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An Edition of Shakespeare Restored by Lewis Theobald (1688-1744)

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AN EDITION OF
SHAKESPEARE RESTORED
BY LEWIS THEOBALD (1688-1744)

by
Anthony LaLa

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Loyola University in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

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INTRODUCTION

It is difficult for us to appreciate today the relatively primitive conditions under which Lewis Theobald worked in 1726. At that time there were no concordances to Shakespeare's works, and there was hardly anything in the way of a critical apparatus to assist anyone in Shakespearean research. Furthermore, the original texts of Shakespeare's plays--the folios and quartos--were already becoming scarce. Yet, despite this, Theobald had, by the time he came to write Shakespeare Restored, invented a technique whereby he could locate virtually any passage in the Shakespearean canon for any purpose.

But Theobald's accomplishment has generally been depre-
cated by several generations of scholars, and his actual work
has largely gone unread and unstudied. In his own time Theobald
became something of a controversial figure, even perhaps a mild-
ly notorious one, on account of the enmity of Alexander Pope.
It seemed, however, by mid-century, that Theobald, who had died
in 1744, was going to be remembered favorably as a gentleman

who had contributed something worthwhile to the developing traditions of Shakespearean editing. His friend and colleague, Thomas Seward, wrote that Theobald's fame as a critic of Shakespeare remained "fresh and unblasted though the lightning of Mr. Pope and the thunder of Mr. Warburton have been both launched at his head." Seward went on to claim that Pope had been driven out of the field of Shakespearean criticism by Theobald's superior powers, and although Pope, who had "retired to his poetic citadel," had attacked Theobald with the full resources of his satirical arsenal, he never drove Theobald "from his hold on Shakespeare, and his countenance on that side is still clear and unspotted."¹

If Seward intended this as a prediction he proved that he was no prophet, for, since his death Theobald has frequently been maligned both as a man and as a scholar. Even those who have attempted to restore his reputation have failed to do so effectively because of a misplacement of emphasis. He has generally been praised highly for a brilliant emendation or two--inevitably and invariably for "a' babled of green fields" --but rarely for the development of the technique that produced those emendations. Theobald's current reputation as a scholar

¹The Works of Mr. Francis Beaumont and Mr. John Fletcher. 10 vols. Ed. by Theobald, Seward, and J. Sympson (London: Tonson and Draper, 1750). "Preface," I, lvii.

is based on his own edition of Shakespeare's plays, published in 1734. But this edition has been superseded in the past two hundred and thirty-five years by countless editions, many of which have incorporated everything of critical value in Theobald's edition. Theobald is frequently given credit for his contributions in occasional footnotes, often he is not given any credit at all. The point is, if one is going to read Shakespeare's plays today, one is not going to seek out Theobald's volumes. It has been pointed out, moreover, that as Theobald's method "became more general, its source was obscured."² That method was, so to speak, by the late nineteenth-century, in the public domain, its inventor forgotten, or remembered by and large for the wrong things. If Theobald's value were limited to his edition, he would be as obsolete today as Thomas Hanmer and William Warburton, and his name would be embalmed alongside of those of Alexander Dyce and Richard Grant White.

The thesis underlying the production of this present work is that an assessment of Theobald's place in Shakespearean scholarship should be based primarily upon a study of his book, Shakespeare Restored, which, since its initial appearance in 1726, has been reprinted only once, in 1740, as a companion

²R. F. Jones, Lewis Theobald (New York: Columbia University Press, 1919), p. 251.

volume to Theobald's second edition of Shakespeare's works. It has not been reissued since that time, and it has never been edited.

Only two books have been devoted wholly or largely to a study of Theobald, both of them published in the first quarter of the twentieth century. Thomas Lounsbury, in The Text of Shakespeare (New York: Scribner's, 1906), is almost wholly preoccupied with rehabilitating Theobald's reputation and in attacking or ridiculing his enemies, especially Pope, Warburton, and Samuel Johnson. R. F. Jones, in Lewis Theobald, is partly derivative of Lounsbury, but somewhat more scholarly in his approach. Jones gives a good deal of attention to a discussion of Theobald's source materials and thoroughly analyzes his debt to Richard Bentley, a debt that Theobald was happy to acknowledge time and again. Professor Jones, however, for all his scholarship, is something of an apologist for Theobald, whom he tends to treat as a man more sinned against than sinning.

The primary differences between the present work and previous treatments of Theobald are: (1) this is a modern edition of a work that is essential to Shakespearean scholarship, yet is available only in a few libraries on a non-circulating basis, generally restricted to rare-book rooms; (2) it is preceded by a thorough analysis in which Shakespeare Restored is

placed in a context of other writings by Theobald that were steps in the process by which his editorial method was formed; (3) the findings and attitudes expressed in this study are disinterested: there has been no attempt to give Theobald a higher place in the scholar's hierarchy than he deserves, nor has there been an effort to enhance his reputation at the expense of others.

Theobald is sometimes pedestrian, sometimes awkward, but he is always authentic; his work shows that he was a tireless craftsman, and, in many respects, an original scholar.

When Theobald came, in 1740, to revise the Preface to his edition, he removed from it a large number of tiresome and cumbersome classical illustrations, mostly in Greek, probably on the grounds that they were primarily uninteresting and ultimately unnecessary. The present editor has performed a similar service for Shakespeare Restored by removing a small amount of erudite deadwood. Theobald's text, moreover, has been regularized by the modernization of his spelling, the occasional adjusting of his syntax, and a few corrections of his grammar. It has been decided, however, not to get too far away from the original by extensively altering Theobald's punctuation, which at first glance--at least to a present-day eye--seems somewhat capricious. But this is, after all, an eighteenth-century work, and the punctuation is an aspect of the style. Theobald was

inordinately fond of commas, and was liberal in his use of parentheses and semicolons. Most of these have been retained, but there have been silent alterations where intelligibility palpably called for them: occasionally obtrusive commas have been dropped, and frequently semicolons have been converted to colons where they serve to introduce quotations.

But these are peripheral concerns. The important thing is that a legible edition of Shakespeare Restored can assist a modern reader in an appraisal of Theobald and his contribution to early Shakespearean scholarship.

All of the available evidence supports the conclusion that Theobald was one of the truly learned men of his time. His knowledge of Greek and Latin was comprehensive, if not profound. His work indicates that he knew the Romance languages. He was exceptional even among the scholars of his day in that he was acquainted with Anglo-Saxon, as well as the language of Chaucer. To his mastery of languages Theobald added an extraordinary knowledge of literature.

Exceptional knowledge, however, is not enough to make a successful editor. In addition to his learning, Theobald possessed a very fine esthetic faculty. According to John Churton Collins, in his Essays and Studies (London, 1895), Theobald had what all other eighteenth-century editors lacked: "a fine ear

for the rhythm of blank verse, and the nicest sense of the nuances of language as well in relation to single words as to words in combination."

It was, ultimately, in the realm of editorial technique that Theobald was a great innovator. He was the first to undertake the study of Shakespeare's sources, for example Holingshed's Chronicles, North's Plutarch, and the Italian novelle. He was also the first to justify his emendations with evidence from Shakespeare's own language. "If he set out to make an emendation," says Lounsbury, "he supported the change, whenever possible, by citation of extracts in which the new word or phrase was shown to have been used elsewhere in the same way."³ In short, Theobald was the first editor to attempt to develop a genuinely scientific technique for the purpose of textual emendation.

³p. 160.

CHAPTER ONE
THE OCCASION OF THEOBALD'S
SHAKESPEARE RESTORED

The history of early Shakespearean textual scholarship is the history of a search. It has its genesis in an evolutionary groping toward the conception of a method. The very first producers of Shakespeare's texts were sometimes less sophisticated than modern scholars would like them to have been, and sometimes simply less honest. Lewis Theobald--who probably would have preferred to earn his share of worldly fame as a poet--was certainly, in his scientific way, more sophisticated than his sixteenth-century predecessors, and considerably more honest. Theobald marks both an end and a beginning. He marks the end of the first chronological line of Shakespearean publishing, a line which, if a small amount of refinement can be condoned, was divided into two phases. The first phase consists of the quartos, almost all of which were published during Shakespeare's lifetime, and the folios, the first of which came

out in 1623, seven years after his death. The second phase starts with Nicholas Rowe, continues with Alexander Pope, and ends with Theobald's Shakespeare Restored.

Theobald begins the second line, and by logical extension all subsequent lines, with the appearance of his edition of Shakespeare's plays in 1734. It constitutes the beginning of a new line because it is the first that was executed upon a fully developed and deliberately conceived editorial system. One might say that Theobald put an end to one kind of daydreaming about Shakespeare that, if not checked early, might have distorted the viewpoints of many responsible scholars. The dream was that if Shakespeare's manuscripts could somehow be found, all questions would be answered and all problems solved. Theobald faced the truth, at the very beginning of his career, that those papers were irrecoverably lost, and that we must find our authorities in the printed documents that are closest to Shakespeare's own time, the quartos and the folios. In his work upon those documents Theobald developed his method, a method of textual criticism that was new in that it had a scientific basis.

Shakespeare had been dead for almost a century when Nicholas Rowe, in 1709, put his name to an edition of the plays. It has been easy, since that time, for scholars, students, and educated readers to take the Shakespearean bounty for granted,

to regard the thirty-seven plays, the poems and sonnets collectively as one of the birthrights of the English-speaking world. It is also easy, when one examines the earliest texts upon which modern editions are based, to complain that most of the plays were left in deplorable condition. Modern readers, conditioned to the letter-perfect products of today's printers, can only look upon Elizabethan presses as at best slovenly, at worst irresponsible. But it is actually something of a miracle that such a relatively large number of plays by a single author of Elizabethan and Jacobean times managed to survive. That they survived virtually intact is another miracle.

