember the Porter' come together in our play. And you couldn't say they were both mere tags, could you?"

"I don't remember that even the 'pay the Porter' occurs anywhere else than in our parallel," replied Brown. "As to dates, *Women Beware Women* is not on the map, having been first printed long after Middleton's death. Fleay provisionally suggests 1613. But that is not all. You remember the bawdy talk of the Porter to the tolerant Macduff, which they can't print in the school editions? Well, that is simply a variation in the key of much of *The Witch*; and if you compare scene iv of Act III of *A Trick to Catch the Old One*, headed 'Enter Dampit, drunk,' you will find the same key struck. Again you find it in *Michaelmas Term*, IV, iv—an early play. And yet again, in scene ii of *The Phœnix*, dateable 1605, you have the same theme handled. It is one of Middleton's recurring obsessions; and those who admire the stuff in *Macbeth* as part of 'a dramatic stroke of the greatest genius' should really transfer their allegiance to Middleton as the master artist.

"As for those other anachronistic Jacobean touches in the soliloquy, about the 'farmer that hanged himself on the expectation of plenty,' and the 'equivocator that could

swear' in both the scales against either scale, 'who committed treason enough for God's sake, yet could not equivocate to heaven,' it is a hopeless mystery to me that any scholar could imagine them to come from Shakespeare.

"To fasten them down to a 1606 date, as Malone strove to do, is extremely arbitrary, as many critics now admit. From the author of *A Game at Chesse* they are as characteristic as all the rest. The farmer is actually a quasi-proverbial tag from Hall's Satires (1598); and the Jesuit doctrine of equivocation was a theme of controversy long before and long after 1606. And surely it was as much in the way of Middleton to introduce such contemporary debate as it was in the way of Shakespeare to avoid it."

"In fact," chimed Smith, "the whole scene is as perfectly Middletonian in its gross irrelevance and its grosser indecency as it is un-Shakespearean both ways."

"But now," went on Brown, "I come to a critical test. In *The Puritan*, which I hold with Fleay to be certainly penned by Middleton, we have that phrase (IV, iii, end) about the ghost in a white sheet at the top of the table, which, printed as it was in 1607, is the accepted proof that our play was already on the stage at that date, though Halliwell-Phillipps, after accepting it, wavered as to its validity. Well, in *The Puritan*, in Act II, scene i, we have a passage that I think has not often been cited, which speaks of 'the general bonfire':

> There is a purgatory, in which place I know your husband to reside, and wherein he is like to remain till the dissolution of the world, till the last *general bonfire*; when all the earth shall melt into nothing, and the seas scald their finny labourers.

"Now, *prima facie*, that passage suggests an echo from the Porter scene; that is to say, it would seem to indicate that the Porter scene was already in the play in 1606. Yet I think we shall find when we go further afield that the *prima facie* inference would be wrong. We shall find, I think, that the Porter's phrases are all from Middleton; and

that the scene in our play did not exist, as we have it, in 1606."

"Still, so far," murmured Jones, "theoretically speaking, Middleton with his Cheapside Porter and his 'company of all professions,' *may* have been echoing Shakespeare's *Macbeth*."

"So far so good," pursued Brown. "But now I think I can give you a clinching proof that all that phraseology in the Porter scene is Middleton's own. You remember how Hales argued about the solemn implication that the porter of Macbeth's castle is really the porter of hell. Well, turn to Middleton's *Blurt, Master-Constable*, Act III, scene i, and you find Frisco, servant to the courtesan Imperia, telling Camillo: 'I may be her Mercury, for my running of errands; but troth is, sir, *I am Cerberus, for I am porter in hell.*" Now, *Blurt* was printed in 1602, years before our recast *Macbeth* was thought of. Is not *that* decisive?"

"I admit it is," said Jones, at last convinced. "Indeed, the other three phrases were morally conclusive; but this fourth, clearly prior to *Macbeth*, pierces the centre of the defence. The soliloquy at this point is all Middleton, phrase by phrase."

"I might add," supplemented Brown, "that in scene ii of Act IV of *Blurt*, you have Lazarillo crying, 'I am in hell, but here is no fire: hell-fire is all put out,' which squares with 'this place is too cold for hell' in the Porter's speech; and that in the first scene of Middleton's play *The Phœnix* you have 'foul mysteries throughout *all professions*'; and then again, in scene iv of the same Act, Tangle says: 'Thus am I sought after *by all professions*'; and yet again, in Act IV, scene ii, end: 'I am sick *of all professions.*'

"It seems to have been a positive tic of Middleton's; *and* it is pre-Shakespearean. *The Phœnix* was printed in 1607 as having been 'sundry times acted by the children of Paul's,' and is reasonably held by Fleay to have been on the stage in 1605. Furthermore, in *Michaelmas Term*, which Fleay

declares to have been 'certainly written in 1604,' though only published in 1607, we have in III, i, jesting about 'engrossing hell to yourselves' and 'suffering not a stranger to come in. The Devil himself is not so unmannerly.' "

"Save for the possible chronological challenge," assented Jones, "that is doubly decisive."

"Well," nodded Brown, "I have one more arrow in my quiver. We are pretty sure that Middleton did not make four uses of an alien tag about 'all professions'; and you are convinced that he had a hell-porter, in a cold hell, in 1602. Let me cite one more instance in that column. You remember the famous play *The Honest Whore*, mainly by Dekker, but certainly collaborated in by Middleton. Part I was published in 1604; and, as Fleay claimed, Part II is to be dated about the same time, though it was not then printed.

"Now, in Part II, Act IV, scene i, in one of the long speeches by Bellafront, you have 'hell's porter' used in the same sense as in *Blurt*. The speech may be by Dekker, but that does not affect the argument. And in Act V, scene i, end, 'bonfire' means just what it does in the Porter scene."

"Surely *that* is doubly decisive," cried Robinson, after looking at the passages. "Exit Hales. And that stupid bawdry that follows, which is just as Middletonian as the rest, is quite too idly gross for Shakespeare. I confess too that I never could imagine Shakespeare making the mediaeval Porter ask for his tip before he opens the gate, though it might make the unskilful laugh."

"Or make him talk of 'an English tailor come hither for stealing out of a French hose,' " growled Smith. "You'll find some such tailor-talk in *The Roaring Girl*, if I remember rightly. In fact, the whole thing smacks of Jacobean Cheapside, in a fashion that Shakespeare would have scorned in such a play, where it is the one entirely anachronistic note—apart from the 'clocks,' which were a chartered anachronism. It is like bringing a London music-hall 'turn' into the *Eumenides*. And then think of the Porter's talk to Macduff,

which I suppose is certified as thoroughly Shakespearean by the editors of the school editions, who cannot possibly print it. Think of Shakespeare making a menial talk like that, in that situation, to a nobleman."

"I suppose," said Robinson, becoming abnormally serious, "we have to recognize that when any respectable tradition or convention is first challenged, the spontaneous tendency of the most respectable people is to frame futile fibs. That is what seems to have been done by the estimable Hales, anyhow. And at this moment we are reading in *The Times* a revival of the old defence of the diction and sentiment of the National Anthem. Grave and reverend seniors explain that 'Confound their politics' is not bad language, because 'confound' means just 'confuse'; not mentioning that what we have been singing—or hearing: I hope I never sang it—was '*con*found their *pauly*ticks'; and not stopping to ask whether 'Frustrate their knavish tricks' is either poetry or piety."

"Most true," assented Jones. "But are we not bound to glance back to that echo in *All's Well* about the flowery way that leads to the broad gate and the great fire?"

"Assuredly," said Brown; "and perhaps I should have discussed that before, especially seeing that my old friend Fleay held as to the 'everlasting bonfire' that 'This use of a word so remarkably descriptive in a double meaning is intensely Shakespearean.' Fleay, I gladly grant, abounded in good ideas; but I must say that in his early days he was often precipitate. And he never quite ceased to be so. He could at times see a Shakespearean quality in a word that had a wide pre-Shakespearean stage currency."

"Quite so," assented Smith. "I told him once, to his surprise, that all the words he noted as Shakespearean in the Countess (or other) scenes in *Edward III* are to be found in Greene. And that he or anybody could find anything intensely Shakespearean in that wordy scene of the Countess and Lafeu and the Clown in *All's Well* I cannot easily imagine."

"I agree," said Brown. "It is one of the Clown scenes that decorate that comedy wherever possible, as if we needed any comic relief *there*; and I should count that prose as no less likely to be Chapman's than the Porter scene is to be Middleton's. Chapman runs to the comedy of talk just as he does to the tragedy of declamation. But let us keep to our argument. On the orthodox view Shakespeare first writes: 'the flowery way to the great fire,' then, soon after, the 'primrose path of dalliance'—that is, of sin; and then again combines them in the 'primrose way to the everlasting bonfire.' For we commonly date *Hamlet*, in the revised form, 1603 or 1604; *All's Well* anywhere between 1601 and 1604—Fleay preferring 1601; and *Macbeth* 1606. I should think that the mere iteration would set people doubting. Anyway, we see now that the Porter scene is not his."

"You said that Chapman echoed the Shakespeare plays in his own," interposed Jones. "If you can show that quite clearly, do you raise the question whether Shakespeare, in return, would echo Chapman? And might it not be Chapman, after all, that did the Porter scene, if, as some think, he did various interludes for Shakespeare's company?"

"I would rather waive the à priori probability of complimentary echo for echo," demurred Brown; "but it is clear that if *All's Well* preceded *Macbeth*, the Porter echoes the Clown of *All's Well*, while bringing in 'primrose' from *Hamlet*. Well, at least we make out that the tag—and probably even the word 'bonfire'—lay ready to anybody's hand in 1606. And as Chapman certainly echoed himself, he might theoretically write the Porter scene. But I don't catch his hand in it. Still, if you like, I'll give you some of the Shakespeare echoes in his plays, which will show you that we get into deep water in that direction. Setting aside echoes that may pass as current coin, take these to begin with:

Men rich in dirt. *All Fools*, I, 1.
Brave men of dirt. *Goosecap*, I, iv, 138.
Spacious in the possession of dirt. *Hamlet*, V, ii, 90

Then the passage in *All Fools*, II, i, about flowers:

> The pansy this.
> Oh, that's for lover's thoughts.
> What's that, a columbine . . . that thankless flower,

is generally admitted to point to Ophelia's flowers, since *All Fools*, in its present form, is to be dated 1604; and yet another passage in the same play, III, i, 188 sq.:

> You must consider a woman is an unfinished creature, delivered hastily to the world, before Nature had set to that seal which should have made them perfect,

is also an echo from *Richard III*, and perhaps other plays. Then in *Monsieur d'Olive*, II, ii, 92–93, which was published in 1606, those lines

> Like to a mass of clouds that now seem like
> An elephant, and straightways like an ox,

equally point to Hamlet's fooling of Polonius, as do these in *Bussy d'Ambois*, III, i, 23–26:

> Like empty clouds
> In which our faulty apprehensions forge
> The forms of dragons, lions, elephants,
> When they hold no proportion.

Now, I confess I see in these *Hamlet* parallels something more than echoes or paraphrases of Shakespeare by Chapman, just as I see in his parallels from *All's Well* and *Measure for Measure* echoes from himself. But, putting aside these last, I regard at least the 'rich in dirt' tag as Chapman's own. *All Fools*, you may remember, is dateable, in its first form, 1599. And I stand to the view that he had at least a hand in Osric, who is so signally a type in Chapman comedy, and, further, a dramatic excrescence, in Chapman's style, on the *Hamlet* play.

"You will remember that in the First Quarto, Osric, not yet named, figures in very brief outline, as 'a Gentleman';

then in the Second Quarto as 'a Courter,' developed as we have him; though not till the Folio do we know him as Osric. All this, of course, is extraneous to *Macbeth*; but I cite it in order to show that Chapman *might* conceivably have been given a hand in *Macbeth*."

"But you don't claim that he had?" asked Jones.

"Not apart from a doubtful Witch scene," said Brown, "which we shall look into later; and the closing speech of the play. The only other hint of *Macbeth* in his plays that I can remember is a ribald phrase about 'the common enemy of mankind,' which was common coin. He has nothing like those passages in Beaumont."

"Do you mean to say you have been all through him?" asked Robinson sceptically.

"Many times, for my sins," sighed Brown; "or perhaps I might say, for my love of Shakespeare. You must study the Elizabethan drama carefully if you are to have a right to an opinion on the problems of the Folio."

"Then so far," suggested Jones judicially, "we have got simply, as to *Macbeth*, a strong inference, strongly justified, I admit, as to Middleton's having done the Porter scene. Then what do you propound as to Beaumont?"

"Before coming to that," replied Brown warily, "I think we should look into the whole question of the history and composition of the play. But while I think the whole goes back to a pre-Shakespearean form that has been lost, I would suggest that the Sergeant scene, which opens the play after the first vision of the witches, should be examined as having been forcibly challenged by the Clarendon Press editors and others, and defended by Bradley as genuine, but doubted by Wendell." And the symposiasts agreed.

"You may remember," went on Brown, "how Clark and Wright put their case. They faced at the very outset the conventional line of resistance, embodied at its best in the argument that you can't settle the authenticity of any passage by showing it to be bad or good; and the defence

has since gone on very much as if they had never faced that objection, though of course Bradley did not rely on it. Here are the decisive words of the Clarendon editors:

'We are persuaded that there are parts of *Macbeth* which Shakespeare did not write; and the style of these seems to us to resemble that of Middleton. It would be very uncritical to pick out of Shakespeare's work all that seems to be inferior to the rest, and to assign it to somebody else. At his worst he is still Shakespeare; and though the least "mannered" of all poets, he has always a manner which cannot well be mistaken. In the parts of *Macbeth* of which we speak we find no trace of this manner.

But to come to particulars. We believe that the second scene of the first act was not written by Shakespeare. Making all allowance for corruption of text, the slovenly metre is not like Shakespeare's work, even when he is most careless. The bombastic phraseology of the sergeant is not like Shakespeare's language even when he is most bombastic. What is said of the thane of Cawdor, lines 52, 53, is inconsistent with what follows in scene 3, lines 72, 73, and 112 sqq. We may add that Shakespeare's good sense would hardly have tolerated the absurdity of sending a severely wounded soldier to carry the news of a victory.'

"And then, besides commenting on the thickly scattered wooden couplets, and the poverty of the Hecate scene, they cite Coleridge as to the Porter scene. It ought to have been a good thing that the editors of the Globe edition should thus strikingly challenge the Folio; as they further did in their *Hamlet*. But you remember how Furnivall blusterously defended the fooling of Polonius; and we shall find the Sergeant scene better defended by a better man, Bradley."

"Furnivall's service to Shakespeare study by running the old New Shakespere Society," remarked Smith, "may have been great, as was his service to Chaucer study; but his contribution of critical ideas was not much above zero."

"Surely," interjected Jones, "Clark and Wright couldn't claim that the Sergeant scene was written by Middleton? They seem to imply that *all* the non-Shakespearean parts were probably his."

"There, I think, they miscarried," said Brown: "they

certainly offer no sort of evidence in that regard. I cite them rather for their negative position in general."

"I remember," remarked Jones, "how startled I was when I read Chambers's defence of the Sergeant scene in his 'Warwick' edition. After citing the arguments of the Clarendon editors, he actually passes over the point about the bleeding Sergeant as not being a 'serious' objection."

"That's just like them," acquiesced Robinson: "there is nothing too extravagant for orthodoxy. The Sergeant is just as preposterous as Smith represents him to be. It looks as if some men came positively to prefer nonsense in the classics. The man who can see nothing absurd in the blood-boltered Sergeant ploughing his gory way from Fife up to Forres, ahead of the mounted nobles, is capable of any bluff."

"It is only fair to remember," urged Brown, "that even E. K. Chambers at times accepts a reasonable emendation, and that he gives up *some* of the witch stuff. Of course I agree about the Sergeant; and one of my perplexities is that Bradley, praising Chambers, ignored that point as he did. But the finally important thing about Bradley's defence is that, in vindicating the quality of the Sergeant scene, as apart from the pragmatic preposterousness of it, he really forces us the more clearly to realize that it cannot be of Shakespeare's writing.

"That is to say, he seems to make one really good identification. I used to have a feeling that the Sergeant's diction was likely to belong to the early form of the play which, I think we shall have to admit, *had* existed. There are, in fact, clues of vocabulary to Kyd; and the fashion of describing a doubtful battle, in a style at once turgid and conventional, is so far like him that I strongly suspect a Kyd basis for the speech as we have it. But when Bradley, following Coleridge, argues that the scene is really in the key and style and movement of the player's Pyrrhus speech in *Hamlet*, I feel much disposed to agree; and I cannot think that the Pyrrhus speech really belongs to the old Kyd *Hamlet*.

"Bradley's point is, in sum, that it is archaistic, not archaic, bizarre rather than bombastic, or bombastic in a special way, and not really weak or centrally bad, but in its own way striking. And even apart from the echo in 'strumpet fortune' and fortune the 'rebel's whore'—which is really a common old trope—I find the peculiar, jerkily powerful movement of the verse in the Pyrrhus speech and the Sergeant's to be almost essentially the same. It seems to be a really notable identification; and I will not venture to complicate the problem with that of the authorship of the Induction to the *Warning*.

"If only Bradley had worked systematically on such problems he might have done even more for us than he has done. But what is permanently astonishing to me is that he should take it for granted that the Pyrrhus speech is Shakespeare's own work."

"Didn't Fleay or somebody once suggest that it was introduced by way of a compliment to the dead Marlowe?" asked Jones.

"That it could hardly be," returned Smith. "It isn't Marlowese, despite the sub-reference to *Dido*, and the echoes. And surely nothing could be plainer than Prince Hamlet's account of it as being the work of what we should call 'an outsider,' somebody who had not succeeded as a playwright, though the play in question had been acted once.

"That reminds me, however, that Fleay, in his pamphlet of 1898, *Queen Elizabeth, Croydon, and the Drama*, makes out another case. He shows from Henslowe that there was a *Dido and Æneas* played in 1598; that this cannot have been Marlowe's *Dido*; and that 'beyond all question' it must have been by Ben Jonson, as indicated by the Diary. Then, seeing rightly enough that on the Pyrrhus speech Shakespeare cannot have been praising himself, he infers that Hamlet's panegyric is meant for Ben Jonson; and was in the play as early as 1601 when acted at Cambridge."

"But why?" queried Jones and Robinson together.

"Because Shakespeare had taken Jonson by the hand and got his company to play *Every Man in his Humour* in 1598," explained Smith. "I never could see," he added, "that this was a valid solution. It is a *non sequitur*. You might just as well suggest Chapman."

"Why," cried Robinson, "there isn't a semblance of Jonson in the Pyrrhus speech."

"Perhaps," said Smith, "there is a parallel of theme and ideas in Nuntius's speech at the end of *Sejanus*—which, by the way, is rather fine declamation—picturing 'the expulsèd Apicata' execrating the unjust Gods. But of resemblance in style—nothing. Of all dramatists, surely, Jonson was the least able to get out of *his own* expository style."

"Besides," supplemented Jones, "remember the war of the theatres. Jonson in his *Poetaster*, in 1601, had furiously assailed the Chamberlain's men in connection with the *Satiromastix* squabble; and we have the account in *The Return from Parnassus* (1601) of how his fellows enjoyed the 'purge' that Shakespeare had given to Ben; which I take to have been the description of Ajax in *Troilus and Cressida*."

"Of course," chimed Smith, "the Chamberlain's company in 1603 were playing Jonson's *Sejanus*, the quarrel having been made up; and Shakespeare talks with the utmost good-humour in his first scene (II, ii) of Hamlet with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern about the war of the theatres as a thing of the past. But that he should go *so far* out of his way as to pay Ben Jonson, either in 1601 or 1603, a compliment quite unprecedented on the stage, is not reasonably to be supposed. It would be a strange prosternation before a man whom he had happily ridiculed in rejoinder for a 'pestilent' attack. It would in fact look like a rather abject surrender, as if the company were *afraid* of Ben. The actors would not like it; and surely Shakespeare would not. No: the only licit inference is that Hamlet in his praise of the Pyrrhus speech is made to pay an exceptional tribute to an exceptional personage."

"That is the point," declared Brown with emphasis. "Bradley, seeing clearly that the speech cannot be a mere burlesque of older bombast—for what could be gained by making the players ridiculous?—and seeing as clearly its mannered power, seems to forget how utterly unlike it is to Shakespeare's own style; and how expressly we are told in the play that it is by someone else. Read the words in *Hamlet*:

'I heard thee speak me a speech once, but it was never acted; or, if it was, not above once; for the play, I remember, pleased not the million; 'twas caviare to the general; but it was—as I received it, and others, whose judgments in such matters cried in the top of mine—an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning.'

"Now I ask you, is it thinkable that Shakespeare there was going out of his way to throw a bouquet to *himself*—he of all men! Would *any* dramatist have dared so to laurel himself in his own play? Isn't it perfectly obvious that, as Smith says, he is paying an unusual compliment to a play by some distinguished outsider? To none of his corrivals *could* it apply. I defy you, as I think Smith does, to fasten that diction and versification on any public dramatist of the time. I have tried; and so have others. Dr. Creighton, if I remember rightly, set it down to Churchyard; and if any man can find in it any clue to Churchyard's old-world stanzas in *The Worthines of Wales*, published in 1587, which is all I have read of him, I will give in. So far, I find the styles as different as chalk and cheese."

"Which is the cheese?" asked Robinson.

"Well, the Pyrrhus speech," replied Brown. "Cheese is not a bad figure for it—Gruyère cheese. It is compact, pressed, with 'empty bits,' and, beyond a bit or two, indigestible; but it is edible. I don't mind granting all that Bradley claims for it, except the impossible assumption that Shakespeare had written a play containing it, and that he makes Hamlet strangely certify to *his* merits in the matter.

That he should ever have even tried to write for the stage in that fashion is to me inconceivable; but it is doubly inconceivable that he should have selected such a fragment of his own for unexampled and supererogatory stage praise."

"Certainly," commented Smith, "a compliment to a distinguished contemporary, not a regular playwright, seems the only possible inference. It might be a tribute to a patron of Shakespeare, or, perhaps more probably, of the company—some distinguished amateur, who had studied *Ferrex and Porrex* and later work, but kept to the old-world tone that you find in the quaint verse of the Earl of Oxford. It is, of course, far above *him*."

"That quite squares with my own ideas," nodded Brown. "Now, that brings us to about 1603, for the matter in hand is already in the First Quarto, a bit mangled. And the prose style of the compliment seems quite Shakespearean, and detached from the old Kyd basis. Accept Bradley's hypothesis that the Pyrrhus speech and the Sergeant scene are closely akin, and admit as you must that neither can be Shakespeare's; and you get a *Macbeth* play new-schemed or reconstructed about 1604 or later, in which some literary aristocrat was concerned to pay complimentary attention to King James. Such a motive has always been reasonably associated with the play as a whole. And let us remember that James is recorded to have a special friendship for Southampton as one who had suffered for his sake."

" 'The justice of it pleases,' so far," assented Jones, "though the theory is speculative. You will remember, by the way, that when Simon Forman in his Diary gives the account of *Macbeth* as he saw it played in 1610, he says nothing of the Sergeant scene, but speaks as if the play began with Macbeth and Banquo on their way to Forres. What do you make of that?"

"It is a very interesting point," agreed Brown. "Of course, as against the view that he was describing a new play, there is the old suggestion that Forman may have just ignored

the scene, or come a little late, but my own surmise is that by 1610 the Sergeant scene may have been dropped as being both superfluous and confusing. Even as it stands, it has visibly been 'cut.' But if it should be argued that in that case it would have been dropped from the prompter's copy, and accordingly from the Folio, there are alternatives. First, and this is finally the more probable, the scene may have been only occasionally dropped, for time-saving. Secondly, it may have been *inserted* after 1610, which seems very unlikely. Of course I am now assuming that the play dates from 1606, not from 1610, as the Clarendon editors argued; though that theory has not, I think, been fully rebutted."