Two things militated against the careful printing of plays in Shakespeare's time. The first was that plays were considered indispensable properties of the acting companies and were jealously guarded, especially against rival companies. Occasionally, a play was taken down in shorthand by one or more members of its audience and sold to a publisher for whatever it was worth; but, for the most part, the theaters considered it bad business to release their scripts or to countenance their appearance in print.¹

¹This process, justly known as pirating, almost always produced ludicrously bastardized reconstructions of popular plays.

The second consideration that accounted for the complacent attitude toward the printing of plays was the "highbrow contempt"² that most educated Elizabethans felt for the professional drama. The stage was a popular, therefore vulgar, form of entertainment, which appealed to the unlettered and unwashed members of English society. That it also held a strong appeal for the highest levels of that society--indeed, it was one of the Queen's favorite pastimes--and that Shakespeare's company frequently performed at court did nothing to enhance its prestige. As an art, the drama was considered grossly inferior to poetry. Joseph Hall, a contemporary of Shakespeare's, gives a good account of this condescending attitude in one of his satires:

Then doth the Theatre Echo all aloud,
With gladsome noyse of that applauding croud.
A goodly hoch-poch, when vile russetings,
Are match't with monarchs, & with mighty kings
A goodly grace to sober Tragicke muse,
When each base clown, his clumsie fist doth
bruise,
And show his teeth in double rotten-row,
For laughter at his selfe-resemble show.
Meane while, our Poets in high Parliament,
Sit watching euery word, and gesturement,
Like curious Censors of some daughtie geare,
Whispering their verdict in their fellowes eare.
.
Gins the bare hearer in a guiltie rage,
To curse and ban, and blame his likerous eye,
That thus hath lauisht his late halfe-penny.

²Patrick Cruttwell, The Shakespearean Moment (New York, 1960), p. 4.

Shame that the Muses should be bought and sold,
For every peasants Brasse, on each scaffold.³

It is obvious that there is something more than mere snobbery reflected in these lines. Evidently, there was a growing consciousness of an esthetic basis of art and poetry in Renaissance England. Englishmen were beginning to feel that they were capable of producing a literature, perhaps not yet comparable to that of classical Greece and Rome, but a literature nonetheless. Little wonder, then, that they saw the bombast and bloated rhetoric, the calculated violence and artistic formlessness of the popular plays as inimical to the development of taste. Anything so "clapper-claw'd with the palms of the vulgar"⁴ could not, in the mind of a refined esthete, have the intrinsic value of poetry. As late as 1612, George Chapman, in dedicating one of his works to a Mr. John Reed, apologized for the fact that it was a play, stating that it would have to serve "till some work more worthy I can select and perfect out of my other studies, that may better express me, and more fit the gravity of your ripe inclination."⁵

³Virgidemiae, Book I, Satire III, lines 37-48, 54-58.
The Collected Poems of Joseph Hall, edited by A. Davenport
(Liverpool, 1949), p. 15; noted by Cruttwell, p. 4.

⁴Foreword to the quarto edition of Troilus and Cressida,
1609.

⁵The Widow's Tears, edited by Ethel R. Smeak (Lincoln,
Neb., 1966), p. 3.

It is not improbable that Shakespeare himself shared, or at least recognized, this attitude. He was certainly aware that the social status of actors was very low, and that the respect accorded them in the later years of the sixteenth century was measurable in terms of financial success. In short, actors, as did the merchants before them, earned middle-class respectability, but to the extent that they ran a profitable business. But this kind of advancement had nothing to do with culture or esthetics. Tradesmen are not artists. In his Sonnet CXI, Shakespeare speaks apologetically of his "dyer's hand," and although he was certainly conscious of his powers as a dramatist, his aspirations were poetic. His most ambitious poems--apart from the Sonnets--were Venus and Adonis and The Rape of Lucrece. Both of these works were carefully, even somewhat elegantly printed; they show the unmistakable effects of conscientious proof-reading and almost certain authorial supervision. They were prefaced by conventional, if not elaborate, dedications. The plays, on the other hand, and with equal certainty, were not seen through the press by Shakespeare; indeed, there is no evidence that he was at all concerned with the publication of his plays. The many quartos tell us that story, and they tell it eloquently.

The printing of the quartos was first undertaken "by a group of publishers, among whom shifting business relations seem

to have existed, and some of whose proceedings, from a literary and probably also from a commercial point of view, were discreditable."⁶ The earliest extant quarto of a Shakespeare play is that of Titus Andronicus, which appeared in 1594. The publishing of this play was obviously intended to capitalize upon the popularity of an old-fashioned Senecan blood bath. It is a poorly printed book, as are most of the Shakespearean quartos which appeared between 1594 and 1622. Printing was not a highly refined art in Elizabeth's day; moreover, the quartos were cheap issues, designed to sell for a few pennies. They were not the products of the most highly skilled craftsmen. In some cases, notably the first issue of Romeo and Juliet (1597) and Hamlet (1603), the text was corrupt to begin with, having been acquired by means of a very imperfect stenographic technique. The actual process of printing was, according to modern standards, inefficient in the extreme. Misprints, which occur on almost every page, were corrected when noticed, but the sheets already printed were not discarded. This incompetent and somewhat fraudulent method of proofreading resulted in editions in which individual copies differ from each other.⁷ Under the circumstances, the tendency was for the texts

⁶E. K. Chambers, William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems (Oxford, 1930), I, 130.

⁷Tucker Brooke, Shakespeare of Stratford: A Handbook for Students (New Haven, 1926), pp. 116-117.

of plays printed in such a fashion "to degenerate through the series of editions, each later quarto being printed from the one immediately preceding it and adding typographical errors to those its predecessors had accumulated."⁸

The quartos are of genuine interest and importance, but the real beginnings of Shakespearean scholarship--inchoate as they may be--are to be found in the seventeenth-century folios, starting with the appearance of the first in 1623. Scholars have long deplored the shortcomings of the First Folio: its inconsistency of style, its haphazard proofreading, its failure to establish a chronology. For all its faults, however, the First Folio is for its time a very professional performance. Although unwieldy in size and hardly designed for the casual reader, it fulfilled its two basic purposes, first, to preserve in print a valuable corpus of dramatic work, and secondly, to serve as a memorial, indeed a monument, to a deeply loved artist. Its title page carries a good deal more authority than the miscellaneous quartos with their promises of having been "sundry times acted" or "never before imprinted." It provided the texts of twenty plays that would otherwise almost certainly have been lost, and established the Shakespearean canon, which, except for the dubious addition of Pericles, has been accepted almost unchanged by scholars and

⁸Ibid., p. 117.

editors to the present day.⁹

There were, of course, some obvious inherent difficulties in getting the First Folio through the press. The men who were chiefly responsible for its contents, John Heminge and Henry Condell, were actors, not scholars. Some of the plays were as much as forty years old and their mere survival is providential. Several of the more frequently performed plays had been subjected to complicated revisions during their stage lives and a definitive text for any of them could only have a theoretical existence. Possibly the greatest difficulty of all was posed by the sheer size of the volume. The challenge was simply too great. No team of anthologists, no staff of compositors and proofreaders, especially in the first quarter of the seventeenth century, could have produced a text of more than adequate fidelity to the original manuscripts. Without the living author to oversee the project, a half-success was all that could be expected.

If the First Folio be taken as the source-book, then the later folios can be seen as establishing an editorial tradition.

⁹It was once stylish to relieve Shakespeare of the responsibility for having written Titus Andronicus and Henry VI, Part I. On the other hand, a number of editors have claimed that Shakespeare's share in the composition of The Two Noble Kingmen is at least as large as in Pericles and King Henry VIII.

Each of the subsequent issues is, in a sense, an "improvement" upon its predecessor, at least in intention. Since the First Folio is not an "edition" in the accepted sense of the term--it is actually a collection--the history of Shakespearean emendation begins in 1632 with the issuance of the Second Folio. Although it created new errors of its own, this volume contains corrections that can only be construed as having come from an editorial hand. In it can be discerned the rudiments of a philosophy of editing and the beginnings of a somewhat haphazard technique. The anonymous overseer of the Second Folio probably considered himself a proofreader, although he was obviously authorized to make more than mechanical changes. There is no evidence that he resorted to collation, or that he thought it necessary to do so. He apparently used a common-sense approach, and most of his attention seems to have been directed toward catching typographical errors and correcting Shakespeare's grammar. In short, he regularized the works of an author who, although dead only sixteen years, was already somewhat difficult to read.¹⁰ Whoever he was, he can be credited with "more than eight-hundred emendations accepted by most modern editors."¹¹

¹⁰Matthew W. Black and Matthias A. Shaaber, Shakespeare's Seventeenth-Century Editors: 1632-1685 (New York: 1937), pp. 32-33.

¹¹ibid., p. 49.

Because the man in charge of the Second Folio had done his job so well, the man responsible for the Third had relatively little to do. There remained many obvious misprints left over from the First Folio, as well as a large number committed in the Second. These the Third Folio cleared up, at the same time contributing a small number of emendations. The Fourth Folio is no more remarkable in this respect than the Third. It is, certainly, the most carefully printed of all the seventeenth-century folios, and it carried on "the gradual process of mending and restoring the text of Shakespeare."¹²

The appearance of the Fourth Folio marked the end of the first phase of Shakespearean editing, what might be called the anonymous phase. As a mechanical technique the folios had clearly worn themselves out. The "editors" of these volumes had mastered only one tool, their ability to read Shakespeare's plays intelligently. There is not any reason to believe that after 1623 they had ever had access to any genuinely authoritative materials. Each of the last three folios was in effect a modified reprint of its predecessor. As an independent tradition, the folios had by 1685 become sterile.