"As to that I agree," said Smith. "But the balance of probability seems towards the earlier date, and it *is* very unlikely, on *that* assumption, that the Sergeant scene would have been inserted after 1610."

"What a tangle it all is," sighed Jones. "The one thing that is clear, by light of reason, is that Shakespeare did *not* write the scene, since it clashes hopelessly with his unquestioned scene that follows, and is wholly alien to his versification and his diction."

"When I used to read 'What bloody man is that?' " observed the ribald Robinson, "I was much tempted to apply the phrase to the writer of the speech, for even I could never hear Shakespeare there. The Davenant adaptation in the Restoration period put 'aged man' for 'bloody man,' which only makes new nonsense. When Arnold pronounced the scene 'detestable, if Shakespeare signed it fifty times,' I was wholly in accord. The wonder is that Arnold never suggested an alien hand."

"His criticism never took that line," said Brown. "Tennyson had more instinct for noting styles; but he only occasionally used it on the Elizabethan drama. I'm afraid, indeed, the poets have done little for us in the way of clearing up Shakespeare."

"You may remember," interposed Jones, "that Dryden in his light essay on the Dramatic poetry of the Last Age tells of Ben Jonson that 'in reading some bombast speeches of Macbeth which are not to be understood he used to say that it was horrour.' That might refer to the Sergeant scene; though it is not certain."

"It is worth noting, by the way," added Brown, "that Hermann Conrad, who sees nothing alien in the Porter scene, and rejects only fragments of the witch-stuff, is convinced on the ground of versification, which is his specialty, that the Sergeant scene cannot possibly be by Shakespeare. That is something, though Conrad is weak on prose style and rhyme, and passes a line and a half even in the Sergeant scene."

"Cheer up," said Smith. "The business is finally scientific; though you would have expected Meredith and Swinburne and Browning to have had more feeling for the real ring of Shakespeare's verse."

"I should say," observed Jones, "that Swinburne was by chance right where Tennyson was by chance wrong, over *Edward III*."

"Well," said Brown, "we seem to have got some little way; and at our next sitting, unless you are by now bored stiff, I will first give the reasons for holding that there had been a pre-Shakespearean play on Macbeth, in which Kyd had a main hand. Bradley doesn't weigh them; but I don't see how he could reject them. Perhaps you won't go with me so far."

"Perish the thought," cried Robinson. "That jolly dinner you gave us to-night may have made me more docile to disintegration than usual; but I won't back down at the next sitting."

"And after all," chimed Smith, rising, "the idea of an old *Macbeth* is of long standing. Fleay, I remember, was quite confident about it. We'll have that next time when we dine with you, Robinson. 'And so to bed,' as Pepys would say."

"The innocent sleep," chanted Robinson—

> Sleep, that knits up the ravelled sleave of care,
> The death of each day's life, sore labour's bath,
> Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,
> Chief nourisher in life's feast.

"Do you know, fellows, that strange cry of Macbeth's, bringing out Lady Macbeth's staring challenge, 'What do you mean?' has for me as authentic a touch of spiritual magic as anything in the Folio; and the way it surges up in him gives me that kind of cold shiver that Brown gets from the banquet scene. 'Sleep, that knits up the ravelled sleave of care!' Heavens! what an imagination it was that flashed through Shakespeare, thrilling him to greatness at every great conjuncture!

"You're not going to disintegrate *that*, are you?" he cried to Brown, shaking a minatory fist.

"Be of good cheer," smiled Brown; "great Shakespeare is safe from me at my worst. And so 'A kind good night to all,' though Lady Macbeth once said that with lead in her heart!"

THIRD SITTING

"Now, 'to 't,' my bold buccaneer," cried Robinson gaily to Brown, as his guests comfortably adjusted themselves, after dinner, in Robinson's library. He had hospitably sought to impose on Brown a liqueur, which was firmly declined. "I need my wits about me," Brown explained, "with two sleuths watching me"; but he cheerfully waved his cigar.

"To begin," he observed, "may I ask whether any of you ever saw, in any edition of *Macbeth*, Variorum or other, any note on that famous ejaculation, in two half-lines:

> Infirm of purpose! give me the daggers!"

They shook their heads.

"Well," went on Brown, "did none of you ever happen to notice that in Kyd's *Soliman and Perseda* (v, iii, 52) there is this line:

> What, darest thou not? give me the dagger, then!?"

"I never read *Soliman and Perseda*," sighed Robinson; "or I *would* have noticed it."

"Sorry," said Brown; "but you ought, you know, to read *Arden of Feversham*, which is in its way a rather remarkable play for its time; and there you will find Alice Arden, at the killing of her husband, crying out, 'Nay, then, give me the weapon!' " Whereat Robinson raised his eyebrows.

"What are we to infer, then?" asked Jones. "What are the dates?"

"*Soliman and Perseda* is on the Stationers' Register for 1592," said Brown; "but there is no surviving copy of that date. It would then be a fairly recent play, though even then a partly recast one, if it stood as we have it. There is an old undated copy; and the only other survival bears the date 1599. By all the signs it is earlier than 1592—I should

say, perhaps 1589 or 1590. So our *Macbeth* echoes it beyond doubt. And, I should say, it is equally clear that in his *Arden* Kyd is echoing his own play of *Soliman*.

"And that is not all. There is another old anonymous play, *A Warning for Faire Women*, which seems to have been first printed in 1599 (same year with *Soliman*) with the statement (observe this) that it had been played by the Chamberlain's men—that is, Shakespeare's company. But it is to all appearance several years older than 1599; Ward is emphatic as to that, and I think everybody agrees. Now, in that play, which you will find reprinted in Simpson's *School of Shakspere*, we have:

> Neither time
> Nor place *consorted* to my mind,

which is plainly a prior form of the phrase in *Macbeth* (I, vii, 51):

> Nor time nor place
> Did then adhere;

since both allude to a planned assassination. Now, those parallels *must* have a relation. Either our *Macbeth* phrases are from a pre-Shakespearean *Macbeth* or it copies the *Warning*. And there are several more parallels between the plays, equally significant. Listen:

> Oh, sable night, sit on the *eye of heaven*,
> *That* it *discern not* this black deed of darkness . . .
> Be then my *coverture*, thick ugly night.
> *Warning*, II, 98–9, 102.

Compare *Macbeth* (I, v, 51–4):

> Come, thick night
> And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,
> *That* my keen knife see not the wound it makes,
> Nor *heaven peep through* the *blanket* of the dark.

Then take these:

> Ten wounds at least, and deadly every wound.
> *Warning*, II, 774.

With twenty trenchèd gashes on his head,
The least a death to nature.

Macbeth, III, iv, 27–8.

Let blood be paid with blood in any man.

Warning, II, 817.

It will have blood; they say, blood will have blood.

Macbeth, III, iv, 122.

"I don't see how on any critical principle whatever these coincidences can all be considered accidental, though the last phrase may pass as such. And I cannot understand how Bradley, save by oversight, ignored them, or why E. K. Chambers, presumably *not* by oversight, ignores them still."

"Clearly the lot cannot be fortuitous," said Robinson; and Smith strongly assented.

"On the orthodox view, then," chimed Jones, "we shall be expected to believe that Shakespeare deliberately took all these effective passages from preceding plays, one of which had been played by his company—echoing predecessors as much as his contemporaries ever echoed him or each other, though of course in lifting them he lifts the style."

"Well," asked Smith, "can you conceive him as 'lifting' in that promiscuous fashion? What is your solution, Brown?"

"My solution is," said that explorer, "that there *had* been an early form of *Macbeth*—say, about 1594 or 1595; that in that early play Kyd had a main hand, using some of his own phrases over again; further, that the *Warning for Faire Women*—say, about 1595—was by him, as Dugdale Sykes, I think, has reasonably suggested; that there Kyd uses over again some bits from his unprinted *Macbeth*; and that it is from that play, which Shakespeare found to his hand for the recast in or after 1606, that he worked up the lines I have cited."

"You mean," asked Jones, "that Kyd had used again his dagger phrase from *Soliman* in his *Macbeth*, and that Shakespeare found it there?"

"I can see no other likelihood," confessed Brown, "Shake-

speare does not go about picking from Kyd in general; but if he was revising or joining in a recast *Macbeth* which preserved something of Kyd's early handiwork, he would use it just as he must have used Kyd matter in *Hamlet*, where, as Boas and Sarrazin have clearly shown, there are actually survivals of *tic* phrases which occur in *The Spanish Tragedy*, to say nothing of the plain earliness of some verse speeches in Q1. That was in Shakespeare's ordinary way of play-work, whereas casting round in other plays for oddments was not in his way. Of the two cases where he seriously echoes Marlowe—not parodying him—one is an *avowed* quotation; the other a plain adaptation of the famous line about the thousand ships, made in a modest spirit of compliment."

"That is fair enough, I think," said Jones, "provided we agree that all the plainly Marlowese matter in the *Henry VI* plays, and in the two *Richards*, is not the flat, wholesale imitation of Marlowe that it would be if Shakespeare wrote it, but is really Marlowe's own work. And that, I understand, you take for granted."

"At least I take it for certain," said Brown. "And now, notice this. All those three forms of 'Give me the dagger,' in *Soliman*, in *Arden*, and in our *Macbeth*, are put in the mouths of women. First it is Perseda, then Alice, then Lady Macbeth; so that if Shakespeare used it in our play without a Kyd basis for *that*, he was adopting an already twice-used effect of a very special kind. Would that be likely, unless he found that very effect in the old *Macbeth* play lying to his hand? And is it not pretty obvious that Kyd set special store by his stroke, when he uses it for Alice, by making her stab her own husband, which she had *not* done, according to the old narrative? That he, Kyd, should use it a third time, in his *Macbeth*, seems to me extremely likely, just because it is there newly used, in his manner.

"And that Shakespeare should have made the third use, *in a new play*, is just as unlikely. Of course you have

adaptations or echoes from *Titus* in the *Venus*, and of *Edward III* in the Sonnets and in the *Lucrece*; but these, occurring in poems, were in the poetic fashion of the time; and he was padding out the poems for the market. To lift lines from *Soliman* and *Arden* and the *Warning* and put them in a new play, after a lapse of seven years, would be quite another thing. The only inference that reasonably meets all the facts is that of the existence of all the passages, in some form, in the old *Macbeth*."

"And that," said Smith, "is of course a reasonably well-warranted view. We have the alleged entry in the Stationers' Register about a 'Ballad of Macdobeth' or 'Macedbeth' in 1596, which Dr. Greg suspects to be one of Collier's forgeries. But there remains the allusion to some such stolen 'Ballad' by Kemp in 1600; and Chambers finally leans to the allusion for 1596."

"Is there no doubt, then," asked Jones, "that Kyd wrote the *Warning for Faire Women*? Didn't Fleay ascribe it to Lodge?"

"Only with the final confession," replied Smith, "that he reached Lodge only by a process of elimination; and he gave no reasons for eliminating Kyd, whom he had not considered. In fact, as he was the first to discern that *Arden of Feversham* is a Kyd play, I believe he would have accepted the attribution of the *Warning* to Kyd if he had lived to hear it put. Anyway, I don't believe he would ever have accepted the absurd old ascription to Lyly, or Bullen's guess of Yarrington."

"I am pretty sure he would have accepted Kyd," chimed Brown. "The curiously close kinship in conception and method between *Arden* and the *Warning* is the primary ground for crediting him with the second play; and the Induction to the *Warning*, pleading for a realistic drama, is an express indication of what had been actually done in *Arden*. Of course, Lodge or another *may* have been associated with Kyd in that Induction, and even in the play, as I

think Kyd had had some help from Marlowe and Greene in *Arden*. But Kyd's, I think, is the only hand that can be said to link the *Warning* passages together with the *Soliman* passage, in a further play which would present them all for Shakespeare's legitimate dramatic use.

"There are still further grounds, and strong grounds, for the inference of an old *Macbeth* in which Kyd has colligated a number of expressions and situations from previous plays of his own. I won't lay any stress on the 'bolstered' (= plastered) hair in *Arden* and 'blood-boltered' in ours, though it is suggestive. But take these. In our *Macbeth* we have the passage (II, ii, 46):

> Go get some water
> And wash this filthy witness from your hand.

Now, in *Arden* (v, i, 266) we have the line:

> Fetch water and wash away this blood.

When, then, we find, further, in our *Macbeth* (II, i, 58–9) the passage, 'for fear *the very stones* prate of my whereabout,' and in the *Warning* (II, 765–8) Anne's 'yet will the very stones . . . cry out for vengeance'; and again in our *Macbeth* (III, iv, 124–7) that passage beginning:

> *Stones* have been known to move, and trees to speak,

the plot thickens. For in our *Macbeth* (II, ii, 51–2) we have also:

> I am afraid to think what I have done;
> *Look on't again* I dare not;

while in the *Warning* (II, 1050–1) the murderer Browne says:

> Were he now but where I saw him last
> For all this world *I would not look on him.*

The parallel is again insuperable.

"Yet again, in our play, we have Macbeth recoiling in

advance from his planned crime, and speaking of the claims of Duncan on his gratitude. Just so, in *Arden*, does Michael recoil on the score of the gratitude he owes his master; and so also does Mosbie falter in his plot. All this seems to me to tell plainly of the Kyd foundation. And so indeed do the self-pitying speeches of the slaughterous Macbeth, when compared with those of Soliman and of the Viceroy in the *Spanish Tragedy*.

"We have thus over and over again, in our Folio play, matter from those *three* previous ones, all confidently assignable to Kyd and each echoing in turn his preceding plays. Is it then possible to suppose that Shakespeare went through *three* of them picking out passages and ideas for combination in a *new* play by him? The idea is surely preposterous. I find no rational inference open save that the Kyd passages used in our Folio play had been previously used in a *Macbeth* play drafted by Kyd."

"You are cutting a bit into the quick now, aren't you?" asked Robinson. "You are making Shakespeare an adapter in some of the strongest scenes."

"Exactly," granted Brown; "but what is he in *Hamlet*? And isn't the rewriting just the thing that matters? Who can suppose that Kyd ever wrote verse or dialogue equal to what Shakespeare yields us on a Kyd basis? The versification in *Arden* and the *Warning*, apart from the Induction to the latter, is mostly just of that plodding, prosaic kind that marks Kyd in his dramatic work in general; and the more poetic passages are *also* in his old poetic manner. You cannot get away from it that the cited passages *are* pre-Shakespearean; unless you suppose that Shakespeare wrote the early *Macbeth*. And even on that view he was borrowing the dagger-phrase from *Soliman* and *Arden*, and other things from the latter play. I don't for a moment dispute that Kyd himself was a borrower: he has been traced to Marlowe in dozens of cases. But he also borrowed freely from himself."

"If you can make that last point good," suggested Jones, "you will greatly strengthen your case."

"It has been abundantly done," replied Brown, "as to *Soliman* and *Arden*. I assume you will grant me that at least *Soliman* and *Arden* are by the author of the *Spanish Tragedy*, seeing that *Soliman* is accepted by Boas and practically everybody; and that Fleay's ascription of *Arden* has been independently and copiously confirmed by both Charles Crawford (in his *Collectanea*) and Dugdale Sykes (in his *Sidelights on Shakespeare*), after having been accepted from Fleay by other scrutineers."

"There seems to be just one alternative open," said Jones thoughtfully. "Could Shakespeare, do you suppose, have touched up the *Warning* for his company when they were playing it, even bringing in that dagger-phrase from *Soliman*, and then, later, have used his added matter over again in the *Macbeth* of 1606?"

"Let us weigh the issues," returned Brown. "Perhaps the main one is this, Are those 'sable night' lines in the *Warning* [re-reading them] perceptibly Shakespearean, with their 'thick, ugly night'?"

"Clearly inferior," murmured Robinson. "Besides, as the Clarendon Press editors show by many citations, the idea of 'sable night' as 'veiling' things in general is quite old and common; and *that* you will find in the *Spanish Tragedy*; as, much later, in the *Spanish Gipsy*. Besides, the recoil of Browne is very flatly worded, as compared with our Macbeth's."

"That is one thing," continued Brown. "The other is this: Is it at all likely that Shakespeare would take a whole set of early insertions of his own from the *Warning* and work them up again in the new *Macbeth*, when the *Warning* was clearly not to be reckoned a dead play?"

"There is no sort of precedent for it," urged Smith, "and surely not a shadow of probability. And, incidentally, it is hardly necessary to add that nobody—at least none but

Collier—ever dreamt of ascribing the prosaic *Warning* to Shakespeare as a whole, though it is in its way a rather bitterly strong play. The verse in general is utterly alien to Shakespeare. And on the Kyd theory, you might add, those and other poetic passages in the *Warning* are not in its planned key, but are readily to be accounted for only as returns by Kyd to his poetic manner, such as he actually makes in *Arden*, which also is visibly and indeed avowedly planned as a realistic play."

"That, I think, is sound reasoning," said Brown; "and I can't improve on it. I will confess that I was for a while not *quite* so certain of Kyd's authorship of the *Warning* as I am that he planned and wrote the bulk of *Arden*, though the planning, and in particular the delays, chime so curiously in the two melodramas. But the theory seems to me to hang firmly together. *Arden* echoes *Soliman* much oftener than it does the *Spanish Tragedy*, which is his first known play. Then you would expect the *Warning* to echo *Arden* and *Soliman* in turn less than it did an intermediate play, which I take his early *Macbeth* to have been. And yet there really are a reasonable number of old Kyd echoes in the *Warning*.

"For instance, you have a *Hamlet* echo in line 1358 of Act II: 'But murder, most unnatural of all,' which at once calls up the ghost's line (I, v, 28), and must be drawn from the old *Hamlet*, not yet printed. I might add that another passage in the *Warning* (1040–2):

> I gave him fifteen wounds,
> Which now be fifteen mouths that do accuse me;
> In every wound there is a bloody tongue,

points to the inferable early form of *Julius Cæsar*, and indeed raises the question whether Kyd may have had a hand in that. But it also points to the killing of Horatio in the old *Tragedy* 'through girt with wounds' as well as hanged.

"And there are quite a number of tics of word and phrase pointing back certainly to Kyd, such as 'damned deed,' 'fact' for 'act,' and 'martyred me' for 'wounded me'—which you find in both the *Spanish Tragedy* and *Titus*. And you have 'my other self' in the *Warning*, and 'my second self' in the *Tragedy*. Of course those would not be conclusive clues. But look at these. In the *Warning* (l. 522) you have the line,

But givest me dreadful *agony of soul.*

In *Arden* (IV, iv, 33) we have this:

I speak it *in an agony of spirit.*

Then in the *Warning* you have (l. 493):

I cannot choose
But *tremble every joint* to think upon 't.

Well, you have that *'trembled every joint'* in *Arden*, and also 'my trembling joints' (III, i, 96; iii, 20); and the phrase goes back to Kyd matter in *Titus Andronicus* (II, iii, 212). These, I think, are definite clues; though for that matter the frequent iteration of 'damned deed,' which goes back to the *Spanish Tragedy*, seems to me also a distinct finger-print."

"And they all go to date the *Warning* years before 1599," added Smith. "That it is years earlier than 1599, indeed, is never disputed; though you will of course have noticed, Brown, that the percentage of double endings is considerably higher than in *Arden*, which puts it later than *that*."

"I think I can agree to all that, if it is duly checked," said Jones. "But one thing occurs to me. Could Kyd's *Macbeth* by any chance be still earlier than you have put it? Could it possibly have antedated both *Arden* and the *Warning*? Kyd's work always shows links. In the old *Hamlet* we have the son revenging the father, after we have the father revenging the son in the *Spanish Tragedy*. Now, in both *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* you have the murder of

a King. Then you have ghosts in the *Tragedy*, in *Hamlet*, and in *Macbeth*. Broadly speaking, *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* are historic-romantic; while *Arden* and the *Warning* are expressly modern-realistic; though in both you have returns to poetic-tragic diction at times."

"It would be very hard to say," mused Brown doubtfully. "Put it that he did his *Macbeth* play before *Arden*: then the *Macbeth* echoes the dagger business at only second instead of third hand; and the phrase about time and place concurring would not be an echo. Frankly, I don't at the moment see how we are to settle the point. The only documentary guidance we have as to the date is the trace of the 'ballad of Macdobeth' in 1596. I will first say this: 'Give me the dagger' is fitting, so to speak, on the part of Perseda in *Soliman*; and the use of the idea in *Arden*, though not justified by the record, may be said to be dramatically fitting in respect of Kyd's conception of Alice. It is in the case of Lady Macbeth that it seems most gratuitous, suggesting a hankering for the phrase and the situation in Kyd's mind.

"For, remember, the active complicity of Lady Macbeth in the slaying is not given in the Chronicles, where the deed is openly done. Of course our play-story proceeds upon the killing of King Duff by Donwald; but there also the lady, though a keen instigator, has nothing to do with the daggers, these being used by four menservants. The inference is that our play embodies a special piece of Kyd 'business,' as well as his main plot, or part of it."

"I think I should agree," said Jones doubtfully, "if there is any further guidance to be had from the *Warning*."

"Well, as it happens," said Brown, "there *are* further clues to our *Macbeth* in the *Warning*, which we have yet to discuss. Let us see whether they give us any chronological hint. They are not the least important, though I did not take them first. But let us examine the Induction, which, mind you, I don't feel *quite* sure of as *wholly* Kyd's, though

there are such striking parallels in it to the prologue choruses of *Soliman* that we must admit his hand to be at work. There *may*, let us say, be another hand in it. The fourth line runs:

> This brawling sheepskin is intolerable,

which points straight to *Edward III* (II, ii, 50). Now, though that play must be held to have existed in 1592, it was not printed till 1596. But Kyd, I am certain, had a share in *Edward III* (II, ii, 50), and would know the play. On the other hand, if the Induction were penned *after* him, it might still be referred to 1595–6. But on that view we are left uncertain; for Kyd seems to have died either in 1595 or 1596. So, if we are to lay any stress on the lines put in the mouth of 'History'—

> And, Tragedy, although today thou reign,
> Tomorrow here I'll domineer again,

we have no clear lead to a Kyd *Macbeth* written *after* the *Warning*.

"On the other hand, when we turn to the prologue of Act II—which is really a second Induction—we are at once clearly in touch with Kyd, in vocabulary and style and diction alike, and also in touch with *Macbeth*. The second line runs:

> The *fatal entrance* to our bloody scene,

which points straight to Lady Macbeth's line (I, v, 39) on 'the fatal enterance of Duncan'—for so you must scan it. But Kyd so scans that word in *The Spanish Tragedy*, and you *can* so scan it in the *Warning*; just as, though he usually scans *jealous* in three syllables (*jelious*), you can in one case read it as two.

"Then, after the clues of 'this dismal act' and 'this damned deed,' which are tics of Kyd, we have those lines:

> The ugly screech-owl, and the night-*raven*
> With flaggy wings, and hideous *croaking* noise,
> Do beat the *casements* of *this fatal house*.

Come now back to our Lady Macbeth:

> The *raven* himself is hoarse
> That croaks the *fatal* enterance of Duncan
> Under my *battlements*;

and then ask yourselves, Which is the likelier original, a combination of 'fatal enterance,' 'croaking raven,' 'casements,' and 'fatal house,' in a prior *Macbeth* by Kyd, or a reproduction of them separately as here?

"I put it to you that the *prima facie* presumption is strongly in favour of the prior combination. The 'fatal entrance' in the *Warning* seems quite forced, and much less natural; and there is no dramatic propriety in the screech-owl and night-raven and the 'hideous croaking noise' and 'casements' in such a realistic play as the *Warning*; whereas they would be as fitting in the early *Macbeth* as they are in ours. And the fact that Anne Sanders in the *Warning* does not have a hand in the killing may well be taken to signify that Kyd felt he had used *that* effect often enough already."

"Which certainly justifies us in putting the *Warning* last," agreed Jones, "though we leave the Kyd *Macbeth* later than *Arden*. Is there, then, any general or particular difficulty about the inference that Kyd did his *Macbeth* before his *Warning*? You claim that the poetic passages you quote from the *Warning* seem much more likely as echoes from a historic-romantic play than as fresh forms?"

"That is my point," said Brown. "So far as I can see at the moment, Kyd could perfectly well have lifted all of his special *Macbeth* parallels in the *Warning* out of a prior *Macbeth* of his own; just as he lifted bits from *Soliman* and *Arden* into that *Macbeth*. On that view we get this order for the four plays:

> 'Soliman and Perseda.'
> 'Arden of Feversham.'
> 'Macbeth.'
> 'A Warning for Faire Women.'

Thus we make the *Warning* his latest, as it is in theory his most advanced play, in terms of the doctrine of the Induction; though it dips sporadically into the poetic diction of his earlier plays, just as *Arden* did. And I can conceive that, whosoever actually wrote the first Induction, Kyd might debate with himself and a coadjutor as to whether History would not come back to the boards again. He had been a coadjutor in several history plays."

"Then," commented Smith, "you have corrected and consolidated the argument for the existence of the pre-Shakespearean *Macbeth*, but have made the priority none the less certain. It is finally a matter of dating the Kyd *Macbeth* about 1594–5, and his *Warning* a little later, I suppose."

"And," interpolated Robinson, "of recognizing as clearly as usual how Shakespeare uplifted everything in rewriting it!"

"Without a doubt," said Brown. "All roads lead to that Rome. And that has always been the inspiration of my quest. When I think of Shakespeare turning the self-pitying speeches of the Kyd Macbeth into the great strains of our tragedy, I get a new glimpse of his mystery: Soliman is a nullity; and Kyd's Macbeth would have been another; but ours is vitalized by sheer poetry. Kyd has such speeches to no purpose. That beginning 'Infortunate condition of Kings' in the *Spanish Tragedy* (III, i) is the type. It has the music of a hurdy-gurdy."

"Well, now," resumed Jones, "is there any probability or presumption that Shakespeare's company, which, I understand, got hold of Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*, and which we know to have played his *Warning for Faire Women*, had also in its repertory his old *Macbeth*, as it is understood to have had his *Hamlet*, before Shakespeare undertook the rewriting of the bulk of that?"

"Who shall say?" groaned Brown. "It is very likely. But what wouldn't we give for a document that should tell

us the stage-history of everything in the Folio—the one thing that Heminge and Condell *might* have given us, and that never occurred to them or anybody else in that age as a thing desirable. When I think of the mist of mystification in which they left everything, I snap my fingers at Pollard's benevolent whitewashing of their integrity. They were doubtless honest theatrical men of business. But literary integrity they simply never thought about."

"I seem to remember," said Jones, "that there are yet other play clues, apart from Kyd, which point to the currency of some passages in our *Macbeth*, years before 1606."

"There *are* two clues," responded Brown. "In Munday and Chettle's *Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntington*, which dates, in Henslowe's Diary, 1597–8, though not printed till 1601, we have the line (IV, i: ed. Collier, p. 68):

> And make the green sea red with pagan blood.

Then in the sequel play on the *Death of Huntington* (II, ii: ed. Collier, p. 50) we have the line:

> The *multitudes of* seas dyed red with blood.

We can hardly refuse to connect such lines with those lines in the Folio *Macbeth*:

> The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
> Making the green one red."

"An echo, presumably, from your Kyd *Macbeth*," commented Robinson. "For if Kyd had written such a phrase as 'The multitudinous seas incarnadine,' Munday and Chettle would hardly water it down to 'The multitudes of seas.' The Shakespeare touch belongs to our play, does it not?"

"I certainly think so," agreed Brown. "All that is clear is that again we seem to find the Shakespeare play transfiguring a prior one; for I don't think Shakespeare would have lifted a line out of the *Earl of Huntington* plays. For all of those coincidences we are driven back to the prior play by Kyd."

"Well, I am satisfied," genially declared Smith. "I cannot see any possible escape from the conclusion that there was an old *Macbeth* play, and that that play was mainly or primarily Kyd's. So far we are on firm ground, if there is anything in literary logic. The astonishing thing is that Chambers and the editors and academics have never recognized such convincing clues."

"The inertia of tradition," Robinson lightly explained. "I know in myself what it is. And you'll find your work cut out to overcome it, as Clark and Wright found to their cost."

"Do you find no trace in the Folio play," queried Jones, "of any of the other old hands, the men with whom Kyd, as I have understood you to argue, had been in collaboration?"

"Only a tantalizing touch or two," answered Brown. "I do suspect that Lady Macduff's speech about herself, as apart from her talk with her son, is or is based upon old matter. But that might be Kyd's. As for the rest of the play, after one gives up the notion that the Sergeant's speech was early matter there is little to say. I used to think the Sergeant's bombast savoured of the lines in *Romeo and Juliet* (I, i, 116 sq.) about

> The fiery Tybalt, with his sword prepared,
> Which, as he breathed defiance to my ears,
> He swung about his head and cut the winds,
> Who nothing hurt withal hissed him in scorn.

And that, which seems more likely to be at bottom Kyd's than Marlowe's, though probably revised by the young Shakespeare, really *is* in the manner of the Sergeant's speech, both in verse movement and in bombastic content. Compare it, for instance, with the General's speech in the second scene (really the first, as it follows on the Induction) in the *Spanish Tragedy*, and you will find a real kinship of rhetoric, with Bellona in both.

"But if you admit the force of Coleridge and Bradley's

identification of the style of the Sergeant with that of the Pyrrhus speech in *Hamlet*, you come to infer that the unknown author of the Pyrrhus speech had formed himself on the old fashions, such as that of Benvolio's speech, and that he is a contemporary of the time of the first and second *Hamlet* quartos. You can neither imagine Kyd writing the Pyrrhus speech nor figure Shakespeare paying that out-of-the-way compliment to Kyd's memory. But you can imagine a Kyd speech recast here.

"Apart from that, you have the faint echo in the speech of the 'bloody child' apparition to Macbeth (IV, i, 79), 'Be bloody, bold, and resolute.' That phrase is very Marlovian; but if I were to seek for it a writer about 1594 or 1595 I should guess it to be a Marlovian echo by Kyd. For if we date Kyd's *Macbeth* between *Arden* and the *Warning*, as we have agreed to do, we are getting too late for Marlowe, who was killed in May 1593.

"Besides, all that business about the child apparitions, like the show of eight Kings, belongs strictly to the Jacobean period, that is, to a revival of the play in compliment to James. No: I don't seem to catch any clear trace of the old hands, or of Kyd himself apart from those very definite parallels that I have recited, and that Lady Macduff scene."

"Wouldn't you, then," asked Smith, "expect Kyd à priori to have begun his play before the point of the fabulous Sergeant's recital?"

"I should indeed," promptly assented Brown, "and to have made it longer than ours, which is the shortest tragedy in the Folio, and visibly curtailed for the added witch-stuff and the music that would eke it out. I never could agree with those who thought that there wouldn't be much matter in *Macbeth* to cut out in order to make time for the witch business and the apparitions. They seem to forget that in the chronicles there is significant matter about Macbeth's previous actions and, in particular, his relation to Duncan. Historically, Macbeth did not assassinate Duncan. He killed

him quite openly. And if there is any predominant note in Kyd's plays it is his concern for delay in revenge. He was rather likely, therefore, to make Macbeth plan Duncan's death at a previous juncture.

"In fact, I should have looked confidently to Kyd to begin his play with that previous history, showing Macbeth to have had a real grievance against Duncan, as Kyd's Greene has against Arden. He may indeed have worked up the assassination from the record of Donwald's killing of King Duff, embodying *Donwald's* grievance against Duff. Kyd would quite naturally have given an Act to that, I should imagine. And I can well conceive him as doing a first form of the Sergeant's speech, giving a long account of a 'doubtful' battle, which a recaster would be sure to curtail."

"And, I fancy," added Jones, "the planners of the recast play, in 1606 or later, would be just as likely to cut out everything that might look like justifying Macbeth's crime. It wouldn't do, for court purposes."

"Clearly not," chimed Robinson. "Though James figured as a descendant of Banquo, any suggestion that a true King could have done wrong would be uncourtly."

"Then," said Smith, "we come in sight of a motivation in which an aristocratic amateur, whose taste had been formed on the plays of ten years before and earlier, schemed a play in which the bloody but declamatory Sergeant, perhaps after a preliminary witch-scene, came on to prepare us for a victorious Macbeth who was to be honoured by the King before he committed regicide."

"That would be the way of it, I should think," said Brown. "But mind you, I should have expected Kyd to initiate the witch business. Finding them in the histories, I should say, he couldn't keep his hands off them. That kind of machinery was after his own heart, and 'the fatal sisters' were already a standing institution for Marlowe. There is special witch-stuff in the story of Donwald and King Duff, which he may or may not have used. Still, I

won't claim to see the hand of Kyd in the 'When shall we three meet again' episode at the outset of the Folio play, though with his habit of Inductions I should expect him to put one of some sort."

"Anyhow," cried Robinson, "you have cleared the decks for your analysis of the composition that was gone about for the play of 1606. You have covered a lot of ground."

"For this belief much thanks," smiled Brown. "You have had a long séance with parallels, and you must be glad of a break. What about a renewal at our next dinner? Are you game for more of it?"

"Game!" cried Robinson, "of course we are! The official inertia is the more reason for our waking up and speaking up. This has been the most fruitful sitting yet."

And, with the sense of having earned a night's repose, they parted, after some exchange of talk on the awful price of new books and the pecuniarily evil times, and, withal, the tragical evanescence of old Kensington High Street, which everybody deplored, without reference to disintegration or unemployment.

FOURTH SITTING

"I DON'T think," began Brown slowly, "that we need occupy ourselves with any discussion as to how Shakespeare *would* have planned the witch-scenes for himself. The dramatic badness of the stuff long ago moved some students to protest, very rightly, that Shakespeare's own conception was of a far higher sort than the vulgar and malodorous machinery that bulks so largely in our play. The trouble is that many well-meaning people think there is no other way of poetizing the concept of sorcery than the lyrism of the slum and the ditch and the sewer, in the manner of Middleton; and that Shakespeare would quite naturally take that view.

"Holding that he would not, we think we can infer what took place. Even if we had not satisfied ourselves that Kyd planned the old play, we might have taken it for granted that Shakespeare would in some fashion take over the old witches as he took over the Ghost in *Hamlet*. That is not the issue.

"But," he added, "when we remember that Kyd was nearly sure to take over some of the witch-matter from the chronicles, it is forcing an open door to urge upon us that in our play the whole action is bound up with the primary witch action from first to last. Of course it is! The real question is, how much of the rhyming witch machinery is non-Shakespearean, whether old or new? It is there that we meet a dramatically incongruous element, the drug-brewing witches of Middleton in a play in which the drugs count for nothing, since Macbeth never takes any. That incongruity is radical.

"And that is not all. As the American Professor Hiram Corson remarks in his 'Introduction to Shakespeare' (1889), one of the best books of its class, 'Only free agency is dramatic.' He is here following Gervinus, who was the first, I

think, to combat Schlegel and Lamb on the point; but he puts it effectually. And to make the witches *do* the work of forcing Macbeth to his doom by a perpetual bustle of black magic is to clash with Shakespeare's clear conception, in which Macbeth had already hankered for the crown at the cost of slaying Duncan, and the witches only incite and encourage him.

"The view of them put by old Thomas Whately, uncle of the Archbishop, in his posthumous essay published in 1785 (and, I am sorry to say, accepted at this point by Charles Lamb), was that they are the initiative and decisive forces in the tragedy. (Curiously, the old Scotch 'Moderate' Professor Richardson, writing on Macbeth at the same period, barely alludes once to the witches at all, and Schiller simply transformed them.) Shakespeare's first scene entirely repels Whately's conception, which would have made the drama a Satanic miracle-play. It is a worse vitiation of dramatic principle than Clutton-Brock's thesis that Hamlet is run by his 'Unconscious,' which makes that tragedy a freak-study in pathology.

"If only Corson, who was a really advanced critic in his own day, to the extent of seeing clearly how Shakespeare's blank-verse transcends Marlowe's—if only he had glimpsed the fact that the machinery of the rhyming witch-scenes is the false element which led Lamb and the older critics ethically astray, he would have added a greater service to those which he has actually rendered. But he laid his finger on the dramatic principle involved."

"I think we must admit," observed Smith, when Brown looked round as if challenging agreement, "that Charles Lamb did not clearly grasp, and so did not disentangle, the problem of the witch-matter. With his *penchant* for Middleton, he saw dramatic merit where he was impressed by the dare-devil Elizabethan audacity which he always in his heart preferred to the insipidity of the drama of his own day. That is why, I suppose, he did not react against

the Middletonism of the rhymed witch-scenes. Seeing clearly the superiority of Shakespeare's conception of evil over Middleton's, he laxly transferred the idea to the alien scenes in which there is no superiority, seeking to see the drama as a unity, which it is not."

"Lamb," declared Robinson, with an unwonted touch of reverence in his voice, "had the finest feeling, as he was the finest writer, of his age. I wince when I diverge from him, as I do when I read that he had no taste for Goethe's *Faust*. He wrote the greatest of all single essays on Shakespeare; and people to-day do not read it: witness the current falsism that he said *Lear* as a drama was beyond the stage; whereas he had really said that Lear the man was—having in view the scene of the mad King in the storm. But I admit that he has mixed up the primary ideal and the actual machinery of the witches in *Macbeth*."

"It is the old trouble," said Brown sententiously, "of letting feeling take the upper hand in a reaction, when the guidance should be given by thinking. Reacting against the drama of his day, Lamb shed tears of sensibility over such a play as *The Old Law*, where we, I hope, cannot. In his great essay his thinking power rises to the call on it."

"But must we not admit," asked Smith, "that the critic-thinker, Watkiss Lloyd, a man of real ability, in advance of his time, also missed seeing the incongruity of the higher conception with the contamination of the added machinery? It was one of my youthful disappointments, in studying his Essays on Shakespeare."

"I agree," conceded Brown. "In his case I should say that the defect lay on the æsthetic or literary side: or perhaps it would be fairer to say that he came before the æsthetic analysis had made due headway. His reactionary and uncritical attitude to the evidence of Fletcher's hand in *Henry VIII*, however, tells of æsthetic impercipience. He had not the verse-ear. As for Ulrici, whose handling of *Macbeth* is one of his dullest chapters, I do not suppose

anybody now assents to his fantasy that the witches are inserted to make Macbeth less guilty."

"And then you have Stopford Brooke," chimed Robinson. "There was a critic above the average; and yet he too, while admitting that perhaps no text in the Folio is more corrupt than that of *Macbeth*, swallowed the rhyming dialogue of the witches in scene iii, and 'could see no poetical reason for allotting it to another hand.' And he credited Shakespeare with the cauldron."

"Yes," smiled Brown, consulting his notes, "that is the last man who found the Porter scene 'all in Shakespeare's manner and invention,' referring us back to *All's Well*. 'I do not believe,' he goes on, 'there was another Elizabethan dramatist who could have written this.' There you have the à priori critic who simply does not know the Elizabethan or Jacobean drama. I admit his gifts of interpretation; but he has not studied the problem of the witch-stuff."

"Even Swinburne," acquiesced Jones, turning to his notes, "came to see that there is something radically wrong with those witches. In his first *Study of Shakespeare*, after denouncing Heminge and Condell for their mutilations, while admitting that the mutilated Sergeant's speech is bad anyhow, he vociferates that 'no mangling hand has been stretched forth' against the witches any more than against Lady Macbeth. Then in his Shakespeare essay written in 1905 and published in 1909 he avows that their first reappearance 'must *well-nigh* revolt as well as perplex the instinct and the mind.'

"In fact, calling them 'rather jarring than convincing,' he proceeds to protest that they fall below the level of Middleton's witches and even outsink those of Heywood and Dekker and Ford. Strange that he had not seen that earlier. I fancy he had not studied the others closely in his youth."

"I remember," said Brown. "But I would never buttress my case by the pronouncements of Swinburne, one way or

the other. His perceptions were precarious and changeable; and his concern is always to fulminate rather than to reason, even when he is right. To build up polyphonous periods was his notion of critical method, I am afraid."

"He was always the *enfant terrible* of criticism," said Robinson reminiscently, "and our great monopolist of fugal falsetto prose."

"But somehow stimulating," urged Jones; and the others assented.

"The witch-stuff," supplemented Smith, "has been under fire to some extent ever since Steevens found the MS. of Middleton's play, *The Witch*, and hardly any student now doubts that besides introducing the songs from that play, the Globe management somehow worked up the witch machinery in general. Seymour, I think, was the first to point out that the witches 'seem to be introduced for no other purpose than to tell us that they are to meet again,' which satisfied him that the scene was not in the original. But it seems to belong to the technique of the later acts in which the generals tell each other what they are doing.

"To begin with, it was probably the new law against witchcraft passed at James's wish in 1604 that set those people we were speculating about—aristocrats probably—seeking to please the King with a play in which witches wrought deadly evil, but were overruled for good by a beneficent Providence."

"I suppose so," said Jones dubiously; "but the essential thing is that the old witch-play of Kyd was there for them."

"And we all felt, didn't we," said Robinson, "that when Shakespeare takes hold, and raises up the witches on the blasted heath to accost Macbeth and Banquo, he raises them to poetic stature, just as he did with the Ghost in *Hamlet*. All the vile vulgar business, beginning with scene iii, is inserted later, like the jingle of the first short scene. These first figures who meet the generals are really mysterious

powers of evil, not mere squalid dabblers in Voodoo." And he quoted:

> The earth hath bubbles as the water has,
> And these are of them.

"There we shall all agree, I think," said Brown; "and when even Chambers is prepared to delete the alien Hecate scene and the feeblest patches of rhyme, he only sets us asking—in his own words—how he can pretend either to know that Shakespeare did not write that particular trash, or did write the rest. When the Clarendon editors weaken so far as to speak of the 'power' in some of the rhyming witch lines, I make two protests. They all seem afraid to believe that the minor men could ever write a powerful line. And those who go on repeating that the Porter scene is Shakespearean seem bound to hold that at least most of the rhymed witch-scenes are. I don't believe that Shakespeare drafted any of it, though he might be urbanely willing to leave standing either old or new rubbish of that kind."

"At least," said Robinson, "we can feel sanely sure that he didn't write:

> Finger of birth-strangled babe,
> Ditch-delivered by a drab,

and that kind of beastly blue-devilry, which I am sure Middleton could produce by the yard—and actually did, in *The Witch*."

"It was what the groundlings wanted," mused Smith. "Perhaps before Shakespeare was dead—anyway, not long after—the managers felt they had to work up his play in this fashion to draw the multitude. So we take on board Middleton's swine-poisoners, and the sailor's wife munching chestnuts, and the master o' the Tiger, sailing to Aleppo, and all the rest of it. Seymour and his friend Strutt and Capell Lofft, I remember, rejected it all, and would have the play begin about 'Macbeth doth come.' "

"On that general basis of agreement," nodded Brown

approvingly, "we may at least put aside the witch-stuff for the present. What I am most interested in, at this point, are the later scenes in which Macbeth does not appear, and in most of which the versification and the diction alike compel you to infer that, even if Shakespeare has been revising, as I think he generally was, he was not rewriting, and certainly had not done the drafting."

"That's where you get on difficult ground," murmured Jones; "and though Robinson and I may agree with you that the stuff is not good enough for Shakespeare, I don't yet see how you are going to *prove* that it is alien. I've been studying the scene of Malcolm and Macduff, which Chambers admits to be tedious. Even Brandes, after praising 'almost the whole' dramatic construction of the play, had to admit that this scene is about an eighth of the play, and that it is supererogatory. Here he follows Ulrici; and indeed nobody praises the scene. I don't admire it; and I fancy Robinson doesn't. But what do you make of it, Brown?"

"Like you and the rest," said Brown, "I find it second-rate in conception, and third-rate in execution. The substance is lifted bodily from the chronicles; and as a matter of fact it is a rhetorical exercise primarily composed by old Hector Boece. To begin with, I should say it is just the kind of stuff that Kyd might want to handle.

"For, let us remember, this matter, which we to-day find inferior, would in that age find many admirers, though the witch-scenes would attract more. Its contemporary appeal is noted by Max Wolff, who should get credit for that in sections where he earns little else.

"Now, I don't count it Shakespearean; and I wonder what influence imposed it on the play, even granting that it would then rank as high didactic stuff. In general the style in our play is certainly not Kyd's. The verse structure is Jacobean."

"What about Beaumont?" asked Jones. "You quoted a number of noticeable parallels to it from him."

"That is so," said the prospector; "and if I could find

in him a likely source for those double-terms that you must have noticed, I should feel much surer of my ground. You remember them: 'my more-having,' 'thy here-approach,' 'my here-remain,' 'King-becoming,' 'bloody-scepter'd.' And then 'birthdom.' Can anybody tell me who wrote like that in Shakespeare's middle day? Such a phrase as 'the King-becoming graces' is perhaps not far out of the way; but those other protuberances keep me puzzling. I seem to find as many double-terms of a sort—but not this sort—in Middleton as in Beaumont and Fletcher. And more in the older men than in either. Marston too is out of the question. Jonson in *The Poetaster* ridicules his neologisms as he has inconsistently ridiculed Jonson's, but they are not of this kind."

"Then that is a snag," urged Jones.

"The first thing to make clear," said Brown, "is the non-Shakespearean quality of the versification. And there, at the start, I find myself unhappily at odds with Bradley. That, when it occurs, is always for me a serious matter. I feel as if I were wrangling with 'my father Parmenides.' Of all our older critics, whether on Shakespeare or anything else, Bradley seems to me the most scrupulously mental in his processes, the most imaginative, in the best sense of the word, and the most alert to poetry *as* poetry. When I try to explain to myself how he came, as I think, to miscarry at one or two points on *Macbeth*, my notion is that it is the very power of his poetic imagination that supplies him with solutions which a stricter regard to the concrete would have barred."

"That sounds a bit highbrow," complained Robinson. "I am getting out of my depth."

"Well, put it this way," said Brown appealingly. "Bradley starts with the assumption that Shakespeare had planned and drafted the play independently. In the face of the unquestioned history of *Hamlet*, that concrete assumption ought really not to have been made. The alternative should

have been recognized. And if the play had been faced by him inductively and not deductively, he would have surmised that there had been in a previous form of the play a pre-history of Macbeth and Duncan such as would account for those apparent inconsistencies about Macbeth's previous designs against Duncan which Bradley strives, unsuccessfully I think, to explain away."

"You might argue further, I think," urged Smith, reading from his note-book, "that when Bradley is driven to surmise (p. 464) that in reproaching her husband for dropping his plans Lady Macbeth is referring 'to some interview subsequent to her husband's return, and that, in making her do so, Shakespeare *simply forgot* her speeches on welcoming Macbeth home,' he is surely at a loose end, and trying to vindicate the assumed authorship anyhow.

"Only a page earlier, he had shrunk from 'burdening Shakespeare with a careless mistake in a very critical passage.' That is just what he is now doing. And it is better to say squarely that Shakespeare never brought the primary exposition of Macbeth's growth of purpose to clearness because he was hampered by a composite recast of an old play."

"Exactly," agreed Brown. "If Bradley had only noted all those *Macbeth* passages in Kydian plays long before 1606, his imaginative insight into Shakespeare would have given us a new vision of how that creative mind burned up crude ores, so to speak, into fine gold, and yet, just because it cared more for poetry than for plot-making, at times left the action at loose ends, here as in *Hamlet* and *Othello*. For Shakespeare does let us have two primary stories, in the second of which Macbeth does not know of the facts about Cawdor which, according to the Sergeant's speech, he must have known. And he leaves Macbeth himself in the vague at the start, perhaps finding that Kyd overdid his usual vacillation."