This history of Shakespearean editing entered what might be called its first stage of maturity with the appearance,

¹²Ibid., p. 66.

in 1709, of Nicholas Rowe's edition. According to Professor McKerrow, Jacob Tonson, an ambitious London publisher, had bought the rights to Shakespeare's text from the publishers of the Fourth Folio. It was well known that a practicable copyright law was in the works in Parliament, and Tonson, wishing both to assert and to broadcast his ownership of the plays, decided to launch a new printing.¹³ Tonson selected Rowe because he was a respected actor and dramatist in his own right, one whose name could be expected to lend an air of authority to the enterprise.

Rowe's edition marks at least a technical advance over the Fourth Folio, upon which it is substantially based. It was printed in six comparatively small octavo volumes as opposed to the oversized and unwieldy Folio. It was illustrated with engravings and benefited from a uniform and fully modernized text. It was, professedly, the first edition of Shakespeare in which an effort had been made to be consistently systematic: Rowe saw, although imperfectly, that the text that he found in the Fourth Folio was the result of an evolutionary process, a process that was by its nature erratic. His basic purpose, other than satisfying Tonson's demands, was to produce a corrected text in which

¹³Ronald B. McKerrow, The Treatment of Shakespeare's Text by His Earlier Editors, 1709-1768 (N. p., 1933), P. 5.

the accumulated errors of almost a century had been cleared away.

It would not be accurate to say that when Howe set about planning his edition he perceived the necessity of certain editorial conceptions. He was not really aware of the need for a clear set of principles upon which to base his method, other than that he be superficially systematic. His best idea--if it was his own and not Tonson's--was to examine all the available old quarto editions, and to attempt a definitive text. He was the first to claim that he had performed the laborious task of collation, but his claim does not bear up under even perfunctory inspection. Except for Hamlet, none of the plays for which quartos exist were given much more than minimal examination. Howe restored a few lines here, adjusted a reading there, corrected obvious misprints when his eye caught them. But of a true system there is little sign; it is obvious that Howe never intended to do any collating more than was necessary to substantiate his publisher's advertising.

Howe did, however, succeed in improving the Shakespearian text in a number of peripheral areas. He brought uniformity to the designations of speakers' identities, so that a character always carried the same name. He constructed lists of dramatis personae for all of the plays. He systematized and regularized

the stage directions and settled the matter of particular locality for all of the scenes. An interesting aberration in his handling of these non-essential matters is his practise of dividing the plays into acts and scenes. Except for The Merchant of Venice he made no alterations in the comedies, and they appear in his edition as they did in the Fourth Folio.¹⁴

In the histories he merely readjusted the act division in the first part of Henry VI and divided the third part, previously undivided, into acts, splitting one act into scenes. When, however, he came to Troilus and Cressida, the first of the Tragedies, he began to take the matter more seriously, and from this point onwards he introduced scene division into all the plays where this did not already exist, though his divisions are occasionally, as in Coriolanus, somewhat erratic. In general he divided into fewer scenes than the modern editors, even in one case, Lear, making fewer divisions than the folios, eighteen instead of twenty-three; modern editions generally have twenty-six.¹⁵

Although all of these things were useful--and they certainly accomplished one purpose: they made the plays easier to read--they were all fundamentally mechanical. They were the sort of thing that almost certainly would have been done anyway as professional interest in the study of Shakespeare grew, as it had obviously been growing all through the seventeenth century.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 11.

¹⁵Ibid.

There is no clearly consistent credo, then, perceptible in Rowe's edition proper; however, in his prefatory essay, "Some Account of the Life of Mr. William Shakespeare," there is at least a suggestion of some critical awareness on Rowe's part. Basic to his formulation of an approach to the writings of a deceased dramatist is the assumption that the work is the reflection of the man. "As for what relates to Men of Letters," he wrote, "the knowledge of an Author may sometimes conduce to the better understanding of his Book."¹⁶ The acceptance of this hypothesis, although imperfectly thought out and stated somewhat oversimply, led to a search, on Rowe's part, for biographical data concerning Shakespeare. Since the great playwright left no autobiographical documents, and since his associates and contemporaries had failed to foresee posterity's wants in this regard, Rowe succumbed to the temptation to fill the vacuum of truth with quasi-truth. Unfortunately, in the absence of reliable data, apocryphal trivia can assume a magnitude far beyond their intrinsic worth. For example, Rowe accepted uncritically and without documentation the tradition that, owing to financial embarrassment, Shakespeare had to leave the grammar school at Stratford before he had completed the curriculum:

¹⁶Eighteenth Century Essays on Shakespeare, edited by D. Nichol Smith (Oxford, 1963), p. 1.

"the narrowness of his Circumstances, and the want of his assistance at Home, forc'd his Father to withdraw him from thence, and unhappily prevented his further Proficiency in the Latin Language."¹⁷ Rowe also believed the story that the adolescent Shakespeare had fallen among evil companions with whom he had been caught stealing deer on the property of one Sir Thomas Lucy of Charlecot.¹⁸ Rowe accepted this account because it filled in one of the awkward lacunae in the biography, for it provided a motivation for Shakespeare's leaving Stratford and accounts for his removal to London.

It is interesting to note that when Pope and Theobald approached the task of treating Shakespeare critically, they ignored this sort of thing. Their focus of attention was upon his works and upon his genius. In Rowe's view, Shakespeare was a "natural genius." A natural genius is one who does not deliberately require models in the practice of his art. If Shakespeare had been academically conscious of himself as a dramatic artist, he would have imitated the ancients, and would have reflected them both in form and content. But he lacked

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 1-2.

¹⁸Ibid.

that regularity of form and content to such an extent that Rowe concluded that he literally had no knowledge of the classics. Such innocence, Rowe felt, was all to the good. If Shakespeare had known, admired, and imitated the classics, he might have sacrificed many excellences in the name of mechanical correctness, which "might have restrained some of that Fire, Impetuosity, and even beautiful Extravagance which we admire in Shakespeare."¹⁹ Compared to Ben Johnson, the Bard was ignorant, but his "ignorance" was analogous to that of the Greeks, whose works were independent of pre-existing dramatic codes. Jonson was a man of books; Shakespeare was an artist, an original, a man who wrote according to the dictates of his own imagination, a man who created where others merely copied. "When one considers," wrote Rowe, "that there is not one Play before him of a Reputation good enough to entitle it to an Appearance on the present Stage, it cannot but be a Matter of great Wonder that he should advance Dramatick Poetry so far as he did."²⁰

It is impossible to determine, at this late date, the reason for Pope's undertaking the duty of editing the complete set of Shakespeare's plays. The Rowe edition was not an old

¹⁹Ibid., p. 2.

²⁰Ibid., p. 15.

one by any standard. Furthermore, the gigantic task of executing and seeing through the press the translations of Homer's two great epics had sapped a good deal of the poet's vitality. Professor McKerrow believes that despite his evident fatigue, Pope was persuaded to take on the job by his publisher, Jacob Tonson, who apparently intended to capitalize upon the success of the translations by producing a sumptuous and expensive set of books bearing Pope's name, since "it might reasonably seem that the foremost poet and critic of the day was the best possible man to edit our foremost dramatist."²¹ In any event, it is clear that Pope had begun to lay the groundwork for his "Shakespeare" before the fall of 1721, for Tonson placed an advertisement in the Evening Post of October 21 of that year, stating that "a new edition of Shakespeare has been for some time preparing for the press."²² The purpose of the advertisement was to solicit possessors of old editions of single plays --i.e., quartos--to make their materials available to the new Shakespearean editor. Six months later another advertisement appeared asking for specific titles:

The new Edition of Shakespear now being in

²¹p. 14.

²²George Sherburn, The Early Career of Alexander Pope (New York, 1963), p. 238.

the Press; this is to give Notice that if any Person has any Editions of the Tempest, Mackbeth, Julius Caesar, Timon of Athens, King John, and Henry the 8th; printed before the Year 1620, and will communicate the same to J. Tonson in the Strand, he shall receive any Satisfaction required.²³

In assuming the function of a Shakespearean editor, Pope found it necessary to formulate and articulate a viewpoint. It was obvious that the days of the silent and somewhat irresponsible folio craftsmen were over, as were the days of the semi-skilled Nicholas Rowe. The publisher Tonson had advertised, and the public had come to expect, if not a definitive, at least a sophisticated and professional production. Pope's purpose in composing the Preface to the edition was to give an account of his conception of the task of putting Shakespeare's text into finished form. This conception reflected, both affirmatively and negatively, the Shakespearean preoccupations of the eighteenth century, which manifested themselves in four main categories: the first category dealt with Shakespeare's failure to observe the Aristotelean "rules" of dramaturgy; the second was concerned with Shakespeare's learning, or lack of it; the third was the young but growing science of textual criticism; and the special regard of the last category was the analysis of Shakespeare's

²³The Evening Post. London, May 5, 1722. Quoted by Sherburne, p. 238.

extraordinary powers of characterization.²⁴

Pope resembled Rowe in at least one respect: his approach to Shakespeare was strongly colored by his admiration of the great dramatist. He was unable, however, to dismiss Shakespeare's apparent lack of learning as irrelevant to a realistic evaluation of the plays; therefore, he tended to stress Shakespeare's "originality" in an effort to offset the critical bias. Shakespeare's command of the classics may have been very superficial. Pope was ready to admit, but he had a power over expression that, by comparison, made most of his contemporaries sound like hacks. This power, of course, was undefinable and resisted analysis, but it was probably the one element in Shakespeare's total accomplishment that could be immediately perceived and appreciated by even the least discriminating members of his audience. Whereas some writers appealed primarily to the mind and others to the instincts, Shakespeare addressed the whole man, arresting the attention and delighting both the intellect and the imagination, for "by a talent very peculiar, something between Penetration and Felicity, he hits upon that particular point on which the bent of each argument turns, or the force of each motive depends. This is perfectly amazing, from a man of no education

²⁴Smith, Eighteenth Century Essays, pp. xiv-xv.

or experience in those great and publick scenes of life which are usually the subject of his thoughts."²⁵

In Pope's view, Shakespeare excelled as a delineator of character. No amount of classical expertise in any other writer can approximate the Bard's simple and direct mastery of the art of representing human beings on the stage. His characters are, first of all, true to nature. They are never monsters or oversimplified caricatures. The things that move them are the things that move real men, and their responses to external stimuli are the responses that we can recognize in ourselves. In this respect Pope possibly prefigured the kind of criticism that appeared in its most highly developed form in the early twentieth century in the work of A. C. Bradley, who wrote that the center of Shakespearean tragedy "may be said with equal truth to lie in action issuing in character, or in character issuing in action."²⁶ Secondly, the characters are individuals; rarely, if ever, are they mere types. This aspect is, of course, a corollary to their truth to nature; Pope, however, extends the principle of individuality not only to the general traits of characterization, but also to the very language that

²⁵Pope's "Preface," Ibid., pp. 45-46.