"Might it not have been," suggested Jones tentatively,

"that in the old play, which, as we have agreed, preceded Shakespeare's, the story had been told in the historic order in which, as Chambers shows, the disgrace of Cawdor really took place some time after the Norwegian invasion? I have long surmised that Shakespeare either wanted his play to begin, or did begin his own part, with Macbeth's line, 'So foul and fair a day I have not seen,' where his hand is at once salient and unmistakable."

"That might very well be," assented Brown, "though I think he would have assented if anyone urged that *some* previous narrative was required. And there *would* be some in Kyd."

"On either view," urged Smith, "you have a new support for the theory that the Sergeant scene is by the distinguished outsider who had written the Pyrrhus speech in *Hamlet*. Shakespeare, surely, would not have wanted *that* piece of turgid declamation to stand. Either he had proposed to elide it, or it was first imposed on him after he had begun his recast. It seems to be a case in which 'great command o'ersways the order.' For Shakespeare, as you say, does leave a clash between it and his own scene, as regards the thane of Cawdor. And whatever we may say about his caring more for poetry than plot, he surely wouldn't have *planned* such a confusion at the very start of the play."

" 'The justice of it pleases,' " quoted Robinson.

"I am with you all," agreed Brown. "You are helping me on famously. In fact, even Chambers, after the usual lame compromise—'In writing this speech Shakespeare *may have forgotten* that he had *altered* that point,' about Cawdor —plucks up common sense to say, '*Or, of course*, the discrepancy may be due to some rehandling of the play for stage purposes.' "

"Out of the mouths of mandarins," interjected Robinson, "cometh . . . I won't finish the perversion. But that 'or, of course,' is priceless."

"Better not finish," assented Brown. "Well, we can now come—can we?—to that large question about the versification of later parts of the play, in which I sorrowfully find myself dissenting from Bradley. And I want you all here to keep your ears open—no, not lengthened" (he gibed at Robinson): "I know you were going to make that joke."

"I protest," said Robinson, "there was no such stuff in my thoughts."

"Well, anyhow, you remember how Bradley, in his long Note BB on the date of *Macbeth* and the metrical tests, says it is 'almost obvious that Shakespeare is passing from one system to another,' that is, in versification, inasmuch as 'in *some* passages the change is almost complete.' Now what does he mean? 'In Shakespeare's early plays,' he writes, ' "overflows" are rare—that is, running on of sense *and* rhythm from one line to the next.' Now, that I must expressly deny."

"Surely," said Smith, "whether you take scene i of the *Comedy of Errors* or the whole of the *Dream*."

"That is just the point," chimed Brown. "Bradley takes the *Errors* as a whole, though there can be no more staring contrast than that between scene i and scene ii, which are by different hands. It was Bradley's plain duty to face that contrast. But why, oh why, did he at this point ignore the *Dream* and *1 Henry IV* altogether? He takes König's figures for run-on lines in the *Errors* as a whole (12·9 per cent.) when the first scene has 20 per cent.; and when König gives him 22·8 per cent. for *1 Henry IV*, and 17·7 for *King John*. Now, nobody places *1 Henry IV* later than 1597; and by the double-ending test it should be 1595 or 1596. Anyway, it has almost as many run-on lines as *Hamlet*."

"That is very important," nodded Jones, "especially seeing that Bradley does admit the weight of the versification tests. What Bradley *should* have said is that in Shakespeare's early work *double-endings* are few. But of course

we are always up against the question of the main authorship of the *Errors*, where the first scene is as the poles asunder from the second, yet obviously early, and even relatively raw."

"Let me add," said Brown, "that in the *Dream* there are only 878 blank-verse lines altogether, with 441 of prose, showing that Shakespeare (before revising) is there at a quite early stage (Luce dates the play 1594). But in *1 Henry IV* he has already a high figure in run-on lines, alongside of his lowest figure in double-endings; and even in *King John*, which was a kind of exercise, he has 17·7 of run-on lines. In the *Merchant* there are 21·5."

"But I have often felt," pleaded Jones, "a special difficulty about run-on lines. In the later men—Beaumont, for instance, and Middleton and Massinger—you will often find lines where the *sense* is run on, while there is really no run-on in the rhythm, but a most trying jerk, or thud, which is much worse than the old line-ending of Marlowe."

"Hear, hear," cried Robinson. "Do you know, I long ago suspected that Ben Jonson was making fun of the merely formal run-on in his grotesque line in *Sejanus*. You remember how it goes:

> That for her own, great Cæsar's, and the pub-
> Lic safety.

And, a little earlier, you have the name Cremutius Cordus halved between two lines. When I first read that halving of word and name I gasped, and then I jeered. But I believe Ben does it only in that one play; and I can conceive that he meant it as a sardonic challenge to his compeers about 1603."

"That is a new idea to me," said Jones, "but I think it may very well be right—though I suspect Ben was thinking of some Greek choruses—for you get some awful run-on lines in Beaumont and Middleton."

"Most true," said the paternal prospector. "I had made

a note of a lot in this very connection. Listen to these of Middleton:

> You do so ravish me with kindness that
> I am constrained to play the maid, and take it.
>
> Lover I'm sure you're none; the stoic was
> Found in you long ago; your mother nor
> Best friends . . .
> *Als.* Lord how violent
> Thou art! I was but meditating of
> Somewhat I heard within the temple.
> *Jas.* Is this
> Violence?"

"The man who wrote that," interjected Robinson, "if he did mean it to stand as blank-verse—which I doubt—was merely making verse ridiculous."

"Even so," said Brown; "but listen to some of Beaumont and Fletcher. The difficulty with Fletcher, and indeed with Middleton, is to be quite fair; for where you find bad verse in some reprints you may find either a different lining or prose in the B. & F. Second Folio; while there you at times get as verse what is not scannable blank-verse, and prose that you can see to be verse run together. But take this, which the Folio properly prints as verse. (The Cambridge edition, I may say, does not give the word *alike*, though all the other modern editions do):

> The destinies, I hope, have pointed *out*
> Our ends alike that thou may'st die for love,
> Though not for me; for this assure thyself,
> The Princess hates thee deadly, and will *sooner*
> Be won to marry with a bull; and *safer*
> Than such a beast as thou art; I have *struck*,
> I fear, too deep. . . .

"Now, there you have in six lines three run on, which I have emphasized; and I put it to you whether the *rhythm* is not stopped by its own end-stress or, in the case of the double-endings, by theirs. And I call that typical of Fletcher. I do not deny that when he is careful he can at times evade

his proclivity, and make a speech run freely and smoothly for a good way. But we have the competent word of Knox Pooler for it that Fletcher's rhythm in general is that of a cradle. What I have quoted is from *A King and no King* (IV, ii). Now take Beaumont in the same play (I, i):

> Thy sadness, brave Tigranes, takes away
> From my full victory. Am I become
> Of so small fame that any man should grieve
> When I o'ercome him? They that placed me here
> Intended it an honour, large enough
> For the most valiant living, but to dare
> Oppose me single, though he lost the day . . .
> To be my prisoner is to be more free
> Than you were formerly.

"Here, most of the lines are syntactically run on. The weakness, as usual, is in the feverish inflation of the artificial sentiment. But Beaumont's verse in general, though unduly iambic and end-stressed, like this, is much better than Fletcher's average. What we find is that Beaumont, who had a lead from Jonson as well as from Shakespeare, had quite learned the lesson, so far as he could, of breaks in the line and of 'over-flow' in the clause. Yet nobody could mistake even this for Shakespeare's verse; and in the speech of Tigranes which follows, the Second Folio makes a badly immetrical line where the moderns see a badly limping run-on. Then the Folio in Arbaces' next speech mauls run-ons which the moderns save. But in both you get an effect like this:

> Far then from me
> Be ostentation.

And that kind of effect, the run-on form with a real check in the rhythm, pervades Beaumont's better verse because he does not *think* in liquid periods like Shakespeare."

"You remember, of course," broke in Smith, "that in the Shakespeare Folio also, especially in the later plays, there are a number of passages where the editors have

varied as to the right lining of the speeches—a thing the old printers were always tending to make pie of."

"True," said Brown; "and there are strong grounds for holding that in the later plays, when you get *bad* weak-endings, they stand for alien verse that Shakespeare has merely tried—or *not* tried—to trim. I shall come to that later. The late M. A. Bayfield, who was a scholarly cleric, in his book on *Shakespeare's Versification* (1920), proposed quite a multitude of changes in both the lining and the syllabling, claiming that the printers made a number of contractions at their own sweet will. But even if Bayfield were not, as I think he is, quite arbitrary in many of his decisions, we needn't discuss his system here."

"He might have argued, I think," suggested Smith, "that Ben Jonson did some proof-reading on our Folio. Ben seems to have had some fastidious notions about semi-contractions or slurs."

"It is an interesting question," agreed Brown; "but it might occupy us a year. I shall just sum up on Shakespeare's genuine verse—with a caveat as to alien bases in several of the later plays—that when we rejoice in Shakespeare's winged movement we know that the *enjambement* is not the whole secret of the charm. It is the poetry of the diction that gives the vital lifting force. Robertson, I think, has not properly brought this out. As you know, breaks in the line, and run-on lines, occur even in the primordial *Ferrex and Porrex*. The point is that Shakespeare had given the vital lead, and always maintained it by the witchcraft of his poetry."

"And perhaps that isn't quite all," interposed Smith. "If you'll let me add an observation, I would urge that even where Shakespeare is *not* obviously using *enjambement*, in our play, his verse has still a harmony that is quite absent from those other speeches in which we find run-on sense without run-on rhythm. The vital æsthetic principle, it seems to me, is that it is end-*stress* that creates the worst

monotony; and that it is avoidance of such stress that keeps rhythm free, whether the line be a clause or not; though a run-on sense *plus* rhythm gives the maximum freedom.

"I would suggest that run-on sense is specially appropriate where the thought is argumentative, as in 'If it were done when 'tis done,' or 'How all occasions do inform against me.' But take two speeches in *Macbeth* where the thought is markedly sententious, therefore less productive of run-on sense. This naturally tends to shorter runs, though always in one strong flow of feeling. Yet even there, what a stressless flow there is in the verse. First this:

> I have lived long enough: my May of life
> Is fallen into the sere, the yellow leaf;
> And that which should accompany old age,
> As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,
> I must not look to have, but in their stead,
> Curses, not loud but deep, mouth-honour, breath,
> Which the poor heart would fain deny, and dare not.

"Observe how the first three lines have unstressed or what I should call soft or easy endings—*life*, *leaf*, *age*; then one rather more arresting, *friends*, and then another, *stead*, after which again we have the easy endings, *breath* and *dare not*. But through all the lines alike, how checkless is the movement, in comparison with those 'Macduff, this noble passion,' lines. Then take that other great flight of sententious music:

> Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow,
> Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
> To the last syllable of recorded time;
> And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
> The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
> Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player,
> That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
> And then is heard no more: it is a tale
> Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
> Signifying nothing.

"In those lines there are only two that can be strictly called run-on—those ending in *fools* and *tale*; and yet how easily all end, and how wingingly and singingly—if I may

so jingle after a strain that calls up Beethoven—the whole speech soars! What Bradley would make of that I don't know. I am content to claim that Shakespeare is thus canorous whether his lines run on or not. And this holds of speeches in *Othello*, where the labouring soul speaks fitly in line-ended verse."

"And you have it again in *Macbeth*," chimed Robinson, "in the soliloquy before the murder, where the verse turns to that wonderful *physical* rhythm:

> thús with his stéalthy páce,
> With Tárquin's rávishing strídes, tówards his desígn
> Móves like a ghóst,

where you feel the very stride in the beat of the lines."

"Of course I agree," cried Brown enthusiastically; "and the men who learned *enjambement* from him are incapable of that canorous quality even when they make their lines expressly run on in syntax. I suppose we all feel, in these great strains, the sheer insuperableness of this man's poetry, which puts him apart from every performer in English drama. He is our absolute, in sheer verse-music as in terror of passion."

"I suppose, however," hazarded Jones, "that if we had found in the Shakespeare Folio that bit of Beaumont in *Philaster*:

> 'Tis not a life,
> 'Tis but a piece of childhood thrown away,

we should have been told that nobody but Shakespeare could possibly have written it."

"Without doubt we should," cried Brown, "—by the same men who tell us that the Porter's speech is thoroughly Shakespearean! There I am warmly with you. But will you show me a whole page of Beaumont's verse, even in *Philaster*, that you could mistake for Shakespeare's?"

"Assuredly not," pronounced Smith.

"Then how does the argument stand as to Bradley?"

queried Jones. "We shall agree, I suppose, that Shakespeare did lead the way in really flowing verse, and that the others soon learned the formal part of the lesson. But I agree that even in those lines of Beaumont's which you praised there is a distinct sense of line-endedness which makes the difference. Somehow the line asserts itself as something that is formally freed, but remains pedal, though I don't say that Beaumont's rhythm always does."

"That is just what I am coming to," replied Brown, collecting himself for his argument. "Bradley first quotes Macbeth's speech beginning:

> If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well
> It were done quickly.

You will remember that the whole thing is so 'on the wing' that save at one point you are only sub-consciously aware of the line form. All the end-syllables are unstressed but one:

> that we but *teach*
> Bloody instructions . . .

where the trochee 'bloody,' following 'teach,' forces the line form on us—just that once in twelve lines.

"Now, I don't understand why Bradley argues that in no previous play do you get such a twelve-line run of such free verse. To say nothing of (*a*) the 'early' unimpassioned speech of Titania in the *Dream*,

> These are the forgeries of jealousy,

where you have, as here, but two periods and one or two end-stresses in twelve lines, or (*b*) the opening speech in *1 Henry IV*, what does he make of (*c*) Hamlet's speech in the Second Quarto:

> How all occasions do inform against me——?

"But I pass from that, because I cannot be quite sure of what he counts to be equally 'overflow' lines, and I come straight to his second and third examples which he



includes in his challenge as being on a par with the 'If it were done when 'tis done' speech. The same quality of versification, he argued, is found in the latter part of that speech of the 'Lord' in Act III, scene vi, beginning 'the son of Duncan,' and in what follows; and then again in that speech of Malcolm's in IV, iii, beginning, 'Macduff, this noble passion.' Now, I beg you to follow here attentively.

"Take first the cited lines, 37–49, from the narrative matter in III, vi. Note to begin with that Bradley does *not* cite the preceding lines. Why? Because, I take it, he could not miss the end-stressed quality of those previous lines. He takes up the Lord's speech here:

> And this report
> Hath so exasperate the King that *he*
> Prepares for some attempt of war.

After that rather bad beginning—one of the bad line-ends I spoke of—you have lines that are not even formally line-ended, till you come to:

> You'll rue the time
> That clogs me with this answer.

"Then see how it proceeds:

> *Len.* And that *well might*
> *Advise* him to a caution, *to hold what distance*
> His wisdom can provide. Some holy *angel*
> Fly to the court of England and unfold
> His message ere he come, that a swift *blessing*
> May soon return to this our suffering *country*
> Under a hand accursed!

"Now I put it to you, are those line-ends which I have a little emphasized—to make my point clear—are they really in run-on rhythm as distinct from run-on sense?"

"I say *not*," cried Robinson; and Jones assented, adding—"save for perhaps that one line where 'unfold his message' is really an unchecked flow. They are, in fact, lines of that

Beaumont type we discussed, where you have a clause-by-clause constriction, a checked rhythm, and no poetic *flight*, as the phrase goes."

"We might add, I think," said Brown, acknowledging the support, "that, a year or two before Bradley, an American graduate, D. L. Chambers, in a thesis on *The Metre of Macbeth* published by Princeton University (1903), selected, as Bradley does, the speech 'Macduff, this noble passion,' as showing the gain by *enjambement* in Shakespeare's later work, as compared with *King John*. He claims (p. 50) that the *Macbeth* speech shows 'gain in rapidity, variety, vivacity, and ease.' As his is an intelligent and studious paper, with an eye to Middleton's hand in our play, I am sorry to oppose him here; but I feel bound to point out that Shakespeare's later contemporaries had learned *enjambement* from him without gaining, save occasionally, his fluidity and ease; and that the consummation is not reached here."

"As to *King John*," remarked Jones, "we can never be sure whether he had not before him a play in which Marlowe had reconstructed the old composite one, as appears to be probably the case in the opening scene. In that case, Shakespeare may have been partly tied to end-stopped verse by his model."

"Isn't that hypothesis too precarious?" urged Robinson. "Isn't it more likely that the young Shakespeare felt the weight of the cothurnus, in his first historic tragedy, when he did not feel it in the *Dream*?" (To which view Brown inclined to assent, and Jones did not demur, remarking that Jonson shows more *enjambement* in the *Poetaster* in 1601 than in *Every Man in his Humour* in 1600, apparently feeling a current movement.)

"But I should say," interposed Smith, turning back to the pages in his copy of *Macbeth*, "that in that other scene, in Act III, in one bit of the narrative, apart from the question of run-on verse, there is a touch which does not look

like Beaumont, but does look rather like Shakespeare. Listen:

> *Len.* Sent he to Macduff?
> *Lord.* He did; and with an absolute 'Sir, not I,'
> The cloudy messenger turns me his back,
> And hums, as who should say, 'You'll rue the time
> That clogs me with this answer.'

"Granting that a line seems to have been dropped—for the 'Sir, not I,' must be supposed to be the answer of Macduff; and (unless we read *on* for *with*) the sense requires a line ending in something like 'whereupon' before 'The cloudy messenger'—the turn of phrase and diction here is rather nearer Shakespeare than, say, Beaumont."

"I grant it freely," answered Brown. "Let the best and the worst of the critics force the argument as they will, it is not for us to force it anywhere. I am keeping faithfully in view all the difficulties."

"What was it that Bishop Butler said?" queried Smith. " 'Things are as they are, and the consequences of them will be what they will be, why then should we desire to be deceived?' "

"As the mandarins do," grinned Brown.

"And Butler himself, now and then," interjected Robinson.

"In the meantime," went on Brown, "let us return to our muttons. I claim that Bradley fails to make his point about the versification after he has passed from the 'If it were done when 'tis done' speech; and when he comes to Malcolm's 'Macduff, this noble passion,' as D. L. Chambers had done, I claim that he fails completely. Listen:

> Macduff, this noble *passion,*
> Child of integrity, hath from my *soul*
> *Wiped* the black scruples, reconciled my *thoughts*
> To thy good truth and honour. Devilish Mac*beth*
> By many of these trains hath sought to *win me*
> Into his power, and modest wisdom *plucks me*
> From over-credulous haste: but God *above*
> *Deal* between thee and me; for even *now*
> I put myself to thy direction, *and*
> Unspeak mine own detraction.

"It is only when we come to 'Here abjure the taints' that the rhythm runs on with the sense; and that line ending on *and* is for me false verse."

"And we 'fight it out on this line?' " queried Jones.

"On the point of versification, yes," nodded Brown. "I maintain that Bradley has juxtaposed essentially different kinds of blank-verse; that this last could be reckoned Shakespeare's only on the assumption that he is changing by sinking to a *worse* kind; and that we have no earthly right to make such an assumption. And, besides, I deny that, apart from a touch or two, this diction is Shakespeare's."

"There even I am with you," cried Robinson. "Those phrases, 'this noble passion, Child of integrity,' and 'reconciled my thoughts To thy good truth and honour,' are just padded rhetoric, where Shakespeare would give us poetry. And do you notice, fellows, that in the first part of the Lord's speech in Act III we get:

> With *Him above*
> To ratify the work,

while in the Malcolm speech we get:

> But *God above*
> Deal between thee and me—?

Now, that weak repetition of a *cliché*, while it points to one hand, is not at all like Shakespeare as I know him. You get it often in old Lodge and Greene; but where else in Shakespeare?—I mean in a serious passage like this."

"Don't go too fast," smiled Smith. "Beware of the zeal of the convert!"—whereat Robinson grinned. "As to this 'above' business, 'thereby hangs a tale,' which I will tell you. Turn to 'Above' in Mrs. Cowden Clarke's Concordance, and you will find that the word is not given at all—at least it is not in my copy."

"Really?" cried Jones. "Did she begin skipping at '*Ab*'?"

"Unless my copy is corrupt," said Smith. "Of course 'above' is one of the very common words that you *can't* give all the instances of. But that isn't all. Turn to the

comprehensive Bartlett, and you will find, under 'Above' that 'God above' reference all right, but not along with it the 'Him above.' That, however, you will find at letter H, under the entry '*Him*'—'God knows why,' as E. K. Chambers would say. Of course you have the 'God above' under 'God.' "

"This is disquieting," said Robinson. "But I suppose it doesn't much matter. Anyhow, my recollection is that, while you get:

> This shows you are above, you justicers!

in *Lear*, where it is dramatically all right; and 'O you blessed ministers above' in *Measure for Measure*, where again it is poetically fitting, here in *Macbeth* the repeated *cliché* is a fall to commonplace in diction, such as you show there is in the versification."

"That, I think, is the main point," replied Brown; "and it is by that I elect to stand or fall in æsthetic logic. If you argue about diction you will always get the old answer that poor stuff can be 'Shakespearean.' They can feel that way —though I don't believe Bradley can—about the Porter's 'sculduddery,' or the obscenity in *Othello*; but I defy them to convince any lover of rhythm that Shakespeare's winged Pegasus can change for long stretches into a spurred mule, at the very period at which Bradley sees him entering on his last verse manner. D. L. Chambers, by the way, takes the same view as to a transition beginning here."

"Well now," asked Jones thoughtfully, "how do we finally stand on these later scenes in *Macbeth*, where the writing tends to be rather flatly conventional—at times, as you say, spurred—but never great except when Macbeth flames out. *Can* we make out, with any plausibility, *who* wrote the strenuously flat stuff?"

"The Clarendon editors, you will remember," interposed Smith, "avowed that they had doubts about that scene v, ii, beginning:

> The English power is near, led on by Malcolm,
> His uncle Sward, and the good Macduff—

which go on in a very queer and possibly corrupt diction. And they pointed to the many flat couplets, of which the worst is that made by the line (II, i, 61):

> Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives,

which is almost incredibly bad even for Middleton. And then there is the old revolt from

> Lay on, Macduff,
> And damned be him that first cries, 'Hold, enough!'

with that turgid prelude,

> Before my body
> I throw my warlike shield,

as to which E. K. Chambers, in his manner, claims that 'no critic can seriously persuade himself that he has a sense of style delicate enough to determine whether [those words] are Shakespeare's or not,'—this after he has assured us that Shakespeare did *not* write the rhymed lines of the First Witch in IV, i, beginning

> Ay, sir, all this is so: but why
> Stands Macbeth thus amazedly?[11]

"Quite so," nodded Brown, "the inevitable mandarins are there at their old 'lay.' Chambers doesn't distinguish between the 'sense of style' and the 'sense of sense.' Well, I will try to continue now the outline I began of the composition of the play as a whole. Shakespeare, we agreed, has transfigured as only he could do the Macbeth and Banquo and Lady Macbeth scenes, of which he *certainly* got some of the primary matter from Kyd, and other parts *probably*.

"Then we come to the development of the action after the central or turning-point, when Fate, held to be symbolized in the witches, begins to work out the tyrant's doom. As regards that action, even orthodoxy has shaken its head over the machinery of the witch-business, feeling that Shakespeare's high fashion of turning common wiseacreism

to poetry is *not* preserved in the jingling cauldron stuff, which is extraneous to the very idea of Fate. In *Hamlet* he takes Montaigne's divagatory thoughts about indiscretion outgoing reason, and fuses them in a few triumphant lines. Here, the obscurantisms of the witches are fused for us in the seething of Macbeth's soul. But the witch-rhymes are naught for us; and Bradley rejects everything about Hecate."

"I think," said Jones, "the critical case is won there, and it is only because Bradley seemed to think some readers wanted to disconnect Shakespeare from all recognition of sorcery that the dispute has lingered. I am content to think that Shakespeare no more believed in a talking Ghost in complete armour than I do, and yet used Kyd's Ghost as a matter of course. First and last he is a playwright and play-improver for a going theatre."