²⁶Shakespearean Tragedy (New York, 1956), p. 21.

Shakespeare puts into the mouths of his characters. Finally, Shakespeare's characters are "various," that is, taken in the aggregate, they represent the full spectrum of human classes. Like Chaucer, Shakespeare saw the world as a whole, and as peopled by an infinitely varied race of beings. Unlike Chaucer, he extended his view to include kings and beggars. Pope here adumbrated that school of criticism that was later to assert that the purpose of the dramatic artist was to create a cosmos, and to function organically and consistently within the set limits of that cosmos.

Pope's effort to extol the natural genius of Shakespeare stems from a reaction to the elaborate concern in the eighteenth century over the extent of an author's erudition. It had apparently become a learned catch-phrase that Shakespeare "wanted art." Pope laid part of the blame for this injustice to the account of Ben Jonson who had been asked by Heminge and Condell to compose some laudatory verses to be prefixed to the First Folio. The poem that Jonson wrote for the occasion²⁷ was sufficiently complimentary, but Pope felt that one could read between the lines that Jonson harbored a certain amount of ill will for his deceased colleague, and that the whole piece

²⁷"To the memory of my beloved, The Author Mr. William Shakespeare."

was designed as a setting for the accusation that "thou hadst small Latine, and lesse Greeke,"²⁸ an "accusation," be it understood, that soon achieved as wide and as lasting currency as many of the famous lines in the volume proper. Jonson only made matters worse, years later, when he wrote:

I remember, the Players have often mentioned it as an honor to Shakespeare, that in his writing, (whatsoever he penn'd) hee never blotted out [a] line. My answer hath beene, would he had blotted a thousand. . . . Hee was (indeed) honest, and of an open, and free nature: had an excellent Phantasie; brave notions, and gentle expressions: wherein he flow'd with that facility, that sometime it was necessary he should be stop'd; Sufflaminandus erat; as Augustus said of Haterius. His wit was in his owne power; would the rule of it had beene so too.²⁹

Jonson's asseverations, however, were only partly responsible for the damage to Shakespeare's prestige. The neo-classical insistence upon the so-called Aristotelian rules of dramatic structure had caused, in Pope's view, almost as much and similar damage. In Shakespeare's own time, the accepted view of the intelligent man was expressed by Sir Philip Sidney: "the stage should alwaies represent but one place, and the

²⁸Line 31.

²⁹Timber: or, Discoveries (London, 1641). Reprinted in the "Elizabethan and Jacobean Quartos," edited by G. B. Harrison (New York, 1966), pp. 28-29.

uttermost time presupposed in it should be, both by Aristotle's precept and common reason, but one day."³⁰ Pope could accept neither this theory nor any of the overblown theories that sprang from it. This was no longer the intelligent man's view as far as Pope was concerned, because a century and a half of successful stage practice had proved that the neo-classical strictures were eminently unworkable. "To judge therefore of Shakespear by Aristotle's rules, is like trying a man by the Laws of one country, who acted under those of another."³¹

Pope was, therefore, one of the first serious eighteenth century critics to adopt a liberal, common-sense position regarding the application of Aristotelian principles to modern dramaturgy. He perceived that "Aristotle's rules even if they be accepted as correct, apply to purely literary forms of art, and not to the stage, which has rules of its own. He distinguishes between Shakespeare the actor and Shakespeare the dramatist, and avers that many of the so-called defects are due not to Shakespeare's inferior judgment as a poet, but to his very superior judgment, as a player, of what is suitable for the

³⁰An Apologie for Poetry, edited by E. S. Shuckburgh (Cambridge, 1951), p. 52.

³¹"Preface," p. 47.

stage."³²

Whether Pope was aware of the fact or not, the attitude reflected in this defensive approach cast him into the role of an apologist for Shakespeare. Since it has already been established that the Bard's reputation had been growing favorably for several generations, there was probably no real need for Pope to play such a role; however, the bardolatry of Rowe and the tendency towards partisanship that is characteristic of the early eighteenth century made it almost inevitable that Pope would look upon Shakespeare as a cause to be championed. He saw what was to him a critical discrepancy, a gulf between Shakespeare the artist and Shakespeare the craftsman. It was one thing to say that one does not observe the old classical rules because they do not apply any more; it was another to try to account for extreme lapses of taste in a writer who out-topped knowledge. After all, the main reason for producing a sumptuous edition of the works is that they had achieved the status of great art. Yet, in countless instances, the vulgar jostled the sublime, and the clowns stepped on the toes of the tragic heroes. As it was impracticable if not impossible to explain all of such faults as interpolations, Pope constructed a defence based on three closely

³²Herbert S. Robinson, English Shakespearean Criticism (New York, 1932), pp. 56-57.

related points. First, Shakespeare was a practising playwright who had a complex audience to please: "He writ to the People: and writ at first without patronage from the better sort, and therefore without aims of pleasing them. . . . in a word, without any views of Reputation, and of what Poets are pleased to call Immortality."³³ His second point was that Shakespeare did not hold himself aloof from his fellow players; consequently, he tended to assent to their wishes sometimes in matters of taste. The last point, derivative of the second, was that the playwright frequently succumbed to the judgment of others, "even when he knew it to be inferior to his own."³⁴

Once Pope's apologetics have either been accepted or dispensed with, the question that naturally arises concerning his approach to Shakespeare is: what was the basic, dominant editorial principle that guided Pope in this work? The answer is that there was probably none, at least no clear or consistent one. Following Rowe's lead, Pope excelled in the treatment of peripheral material: the supplying of the dramatis personae, the marking of act and scene divisions, the amplification of stage directions and the like. Beyond this, he demonstrated a marked improvement over Rowe in his use of early quartos and

³³"Preface," p. 47.

³⁴Robinson, p. 58.

folios. He was the first "to make a genuine attempt to collect all the available material and to use it for the construction of what he regarded as the best possible text."³⁵ But he failed to see that the best possible text was neither the necessary nor the proper goal of a scholarly edition, since there could be a considerable difference between the "best" text and the right text. In Pope there is only an incipient awareness of the necessity to determine what Shakespeare actually wrote in preference to what one might think that he ought to have written. But there is some such awareness, nonetheless, since Pope expressed "a religious abhorrence of all Innovation." However, Pope did not fully articulate what he intended to accomplish; therefore there is no clear internal principle that governs the entire edition, no philosophy, so to speak, that might give the edition an artistic integrity.

The physical layout of Pope's edition may seem obvious --and in some cases unworkable--to a twentieth-century student, but in the eighteenth century it marked a significant improvement over all of its predecessors. It was Pope's intention to set up a critical apparatus that would facilitate both the reading and the study of Shakespeare's plays.

Pope was justly proud of the work he had done in

³⁵McKerrow, p. 17.

assembling early editions of the plays, and he had intended to collate them fully with the received text in Rowe's edition. In an effort to offer as complete a text as possible, Pope struck upon the idea of printing not only the approved text, but also what he called the various readings, which "are fairly put in the margin, so that every one may compare 'em; and those I have prefer'd into the Text are constantly ex fide Codicum, upon authority."³⁶ Included in the classification of "various readings" are changes or additions "which Shakespeare himself made," and these are taken notice of as they occur."³⁷ Since Pope had already expressed his despair of ever finding any of the manuscripts, it is difficult to ascertain precisely what method he devised for determining where he could perceive Shakespeare's revising hand, other than his own principles of taste.

One of the most controversial features of the edit was the deletion of those passages that the editor suspected as spurious. All such passages were, of course, "excessively bad," and were "degraded to the bottom of the page; with an Asterisk

³⁶"Preface," p. 57.

³⁷Ibid., p. 57.

referring to the places of their insertion."³⁸ Pope supported his taste in this matter by what he offered as a natural test: if the offending segment was so poor that it was doubtfully Shakespearean, and if it could be removed without disturbing the sense or the organic unity of the larger passage in which it appeared, then it was obviously put there by some one other than the original author.³⁹

In almost all mechanical aspects, Pope's work marked an advance over the earlier editions. It has already been shown that "he kept Rowe's lists of *Dramatis Personae* almost unchanged, but he improved greatly upon his indications of locality, giving these carefully throughout all the plays, instead of only in the later ones as Rowe had done. He also divided all the plays fully into scenes."⁴⁰ Pope's main reason for carrying through Rowe's incomplete design was to clarify the action from the point of view of the reader. Since Shakespeare shifted his scenes more frequently than any other author, it was necessary that

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹"One can intirely omit them without any chasm or deficiency in the context." Ibid.

⁴⁰McKerrow, p. 14.

"every removal of place be specify'd."⁴¹ It was also in the interest of clarity that Pope set out to explain the "more obsolete or unusual words,"⁴² for the archaic language of Renaissance England was--and still is--one of the most serious obstacles between Shakespeare and the modern reader. In the interests of taste and esthetics, Pope signalled out the "most shining passages" by the use of commas in the margins and stars at the beginnings of certain scenes.

This last point demonstrates both the fact that Pope had been on the brink of formulating an editorial philosophy and that he failed to arrive at a clear articulation of whatever that philosophy might have been. On the one hand, he saw that an editor functioned as a critic and that "the better half of criticism" was to point out "an Author's excellences";⁴³ on the other hand, he overlooked the essential illogic of his approach. Since he failed to see that these markings of "excellences" had no place in a basic text, for the author himself would not have put them there, he only half perceived the primary

⁴¹"Preface," p. 57.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Ibid.

editorial function, to reconstitute, as far as possible and within the limits of the available materials, a correct and authoritative text.

It is very difficult, then, to evaluate Pope as an editor of Shakespeare. It is even more difficult to arrive at an objective view of his accomplishment today. Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries there was a great deal of energy expended by critics and non-critics either to exalt Pope's efforts at the expense of the reputations of his contemporaries and successors or to declare that he had contributed nothing to the science--or art--of editing the works of England's most important literary figure. The twentieth-century view is probably best mirrored in Ronald McKerrow's opinion that Pope was a brilliant amateur, "but one incapable of the long continued drudgery which was necessary to the accomplishment of the task which he had undertaken, and with no clearer understanding of the problem before him than had others of his time."⁴⁴

In any event, it is not easy to avoid the judgment that in most respects Pope's work on Shakespeare ended in failure. It is not, for the most part, difficult to discover why it did so. There are three chief causes of Pope's frustrations. First, as it has been indicated above, he did not establish a responsible

⁴⁴p. 21.

set of principles upon which to base the many changes he introduced into the text. Secondly, he was inconsistent in his use of his primary materials, the First Folio and those early quartos that he had collected. Lastly, there were certain flaws in the temperamental and intellectual equipment that he brought to the task. For example, Pope protested that he felt a "religious abhorrence of all Innovation" and that he would not indulge his "private sense of conjecture";⁴⁵ yet he made a large number of alterations in the text that can only be accounted for in terms of his own personal taste. Although he recognized Shakespeare's greatness as a Renaissance poet, he could not read him with Renaissance eyes, and in spite of his desire to synthesize, so to speak, the best possible text from the available sources, he inevitably succumbed to the Augustan predilection for order and decorum. Professor McKerrow points out that

there seem to have been certain things which a literary man of Pope's eminence simply could not let him do, such as refer to "hats" in a classical play. It seems odd, in view of the many anachronisms that Pope allowed to pass, even allowing Caesar to pluck open his doublet, that he should so much have objected to Coriolanus waving his hat. But the fact remains that finding "hat" four times in the plays on classical subjects, twice in Coriolanus, once in Timon of Athens, and once in Julius Caesar. Pope in the first three cases altered "hat" to "cap." In the fourth there was a difficulty; the phrase was

⁴⁵"Preface," p. 57.

"Their hats are pluck'd about their ears," and I suppose that he did not quite see how one could do this with a cap. Still "hat" could not be allowed to stand, so he cut the word out and substituted a dash.⁴⁶

The only conclusion to be drawn is that Pope had no clear esthetic pattern in mind when he made such changes, or that he allowed a certain element of caprice to direct--or misdirect--the exercise of his taste.⁴⁷

In one category of editorial activity Pope was exceptionally consistent. He attempted to impose neo-classical regularity upon Shakespeare's flexible lines. Not an accomplished playwright himself, Pope apparently had a deficient sense of dramatic diction; or, he may have sub-consciously decided that "as Dryden is, shall Shakespeare be." According to his view, in a rigid pentameter scheme a four-foot line was an incomplete line. He failed to take into consideration such things as stage pauses and changes or lapses in tempo that called for a

⁴⁶Pp. 15-16.

⁴⁷It is also possible that not all such changes were made by Pope personally. There is evidence that the hands of several assistants were involved in putting together the edition: "I'm resolved to pass the next whole week in London, purposely to get together Parties of my acquaintance ev'ry night, to collate the several Editions of Shakespeare's single plays, 5 of which I have ingaged to this design." Letter, Pope to Jacob Tonson. Sherburn, p. 308.

variation in meter. In order to give the lines the shape he thought they should have, he developed the somewhat Procrustean technique of deleting superfluous words, generally monosyllables, adding syllables where they were needed, or rearranging Shakespeare's original word-order. Unfortunately, these changes are not as superficial as they may seem. Since Pope seldom indicated them in the margin, they are an integral characteristic of the text he produced, and, as Professor Lounsbury justly complains, "we are never sure whether we have the text in the exact form in which Shakespeare presumably wrote it, or as Pope altered it."⁴⁸

One of Pope's most impressive claims was that he had assiduously compared all the old editions of the plays, the implication being that he had collated them with professional care. In the first place, such an undertaking was virtually impossible. Pope planned to place the "various readings" where they could be examined by all students of the text. If he had carried out this plan many of his pages would have had more marginal material than basic text. In the second place, Pope did not have the mechanical means of accomplishing this end in the time allotted to him. Neither did anyone else in his time, for that matter.

It was also clear that Pope was either unable or unwilling

⁴⁸p. 109.

to make the distinction between "bad" quartos and "good" quartos. Any copy of a Shakespearean play that appeared before the date of the First Folio was, as far as Pope was concerned, an authoritative text. In at least one case, Romeo and Juliet, Pope used the first, probably pirated, quarto of 1597 for the purpose of deleting what he considered offensive material.⁴⁹ There are two probable reasons why Pope's performance as a collator was a disappointment. One was that he miscalculated the enormity of the assignment and simply did the best he could under the circumstances. The other was that, like all readers, Pope admired some of the plays more than others. His interest in such plays as Timon of Athens, All's Well that Ends Well, and the early histories was almost certainly minimal. One can guess, then, that his consistency in collation lessened as his interest waned, that he was most conscientious in comparing the texts of the plays that he considered important.⁵⁰ It is questionable that in dealing with the less popular plays he did much more than consult "the early texts when it seemed to him that the reading before him was unsatisfactory."⁵¹

⁴⁹McKerrow, p. 20.

⁵⁰He restored an entire scene to King Lear. Cf. n. 55.

⁵¹McKerrow, p. 20.

Pope faced the same problem that all editors of Shakespeare must inevitably face: the problem of the crux, that class of reading which may defy sense, or logic, or even simple comprehension. What is the sense of Juliet's words when she says that "runaway's eyes may wink" (III, ii, 6); who can account for a "Table of green fields" in Henry V (II, iii, 17)? Perhaps no editor will ever answer these questions, but any editor who attempts to answer them, or who expects to solve other textual problems must have certain qualifications. Most critics agree that Pope lacked the proper credentials of a competent scholar, albeit in a time when no one really knew exactly how one went about earning those credentials. It has become fairly well established that an important part of the equipment of an editor is a thorough knowledge of the language and literature of the age in which his subject lived. It seems that Pope tended to read Shakespeare as an isolated phenomenon. Of the non-dramatic literature of Shakespeare's time it is clear that he knew virtually nothing. He possibly knew some of the more popular plays of Ben Jonson and Beaumont and Fletcher, but his familiarity with the dramatic literature of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries was scarcely more than rudimentary. It is hardly surprising, then, that when he felt obliged to explain the meaning of difficult or obscure words he relied as often on guesswork as

on erudition. Professor Lounsbury has implied that Pope was learning his craft as he practised it. How else can one account for the fact that he sometimes elucidated the same obscure word correctly and sometimes incorrectly? The word "foison" for example, appears in the second act of The Tempest, where Pope explains that it means the "natural juice or moisture of the grass and other herbs."⁵² No one will ever know where Pope got this definition, but he abandoned it, for in later plays he defined it as the noun "plenty" or "plentiful crop," its invariable signification in Shakespeare.⁵³ Another example that Professor Lounsbury gives concerns the word "neif":

This is a word which belongs to the Northern English dialects and signifies the closed hand. It is twice used by Shakespeare. In the place where it occurs in the "Midsummer Night's Dream," (IV, 1) it was very properly defined by Pope as a Yorkshire word for "fist." But this same natural and, as it might seem inevitable, interpretation as an affected term for "hand" he failed to adopt in the second part of "King Henry IV" when Pistol says to Falstaff, "Sweet Knight, I kiss thy neif." (II, iv) Instead he gave it the preposterous definition of "woman slave."⁵⁴

Whether he was fully aware of these flaws or not, there

⁵²Quoted in Thomas R. Lounsbury, The Text of Shakespeare (New York, 1906), p. 89.

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 90.

is little question that Pope was at least partially dissatisfied with his work on Shakespeare. It was not simply modesty that prompted him to express in his Preface the hope that some day the task would be better done. He realized that he was very early in the field of English textual criticism, that he was only the second man since the time of Heminge and Condell to put his name to an edition of Shakespeare. But he also knew that his gifts as an editor were not negligible. He was the first to collate the folios and quartos on a reasonably large scale, and he is responsible for reinstating a large number of important lines that had fallen out of the "standard" text.⁵⁵

But these realizations were not enough to dispel the feeling of dissatisfaction that Pope must have felt. For one thing, despite his disclaimer to the contrary, he had relied too much upon instinct; for another, a large proportion of his explanatory notes were based upon unsupported conjecture, as in the case of Greenfield, the property man whose table has baffled many later scholars and editors. Anyone casually turning the pages of the edition can see that Pope did not accomplish what he set out to do, that his work simply lacked the thoroughness that should have been his first consideration;

⁵⁵Notably Act IV, Scene 11 of King Lear. All four folios and Rowe omit the entire scene.

and that is probably the most important criticism leveled at the volumes, both in Pope's time and today.