"Then," said Brown, "if you are all satisfied on that issue, we have only to try to come to conclusions on the remainder of what we may call the historic matter, which I have been approaching by way of the versification. We shall have to consider it further on the lines of diction and vocabulary, trying to get in that way at the hand, or hands. And as that is a tangled skein, I think I had better leave it over for another sitting.

"The fact is that while I find the Malcolm-Macduff scene and what follows to be in distinctly Jacobean verse and style, I conceive the substance of it—apart from the excursus about healing for the King's evil—to have been natural matter for the old play; and, without pretending here to have any such evidence as we have for the Kyd matter and the Middleton matter, I am tempted to guess that at this point Kyd might have had a collaborator in Peele. You remember, they both outlived Greene and Marlowe. But I have no theory ready.

"What I stand to with entire confidence is that the scene is throughout, despite formal *enjambement*, substantially written *in end-stressed movement*, whether or not based on

one in the *old* line-ended verse; that therefore it cannot be of Shakespeare's composition; and that, at most, Shakespeare trimmed it—even that perfunctorily."

"What about those lines on Edward the Confessor and touching for the King's evil?" asked Robinson.

"Do you cling to them?" smilingly queried Smith.

"Well," argued the impressionist, "I should say they have a certain Shakespearean smoothness."

"And, mind you," put in Brown, "I am not going to pretend to know that Shakespeare wouldn't tranquilly lend himself to the smoothing. For him, it would be one of many things that he had to shrug his shoulders over. His theatre was the theatre of the moment—now under Elizabeth, now under James. He was under many more or less compulsory conformities. But he was under no compulsion to write end-stressed verse; and such is the verse here, as you can hear for yourselves. It is the verse structure that I am thinking of—and the diction. Those who tell us that this is Shakespeare's rhythm have simply not duly studied wherein his rhythm consists. Of that, shall we say, more anon?"

"Blessed be anon!" burbled Robinson. "As a postponement, and as an author, and as a young ass, he has done much good work in his time."

A cushion was thrown at him, and the symposium disintegrated.

FIFTH SITTING

"I SUPPOSE," said Jones to Brown when they had settled down for their fifth sitting in Jones's den, "you are now tackling the most difficult part of your job."

"I'm afraid it is," was the reply. "I have always avowed my difficulty in tracing the hand or hands in those scenes of which the didactic forensic dialogue between Malcolm and Macduff is the chief. And I am not going to minimize it. When we have decided that the versification is not Shakespeare's, even if it is partly expanded and trimmed by him, we have still to ask, Then whose? And why was such a dramatically supererogatory scene admitted? And I hope you will all help."

"You mustn't expect help from me," protested Robinson. "I have even been hunting through Drayton, whose blank-verse it is so hard to get any idea of; but to no purpose. And even if you found in his rhymed work any of the sentiments of the dialogue in *Macbeth*, there would be no safe inference that it was of his insertion here. Men might echo him as they echoed Shakespeare."

"True," assented Brown. "We can't pretend here to apply the discriminatory form to which Candy reduces his problem as to the authorship of those juvenile unsigned verses of Milton. There, there is no trouble over chronology. Here we are nearly always faced by the dilemma: Are the curious parallels to *Macbeth* which we find in Middleton, apart from the Porter scene, and in Beaumont and Fletcher—are they echoes *from* our *Macbeth*, or are they passages inserted in that play by their authors in a recast made at any time in Shakespeare's life, or after his death? And, on the latter view, are they made by writers who know they are repeating themselves; or can it be that they are working up in a recast of *Macbeth* things they had done before?"

"Or," suggested Jones, "did those authors contribute

passages to our *Macbeth* when the old play was first worked up by Shakespeare, some time between 1604 and 1606?"

"That too is a clear possibility," said Smith; Brown readily assenting. "But you really can't believe that Shakespeare would have let anybody insert that Porter scene while he was in charge; though it would perhaps be like him to let them make such additions in his later lifetime."

"Well now," asked Robinson, "what are the psychological probabilities as to those five phrases of Middleton at the end of the Porter's soliloquy:—'too cold for hell,' 'devil-porter it,' 'some of all professions,' 'everlasting bonfire,' and 'remember the porter'—stuck on after the 'primrose way' tag, which in turn is a blend of two phrases already on the boards? Shall we infer that Middleton first did that Porter scene, and then thriftily used five phrases from it (including the 'bonfire') in his own plays, or that he fished the phrases out of his plays for a combined use?"

"Surely the latter," argued Jones, "though at first I hesitated. Nobody would think of sticking 'remember the porter' into *Macbeth*, where we have it, unless he had used the tag before, in a London play, where alone it could fitly belong."

"Then," said Brown approvingly, "I think we are definitely led to regard Middleton as a late and not an early contaminator of the play. *Blurt, Master-Constable*, gave us the clinch. Both the *Witch* and the *Chaste Maid* are dateless; but the *Maid* is reasonably dated after 1608; and the *Witch* cannot be earlier. Fleay puts it as late as 1621–2 and the earliest date I have seen suggested is 1608 or 1609, which is very ill-supported. I don't object, at this point, to the argument of E. K. Chambers (*William Shakespeare*, i, 472) that the *Witch* 'has some echoes of genuine passages in *Macbeth*, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that its author was also the interpolator of the Shakespearean text'; though he will scowl over my conclusion that the Porter scene is one of Middleton's interpolations, since he has

declared in his most oracular manner that Coleridge's negative view 'probably now has few adherents.' "

"Of course," mused Smith, "Chambers wouldn't feel well if he were not making by-laws for us every little while. He is chief of staff, you know, with emphasis for his strong suit."

"What *are* the Middleton echoes of genuine *Macbeth* passages that Chambers has in view?" inquired Robinson.

"I can't of course answer for Chambers," replied Brown; "but I should call this bit in the *Witch* (Act I, scene i) a real echo or paraphrase from our *Macbeth*:

> That sorrow's dangerous can abide no counsel;
> 'Tis like a wound past cure; wrongs done to love
> Strike the heart deeply; none can truly judge on 't
> But the poor sensible sufferer whom it racks
> With unbelievèd pains . . .

"That chimes so closely with the speech of Malcolm to Macduff ('Give sorrow words'), following the dialogue there, which seems to echo Florio's Montaigne (I, ii) rather than the Senecan tag; and the lines in the *Witch* are so imperfectly relevant to the context and the situation there that I should say they are certainly an elaborated echo, and not a happy one. So the reasonable inference is something like this:

"(1) The simple witch-scenes in *Macbeth*, years after 1606, suggested to Middleton his witch-business, by way of heightening with a new coarseness his preposterous play so entitled;

"(2) Years afterwards—possibly after Shakespeare's death—the Globe company invited Middleton to work up *their* witch-business for a popular revival;

"(3) Probably at the same time, Middleton furnished the Porter scene."

"And when," supplemented Smith, "on that clue of the lines in the *Witch*, we date it later than the Shakespeare

Macbeth, all the other clues in Middleton's play fall into line. You will remember them:—the drugging of the servants with a drowsy 'posset' (IV, iii); 'there's no such thing' (*id.*); 'the innocence of sleep' (*id.*); and 'rip thee down from neck to navel' (v, i). A friend has pointed out to me, further, that the phrase 'Had it been hid and done, it had been done happy,' in the *Witch*, points to Macbeth's soliloquy, 'If it were done when 'tis done.'

"All these I think are quite clearly mere echoes, artificially introduced. And in fact, when you note in the last Act of the *Witch* (scene iii, line 7) that phrase 'No farther reached my malice,' which is so very like an echo from the *Tempest* (v, i, 29–30), you might almost claim that the *Witch* dates after 1610, as I think it must do. But I would put the caveat that there appear to be visible additions or insertions in the *Witch* text as it stands. Anyway, it remains clear that it is all later than the 1606 recast of *Macbeth* in which Shakespeare took part."

"Now that's satisfying," murmured Robinson.

"And probably," added Smith, "Middleton at the same time—that is, perhaps after Shakespeare's death—on a general commission of revision, inserted those cheap couplets which so often jar on us in the play."

"The reasoning seems water-tight," assented Jones. "And you now definitely exclude Middleton from the Malcolm-Macduff scene; unless, that is, we suppose him to be badly echoing *himself* in the *Witch*."

"Out of the question, surely," cried Robinson. "I take my stand there, for once, with E. K. Chambers. It makes me feel so far orthodox again."

"So far, so good," agreed Jones. "We say that Middleton first echoed our *Macbeth* in its early Jacobean form, specializing and grossly coarsening its witch-business; then, later, was called in to contaminate our play. And we are willing, I suppose, to give him all or most of the Hecate stuff, and more, including the Porter and, I am afraid, the flat-footed

or limping couplets. But not the serious scenes we have still to investigate."

"Not only that," nodded Brown; "but we put the Malcolm-Macduff work definitely *before* Middleton's intervention, and tentatively assign it to the early Jacobean recast, alongside of Shakespeare's genuine work. In this connection we might note that Middleton in the *Witch*, by my counting of several scenes, has an average percentage of double-endings well above 50—which would give you your date well after 1610, Smith. It is in the full swing of the Fletcherian double-ending monotony, with more double-endings than single."

"Can we get any clue of that kind in *Macbeth*?" asked Jones hopefully.

"Perhaps this," said Brown. "In the Malcolm-Macduff scene the mere percentage of double-endings (22) seems rather high for early Beaumont singly; and too low for Fletcher—a kind of mean between them."

Wagging his head perplexedly, Jones appealed for a scrutiny of style and substance; and Brown complied.

"I would much rather approach the problem," he explained, "by that inductive scrutiny than by any surmise about Beaumont and Fletcher, who seem, in fact, inadequate to the whole phenomena. Look at the diction from the start. While it is archaistic from the first lines—'seek out some desolate shade' (which smacks of Peele) and 'weep our sad bosoms empty'—it is rather in that manner of archaistic turgidity that we detect in the Sergeant scene than in the manner of the pre-Shakespeareans. 'Hold fast the mortal sword,' 'Bestride our down-fall'n birthdom'—these are inflations neither in the old manner nor in the new manner then spreading on the stage. 'Birthdom' is a sort of fly in the amber, with no word-history; and 'yell'd out Like syllable of dolour' seems to point to nobody but the writer of the Sergeant scene, who is, as we incline to agree with Bradley, probably the writer of the Pyrrhus speech in *Hamlet*.

"But are there any coincidences?" asked Robinson.

"Well," suggested Smith, "look first at the bizarre vocabulary in the Pyrrhus speech—*heraldry, total gules, eterne, mobled queen, bisson rheum,* as against *birthdom*; and compare the howls of widows and orphans, and the sorrows that

> Strike heaven on the face, that it resounds
> As if it felt with Scotland, and yell'd out
> Like syllable of dolour,

with the figure in the Pyrrhus speech:

> The instant burst of clamour that she made,
> Unless things mortal move them not at all,
> Would have made milch the burning eyes of heaven,
> And passion in the gods.

Isn't it the same trope, inspired by the same turgidity?"

"Why, I must say it is," agreed Robinson slowly.

"And perhaps," mused Jones, "the 'all o'er-teemèd loins' suggests such combinations as 'bloody-scepter'd' and the rest. But is it more than a probability?"

"I agree," said Brown. "The kinship between the Malcolm dialogue and the Sergeant scene seems more remote than that between the Sergeant and the Pyrrhus speech. But we *are* pointed back to the Pyrrhus speech. And I am merely noting that we have in the Malcolm scene a special strain of archaistic rhetoric, which is not at all clearly that of any of the new men round Shakespeare any more than it is Shakespeare's own. For whereas he makes Macbeth and Banquo speak his universal idiom, so to say, this other hand makes the Scots nobles declaim very artificially."

"And what about the rate of double-endings?" inquired the doubting Jones.

"It is rather odd," replied Brown, "that the percentage in the Sergeant scene (10 in 44) is just the same as that in the Malcolm-Macduff scene, 22 +. In the Pyrrhus speech, as you might expect, that being some years earlier, the per-

centage is only 14. But of course that is not serious evidence, and I do not seek to found on it."

"So we have to fall back on diction," urged Jones.

"First, negatively," said Brown: "that is, the diction to a large extent confirms the strong impression that the versification is not Shakespeare's. *That* point can hardly be exaggerated. In the 24 lines of Malcolm's 'noble passion' speech, there is only one—that ending 'even now'—that has not an end-stress, even when the sense runs on. In Macduff's previous speech, there is a better rhythm, and a better diction, in lines 108–111, from 'Thy royal father' to 'Died every day she lived'; but that sentence, curiously enough, could be elided as an insertion, leaving that verse metrical.

"Now, apart from that bit, the diction in general is equally unlike Shakespeare at many points, as Smith has been showing. *Birthdom* is a sole-word in our literature up to that point; and even Johnson's unconfident suggestion of *birthdame* would be no better. *Birthdom* is not even given in the Glossary of Mr. C. T. Onions; and I can't understand why the N.E.D. marks it 'rare,' when there is no prior instance at all. Then 'here-approach' and 'here-remain' are unique in the Folio: Bartlett has no other examples; and Abbott (§ 429) can cite only 'Our hence-going' from *Cymbeline* (III, ii, 65). But that is normal idiom compared with 'my here-remain,' in which 'remain' figures as a noun, for this once only. And observe, it occurs in Malcolm's speech on the King's evil, and so seems to be from the same hand as gave us 'thy here-approach.' "

"That is rather suggestive," pointed out Smith; "I think it is generally agreed that the 'King's evil' speech is an addition. You will notice that Macduff's half-line (129) '"Tis hard to reconcile,' upon which the doctor enters, is completed by Malcolm's half-line (139) 'See, who comes here'—a fairly clear proof that the excursus is an insertion.

"Now, if we find that the addition comes from the same hand as the rest of the scene, we are further led to think

that it may have been that of one of those surmised 'outsiders,' beginning with the writer of the Sergeant's speech, who had got up the revival. For this is a particular piece of compliment, sent to the address of the King."

"It is a fair surmise," said Brown. "But of course we can't call it solid evidence. Unless Shakespeare has revised the whole—and I think that passage on Malcolm's father and mother is his in style and rhythm—the end-stressed verse of this scene must be admitted to have a measure of expertness that, as a whole, differentiates it from the Pyrrhus speech and the Sergeant's. It begins like those, so to speak. But I am moved to infer some collaboration."

"Then," commented Jones, "agreeing that there is strong negative evidence against anything more than revision by Shakespeare of a diction which is often foreign to his idiom, have we no hope of finding any professional hand that seems likely to have done the scene? It takes some believing that an outsider or two would write all that tolerably accurate blank-verse."

"But why not?" queried Robinson, "after you have once assented to assigning the Pyrrhus speech to an outsider, and the Sergeant's speech to the same hand?"

"Quite so," urged Smith. "After all, it isn't hard to write more accurate blank-verse than most of Middleton and Fletcher; and does anybody suggest that, apart from the passage about Duncan and his queen, there is any poetic inspiration in the dialogue? And isn't all the *substance* given in the chronicles? Why should not an educated amateur, fond of playgoing and interested in versing, write most of it?"

"*I* can well believe it," said Brown, shrugging his shoulders; "and I should add that a special influence such as that behind the Pyrrhus speech could account for a long and otiose scene like that of Malcolm and Macduff, which Shakespeare would never have inserted in such a play. But you needn't hope to get the mandarins to tolerate such a hypothesis, even if you don't specify Southampton. After saddling

Shakespeare with the Porter scene, they will certainly saddle him with this. End-stressed verse has nothing suspicious in it for them."

"We certainly shan't shelter in that tabernacle," protested Jones. "I am just hoping, against the outlook, for an identification. I can't see Middleton in it."

"Nor I Dekker," said Brown, "though he did a good deal of odd-jobbing. Nor Chapman, who did some. Though I confess I have my suspicions about Heywood, who by his own hyperbolical or colloquial account, had 'a hand or a main finger in two hundred and twenty plays.' I've roamed through Dodsley, on this quest, with no more reward than that."

"Let us go over the Beaumont and Fletcher clues again, then," urged Jones.

"I have collected them here," said Brown, reading them out:

"(1) The parallel, at the end of *A King and No King*, to Macduff's reply to Malcolm about the risks run by royal lechers.

"(2) A vigilant correspondent of mine, a born literary sleuth, points out to me that the phrase 'Child of integrity' is paralleled several times in Beaumont and Fletcher. For instance, ambition is 'the child of glory' in *The Mad Lover*, I, i, 82.

"(3) Then we have the 'I am not fickle,' in *A King and No King*, which echoes Macduff's 'I am not treacherous' in our scene. And there are similar phrases in Beaumont and Fletcher.

"(4) The phrase 'an angry god,' in our scene is perhaps echoed by 'a god incensèd' in *A King and No King* (III, i, 274).

"(5) That pose of Malcolm, about never having lied before in his life, seems a favourite one with Beaumont, who makes Spaconia claim the same invidious credit for herself in *A King and No King* (I, ii, near end), as old Calianax does again in *The Maid's Tragedy* (IV, ii, 151–2).

"(6) We have 'his suffering land' in *A King and No King* (I, i) and 'our suffering country' in our play.

"(7) The allusion to slayers of infants and mothers in *A King and No King* (V, iv).

"(8) The echo in Fletcher's *Valentinian* (V, vi) 'left to brag of.'

"(9) 'My soul grows weary of her house' in *The Maid's Tragedy* (V, iv).

"(10) The two echoes, in *Philaster*, of Macbeth's phrase about ministering to a mind diseased.

"(11) 'Born of woman' in the same play (V, iii).

"But, observe, there is a solid chronological snag in all this. The *King and No King* and the *Maid's Tragedy* date 1611; and Fletcher's *Mad Lover* dates 1616. Of B. and F. plays before 1606 we seem only to have *Women Pleased*, *Bonduca*, *The Laws of Candy*—all by Fletcher; and Beaumont's *Wit at Several Weapons* and *Love's Cure*. But all these plays came out later in recasts; while Beaumont's *Mador* is lost. Now, the echoes in *King and No King*, *Maid's Tragedy*, and *Mad Lover* cannot prove that their authors had a hand in *Macbeth* in 1606. They must date as echoes *from* it, unless we could prove it to be later, which we cannot. And I am bound to say that they all look, for me, less original than the passages in *Macbeth*."

"What about those prior plays, then?" queried Jones.

"That's just it," said Brown. "There is nothing to go upon. Scraps of Beaumont's prose comedy in the altered plays he had shared in; nothing in Fletcher's *Bonduca*, and nothing in *Women Pleased*; save his agonizing versification with nearly 60 per cent. of double-endings even in *Bonduca*. So all that remains is to ask whether there is any air of special originality about those Beaumont parallels in later plays. I think not. And seeing that our fair presumption appears to be in favour of dating the Malcolm-Macduff scene early, say in the 1606 recast, the trail is not hopeful. Finally, I have found no reason for thinking that either Beaumont or Fletcher invented 'birthdom' or wrote 'my here-remain.' "

"Whereas," recalled Smith, "you did find at the very start resemblances of thought and diction to the Pyrrhus speech."

"Turn the Oxfordites on the trail," suggested Robinson gloomily.

"On such a job, as you know," said Brown, "they are no more use than a sick headache. To try to do anything useful would drive them to despair. Now, if there were any Southamptonians left—there were a few last century, I

think—see what a case they might make out for an initiative by Southampton in the recast of *Macbeth*, by way of a compliment to his friend the King, after having written a lost *Dido*, of which a fragment survives in *Hamlet*!"

"So that," laughed Jones, "the one hint of a rational opening for the Aristocratic School in the Folio comes from outside their four-dimensioned dream-world. With no hope of making the peer take any further hand in the Folio!"

"But isn't there this possibility?" suggested Smith hopefully. "Suppose the young Beaumont was connected with Southampton at the time of the 1606 recast of the old *Macbeth*. They might have worked together on that forensic scene, which is just the kind of pseudo-didactic thing that would have appealed to Beaumont; and if he looked up at all to Southampton he might well cherish the literary reminiscence of their collaboration."

"You have my sympathy," smiled Brown benevolently. "It *could* be as you suggest. Beaumont, I think, certainly echoes *Macbeth* in his plays oftener than any other piece in the Folio. But I don't advise you to put your theory as what we call in business 'a firm offer.' "

"After all," cried Jones cheerfully, "why should we expect to trace to professional hands, or with certainty to *any* hands, *all* the alien matter in the Folio? It is an honest method to say at times, as here, *this* matter is non-Shakespearean, though Shakespeare has apparently inserted some patches and licked the rest into shape. We offer you a guess."

"If you are satisfied with that," said Brown soberly. "I am. I hope I never overcall my hand—if I may so express myself under Smith's roof."

"There is just one point more," said Smith smilingly. "I think there is evidence of collaboration in that Malcolm-Macduff scene. You remember Ross's speech ending with the lines:

and good men's lives
Expire before the flowers in their caps,
Dying or ere they sicken.

Macduff stiffly comments:

O relation
Too nice, and yet too true.

"I can't help surmising that there were two hands in that dialogue; and that one dramatically retorted on the other. And the whole tactic of first telling Macduff that his wife and children are well, and then portentously preparing him for the awful news that they are all savagely slaughtered, seems to me to have a ghastly suggestion of a rhetorical exercise by dilettants who remembered that confused scene in *Julius Cæsar*, in which Brutus first knows and then doesn't know that Portia is dead."

"Whatever the explanation," said Brown, "the tactic is obnoxious; and, I would add, un-Shakespearean; though my negative conviction is always stayed on the end-stressed versification. And, I would add further, that particular tactic of dramatic manœuvre, beginning with the false and working round to the true, seems to me particularly suggestive of Beaumont."

"Why, so it is," mused Jones. "You have it in *A King and no King*, and again in *The Maid's Tragedy*, and, in a way, in *Philaster*. And, by the way, you remember the theory of William Wells that Beaumont had a hand in that compression-recast of two plays in our *Julius Cæsar* which Fleay ascribed to Jonson. Why shouldn't Beaumont have been the meddler who left the confusion about Portia's death?"

"But why shouldn't *both* Beaumont and Jonson have had a hand in that recast?" asked Smith with some eagerness. "I mean, why not à priori, of course. I don't pretend to work out that problem. But it *is* a memorable fact, in that connection, that Beaumont adored Jonson, who loved him in

return. Beaumont only once praises Shakespeare, whatever he may have learned from him."

"Beaumont and Ben," said Brown, thoughtfully, "were both lovers of talk-drama, with more cry than wool in it. And that might suggest that Ben and Beaumont did the Malcolm-Macduff scene—as a revision of old matter—between them. But I can't see Ben letting pass 'my here-remain,' or 'birthdom,' or 'my more-having.' I will just add, while I remember, that the repetition of phrases—as, 'gracious England' twice, recalling 'gracious Duncan'—is rather characteristic of Beaumont. But who wrote that topsy-turvy trope, 'pour the sweet milk of concord into hell'—a feat that would theoretically make hell peaceful—is still a puzzle beyond me.

"So, unless any of you can bring an argument that will carry us beyond the stage of hypothesis, at that stage we remain, as to that scene."

"But that isn't all," protested Robinson, sitting up and taking notice. "What about those other scenes in the later Acts? Above all, what about the scene of the surprise of Macduff's castle, and Lady Macduff's talk with her boy?"

"Well challenged," replied Brown. "I had of course something to say about these, and I'm glad you are still interested. First, as to that scene, v, ii, beginning 'The English power is near, led on by Malcolm,' I would extend the doubts of the Clarendon editors to the point of negation. The dramatic principle is that of the opening witch-scene: the characters tell each other what they are going to do. The verse is absolutely end-stressed; the diction is alternately diffuse and convulsive; and those lines:

> Revenges burn in them; for their dear causes
> Would to the bleeding and the grim alarm
> Excite the mortified man,

have always left the commentators at a stand."

"But," interposed Robinson, "what about those lines:

Now does he feel his title
Hang loose about him, like a giant's robe
Upon a dwarfish thief——?

Don't they sound rather like Shakespeare?"