Yet, Pope's personality made it very unlikely that he would achieve any considerable degree of thoroughness. His impulse was essentially creative. He found that editing was not very much like translating Greek classics, which involves, to some extent, the exercise of a creative faculty. It was, paradoxically, more difficult than translating. Pope was not afraid of hard work, but work for which he felt little or no affinity was not art, it was drudgery. "In what I have done I have rather given a proof of my willingness and desire, than of my ability, to do him justice," he said. "I have discharg'd the dull duty of an Editor, to my best judgment, with more labour than I expect thanks."⁵⁶ He hardly expected, however, that a large part of the audience for whom the volumes were intended would take him literally on this point, and he was little prepared for much of the critical difficulty that was to follow.

Despite the adverse criticism that it received, it is a mistake to look upon Pope's edition as a commercial failure. There were many complaints upon its first appearance, but these were directed mainly against the exorbitant cost, and, according

⁵⁶"Preface," p. 57.

to Samuel Johnson, a hundred and forty sets of the original printing had still not found purchasers in 1767, when the price had fallen from five guineas to sixteen shillings.⁵⁷ However, the public had responded favorably to the less expensive re-printings which came from the presses in smaller volumes, between the years 1728 and 1735.⁵⁸

Pope was much too complex a figure in his own time for a work such as a multi-volume edition of Shakespeare's plays to receive a simple objective evaluation from his contemporaries. There were those, of course, who were disposed to approve of anything that Pope did, simply because he did it. On the other hand, there were those who were equally disposed to disparage any of Pope's efforts, such as the members of the notorious "Concanen Club."⁵⁹ But there were also many well-intentioned men who believed that for more than a century England had felt the need for a correct edition of the works of her greatest poet, and that Pope's effort, if not definitive, was at least a step in the right direction. The judicious critics were becoming aware, however, that something had to be expressed, perhaps a

⁵⁷Sherburn, pp. 240-241.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 241.

⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 242-243.

philosophy of editing, a philosophy to which Pope himself, if his Preface were to be taken seriously, would subscribe, and that is that the editorial ideal is not to provide an esthetically best text, but to provide an authentic one. In other words, the editor's duty is to ascertain what Shakespeare actually wrote, not what his admirers wish he had written. It is one thing for Ben Jonson to desire that Shakespeare had blotted a thousand lines; it is another thing for Alexander Pope to blot them.

Although literary history seems to indicate otherwise, it is apparent that Lewis Theobald originally numbered himself among Pope's judicious critics. He had sincerely praised the translations of Homer, and even in Shakespeare Restored he spoke of Pope in terms of high respect. As a matter of fact, on a number of important points he and Pope were in perfect agreement. Both men felt, for example, that Shakespeare was England's first classic author and that his works should be edited with the same care and diligence as those of Homer and the Greek dramatists. Both men believed that the carelessness of the printers was the cause of the lamentable increase in the number of literal corruptions in the Shakespearean text. To Pope's charge of ignorance, leveled at the seventeenth-century printers, Theobald added the charge of cupidity:

And there is one unhappiness, too, which

generally attends the republication of English books, which is, that being the property of some persons in trade, who, too often, know nothing more of their copy than that there is a demand for reprinting it; and who are withal, persons of such complete frugality, that they think every farthing which is given for the labor of revise, to be so much money given away for nothing; the press is set to work from a printed precedent, and so the more the editions of any book multiply, the more the errors multiply too, and propagate out of their own species.⁶⁰

Theobald also agreed with Pope that some of the damage done to Shakespeare was irreparable: "It must necessarily happen, that where the assistance of manuscripts is wanting . . . many passages must be desperate, and past a cure, and their true sense irretrievable, either to care, or to the sagacity of conjecture."⁶¹

The two men disagreed, however, about method. Theobald maintained that Pope had not followed any coherent set of editorial principles, in short, he had not done what he had promised to do; and secondly, that the poet was not genuinely qualified to perform the duties of an editor. Theobald went to extraordinary pains in his Shakespeare Restored to illustrate the shortcomings of Pope's edition. He did this because he foresaw a danger: that the acceptance of Pope's "Shakespear" as definitive would

⁶⁰ Shakespeare Restored (London, 1726), pp. 11-111.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 11.

create a kind of critical dead-end; that subsequent editions, if they were based upon Pope's method, would breed new corruptions, thereby aggravating the very condition that Pope himself had intended to rectify. The basic flaw in Pope's method, from Theobald's point of view, was that it was only partly scientific. It was primarily subjective since its emphasis was on the esthetics of criticism. Theobald admitted that there was a need for specific critical judgments on an editor's part, but this need was of only tertiary importance, for as an editorial function it came after the emending of corrupt passages and the elucidation of difficult ones.⁶²

The use of instinct instead of sound technique and the tendency to substitute guesswork for actual evidence--these are two practices that Theobald took upon himself to invalidate. His reason, then, for publishing Shakespeare Restored was not only to show what was wrong with Pope's method, but to offer a better method of his own making, one that did not simply depend upon innate taste to choose a preferred reading from among a number of variants, but one that aimed at reconstituting a text that was as accurate as human ingenuity could make it.

Here, then, is the setting in which Theobald's Shakespeare

⁶²Preface to The Works of Shakespeare (London, 1733), I, xl-xli.

Restored appeared. Although not an edition, it has to be given a place in the developing tradition of Shakespearean textual scholarship. It marks, one might say, a critical crossroad. It shows that Theobald stands, not in opposition to Pope and Rowe, but as building upon their foundations while correcting their eccentricities. It shows, finally, that Theobald's aim was not to denigrate Pope or to advance his own reputation, but to lay the groundwork for the development of sound and responsible editorial principles--principles upon which later generations of scholars might build.

CHAPTER TWO
THE DEVELOPMENT OF
THEOBALD'S EDITORIAL PRINCIPLES

Theobald derived his editorial methods from Richard Bentley (1662-1742), who "may well be considered the first modern scholar."¹ Bentley's technique was based upon three things: sound scholarship, the amassing and arranging of information systematically and accurately, and the use of logic in support of editorial judgment. The method itself functioned in three stages. First, there was the detection of the corrupt passage. More often than not the "corruption" consisted of a single word. Bentley compared all existing manuscripts and printed editions, and subjected all variant readings to a scrupulously thorough examination. He then brought into play his enormous erudition and subjected the passage to a number of tests. The grammatical test, for example, determined whether or not a given word might logically be used in a given context. In highly inflected

¹Richard F. Jones, Lewis Theobald (New York, 1919), p. 34.

languages such as Latin and Greek the grammatical test was frequently decisive in proving that a passage was corrupt. The historical test exposed anachronisms and stylistic absurdities. Homeric Greek, for instance, was quite different from Sophoclean Greek, and the erudite scholar was quick to detect those instances where the vocabulary of one period or dialect had been forced to remedy textual deficiencies in works written in another. Although a third test, the esthetic, involved the use of judgment, it required a degree of learning on the editor's part. Bentley's knowledge of ancient and classical literatures, his proficiency in languages, his mastery of not only the political history but also the customs of the peoples of classical times, was extraordinary. The erudition that he brought to bear upon literary texts was so massive that virtually no detail escaped his attention.

After all the tests had been applied and all previous emendations had been carefully examined, there was the second and briefest stage of the application of the method: Bentley presented his emendation, which was, of course, a conjecture that required support. That support was provided by the same means that were used to determine that there had been a textual corruption in the first place.

The third stage, then, of the application of Bentley's

method was the use of grammatical, historical and esthetic tests. The scholar demonstrated, for example, that his emendation was compatible with the context in which it was placed, not only grammatically, but stylistically and esthetically as well. One of the most striking demonstrations of Bentley's erudition was his practice of citing from a variety of classical authors, excerpts in which the material that constituted his emendation appeared. These quotations either showed Bentley's word or phrase being used in an identical or similar way, or they proved a linguistic point that he offered in support of his conjecture.² "So well defined is this method that the qualities that came to be attributed to critics can with some definiteness be localized. Judgment (judicium) operated in ascertaining that there was an error in the text, sagacity (sagacitas or ingenium) invented the emendation, and learning (eruditio) tested and supported the emendation."³

Bentley deserved more praise for the developing of his method than for the frequent misuse to which he put it. The primary flaw in Bentley's editorial technique was that he looked for the textual errors in minutest places, and found them

²Ibid., pp. 37-38.

³Ibid., pp. 38-39.

everywhere. His tendency was to correct where no correction was needed, and in correcting he carried "his predilection for conjecture beyond reasonable limits."⁴

Theobald avoided copying Bentley's faulty in this respect. In a letter to William Warburton he established what he considered a basic principle of editing, which was, never to become over-zealous in the search for textual errors:

I ever labor to make the smallest deviations that I can possible from the text; never to alter at all, where I can by any means explain the passage into sense; nor ever by any emendations to make the author better where it is probable the text came from his hands.⁵

Theobald took it as a false esthetic to assume that if we were by some miracle to recover Shakespeare's manuscripts we would find no artistic flaws. It was, therefore, not the concern of the verbal critics to revise an author. The danger in unrestrained conjectural emendation, then, was that the genuine was sometimes discarded with the spurious. Therefore, even though it may be, in some unlikely instances, to Shakespeare's disadvantage, "his genuine text is for the most part adhered to, and the numerous

⁴Ibid., p. 40.

⁵Reprinted in John Nichols, Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century (London, 1817-1858), II, 210.

faults and blemishes, purely his own, are left as they were found."⁶

One of the reasons why incompetent editors cannot restrain their eagerness to emend is that they are incapable of marking the distinction between a corruption of the text and an "obscurity." Theobald noted three varieties of obscurity in Shakespeare. First, there were those words and passages which were clear to Shakespeare's contemporaries, but having lost their currency, they had lost their meanings. Topical allusions, veiled witticisms, colloquialisms--all these things changed meaning or became devoid of it with the passing of time.⁷ A second variety of obscurity derived from what Theobald called "an ostentatious affectation of abstruse learning, peculiar to that time."⁸ Like many of the other writers of his day, Shakespeare was sometimes guilty of trying to make the ordinary seem extraordinary and the familiar mysterious. A third kind of obscurity was the result of Shakespeare's characteristic manner of thinking, and of his

⁶Theobald, Preface to The Works of Shakespeare (London, 1733). p. xl. Hereafter referred to as Preface.