"If you like," said Brown accommodatingly; "though, coming after these:

He cannot buckle his distemper'd cause
Within the belt of rule,

they would suggest Shakespeare paying little heed in revising. Anyway, the scene as a whole is amateurish, being as it were supererogatory narrative; and the final speech of Lennox, with its tortured couplet, surely cannot come from Shakespeare. Think of it:

Or so much as needs
To dew the sovereign flower and drown the weeds.

Hasn't it a flavour of the Sergeant about it?"

"Let us say: 'Probable touching-up, in a higher rhythm, of a flat supererogatory scene, ending in a footling couplet," suggested Jones; and nobody objected.

"Then you will probably give up also scene vi," continued Brown. "It is of the same supererogatory order; and the two final couplets are hopeless. The last:

Make all our trumpets speak: *give them all breath,*
Those clamorous harbingers of blood and death,

I should call sheer padded fustian. There are many such couplet-nullities in Heywood and Beaumont and Fletcher and Middleton."

"But," again pleaded Robinson, "you wouldn't give up, would you, Macbeth's couplet at the end of the previous scene:

Ring the alarum-bell! Blow wind, come wrack!
At least we'll die with harness on our back——?

Surely there is a true thrill in that, though the Clarendon editors belittled it?"

"I think I am with you there," conceded Brown, "though the mechanic who sprinkled other couplets doesn't keep his hands off Macbeth."

"And now," pursued Jones, "what about the Lady Macduff scene and the child?"

"You know you've got me there in another difficulty," grinned Brown. "That scene obviously connects with the Malcolm-Macduff-Ross scene; since Lady Macduff bitterly argues out the point put to Macduff by Malcolm, about his flight leaving his family unprotected. It is such a typically scholastic point that I have wondered whether, with the Malcolm-Macduff scene, it does not found on the old play. But of course, apart from Lady Macduff's final tearful platitudes, which are really reminiscent, there is nothing savouring of the old hands in the verse here, though there may be in the prose."

"And surely," pleaded Robinson, "that bit beginning:

> He loves us not,
> He wants the natural touch . . .

has a Shakespearean quality."

"I won't say no," nodded Brown; "and you may have noticed that those first nine lines of Lady Macduff, with their free rhythm, have *no* double-ending, whereas in Ross's reply there are six in eleven lines; and they continue in what follows. But when you come to the mother's dialogue with her little son, half verse and half prose, you are up against the hot debate as to whether this is one of Shakespeare's good child-scenes or a bad one. How do you pronounce, Robinson?"

"I confess I am puzzled," said that eclectic. "I can't see Shakespeare in the argument between mother and child about buying and selling husbands, and about the honest men hanging the liars and swearers who outnumber them. It is only after line 79, when the warning Messenger has come and gone, and Lady Macduff wails anew, and the

murderers come, and the boy cries, 'Thou liest, thou shag-haired villain!' that I find good drama, to say nothing of Shakespeare."

"I ought to point out," said Brown, "that there is a mother-and-boy scene in the *Warning for Faire Women* (I, 291) which, with a difference, is akin to this, and not bad in its way. It might even be from the same hand."

"It is a perplexing scene altogether," grumbled Smith. "First Ross clears out as if he was specially concerned to save his own skin. Then mother and child talk in a fashion that suggests a rather dreadful plan of comic relief, worthy of Middleton. Then comes the Messenger, only fifteen seconds before the murderers. And I confess that that 'Whither should I fly?' speech of Lady Macduff, with that ending:

> Why then, alas,
> Do I put up that womanly defence,
> To say I have done no harm?

carries my mind back to *Richard II*, with its pathetic falsetto. It might be a survival. In fact, there may be some Kyd in *Richard II*."

"Granted," said Jones doubtfully. "But we can't prove it. *Non possumus*, again."

"Even the Messenger's speech," observed Brown assentingly, "is a puzzle. What is the sense of his words:

> To fright you thus, methinks, I am too savage;
> To do worse to you were fell cruelty,
> Which is too nigh your person. Heaven preserve you!
> I dare abide no longer;

unless it means that he is one of Macbeth's gang of murderers, who has repented at the last moment? And if so, to what purpose? I more than half suspect that Messenger speech, with its 'homely man,' which points back to Kyd, to be a survival, with Lady Macduff's last speech."

"I think," sighed Jones, "we must just say: 'A factitious scene, perhaps found in the old play, and worked up in both

forms for theatrical purposes, with some added touches that suggest Shakespeare.' "

"So we don't get much out of that," said Robinson. "But there is one thing I wish we could get. You remember, Brown, that puzzling bit,

> But float upon a wild and violent sea
> Each way and *move*,

over which there has been so much boggling. It can't be right. What is your reading?"

"I have always held," said Brown firmly, "that the right emendation is that of the Clarendon editors, 'Each way and *none*.' That cuts the knot perfectly: even Chambers doesn't say no to it."

"And that might almost be Shakespeare," said Robinson contentedly.

"If so, it is surely a bit of mere revision," said Brown grimly. "Do you find Shakespeare, or sense, in the previous lines:

> But cruel are the times, when we are traitors,
> And do not know ourselves, when we hold rumour
> From what we fear, yet know not what we fear——?"

"Well," said Robinson cheerfully, "it might be a reminiscence by Southampton of his ups and downs of imprisonment in the days when he was suspected of working crookedly to bring in James."

"I don't know," said Smith no less cheerfully, "that that isn't a real help to my hypothesis. Anyway, I don't find Ross to be a Shakespearean creation."

"I seem to remember," said Jones, "that Bradley either makes or quotes the remark that in no play of Shakespeare's are the minor personages less distinguishable. Ross and Lennox and Angus are just 'walking gentlemen,' and any one of them might have spoken the speeches of any other."

"At least," grinned Robinson, "you must admit that the Sergeant is *sui generis*! That 'bloody man' has a side-show all

to himself, and plays a part without precedent in human affairs! 'Mark, King of Scotland, mark!' How's that for a bleeding Sergeant, or even a Captain, as the Folio makes him? Now, *would* Southampton really make a Sergeant apostrophize his King like that? 'I pall in resolution,' he spouted,—not *pull*—'and begin To doubt the equivocation of the fiend,' "—pointing hilariously at Brown. "Shall I add a hope that

> the days are near at hand
> That Chambers will be safe——?"

"You know," groaned Brown, "that I don't build on Southampton. But *you* have perhaps builded better than you know. Do you remember that in that same scene that you have last quoted (v, iv), after Malcolm gives the crazy order:

> Let every soldier hew him down a bough
> And bear 't before him: thereby shall we shadow
> The numbers of our host, and make discovery
> Err in report of us,

the next line is:

> *Soldiers.* It shall be done!

Now, how's that for soldiers? as you would say."

"Well, I ask you," cried Robinson, "*could* it have been written by Southampton? Wasn't *he* a bit of a soldier?"

"You can make it anybody you like," sighed Brown—"barring Shakespeare. *He* didn't write pantomime, or musical comedy."

"It certainly *is* false coin," commented Jones sadly. "We do seem to have several loose ends," he added, turning to Brown.

"That I have always felt," said the prospector heavily; "though I think we have cleared up some, both negatively and positively."

"Of course you have," conceded Robinson encouragingly;

"and if you will only tidy up things about the witch-stuff you will have cleared the decks to an extent I didn't hope for. Remember, you had some ideas about a possible trace of Chapman in the witch-scenes."

"I'll leave that," said Brown fatiguedly, "for a final sitting in which I will summarize our results as I see them. I may say that I have a suspicion of Chapman at the very end. You will remember that the Clarendon editors doubted whether Shakespeare would have called Lady Macbeth 'his fiend-like Queen' at the close. Now, that smacks a good deal of the old pre-Shakespearean endings. Compare *Locrine* and *Titus*, for instance.

"But the wind-up speech by Malcolm seems to be a recast; and in the very first line you have what looks like a tic of Chapman: 'Spend a large expense of time'; while near the end you have another, 'by the grace of Grace.' Of course, the commentators call *that* Shakespearean, quoting 'the great'st Grace lending grace' from *All's Well* (II, i, 163). Well, I hold with those who call *that* pure Chapman; and the closing speech here, though it has few double-endings, is end-stressed enough for him."

"Isn't it possible," demurred Smith, "that those Chapman-like tags may be imitations *of* him, by younger hands? He *was* imitated in his turn, I take it; and that pleonasm, 'spend a large expense of time,' seems to me rather more like Heywood, who is so given that way, and whom you say you have suspected. 'A weak, unable impotence,' for example."

"I suppose it *could* be Heywood," assented Brown. "I have sometimes thought of him in those later scenes in which the generals tell each other what they are doing and what they are going to do. The versing and the vacuity, if it is fair to say so, recall his *Prentices* and his *Ages*, especially the latter, which belong to the early Jacobean years. And I will grant you this: Heywood is the one man I feel I could challenge for begetting 'birthdom' and 'my here-remain' and

'bloody-scepter'd.' For he has 'this fail' for 'this failure' (*Silver Age*, III, i); and he is on the whole the most reckless neologist of his day, in his *Rape of Lucrece* and these *Ages*, though he grew more circumspect later.

"Of course he is not so bad as Collier would make him by printing 'trisulc lightning'—which Pearson follows—when he must have written 'trifurk' or 'trifurc' = three-forked. As for linked epithets, though he has many normal constructions, and such as 'hell-scorched' and 'iron-tooth'd harrows,' he essays such phrasing as 'the thunder'd throne,' 'incens'd altar,' and 'nimble-feather'd arrow.' And you have in the *Silver Age* (II, i) this passage:

> The battles join'd, cries past on either side;
> *Long was the skirmish doubtful,* till the Thebans
> Oppress'd the Teleboans; but the battle
> Was by the King renew'd, who, *face to face,*
> *And hand to hand,* met with Amphitrio:
> You fought, and arm to arm, in single combat,
> Trod on his head a victor,

which is a noticeable parallel to the Sergeant's speech."

"Almost thou persuadest me once more," cried Robinson. "Why did you keep all this up your sleeve?"

"Because I keep watch and ward," retorted Brown. "If we are to connect the Sergeant with the Pyrrhus speech, we cannot imagine Heywood to be the recipient of the praise for that in *Hamlet*. The prince says there were 'no sallets' in the once-played play. But Heywood is as salacious as any, in these *Ages* and in his *Lucrece*; and he was a successful playmaker to boot."

"Then," suggested Jones, "may we fall back on the surmise that the imitative Heywood partly aped the Pyrrhus speech in framing the Sergeant's; and that they are *not* from one hand? Heywood could be absurd enough at a pinch."

"Yes," agreed Brown, "and you might say you have his versification in the Malcolm-Macduff-Ross scene; and in that in which the soldiers cry 'It shall be done' when they

get a fantastic order. That is Heywood-like. But I am not putting this, or the guess at Chapman, as a decisive identification. It is partly because I seem to see Chapman's hand in the winding-up of *Henry V*, and am reasonably sure of it in the interlude in the *Tempest*, that I fancy his intervention possible here at the finish. I admit that it might be the pleonastic Heywood echoing Chapman tags.

"And here's another point that I had up my sleeve, and almost forgotten. You may have read that Heywood in his *Funeral Elegie* on the death of King James (1623) expressly craves leave to commemorate Southampton

> as most in dutie bound
> Because his servant once."[1]

"What?" cried everybody else.

"Collier," said Brown tranquilly, "called attention to the fact three generations ago, in his introduction to Heywood's *Apology for Actors*. Only the other day an American scholar pointed anew to the passage. I hope for much from those inquiring men over the water, who are doing good work; but they should have noted the mention by poor old Collier. He wasn't always forging."

"Now, that opens up a new vista of possibilities," remarked Jones reflectively; and Smith acquiesced.

"The American scholar," went on Brown, "speculates about Southampton having had a theatrical company, in which Heywood may have been a member. But there is no such record; and I see no need for the hypothesis. Heywood was a man of culture, and may have been Southampton's 'reader', as Acheson thinks Shakespeare had been. And in that capacity he might have worked with Southampton on the recast of *Macbeth*.

"But I have only a tentative notion on the subject. I make a present of the datum to Smith for his Southampton hypothesis; but I must not forget in this connection to recall that curious point made long ago by Joseph Hunter in his

Illustrations of Shakespeare (1845, ii, 160). He notes that Heywood in his *Hierarchie of the Blessed Angels* (1635) tells the story of Macbeth with notable variations from that given in our play, making the witches

> three virgins wondrous fair
> As well in habit as in virtues rare;

and representing Banquo as dying at a banquet and not killed by Macbeth; and Macbeth as being killed by Malcolm. Now, could those variations have been made, with no ostensible reason, by a man who had actually shared in our play?"

"I can hardly conceive it," said Jones blankly.

"Another card up your sleeve," grinned Robinson. "Any more?"

"Could it have been sheer failure of memory?" asked Smith dubiously.

"Heywood," said Brown, "was not a very old man in 1635, when the *Hierarchie* was published; and he is supposed to have been alive a dozen years later. And he had the Folio to refresh his memory if he wanted to. Possibly he desired for some reason to alter the story; but I can't guess why. So you can realize why I can't claim solidity for the Heywood hypothesis, after all my induction.

"But," he went on hesitatingly, "I confess I have just got another idea. Might it not be that Heywood was putting in his *Hierarchie* the story of Macbeth as Southampton and he had plotted it together in the long ago, on the motive of the device of the three sylphs that was played before King James in 1605?"

"The fourth ace from the conjurer's sleeve!" cried Robinson hilariously; but Brown smilingly protested.

"The idea had just come to me," he assured them. "I had been heavily puzzled, not only by the apparently complete ruling out of Heywood from our play, where I fancied I had seen him, but by the odd divergence of his

Hierarchie story from ours, which he must have known. And this seems to yield an explanation."

"Do you know, Brown," exclaimed Smith, "I believe you are right. For whether or not Heywood had a hand in our *Macbeth* there *is* no other way that I can see of explaining his variant version."

"It certainly strengthens your Southampton hypothesis," replied Brown. "Heywood in his elegy on the death of James pays special tribute to Southampton's memory besides telling us he had been his servant; and if Southampton *had* schemed a *Macbeth* in 1606 with Heywood's help, everything would fit in curiously well. The Southampton *influence* would account for the scene being imposed; and a share for Heywood would then be accounted for. The thing fits."

"Of course it does," cried Robinson, the dubitative Jones finally withholding objection. "That ace takes the trick. All we want now is another card or two."

"I can't think of any," laughed Brown. "So I will just leave it at that. As to the closing speech in our play, to muzzle the equivocating Robinson I will leave him to look for Shakespeare in it."

" 'Infirm of purpose, giving me the daggers!' " spouted Robinson once more. "Hanged if I don't dig up something for the finish!"

" ' 'Tis a consummation devoutly to be wished,' " yawned Jones; and the tired company separated, relieved to think that one more sitting would wind up the quest.

SIXTH SITTING

"I LISTENED last night on the wireless," said Robinson as they settled down in Brown's library, "to the *Tannhäuser* Overture, and Tchaikovsky's *Symphonie Pathétique*, and some English contemporary's Something-or-other; and I had a curious feeling that the Something-or-other was all Wagnerized prose; and that even the admirable Tchaikovsky had been early sealed of Wagner's tribe. Well, to come to the point, it at least inspired me to refuse to pretend that Malcolm's final speech was written by Shakespeare. And I don't care *who* wrote it."

"Good man," applauded Brown. "I'm afraid I can't come nearer refreshing you than by repeating that it may well be the pleonastic Heywood, perhaps rewriting Peele, who has the tag about grace of grace, and also using a Chapman tag. It is in the line-ended verse of all Heywood's curtain-speeches; and indeed the whole of that final-scene section after the death-combat might be penned by him. It has his easily fluent movement; and the Siward passage is not beyond him—good strong sentiment without genius."

"If you could connect that work," suggested Jones, "with the other non-Shakespearean matter where you tried to trace him, it would be something gained."

THE CASE FOR HEYWOOD

"I will do my best, but it really isn't much," replied Brown. "The hypothesis that Heywood's special version of the Macbeth story points to his sharing with Southampton in the draft of the Folio *Macbeth* is, I think, a reasonable one, in the lack of any other. In Heywood's case as in Beaumont's, however, we must not claim echoes *prima facie* as proving collaboration in our play. Like Beaumont and Middleton, Heywood has echoes which, *pro tanto*, prove only that our

play had impressed him. Thus in *The English Traveller*, which must date after 1627, we have these lines (II, i, 6–9):

> I have not eyes
> To search into the inward thoughts of men;
> Nor ever was I studied in that *art*
> To judge of men's affections *by the face,*

which I should call a plain paraphrase of Duncan's

> There's no art
> To find the mind's construction in the face.

So, too, in the *Royal King* he has:

> When I forget thee may my operant parts
> Each one forget their office,

which echoes the play-scene in *Hamlet*; as he echoes Marlowe in

> the beauty
> That launched a thousand ships

in *The Iron Age.*

"Again, in Heywood's *Rape of Lucrece* we have such phrases as 'thy innocent sleep' (IV, iii, 43), in a scene which begins with a rhetoric broadly reminiscent of *Macbeth*, and includes another phrase about the cough 'of any drowsy groom.' And further on in the same scene we have

> This once defiled,
> Not all the ocean waves can purify
> Or wash my stain away.

All these I take to be simple reminiscences, proving only that they are written later than our *Macbeth*."

"Isn't it remarkable," interposed Jones, "how much impression *Macbeth* does seem to have made in its decade? Whatever the crowd thought, the men of letters seem to have felt, as Hallam and Drake and many more have felt since, that this is in a way the greatest, though nearly the shortest, of the Shakespeare plays."

"It really was, you know," mused Smith, "a new dramatic event, in respect of the sheer terror and swift power to which Shakespeare raised it, that is, where he takes hold."

"Precisely," nodded Brown, "though we must not forget that they echoed *Hamlet* and *Othello* also. But we can claim to identify, more or less tentatively, the alien hands only by first finding them capable of the versification which we see to be non-Shakespearean. Well, the case for Heywood seems to strengthen after we have noted that he had been a servant of Southampton's; howbeit Smith may reasonably claim that that fact favours his surmise. And let me tell you, my recreant Robinson, one of the grounds on which you flouted the Southampton hypothesis is strengthened in this twofold way when we go into the case for Heywood.

"You not unreasonably doubted that Southampton would make a Sergeant cry, 'Mark! King of Scotland, mark!' and when I capped that with the obliging assent of the soldiers to Malcolm's orders about bough-bearing, you thought that had an equal negative weight. But if you will turn to Heywood's *Appius and Virginia* you will find reasons for reconsideration."

"You accept Rupert Brooke's thesis, then," asked Jones, "that Heywood substantially wrote that play, originally printed as Webster's in 1654?"

"I do," said Brown emphatically. "The Jacobean *Appius*, as distinguished from the old Elizabethan one, is to me as visibly from the hand of Heywood as is his *Lucrece*."

"And," added Smith, "apart from some Websterian phrases, which Brooke noted, entirely alien to the versification, style, and sentiment of Webster. Fleay, I think, dates it 1609."

"Then," said Brown, "if Robinson agrees there, let him turn to scene ii of Act II, dealing with the mutiny of the soldiers and its suppression by Virginius. There he will find a whole dozen of *Omnes* speeches by the soldiers. And yet Heywood is there maintaining soldierly ideals, and making

Virginius play the merciless captain when the soldiers whose cause he has been pleading at Rome boil up in mutiny in his absence."

"I see what you are driving at," said Robinson reflectively. "You show that Heywood, who extolled Southampton as the soldier he was, could both speak up for starved soldiers and castigate them for mutiny, and could make them express themselves in *Omnes* speeches. Then Heywood, though enamoured of soldierly ideals, could make the soldiers cry 'It shall be done' after Malcolm's order?"

"It looks probable, doesn't it?" asked Brown defensively.

"Well, I won't say so," mused Robinson, "though I still boggle over 'Mark! King of Scotland, mark!' as coming from Southampton."

"Whom, remember," urged Brown, "I didn't claim to identify. That is Smith's pigeon; but, mind you, the Southampton hypothesis strikes me as very plausible in its way, especially if you suppose him to be recasting a Kyd speech."

"When all is said," urged Jones, "it will be on your case for Heywood, probably, that the Southampton hypothesis will have to be judged."

"Very well," said Brown, "let us work Heywood out. First, in respect of the Malcolm-Macduff-Ross scene, he fits the versification. He has that mark which we have seen wrongly taken as Shakespearean—the mere running-on of the clause with unevaded end-stresses—but which is common to Heywood, Beaumont, Middleton, and Jonson. And his double-endings vary round the figures for our scene, sometimes higher, sometimes lower. Finally, he seems the most capable of those eccentricities of word-form which we have failed to match elsewhere.

"I gave you before a number of his linked epithets, for instance. To these I may add:—'most huswife-exercised' in *Lucrece* (III, iii). To his verb-nouns I may add *arrive* = arrival, which he uses in two plays; and *keep* = keeping (*id.* IV, i);

also 'annual Sacreds' for annual festivals; and 'expiat' for expiation; and 'remain' for remainder; and 'durance' for stay, which may suggest 'my here-remain.' And that phrase in our play 'my confineless harms' smacks of him, inasmuch as he has many unusual adjectives in *-less*, as: *revengeless*, *clotheless*, *aidless*, *still-less*, *compareless*, *respectless*, *pardonless*, in addition to common ones. I don't think I have anything further, though I may mention that he has 'a birth' in the sense of 'a personality.' "

"It isn't exactly decisive," said Jones doubtfully.

"It is not," agreed Brown; "and as I can give no example from him of the 'my here-remain' type, I leave still an opening for the Southampton theory. I should add that Heywood's Pyrrhus in *The Iron Age* has no touch of the style of the Pyrrhus speech in *Hamlet*, though he has 'guled in slaughter.' There is no stay or comfort for me in an unproved hypothesis as a solution; and the Southampton hypothesis remains seductive."

"Well, for that matter," granted Smith, "I must leave the Southampton hypothesis equally open. There is just one other point that I think we should note. The speech of the unnamed Lord in III, vi, where we have 'with Him above to ratify the word,' may or may not be from the same hand that wrote 'God above' in IV, iii. I would only say that to make a character 'another Lord,' without a name, is suggestive of patchwork, and those repetitions of 'gracious England' after 'gracious Duncan' carry the same hint of late expansion. In fact, the external pressure may account for several scenes."

"Leaving it at that," assented Brown, "we must next avow, I suppose, that neither have we any decisive case for Beaumont, who does not match our suspicious words, though he repeatedly echoes *Macbeth*."

"And of course," added Smith, "if the certain biographical link between Heywood and Southampton is not conclusive for us, neither can there be any validity in a mere hypothesis

as to Beaumont's collaborating with him, when we have no record whatever."

The Case for Beaumont

"Still," said Brown, "let us not forget the case we did make out, *pro tanto*, for Beaumont. My correspondent has given me a few more parallels. You remember Malcolm's opening lines in IV, iii:

> Let us *seek out some* desolate shade, and there
> Weep our sad bosoms empty.

Compare this in *Philaster*, III, ii (near end):

> Go *seek out some* forgotten place to die.

Then recall Macduff's lines:

> Hold fast the *mortal sword*, and like good men
> *Bestride* our down-fall'n birthdom. Each new morn
> New widows howl, new orphans cry, new sorrows
> *Strike heaven on the face.*

Now compare this of Beaumont in *The Maid's Tragedy*, IV, i, 76–8:

> And I alive? by my *just sword* he'd safer
> *Bestride* a billow when the angry North
> Ploughs up the sea, or make Heaven's fire his foe.

This last is rather remote, with only vocabulary echoes; and a passage of Fletcher in *The Spanish Curate*, I, i, about widows' curses and tears of orphans, is remoter still. But the first-cited parallel at least supports the view that Beaumont had special memories of that Malcolm-Macduff scene, and his connection with Southampton in the drafting remains a possibility; though we can make no commitment.