⁷Ibid., p. xlv.

⁸Ibid., p. xlvi.

"peculiar manner of clothing those thoughts."⁹ Theobald maintained that Shakespeare had a general knowledge of the science of his time. "But his acquaintance was rather that of a traveler, than a native."¹⁰

Nothing in philosophy was unknown to him; but every thing in it had the grace and force of novelty. And as novelty is one main source of admiration, we are not to wonder that he has perpetual allusions to the most recondite parts of the sciences; and this was done not so much out of affectation, as the effect of admiration begot by novelty.¹¹

Theobald's primary motivation, then, for undertaking the role of editor, was that he feared that the process of attrition, if not checked, would place Shakespeare's text beyond redemption. That Shakespeare was a classic needed no proof; that he was a corrupt classic was irritatingly obvious. It was necessary, therefore, that a trustworthy method of editing this classic be employed, and that only those competent to do so employ it. Pope looked upon editing as a "dull duty" the "better half" of which he considered "the pointing out an author's excellences."¹² Theobald

⁹Ibid., p. xlvii.

¹⁰Ibid., p. xlvii.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Pope's Preface, p. 61.

looked upon it as a science, with specific and unalterable functions:

The science of criticism, as far as it affects an editor, seems to be reduced to these three classes: the emendation of corrupt passages; the explanation of obscure and difficult ones; and an inquiry into the beauties and defects of composition.¹³

From his practice it was clear that Theobald was principally concerned with the first two classes and that he disagreed with Pope concerning the primacy of esthetic criticism. It was only those cases where there was no textual problem at all that an editor might be primarily interested in purely artistic values. As a matter of fact, this type of criticism was superfluous inasmuch as an educated reader was generally capable of marking the beauties of a work of art without the assistance of an editor:

Indeed, to point out, and exclaim upon, all the beauties of Shakespeare, as they come singly in review, would be as insipid, as endless; as tedious as unnecessary; but the explanation of these beauties that are less obvious to common readers, and whose illustration depends on the rules of just criticism, and an exact knowledge of human life, should deservedly have a share in a general critic upon the author.¹⁴

Theobald insists, ultimately, that a disinterested judgment must prevail when an editor deals with Shakespeare. An abundance of esthetic enthusiasm can delude editors into attempting to make

¹³Theobald's Preface, p. xl.

¹⁴Ibid., p. xxiv.

Shakespeare conform to the limited ideals of a particular time. As an example of what he meant, Theobald mentioned the History Plays. One might conclude, he maintained, that since Shakespeare committed "the greatest offences against chronology, history, and ancient politics."¹⁵ he was guilty of ignorance. Theobald's answer was that Shakespeare did not concern himself with the fact of history, but with the "truth of history."¹⁶ Whereas a later age might demand of its artists greater literal accuracy in the treatment of history, only a short-sighted pedant would fail to see that in Shakespeare's age poetic license and the blaze of the imagination were preferred to mere precision. It was a time when an anachronism could be an artistic device. It is clear, then, that Theobald regarded Bentley's editorial method as a proper tool for the correction of Shakespeare's text. "I mean to follow the form," he wrote, "of Bentley's Amsterdam Horace in subjoining the notes to the place controverted."¹⁷ However, whereas Bentley embraced all of classical literature in his explanatory notes, Theobald, at the time he wrote Shakespeare Restored, limited himself chiefly to Shakespeare's own works.

¹⁵Ibid., p. xxx.

¹⁶Ibid., p. xxxi.

¹⁷Nichols, II, 621; cited in Jones, p. 173.

In Theobald, as in Bentley, the main support of an emendation is a long list of passages "from various works quoted to show a similar or usual use of the word restored, or to support a stated fact of history, grammar, metrics and the like."¹⁸

Theobald's growth as a critic in terms of the development of a clear and consistent set of editorial principles can be traced through a series of documents that appeared--although not in every case in printed form--over a period of almost two decades. These documents are his periodical, The Censor, which ran from 1715 to 1717; his revision of Shakespeare's Richard II, published in 1720; his pamphlet, Shakespeare Restored, which appeared in 1726, following the issuing of Pope's edition of Shakespeare by almost exactly a year; his correspondence, which is almost literally a continuation of Shakespeare Restored, and ends in 1731; and finally, the Preface to his own full edition of the plays, which came out early in 1734.

Theobald's earliest critical statements on Shakespeare appeared in The Censor, a short-lived periodical that he authored alone. In these papers Theobald was overtly following a pattern set by The Spectator, and thought that he might try his hand at writing interesting essays on just about any topic under the sun. On a number of occasions he either devoted an entire issue to

¹⁸Jones, pp. 90-91.

Shakespeare, or he adverted to Shakespeare for purposes of illustration or documentation. It appears that Theobald's interest in Shakespeare grew out of his love for the English stage. He came to look upon Shakespeare as the ultimate master of the literary form that he himself most affected. These papers represent Theobald's first attempts to formulate general critical propositions concerning the theater of his time, and he frequently called to his readers' attention examples of the significant dramas of the past, not only the obvious Greek and Roman classics, but also the great dramas from England's own past.

It is difficult to tell, in The Censor, whether Theobald was more consciously imitating the writers of The Spectator papers, or whether he was trying to be an eighteenth-century Aristotle. Be that as it may, his criticism at this time follows two clear strains of development. On the one hand, he was a moral critic of the English drama; on the other, his approach was vigorously formal.

The moral aspect of this early criticism is evident in Theobald's insistence upon some kind of edification arising from the drama. "I consider tragedy and comedy," he wrote, "as two opposite glasses, in which mankind may see the true figures they make in every important or trifling circumstance of life."¹⁹

¹⁹Theobald, The Censor (London, 1717), I, 46.

A play, whether acted or read, had, if artistically successful, a most powerful and profound effect upon the members of its audience. "The peculiar province of tragedy," he went on, "is to reform our souls, to purge us of those passions that hurry us to misfortunes, and correct those vices that make us incur the wrath of heaven, and condemnation of our fellow creatures. The influences of comedy are of a lighter nature; her aim being only to divest us of follies or impertinences, which . . . often render us objects of ridicule."²⁰

This somewhat determinedly functional interpretation of the purposes of the two basic forms of drama is clearly a reflection of the oration dictum that the end of art is to teach and to please, with a heavy concentration upon the need for teaching. It is clear that at this time he even regarded Shakespeare in this light, for he wrote, "I admire the poet for his eloquence, and the justness of his instruction."²¹ This emphasis on didacticism in the early phase of Theobald's development as a critic is perhaps a manifestation of the basic conventionality of mind that had hamstrung him as a creative artist. He tended to require models in everything that he undertook, and even in his

²⁰ Ibid., p. 47.

²¹ Ibid., II, 162.

criticism he turned to the ancients and proceeded from points of view that he perceived in them. As a formal critic, Theobald accepted without qualification the "rules" and patterns he found laid out for him in the works of Aristotle, especially in the Poetics, which he seemed to revere almost as a sacred book. Insofar as he was a product of the neo-classical age, however, Theobald tended to apply the regulatory aspects of Aristotle's theories more strictly than the great philosopher had intended. His strictures upon the infelicities of the playwrights of his day were quite severe. He scolded dramatists for the "contradictions and extravagances that are so common in our English tragedies," and for writing without regard "either to reason or judgment, or any view to probability or decency."²² He called their plays "motley productions" and deplored the "multiplicity of actions huddled up in one piece, and scenes so detached and independent of their plot."²³ The most obvious inference that one can draw from these comments is that Theobald, like many another critic of his day, was an advocate of the so-called unities of time, place, and action. But for all its ordinariness, Theobald's view was not simple, nor was it really superficial. His ideal,

²²Ibid., p. 223.

²³Ibid.

although at this time he was incapable of articulating it in so many words, was that a play be integrally unified. He could only suggest, rather than state analytically, that contemporary playwrights were attempting things that they could not accomplish, that they were incapable of consistent characterization or sustained plot development:

Mistakes in the nature of the emotions of the soul, the sources from which grief or rage arise, and the springs on which they turn, are faults of ignorance in the poet, as a failure of working them up properly is of inability. But there are other and more unpardonable errors which are owing to his inadvertency, or a blind indulgence to himself, which makes him overlook absurdities that are conspicuous to the most common of his judges. These blots happen, when an author is not so absolutely a master of his subject as to command the whole at a single view; or when some parts of his scenery are fixed at random, and he does not examine himself for what end such a certain incident is crowded into the story.²⁴

Theobald might have become one of the significant dramatic critics of the early eighteenth century if he could have penetrated the wall of conventionality that diminished his artistic horizons. His cure for the deficiencies that he so vehemently denounced was perhaps too simple: "The inconsistencies in plays, which shock the judgment of the discerning critic, might generally be prevented, if Aristotle were a little better consulted by our authors."²⁵

²⁴Ibid., p. 224.

²⁵Ibid., p. 225.

As Theobald's interests began to focus more clearly upon Shakespeare than upon other literary figures, an area of tension began to develop in his critical responses. Theobald was forced to realize that if he wanted to treat the great Bard seriously, that he had to accommodate artistic views that were not classically orthodox. On the one hand, he was intellectually committed to the neo-classical view of drama, especially tragedy. That meant that there were certain basic propositions that he was not at first prepared to question, or even to examine. On the other hand, he had become, since his indoctrination, an intense and devoted admirer of Shakespeare, who was an inveterate breaker of rules. In his earliest essays upon Shakespeare, Theobald laid more than a little stress upon the irregularities that he found in the plays. He referred to these as defects, or errors, which could only be accounted for "through his being unacquainted with the rules of Aristotle, and the tragedies of the ancients."²⁶ Shakespeare's plots, again especially in tragedy, were haphazard in their organization, subject to the "general absurdities" of the formlessness that characterized much of the drama of his time, but one could not expect anything better in this respect, because of Shakespeare's ignorance of "mechanical rules."²⁷

²⁶Ibid., I, 48.