"In fact, if we were to lay any stress on that 'Bestride a billow' passage in Beaumont, we should have to reckon once more with Heywood. For in that recast play of his (in which Fleay thinks he had first collaborated with Wentworth Smith), *The Royal King and the Loyal Subject*, you have

in the first scene an inflated archaistic speech, with such lines as these:

> My noble marshal, twice that perilous day
> Did he *bestride* me, and beneath his targe
> Methought that instant did I lie as safe
> As in my best and strongest citadel;
> The while his *bright sword*, like the bolt of Jove,
> Pierced the steel crests of barbarous infidels
> And flatted them with earth. . . .

There is more flavour there, perhaps, of the Sergeant speech than you get in Beaumont; and Malcolm, you remember, tells how the Sergeant 'like a good and hardy soldier fought 'Gainst my captivity.' But what can you make of it?"

"Nothing," cried Robinson, adding irrelevantly: "It is a grovelling play, that *Royal King*, and like Chapman's *Chabot* it seems well calculated to create an aversion for monarchy, in preparation for the Great Rebellion."

The Case for Middleton

"So we come to our solidest ground," went on Brown, "and map out the case for insertions by Middleton. First, as to witch-scenes. Seeing that his songs are actually introduced, there is a decisive presumption that it is he who introduces Hecate's reference to 'a wayward son' (III, v, 11), which applies directly to the foul Hecate of the *Witch* (I, i) and has no meaning whatever here. It only shows how unscrupulously he went to work.

"Well, I am really little concerned about tracing him minutely in other rhymed witch-matter. With the editor of the 'Arden' edition I am satisfied that Shakespeare did not write the opening 'When shall we three meet again' scene, which is on the plane of pantomime. When people find poetry in such a line as 'In thunder, lightning, *or* in rain,' I am not moved to argue."

"Kyd," suggested Jones, "was given to Inductions: we have them in the *Spanish Tragedy* and in *Soliman* as well

as in the *Warning*. He might have done a witch-induction here. But I suspect that the 'Fair is foul and foul is fair,' with its vacuous tag-line, is a late insertion echoing Macbeth's line, 'So foul and fair a day I have not seen.' "

"Exactly," chimed Robinson. "If Shakespeare had meant to give the witches first innings with 'Fair and foul,' he would have handed us something better than cheap jingle. And the third scene is no better. Here we fall into raucous vulgarism, *after* the weird sisters have preluded, and are to meet Macbeth and Banquo in a truly weird fashion. There is nothing weird about this stuff—just crude thrills in the squalid taste of the groundlings, such as we get later. I should give it all to Middleton, and be hanged to him."

"That is perhaps a bit summary," said Brown placidly. "But it is clear enough that the functioning of the witches is best introduced by Shakespeare on the plane of mystery; and that the 'raw head and bloody bones' business is meant for that audience to whom his poetry was caviare. I think we all feel that what the play needed, for him, in that kind, was just the really thrilling sense of 'fate and metaphysical aid'; and that all this murky machinery was outside *his* magic circle."

"Then do you hold to any further meddling in the rhymed stuff?" asked Jones. "You spoke of Chapman."

"Well, do you know," said Brown dubiously, "I don't hold strongly to my Chapman clues. Long ago I felt sure that 'Toad that under cold stone' in IV, i, is a futility—in sense as in metre; and when I found 'solid'st stone' in Chapman I surmised a line of his mangled. 'Solid ' or 'solid'st' gives the needed hint of ponderosity; whereas *all* stones are cold. And then 'vaporous' is a word of his, in the rather forcedly poetic line about 'a vaporous drop profound!' But Heywood uses 'vaporous'; and I hesitate to say that neither he nor Middleton could give the poetic touch about the corner of the moon. Still, I can't rule him out.

"Anyway, all that Hecate stuff in III, v, belongs to the

Witch side in respect of the 'wayward son'; and anybody might have thought of 'solid stone' in IV, i. It is true that in Shakespeare's own lines we have two poetic allusions to Hecate; but there she is conceived as the old high power of evil, and certainly not as the crass witch-woman of Middleton. In fact, it is hardly fair to drag in Chapman twice; and all the blue-devilry, as Robinson calls it, was within the scope of Middleton. And if it is he, he is spoiling Shakespeare here just as he does with the Porter scene."

"I wish we could have a fit edition of the play," cried Robinson, "with a riddance of all that spurious rubbish, which can only cultivate bad taste in young readers."

"By the way, Brown," interposed Smith, "do you remember Fleay's theory that Middleton in *The Puritan* meant by his allusions to travesty Shakespeare?"

"I have had it in mind," nodded Brown. "I was quite convinced by Fleay, long ago, that Middleton *did* write *The Puritan*: it is a good illustration of Fleay's swift perception. I see American students are now coming independently to his view—citing, as it happens, some of the very clues which Fleay confidently gave forty years ago, though they usefully add new ones. And Tucker Brooke, who fought so strenuously for Marston, seems to have admitted that he cannot make out any case."

"I agree too, of course," said Smith; "and, by the way, those Shakespeare echoes in *The Puritan* will have to be faced like those of Beaumont and Heywood."

"Exactly," agreed Brown; "but, you remember, we came inductively to the conclusion that Middleton's contamination of our play was late; and we proved it, I think, as to the Porter scene. We agreed that the allusion to the world-end bonfire was not an echo, but part of the fivefold cord of the proof that the Porter scene was a late insertion by him. The allusion in *The Puritan* to the ghost at the end of the table (IV, iii, end) is of course the standing proof that our *Macbeth* is earlier than that play, which dates 1607."

"Of course," interposed Smith, "we must remember that there might be such a scene in the old Kyd *Macbeth*. You remarked in an earlier sitting that the Clarendon editors argued for the date of 1610 for our Folio play."

"And it was not a bad argument," assented Brown. "But I think that that other echo in *The Puritan*, 'metaphysically and by a supernatural intelligence,' pointed to our play, though there *might* be some such phrase in Kyd's."

"It is remarkable," mused Smith, "how few are the firm grounds for the 1606 date. The preliminary datum of the Latin and English performances before the King and Queen at Oxford, in 1605, cited by Farmer, is perhaps the strongest. Malone's argument from the Porter's allusions to the farmer and the equivocator are quite insecure, as Conrad insists; and we date that soliloquy late anyhow."

"When all is said," remarked Brown, "perhaps the echo noted by Bradley from Marston's *Sophonisba*, which dates 1606, is the best evidence for that date. I mean the Marston parallel (I, ii) to 'fan our people cold' in the Sergeant's speech. And that sets up the question whether the Sergeant's speech, which we find non-Shakespearean, may not be an echo *from* that in *Sophonisba*; in which case the Folio play may still date 1610! As you say, Smith, it is a difficult problem—as Jones says, a tangle—and I do not profess to decide it here and now, though I lean to the 1606 date."

"Then what about the theory of travesty in *The Puritan*?" queried Jones.

"It is really very hard to say," hesitated Brown. "The idea began with old Farmer, who thought the allusion to Banquo's ghost in *The Puritan* was a sneer. But I can't easily see why that or the *echoes* in *The Puritan* should be reckoned more in the vein of travesty than any other; though I admit that the phrase, soon after the bonfire passage, 'which must come to me metaphysically and by a supernatural intelligence,' has the air of a gibing reference

to Lady Macbeth's 'fate and metaphysical aid.' But it may be sport rather than travesty."

"I am afraid," remarked Smith, "that Fleay jumped to his view by inference from the printer's 'Written by W. S.' on the title-page. He took it to be an equivocation meaning 'concerning William Shakespeare.' "

"Well, I put it to you," replied Brown, "could not that have been a joke between Middleton and the printer? There were so many Shakespearean echoes in the play; and Shakespeare's name was by that time a 'selling' one. Remember, too, that Middleton published or produced four or five plays in 1607, and might wish one to pass under another name."

"I always remember," objected Jones, "that Ben Jonson said Middleton was 'a base fellow.' Of course, Ben was rather free with such aspersions. But I like neither Middleton's mind nor his matter, after all Swinburne's inconsistent special pleading; and I like him no better after more recent attempts to class him as a great dramatist. They are simply admiring some plot situations which he did not invent."

"He has a few strong situations," commented Robinson; "but so has Heywood. And those who praise him as a master of versification simply reveal that they have no ear for the melody of Shakespeare's. After the Porter scene I can believe that Middleton himself was so constituted. I don't know whether the virtue or the vice in his plays is the more unpalatable. I can believe that he *did* want to mar the Master's work; and I can conceive that he did it because he knew Shakespeare did not like his."

"That might be," mused Smith. "Lamb could lash himself up to admiring that wire-drawn play, *A Fair Quarrel*, only by resenting feebler sentimentalism in dramas of his own day. They must have been bad indeed to upset his judgment to the point of finding *it* admirable. The men are either odious or crazy; the father is a scoundrel, and the lover finally a cad; and even the good women are hysterical men's-women, wire-hung mannequins. Ellis may be right

in ascribing the main plot-idea to Rowley; but the gross farce that supplies relief to the melodrama is in Middleton's vein; and they added a surplus scene of coarse *canaillerie* for a second edition. Yes, I can well imagine that Shakespeare disliked Middleton's work in general; and that Middleton knew it. He stands, in comedy, as Beaumont and Fletcher in tragedy, for the beginning of the decadence."

"I'm afraid I can't pretend to arbitrate," said Brown. "But I will say that if in addition to shovelling in the witch-stuff and the Porter scene he did many of those jarring couplet effects, he shows small respect for the Master whose work he was disfiguring. And I don't think the kindly Heywood would have done that, though I suppose he did not rightly realize the supremacy of Shakespeare's either."

"A list of those bogus couplets," said Robinson insinuatingly, "seems to be part of your business before we try to wind up."

"So be it," said the industrious Brown; and Robinson became newly alert. "You will remember that the question of those couplets was mooted long ago. Fleay pointed out that in *Macbeth* more scenes end with tags than in any other play in the Folio. Spedding suggested rightly enough that the theatre management had developed a craving for couplet-tags, but did not seem to see that the inference was a post-Shakespearean contamination. The Clarendon editors rightly adopted that view; but the American D. L. Chambers, who followed them and cited a few of Middleton's multitude of similar couplets, ventured on no conclusion."

"The whole thing is profoundly suspicious," pronounced Robinson; and Brown went on his way.

"Let us go through the play," he invited, "taking Shakespeare's work as beginning at 'So foul and fair a day I have not seen.' The couplet contamination seems to begin in that scene, in the second half of line 146, when Macbeth utters that vapid 'aside':

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

I cannot imagine anything more idly superfluous, save for tastes corrupted by couplets and *clichés*."

"It is so indeed," cried Robinson. "Just think of those two smug 'editors'—heaven save the mark—Heminge and Condell, letting all that spurious stuff stand, knowing as they must have done how this play had been bedevilled; and talking of giving us his plays 'absolute in their numbers, as he conceived them.' It was a literary crime."

"Of course," remarked Smith placatively, "you must remember that that address to the readers was probably written for the theatre men by Ben Jonson; and that they and he were thinking only of the genuine quartos which were used for copy, as against the pirated ones."

"Damn them all the same," wrathfully muttered Robinson, adding: "As you know, that is no excuse for saddling him with plays which they well knew he had *not* written, as *Titus* and others. And if Ben lent a heedless hand in the business for a fee, caring nothing about all the contaminations that *he* must have known something about, it is no credit to *his* memory."

"It's all past praying for," assented Jones peaceably. "And if Pollard can to-day bring himself to believe that Shakespeare wrote *Titus*, how should poor Heminge and Condell see anything amiss in pretending to think so? They are officially assoiled."

"There's plenty more to come," went on Brown ominously. "In the fourth scene, when Macbeth has taken his leave, with Duncan crying 'My worthy Cawdor' in farewell, Macbeth is made to deliver, in couplets, an aside much more unplausible than the first, beginning:

> The Prince of Cumberland! that is a step
> On which I must fall down, or else o'erleap,

and ending in the most stereotyped style: 'Stars, hide your fires'—when there are no stars, for it is daylight—and

> Let not light see my black and deep desires;
> The eye wink at the hand; yet let that be
> Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see.

I cannot bring myself to count that genuine. It is just like scores of Middleton's innumerable couplets. For example:

> So by my lord's firm policy we may see,
> To present view, what absent forms would be,

in *Michaelmas Term*, IV, iv. The *Macbeth* couplets here are utterly out of place for an aside; and the 'huff snuff' rhyming stuff seems an echo from later speeches. It may or may not be a substitution; but it is surely an insertion.

"Perhaps," he went on, "the couplet at the end of scene vii, about 'mock the time with fairest show,' in the same key, may be argued for as genuine, though I don't so reckon it. 'False face' and 'false heart' are for me quite incongruous with the context, and with Macbeth's mood. This psychology is of the primitive sort that says 'I am a bold bad man.' But in any case the couplet surely stands for a 'cut.' "

"Another crime," murmured Robinson, looking at the passage.

"Then," continued Brown more contentedly, "I suppose we all agree to eject that unspeakable line (61) near the end of scene i of Act II:

> Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives,

which the Clarendon editors condemned, and with which should probably be elided the previous half-line, 'Whiles I threat, he lives.' Chambers of course will tell us that we can't pretend to know Shakespeare's real style sufficiently to say that he could not have penned such a verbal abortion. But we *can* think for ourselves."

"If this is disintegration," said Robinson, writhing in his place, "I'm your man, for good. I call it integration"; and Brown bowed his thanks.

"We now skip the Porter scene, as 'classed and done with,' " continued the prospector. "I may possibly be also

skipping some spurious couplets. But I suppose we agree to blue-pencil the line-and-a-half of Malcolm's speech at the end of II, iii:

> There's warrant in that theft
> Which steals itself, when there's no mercy left.

"I may say that that trail of spurious couplets seems to prove a systematic overhauling of the play for the purpose, by somebody who believed in the practice, or to whom the benighted management had given *carte blanche*. They and he *wanted* couplets. It is simply impossible that Shakespeare, who had done such tags in his time like other men, could have made them so uniformly ill as does the author of those I am noting.

"Therefore the fact that the couplets in this play are so excessively numerous is part of the proof that their multiplication is not of his doing. He is at the height of his power in the blank-verse; to assume that he could *then* be at his very worst in couplet tags is irrational. And hardly one is good. Even the relatively decent tag of the old man at the end of Act II, with the couplet that precedes, must I fear be set down to the contaminator, whoever he was.

"And though those four sententious lines of Lady Macbeth in III, ii, beginning 'Nought's had, all's spent,' and ending 'dwell in doubtful joy,' are not the worst of the couplets in that kind, I profoundly suspect them. They are at best third-rate in conception and in diction, and they badly lower the dramatic pitch. And I suspect that they are a substitution."

"I want a drink to sustain me through it all," said Robinson wearily, whereupon he was duly stayed with flagons.

"I'll hurry up," pleaded Brown. "It was Jones that wanted the list; and I'm giving him his heart's desire. If I skip anything, thank the gods, not me. I'll pass Macbeth's couplet at the end of III, i, though I have no faith in it."

"Nor I," groaned Robinson; the others smiling tolerantly.

"I can see," added the integrator, "the dauber stuck in that couplet in III, ii, where Macbeth is made to say to his wife:

> Thou marvell'st at my words, but hold thee still;
> Things bad begun *make strong themselves* by ill.

The Clarendon men rightly condemned that. Do you know, fellows, I feel that the man who did *that* doggerel had a real malice against Shakespeare. He wasn't even trying to make passable tags, for this would disgrace a hack. And if Chambers stands for all these nefarious ineptitudes, he is a mere accessory after the fact. 'Common-sense,' quotha!"

"I am afraid it *was* a malicious procedure," sighed Jones; "though the sheer literary dullness of those respectable actors who let him do it must have been marvellous. What writer could it be?"

"I can suggest nobody but Middleton," replied Brown. "There are scores of couplets of that order and quality in many of his plays. But, remember, we are giving a *very* black mark to the man whom we name in this connection; and we should not say we are sure."

"When all is said," remarked Jones thoughtfully, "I think we must conclude that Heminge and Condell simply could not distinguish between great verse and tag-couplets, or, let us say, they never dreamt that the tagging could be a literary sin. They simply did not know *how* bad it all was. *Titus* was for them just a successful play like another, mostly in smooth verse. They really knew not what they did."

"But that coupleteer knew," murmured Robinson vindictively.

"I share your resentment," smiled Brown; "but I'm more hardened as a dissector. And we are now near the end. In fact, we have already noted some of the later insertions; and the bulk of the rest of the play is non-Shakespearean anyhow. There is just this to be said. Some of the vacuous

couplets in the *non*-Shakespearean matter in Act v, which I have already noted, such as Malcolm's:

> Do we but find the tyrant's power tonight,
> Let us be beaten, if we cannot fight,

might be penned by the hand or hands that wrote the scenes. I think indeed that they were. And, poor as they are, I wouldn't assign them to the contaminator. Shall we leave it at that? I don't want to drive Robinson to drink."

"I am restored," protested Robinson; "but if Jones is satisfied, I think you might now give us a summary, for which I shall be grateful."

Summary

"Well, suppose we get back to our muttons from this point," chuckled Brown. "It is my pious task to record that in 1905, years after his 'Warwick' edition, E. K. Chambers classed as 'probably interpolations,' the passages III, v, IV, i, 39–43, and IV, i, 125–132, that is (*a*) the Hecate scene beginning, 'Why how now, Hecate! you look angerly'; (*b*) the five lines of Hecate in the 'Thrice the brinded cat hath mew'd' scene; and the eight lines asking, 'Why stands Macbeth thus amazedly?' And I may in your name, I suppose, say 'Thank you for nothing'? It is the minimum possible elimination of the most futile excrescences of the pantomime stuff. Everything else is left standing. So that's that.

"What a futile theory it is," cried Robinson. "It assumes that the theatre management said to Middleton: 'We have a play full of good witch-stuff; but you might give us a new scene of irrelevant rhymed matter, and stick in one or two trivialities. That is all we want from you.' It is unthinkable. However poor their taste, they could not be mere fools in business matters. They were doing a revival; and they would have asked for a quantity of witch-stuff or nothing, pointing to Middleton's play as a pattern."

"I think that is unanswerable," assented Brown, "my only partial alternative being the speculation whether, when Middleton did most of the scenes, Chapman may have done that irrelevant Hecate scene on the basis of Middleton's play. When D. L. Chambers follows E. K., I can only appeal to reason as you do. They ignore it. Our own excisions, happily, are more extensive.

"*First*, with the Arden editor and others we drop scene i, finding it probably a Middletonian substitution for an old Kyd induction.

"*Secondly*, with the Clarendon and Arden editors, we drop scene ii, regarding it as probably a recast of a Kyd speech by the outsider who had written the Pyrrhus speech, and as imposed by his influence against Shakespeare's preference, which is indicated by his different handling of the Cawdor matter. And that external influence would spontaneously delete any prior narration by Kyd of the hostile relation between Duncan and Macbeth.

"*Thirdly*, with the Clarendon editors, and many others, we reject *in toto* the Porter scene, which we definitely assign to Middleton, though not disputing that Shakespeare may originally have made the Porter say *something*, as Kyd may have done.

"*Fourthly*, we reject *all* the rhyming witch-scenes, as parts of Middleton's permitted or commissioned contamination, which included the Porter scene.

"*Fifthly*, we pronounce spurious the whole string of cacophonous or vacuous or platitudinous couplets which have been wedged into Shakespeare's scenes, leaving the similarly poor couplets in non-Shakespearean scenes to go with their context. The couplet-contamination of the Shakespeare scenes, we greatly fear, was part of the job of Middleton; but we cannot pretend, so far, to identify him there with certainty.

"*Sixthly*, on grounds of versification and diction we deny Shakespeare's authorship of the Malcolm-Macduff-Ross

scene, though we think he revised it at points. This seems to belong to the 1606 recast, though a basis in the Kyd play is likely; and, suspecting it to be connected with the hand or hands which wrote the Sergeant scene, we surmise here also an external 'influence,' imposing on the play a scene that is theoretically tedious and supererogatory, though it probably appealed to a number of men in its day.

"Further, with the Clarendon editors, we see non-Shakespearean matter in the later scenes which merely mark time, and in the closing speech of the play. The authorship of those variously inferior scenes, revealed as alien by their versification, we leave undecided, having indicated two hypotheses, which may be combined.

"*In sum*, we affirm that there had demonstrably existed a pre-Shakespearean *Macbeth*, planned by Kyd, and dateable about 1594–5, coming shortly before the *Warning for Faire Women*, which we take to be his last play, and which contains so many Kyd echoes preserved in our play. Of the later history of Kyd's *Macbeth*, up to the recast of 1606, we have no record. But we surmise that as the Chamberlain's company had acquired the *Spanish Tragedy* and the *Warning*, they also owned the old *Macbeth*. That would readily account for Shakespeare's rehandling of it.

"To Kyd, broadly speaking, we ascribe the plot of the killing of Duncan; the close complicity of Lady Macbeth, which was not given him by the Chronicles any more than the assassination itself; and the killing of Banquo; with witch and murderer and ghost business of some sort. It seems probable that he presented a view of the relations of Macbeth and Duncan before the murder, giving Macbeth previous grounds for resentment, as was his scholastic method. And a sleep-walking scene would not be out of his ambit, perhaps, though Shakespeare has written or rewritten ours.

"In the later military scenes he may or may not have had collaboration from, say, Peele, who might do a curtain speech, in his well-known manner. But that matter seems

to have been recast by another hand, not Shakespeare's—possibly Heywood's.

"This, friends and fellow-purifiers of a composite and contaminated play, is a simple businesslike statement of what we are led to by literary and æsthetic logic, on a survey of all the known facts, which include some strangely ignored even by such laudable prospectors as the Clarendon editors. And now, I trust with your approval, I will have a good long drink, otherwise a libation to the wronged soul of a great Master."

To which he received due encouragement.

"I suppose," remarked Jones softly after a pause, "you don't feel that Shakespeare harboured any sense of wrong over any of the compromises laid upon him by the theatre's needs? You mean that the wrong falls on us by way of him, he caring nothing for his own glory?"

"That," said Brown earnestly, "is most true; and it is one of our precious inferences. This, if you like, is partly deductive. Shakespeare's concern that a play should go right was impersonal and apart from his own contribution. We see that in Hamlet's advice to the players. To supersede others can never have been his aim; and if, when he had put in what electricity he was moved to spend, the rest of the piece would go sufficiently by candlelight, he would so let it be, neither disdaining nor grudging. Had he been ambitious to write always whole plays, why should he not so do? He could do all things."

"Yes," added Smith solemnly, "the man for whom 'we are such stuff As dreams are made on' was not the kind of spirit who frets for predominance and resents the shifts of the popular theatre as slights upon himself. If he had heard in his last years that the old management had stuffed the old play with uproarious witchery and things like the Porter scene in order to get new audiences, he would have tolerantly shrugged. Dreaming near sunset, he was above all that."

"So much the more Shakespeare he," cried Robinson, with

an emotion which averted further emotion among the rest. "This was genius without the weaknesses we associate with it. He was 'for all time' because time for him was nothing."

"And, as the traditional Shakespeare is another sort of thing," pursued Jones, reverting to the task of inquisition, "you won't expect much assent to the strictly negative side of your reasoning on the diction and substance of the Malcolm-Macduff scene, even though it satisfies us?"

"Why," grunted Brown, "I don't expect much assent to any argument from rhythm whatever. And even the rhythm sense did not arouse Corson to the alien quality of much of the Folio. If Bradley (at that point obviously thinking less of rhythm than of merely technical-looking grounds for dating *Macbeth* later than the other three tragedies) could pair off rhythmically run-on matter with syntactically run-on matter in which the verse-movement remains end-stressed, what are we to expect from the mandarins, or the multitude? Most men have only a rudimentary sense of rhythm, which they mostly identify with metre."

"And it isn't only that," added Smith gloomily. "Jones seems to think you can count on assent for your positive evidence. But you can't. You will be told that you have given no evidence even when you offer just such proofs as the traditionists themselves offer when they claim to do more than asseverate. They will suppress your evidence and say that you have given none. Whereas they have defended the Porter scene for fifty years with bad à priori arguments, and with no regard to the induction which cancels them, they will just ignore your whole induction. You remember you pointed out how Charles Crawford and Dugdale Sykes, following on Fleay, had proved in great detail that *Arden of Feversham* is the work of Kyd. Well, Boas, editing Kyd, was unable to see that Kyd had written it; and will never admit it, though he has stultified himself by excluding it."

"I know," said Brown. "And the said Boas, who not only, like Sarrazin, cited certain Kyd fossils from our Folio

Hamlet to show that Kyd wrote the old *Hamlet*, but expressly declared that the bulk of the blank-verse in the later three Acts of the First Quarto of *Hamlet* is 'unmistakably pre-Shakespearean,' afterwards protested that you must not apply the comparative or geological method to masterpieces. As if *Hamlet* were not to be so classed."

"And the said Boas," added Jones, "will proceed to tell you that any internal evidence you find for the origination of *Macbeth* by Kyd is 'flimsy'; and he will say this either because he didn't happen to notice it, or because you don't have the same amount of *external* documentary evidence for a pre-Shakespearean *Macbeth* as for a pre-Shakespearean *Hamlet*."

"Quite so," assented Brown. "That is what you have to expect from the Fetishists—all of them already convicted of blasphemy against the Icon. What then?"

"Perhaps the worst of it is," observed Robinson with unusual gravity, "that they will continue to affirm the Shakespearean quality of the Porter scene in *Macbeth* in the teeth of arguments of Bradley's which flatly discredit it, simply because Bradley nevertheless gave a blank certificate to Hales and Chambers in regard to that scene and the play in general."

"As how?" inquired Jones.

"I have been looking into Bradley on *Lear*," replied Robinson. "He takes some of the suspected passages in *Lear*, beginning with the vacuously coarse couplet put in the mouth of the Fool at I, v, 54–5:

> She that's a maid now, and laughs at my departure,
> Shall not be a maid long, unless things be cut shorter.

There is nothing more stupidly coarse in the Folio perhaps; and Bradley rightly puts four effective reasons for rejecting it as spurious. Here they are" (reading from his note-book):

'(1) The scene ends quite in Shakespeare's manner without it.
'(2) It does not seem likely that at the *end* of the scene Shakespeare

would have introduced anything *violently* incongruous with the immediately preceding words:

> Oh, let me not be mad, not mad, sweet heaven!
> Keep me in temper: I would not be mad!

'(3) Even if he had done so, it is very unlikely that the incongruous words would have been grossly indecent.
'(4) Even if they had been, surely they would not have been *irrelevantly* indecent, and evidently addressed to the audience, two faults which are not in Shakespeare's way.'

"Now, I put it to you, is not every one of those arguments effective *against* the ascription to Shakespeare of the Porter scene in *Macbeth*? There, as it happens, the Porter scene comes marked *Scena Tertia*; but Professor Bradley has expressly argued that on the Shakespearean stage one scene followed another without pause or change; and on that view the effect of contrast is just the same. Well, Hales, pontifically endorsed by Chambers, who in turn is endorsed by Bradley and Brandes, told us that after the murder scene we *needed* a comic contrast.

"But, firstly, we found that in Hales's own second opinion it was *not* needed; and, secondly, Bradley holds that Shakespeare wouldn't have put anything *violently* incongruous with what went just before. But the Porter scene *is* violently incongruous with the murder scene. Thirdly, the Porter's soliloquy is quite unquestionably addressed to the audience, which Bradley says is not in Shakespeare's way.

"Again, fourthly, in *Lear* Bradley doesn't believe that Shakespeare, if he *did* want a violent contrast, would have made the new matter grossly and irrelevantly indecent. But the Porter after his drunken soliloquy just goes on into gross and *irrelevant* indecency in his talk with the visitors. *Solvuntur tabulæ!*"

"I don't see," said Brown slowly, "how Bradley could gainsay you. As you know, I have a great esteem for his judgment. And I may add that I cannot easily accept Bradley's further argument in defence of Edgar's soliloquy

in couplets at the end of the sixth scene of Act III of *Lear*. Those lines, as he knows, are not in the Folio. It is not on that score, however, that I doubt them; for other parts of the scene are also dropped, apparently to save time. But I can see no need for them. All that the scene needs to end it we get in the lines:

> What will hap more tonight, safe 'scape the King!
> Lurk, lurk!

which is utterly detached from the couplets. And even these might be anybody's. And finally, after the Professor had justly given up the Fool's rhymed speech at the end of scene ii, ending, 'This prophecy Merlin shall make; for I live before his time,' I think he might have nerved himself to admit that there is yet more spurious matter in that play."

"Whose, do you suppose?" asked Jones.

"Middleton's, I suspect," said Brown. "But that is another inquiry. Enough for the day——"

"Is the good thereof," said Robinson cheerfully. "I see I'm in for more disintegration; and I won't quote Macbeth on that point. It is the defence that finally convinces me: they really have not enough of the truth-seeking spirit. Of course nobody ever doubted the critical good faith of Bradley. He simply didn't work his tests all round. But the triple X men —the Porter men—well, I recall something in George Eliot that won't bear application."

"So," said Jones musingly, "we are left facing a bad defence that is quite likely to remain obstinate, being in the hands of men who have given hostages to fortune by committing themselves to the false positions, but who know that if they just stand by each other in the press they will live and die in the odour of authority, the general public being either ignorant or indifferent."

"It is part of our unsound machinery of press criticism," said Smith heavily. "On the one hand you have Ptolemaic officialism, the critical inertia of the men who will not look

through the telescope, and whose prototype is Pooh Bah. Professor Asellus Abracadabra and Sir Triceps Cerberus will quite spontaneously—you may say, sincerely—proclaim that you can never find out anything by critical analysis and must just firmly continue to wear the blinders of tradition.

"Then the correct newspaper critics acclaim their authority, and tell us that the oracles of Cerberus will last for centuries at least. And the multitude, if they so much as glance at the matter, are satisfied that all is well, and that *all* neologism is on the plane of Baconism and Oxfordism."

"I suppose," said Robinson, reverting to tolerance, "we can't seriously blame the ordinary press critics, who simply *can't* give time to the study of the problems they have to pronounce upon. How can a reviewer earn a living if he is to read carefully and weigh carefully the books he has to notice? He simply hasn't the time. It is a happy chance when he has any special insight."

"It belongs," sighed Brown, "to the commercialism of our newspaper system, which acclaims all the fiction that is well advertised, and is on principle more polite to advertising Oxfordism than to any rational inquiry. And it is that same commercialism that preserves our system of anonymity in criticism. Week by week, in some of our leading organs, men are free to deal out, with no responsibility or risk of exposure, vacuous impertinence, falsification, or cheap aspersion, at will. You can't look for rectitude from protected palterers. The amount of malice or insolence that a man will permit himself under the shelter of anonymity is the measure of his littleness, moral and intellectual."

"I can't gainsay you there," said Robinson. "Our system of anonymity goes far to account for the general inferiority of our criticism to that of France, where honest signed critiques have for a century past created an interested reading public for criticism in general."

"And so we get our vicious circle," continued Smith. "In what we may call the academic ring, the levels seem steadily to fall. Bradley has no comparable successor. The very men who without question accept the discrimination between the work of Beaumont and that of Fletcher in terms of verse-tests will brazenly deny that verse-tests can settle anything when you come to the Shakespeare Folio. And the men who forgetfully admit that Spedding and Ingram and Hickson proved the Fletcherian authorship of half of *Henry VIII* go on talking as if nothing could ever be proved against the Folio."

"Naturally," added Brown, "Peter Alexander makes a desperate appeal to the faithful to abandon 'conjecture' altogether and saddle Shakespeare once more with the whole of *Henry VIII*. He feels that to let Fletcher in there is a fatal breach in his wall of Jericho. What Pollard and Chambers will now do, I can't guess."

"A case of 'The Seven Against Sense,'" murmured Robinson, "with E. K. Chambers self-seated on the throne of the Common-sense he has helped to depose."

"You can see the fatality," put in Jones, "in the way they preserve corrupt readings and immetrical lines, where the correction is quite obvious. For instance, they mostly insist on reading 'the curtained sleep' (II, i, 51), where, by the mere dropping of 'er,' the line is made to halt, and the sense to go awry. '*The* curtained sleeper' is good English, and good metre; '*the* curtained sleep' is not. And nothing will make most of them admit that when the Folio gives:

> Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself
> And falls on the other,

there is anything wrong, however the metre may limp."

"I have always suspected," remarked Brown, "that when Shakespeare found he had ended on 'side,' after using 'sides' two lines earlier, he made a deletion which he did not remedy, or substituted something in the margin which has been lost.

Anyway, 'falls on the other' is no more English than 'abuses the sleep.' Those who suggest that it means the horse falling on the rider outgo me in speculation. For once, I think, Shakespeare felt he had mixed his metaphors as well as doubled his terms. It partly justifies the view that in this play he worked very swiftly, at high pressure, and left flaws."

" 'Let sense and metre go,' they crow, 'But leave us still the Folio,' " hummed Robinson. "But especially sense. I remember even the Globe edition makes Banquo say 'That trusted home' when Shakespeare surely wrote 'That thrusted home.' I suppose that Clark and Wright as text-editors put a rigid restraint on themselves for fear of outcry, and also because of keeping in mind the wrongness of many proposed emendations."

"It was certainly," nodded Brown, "a remarkable act of courage on the part of old Furness, in his Variorum edition, to put 'deserve' where the Folio has 'discern,' in Malcolm's speech to Macduff. For though that is a good emendation it is not such an absolutely obvious one as to demand to be put in the text. 'May of life' for 'way of life' is surely as good, for 'way of life' is flat commonplace. On the other hand, that bit about 'the bleeding and the grim alarm' in v, ii, is quite obviously corrupt, and yet it is not even obelized in the Globe edition. And in that admittedly alien matter of the witches they won't even put 'solid stone' for 'cold stone' to cure the metre and the sense."

"It seems to be where metre and sense are both dead against them," added Smith, "that our traditionists are most immovable for their 'mumpsimus.' You remember that line in Donne:

> Blasted with sighs and surrounded with tears,

which Saintsbury piously declares to be 'wonderful.' It is indeed—gross nonsense and farcified metre that would have made Donne yell. Read 'sorrow-dried with tears,' for which

emendation there are twenty justifications (either in actual use of the term 'sorrow-dried' or in the proverbial application of the idea) in Tudor and Stuart literature—do that and you get at once good poetic sense and right metre, restoring Donne's grave rhythm and escaping the agonizing dactylic jingle that Saintsbury adores even when it simply overturns the context. And E. K. Chambers passed that without turning a hair, in his edition."

"What is the reference?" asked Robinson, getting it (*Twickenham Garden*) from Smith, who added: "It is only fair to say that Grierson, who *has* an eye and an ear, lets the monstrosity pass in *his* edition."

"Well, anyhow, it is significant that Chambers should be on in that act also. Grierson might repent; Chambers won't," replied the eclectic. "That ring," he added, "should be classed as 'The Deaf and Blind Institute.' "

"Come, come," remonstrated Smith, "our natural sympathies should not be trifled with."

"I have been studying E. K. Chambers on *Macbeth*," said Jones, judicially producing a small volume. "There appears to be almost no counter-sense, or non-sense, that he can deny himself. I don't mind his decreeing that 'A cosmic tragedy is *primarily* philosophical and not psychological.' That cuts no ice with anybody, especially when the philosophy you get is a turning of the verbal kaleidoscope on the theme of free-will. But when he tells you, in the introduction to his Red Letter edition—which introduction, remember, he has reprinted with the rest—that in *Macbeth* the antithesis is 'that between the practical life and the intellectual,' the somersaults in the exposition are really beyond permission.

"He goes on to tell us that 'Macbeth is bold and resolute in the moment of action. . . . But when there is *nothing to be actually done*' [remember the murder scene] 'he is *devoid of self-control* . . . he becomes a prey to countless terrible imaginings. . . . Of all this Lady Macbeth is the exact

converse; . . . she can scheme and plot, but she cannot act; . . . at the moment of discovery she faints.' Now, will anybody tell me which is the practical and which the intellectual type in that discrimination?"

"Why," said Robinson, "surely Macbeth is put forward as the man of action: that must be the 'practical' type. Then Lady Macbeth is the intellectual type—the type that schemes but faints."

"And what about Macbeth's soliloquies?" patiently inquired Jones. " 'If it were done when 'tis done,' 'Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow'—are these the reflections of the practical and non-intellectual man; and is it intellectual to faint? And which of the two is it that dies of 'terrible imaginings'?"

"As it happens," remarked Smith, "Bradley has a note on the question, 'Did Lady Macbeth really faint?' He 'decidedly believes that she is meant really to faint.' Others have argued that when Macbeth leaves the rest to help her off the scene he knows well enough she is only making-believe. But Bradley feels that she is conceived as all nerve and no stamina."

"Then," pressed Robinson, "is that the procedure of the practical type? I find no further light from Chambers to illustrate the non-intellectuality of Macbeth, whom we were taught to conceive as a man of tremendous imagination and depth of reverie. What does Chambers's antithesis finally amount to? Does he mean that Macbeth *is* intellectual, and *also* a powerful man of action?"

"Why," said Robinson, "of course it is just verbiage that unsays itself; on a par with that formula about tragedy being primarily philosophical and *not* psychological, as if psychology were alien to philosophy. Perhaps," he reflected, "he had meant to write 'not *physical*.' "

"It doesn't greatly matter what he meant," said Smith severely. "His deliverances on Free-will and Christian optimism, and his decree that 'the gravamen is against the

first cause,' are just the sort of stuff that he would have flouted as sentimental or à priori or fantastic if anybody else had chanced to say it before him."

"But there is worse to follow," went on Jones. "In regard to the 'gravamen against the first cause,' he announces that 'Here Shakespeare acknowledges a mystery, as it would seem, an unholy mystery. *As is his custom*, he indicates mystery by way of *symbolism*. His witches are *not literal*, but they are real enough. They stand for the *non-human agents of the whole cosmic drama*.' Now, could you beat that? I don't say it is the acme; for that is yet to come. But just consider the implications that for Shakespeare the fee-fi-fo-fum witches at the stinking cauldron are at once symbolic and not literal, yet 'real enough,' and stand for 'the non-human agents of the whole cosmic drama'—whatsoever *these* may be."

"Chambers runs a little cauldron of his own," grinned the irreverent Robinson. "But it is hard to guess where his wits were when he implied that Shakespeare usually put symbolism on the evil or the retributive forces in life. As if *he* had invented the Ghost in *Hamlet*, or had inserted any operant symbols in *Othello* or *Coriolanus* or *Lear* or *Antony and Cleopatra* or *Timon*, or even in *Romeo and Juliet*."

"Now listen," said Jones sedately. "After that stuff about the cosmic drama, the Chief of Staff gives us this: 'Nor do I think'—there is no previous negative for the 'nor'; but that is the academic style—

> 'Nor do I think that the symbolical use of the supernatural in the play is *exhausted* in the witches. . . . Are we not to find a *supernatural agent* in that third murderer who silently joins the two commissioned to undertake the waylaying of Banquo? . . . Is it pushing the bounds of conjecture too far to see in this the swift momentary interposition of the hand of inscrutable Providence?'

I can only add, Selah!—whatever that may mean."

"Does he mean to suggest that that is how Shakespeare thought about Providence?" gasped Robinson, sitting up,

staring. "O Great Panjandrum! let me out! 'Can such things be?' " he quoted.

"If any of *us*," observed Brown, "had talked like that, Chambers would have fired off official sneers about sentimentalists and fanciful speculators. The astonishing thing is that the very wildest speculations always come from the official custodians of tradition. *We* see Shakespeare as the Man of the Theatre, transfiguring or adapting a play. If he leaves it not quite clear who or what the third murderer was, the rational course for *us*, as inductive inquirers, is to infer that he meant to show how Macbeth sought to make assurance doubly sure by sending a trusted man to see that the murderers did their job. And then the Guardian of Tradition comes in with a theory that Shakespeare in his heart believed in supernatural agents, and meant to supply one without letting on.

"In the way of rational conjecture, I may say that to put in a third murderer to supervise the others is exactly in Kyd's way. In *Arden* he repeatedly indicates that all hired murderers are untrustworthy; and Greene goes off-and-on supervising Will and Shakebag, and coming in to find they have bungled their job. I should pretty confidently guess that he had somewhat so dealt with the murderers of Banquo."

"Let us be just," interposed Jones gently. "Chambers winds up with this profound reflection: 'it may be that the rash hand of a stage manager has *suppressed* just what was intended to give the requisite clue.' If Fleay had written that, imagine how Chambers would have ejaculated."

"For a wild guess," chuckled Brown, "that almost deserves a pat. What has probably happened is that Shakespeare himself curtailed Kyd's manipulation of the murderers, as he well might; for Kyd overworks those gambits. But that Chambers of all men should invent new supposititious tamperings with the text is more edifying than words can say."

"Really," cried Robinson restlessly, "I agree with Smith

that the divinations of Chambers don't seem worth discussing. I don't know whether at any one moment he regards himself as practical or intellectual; but he doesn't seem to score either way."

"There is just this to remember," cautioned Smith. "If Brown produces a reasoned theory of the construction or composition of *Macbeth*, showing it to be an old play recast, Chambers, as Chief Mandarin, will notify the universe that 'Here, *of course*, common sense revolts.' See his latest Apostolic Constitutions (II, 219). And he will also announce that he dismisses all à priori arguments, when he is using them all the time."

"Common sense," murmured Robinson; "this from the man who thinks the third murderer was probably a supernatural agent; and that Shakespeare drafted *Romeo and Juliet* because of a love affair he had had. The literary crimes attempted in the name of Common-sense considerably outnumber those wrought in the name of Liberty! Certainly, if Chambers proclaims, as he probably will, that your hypothesis of Heywood and Southampton's connection with *Macbeth* is a romance, you can tell him that it is nothing like so fabulous as his third murderer theory."

"I wonder," mused Smith, "whether such an inquiry as yours, Brown, will set anybody thinking anew about what Shakespeare really achieved, in his rehandling of Macbeth as of Hamlet. Kyd's Macbeth would be a barbarian, as his Hamlet was. Ours lives in a universal world. I suppose that, as Salvini said of Hamlet, we may say of Macbeth, 'Such a man could never have existed.' Shakespeare's creations in this kind are 'out of space, out of time'; and here he has lifted an old Kyd play into another æsthetic world, as he did with *Hamlet*, making the mortal put on immortality. For what dramatic realism can ever give us such a thrill of uttermost reality as this impossible Macbeth, in every line that Shakespeare makes him say?"

"Don't forget," deprecated Brown, "that there has been

a great deal of good appreciative writing on Macbeth, though nothing like the mass of literature expended on Hamlet. A good deal of the matter on Macbeth, of course, is neither here nor there—impeachments of him as having no true courage and no capacity for real remorse, which are on a par with the inculpation of Hamlet, from Lowell to Henry Morley, on the score of his deplorable slackness about uncle-slaying. But Bradley gave us something better.

"And the American C. V. Boyer, I should say, makes an excellent reply to Boas and Moulton on that score, in his book on 'The Hero as Villain in Elizabethan Tragedy,' which is an able and scholarly study. Also he makes a useful rejoinder to Stoll, who seems to think that not even Shakespeare could think or feel as deeply as we can three hundred years after him. I confess I have no such sustaining faith in average advance, even if we credit each age with new wisdom. I fancy Shakespeare was deeper than Dr. Johnson, and that Stoll is on that head reasoning à priori.

"If only Boyer had been inductively alive to the Marlowe elements in the Folio, he would have seen that Richard III and Macbeth 'are of two houses.' But that is the trouble that faces us everywhere in these matters."

"In fact," said Jones soberly, "when the analytic method is finally applied to the Folio, and Shakespeare is truly integrated as Brown has been trying to do in the case of *Macbeth*, all Shakespearean criticism will have to be rewritten."

"Ours included," added Brown briefly.

"But in the very doing of it," pleaded Smith hopefully, "the ministry of Shakespeare, which is our stimulus and our sustenance, will carry the whole movement on. The stimulus that created so much good empirical yet thoughtful criticism in the past will surely invigorate the scientific."

"And the theatre itself," chimed Robinson, "might on this basis be reinvigorated for a new audience. If only you

can get the fit actor, it can all be given even on the stage, for which Shakespeare wrote it."

"You are optimistic," sighed Jones. "I can remember feeling in my youth that the gallery at least got far more thrill out of the click-clack of the claymores of Macbeth and Macduff than out of any of the poetry. And don't those very contaminations in our play prove that for the Jacobean stage Shakespeare was found to be too 'highbrow'? The couplet-tags and the witch-stuff and porter-stuff are the sufficient proof. And what inner ear can the Chamberses have for the poetry of which they shelter the contamination? And who is to act Macbeth for us with a corrupted text?"

"How comes it, in fact," chirped Robinson, "that this stolid Old England came to have Shakespeare at all, the supreme master of *poetic* drama, which is a sheer transcendence of drama; and how comes it that this transcendent thing is still acclaimed as a national possession? Why, what can it signify but this, that with all her sins and all her stupidities England *has* a heart for great poetry—a spiritual heart somehow distributed through that amorphous whole. And in three hundred years neither the asses' kicks nor the mandarins' perverted praise have killed the immortal lion. Dr. Johnson can have perceived neither the poetry of Shakespeare nor his rhythm, and he has thrice given the lie to his own praise of the plays; yet he was a force in the building up of their fame. Depend upon it, Brown, the game is not up. Even if many of them worship they know not what, the 'wronged great soul of the ancient master' goes marching on. It's a permanent wave."

"*Sufflaminandus est*," laughed Brown. "Well, my brethren, it is not for us either to arraign or exculpate the First Cause. We have our wages in our joy, and in our work, so far as it is honest and logical; as I hope it really is.

"I should like," he went on gravely, "to add this. I do feel it is difficult to be critically just. Poor Clutton-Brock

wrote, very truly, that 'Nothing is so easy as to seem wise to yourself, if you empty your mind of all facts.' And that hits nobody harder than himself. For he always begins and ends in auto-suggestion; and his facts are of that species. They are merely his subjective facts of the moment. He always felt sure he was righteous, as he certainly meant to be; but he never saw that righteousness needed a steady discipline; and at his best he was too inveterately subjective to perceive that facts are objective tests, to be faced all round. So, as his thought began and ended in auto-suggestion, his doctrine began and ended in unction, with truth and justice sometimes equally far to seek—in Shakespearean matters, I mean.

"I say this because his tribe are like unto him, without his high literary gift. Living on unction, they love his; and of a just investigation as to *Hamlet*, where he made none, they are simply incapable. On a concrete and technical issue, on which they are quite ignorant, they pronounce incompetent judgments, unashamed alike of ignorance and injustice. Unction for them salves all; and epithets take the place of evidence and argument.

"Criticism ought to be a matter of well-informed reasoning; and it is the men of auto-suggestion who are always forcing it into a polemic by their thoughtless dogmatism. They must be exposed, else we should never get a hearing for reason at all. They have to be shown that there is a conviction founded on analytic reasoning and study as well as a conviction given by auto-suggestion, which is only intellectual autocratism and egoism at its best. The man who has never tested his auto-suggestions has simply not learned to reason; and as a schoolmaster in literature he is hopeless.

"Well, let the world wag. In this inquiry we have checked each other; and you have kept me in reasonable order. You have all been excellent collaborators. And perhaps some day we may go again prospecting."

But a somewhat somnolent silence now fell upon the

symposium, which peacefully disintegrated once more after its longest sitting.

"Blessed if I don't have a shot at *Troilus* myself," murmured Robinson to Brown as he said good-night.

"I wish you joy of your job," was the murmured answer. And Smith beamed benevolently, with Jones.

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