²⁷Ibid., p. 72.

Theobald settled his difficulties in this matter by formulating a set of three resolutions regarding the supreme dramatist: First, Shakespeare was a great moralist. Theobald points this out a number of times. His plays teach lessons; they are edifying. When they are tragedies they purge the emotions as effectively as anything in the classic Greek canon; when they are comedies they point up and reveal the follies of human beings in such a way that men are cured of their stupidities and their illusions. Secondly, Shakespeare's art can at least be defended against the rules because of his admirable fidelity to human psychology. Although he might have chosen a number of examples to demonstrate this point, Theobald preferred to praise the tragedy of Julius Caesar as a play that, although it too is guilty of certain irregularities, gives rare insights into the workings of the human mind. He discusses at length the scene in which Brutus and Cassius quarrel (IV, iii) over what he calls a trifle. The significant thing about this scene in Theobald's view is that the characters make certain revelations about themselves, speak many "severe truths, which they never intended to tell one another," that these revelations are "naturally introduced from the violent working of their passions."²⁸ Finally,

²⁸Ibid., II, 48.

Shakespeare is excellent in his own right. There is, in him, Theobald maintains, a beauty that is not to be found in any other writer.²⁹ Theobald is almost willing to forego his Aristotelean sanctions in the light of Shakespeare's inherent and unlearned art:

It is not to be expected that a genius like Shakespeare's should be judged by the laws of Aristotle, and the other prescribers to the stage; it will be sufficient to fix a character of excellence to his performances, if there are in them a number of beautiful incidents, true and exquisite turns of nature and passion, fine and delicate sentiments, uncommon images, and great boldnesses of expression.³⁰

As an esthetic critic Theobald was, at this time, somewhat uneven. He tended, for one thing, either to discuss Shakespeare in purely adulatory terms or to express himself in vague generalizations. In attempting to point out the particular beauties in King Lear, for example, Theobald commented upon Shakespeare's "masterful hand," upon "how exquisitely fine are [Lear's] expostulations with the heavens."³¹ He points out "how artful, yet natural" are the sentiments that Shakespeare puts into the mouth of Lear on critical occasions. For another

²⁹ Ibid., p. 47.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 43.

³¹ Ibid., I, 69.

thing. Theobald sometimes tended to miss the main thematic or artistic point of a Shakespearean tragedy, as is evident in this fairly obvious comment: "The plagues and consequences of this passion [jealousy] are so exquisitely described in Shakespeare's Othello, that this play may serve as a compleat common-place Book of Cautions against entertaining rash suspicions."³²

Theobald rarely probed much deeper than this during the years that he was writing The Censor. Perhaps he was incapable of extended esthetic criticism at this time; perhaps he had a relatively low opinion of the audience at which he aimed in the Censor papers

When Theobald came to write his next critical statement about Shakespeare, it was clear that he had not quite made up his mind whether or not freedom from the Aristotelean rules could be a good thing, even in Shakespeare's case. In 1720, Theobald published a revision of Shakespeare's King Richard II. His purpose in altering this play was to bring to it some of the regularity that he was as a classical ideal. He settled

³²Ibid., p. 116. Note also a similar comment on King Lear: "Hence arise two practical morals; the first a caution against rash and unwary bounty; the second against a base return and ingratitude of children to an aged parent." Ibid., p. 68.

specifically upon the unity of action and made a number of significant changes in the structure of Shakespeare's work. For one thing, he shortened the play to a most un-Shakespearean brevity, and rearranged scenes to suit his predilection for compression. He has Richard and Bolingbroke confront each other over the crown at the Tower of London, not at Westminster Hall, as Shakespeare specifies. He gives the Duke of York a temperamental stability that makes him a perfectly faithful subject to the legitimate king, but that destroys all of the thematic point that Shakespeare made in depicting the Duke as a vacillating, fence-straddling politician. Moreover, he brings about the death of Aumerle in order to intensify the atmosphere of martyrdom surrounding the deposed king who is himself martyred, not at Pomfret Castle, but once again in the Tower. Apparently Theobald saw no need for characters to be transported from one place to another when they could easily be murdered where they were. All of Theobald's changes, needless to say, were for the worse. The version that resulted from this process of "improvement" was a sorry, slipshod affair. The intention, according to Theobald's lights at the time, was a good one. He had long admired, he said, "the many scattered beauties" in Shakespeare's Life and Death of King Richard II, and those beauties had induced him to think that "they would have stronger charms, if

they were interwoven in a regular fable."³³ But the reviser's creative powers were simply too feeble to work effectively in the overpowering company of Shakespeare's lines. One possible beneficial effect of this experience was that it probably accelerated Theobald's growing critical awareness of the fact that Shakespeare's genius simply transcended all preconceived rules. He had said this in The Censor; after tampering with one of Shakespeare's plays he was beginning to believe it without reservation. Perhaps, then, the poor result of this project had a curative effect upon Theobald, in that it shifted his attention and his emphasis to a study of the natural beauties in Shakespeare's work.

In any event, Theobald had obviously learned an important lesson: it is a mistake to improve the works of a great writer. One of the problems for Theobald in the past had been that Shakespeare's very greatness made his faults stand out all the more obviously. "Shakespeare is allowed by all to have had the most wonderful genius, and the warmest imagination," he wrote, "of any poet since the name of Homer. As these qualities led him to say, and express, many things sublimely, figuratively,

³³Theobald, The Tragedy of Richard II, Altered from Shakespeare (London, 1720), p. 1.

and elegantly; so they often forced him out of his way, upon false images, hard metaphors, and flights, where the eye of judgment cannot trace him."³⁴ The temptation had been strong, of course, for the "eye of judgment" to correct him where it could not "trace" him. Theobald had come to know, however, that this was an illusion, and this new knowledge led to the formation of one of his most important critical principles, which he was to articulate most clearly:

Wherever the Author's sense is clear and discoverable (though perchance low and trivial), I have not by any innovation tampered with his text; out of an ostentation of endeavoring to make him speak better than the old copies have done.³⁵

Another beneficial result of this experience was that it afforded Theobald an opportunity to extricate himself from any further involvement in the various controversies concerning the extent of Shakespeare's erudition. It was clearly no longer an important critical question for him. He suggested, moreover, that he saw something dishonest in the motivation of those who repeatedly assaulted the genius of Shakespeare on the ground of faulty learning. Perhaps these critics exhibited "too partial

³⁴Ibid., p. 11.

³⁵Preface, p. xliii.

a contempt³⁶ for an artist whose primacy they were not willing to acknowledge fully. Theobald held Ben Jonson at least partially responsible for this misdirection of critical energy:

They, who affirm that Shakespeare was wholly unacquainted with the ancients, beg the question; and, perhaps, have been unreasonably led into that error by the false opinion of some of his contemporaries, and the falser interpretation of their meaning by some moderns. Ben Jonson seems to be the original from whence they copy one after another. . . . It[is] probable that Ben, who never was renowned for his humanity, might in these verses [i.e. Small Latin and less Greek] stretch a point in his own favor and commendation.³⁷

This realization on Theobald's part marks a definite advance in the formation of his critical consciousness, for he saw the problem of Shakespeare's learning as not really a problem at all, but as a kind of smoke-screen that obscured the genuine problems of studying the great dramatist.

It was apparently at this time, then, and because of these considerations, that Theobald's interest in Shakespeare took a decisive turn. In the past, Shakespeare had provided a great store of maxims, of quotations that served admirably to support and illustrate many moral generalizations. By 1720 Shakespeare had become infinitely more than that. He was such an important writer that it was essential that some effort be

³⁶Richard II. p. 111.

³⁷ibid.

made to put his house in order, so to speak; to find some method of restoring his plays to their pristine condition. He was England's classic writer, that was reason enough. It was time to lay aside the ancients as models, and to realize that England was capable of producing its own writers of classic stature, of whom Shakespeare was indisputably the foremost. "We are a greater, and more flourishing people than either the Greeks, or Romans," Theobald boasted, "and, as some say, more by genius inclined to theatrical representations."³⁸

It will never be known exactly to what extent Theobald would have pursued his studies of Shakespeare, and how much he would have developed in his understanding of editorial problems, if Pope had not published an edition of Shakespeare's plays in 1725. It is quite possible that Theobald had been contemplating at least the possibility of doing an edition of his own, but there is no certainty that he intended to do so. One thin is certain, however, and that is that his disappointment in Pope's accomplishment impelled him to speak out, and the means that he chose to express himself was his Shakespeare Restored.³⁹

³⁸Ibid., p. x.

³⁹For an analysis of Shakespeare Restored, see Chapter III, below.

By the time that he had produced this work, in 1726, Theobald had matured considerably. Many of his ideas had crystallized in the interim between the revision of Richard II and Shakespeare Restored, and he had acquired some degree of sophistication in the articulation of his principles. For example, the aforementioned desire for authenticity, for the restoring of the text to its pristine condition, became one of the hallmarks of Theobald's criticism. However, he had also come to recognize the fact that the determination of such a text was more of an ideal than an actual possibility, and that it was not only an editor's prerogative, it was his responsibility to make changes in those places where it can be ascertained that the text is plainly corrupt. He dismissed Pope's "religious abhorrence of all innovation" as a pose and as an obstacle to the science of responsible editing:

Certainly, that physician would be reckoned a very unserviceable member in the republic, as well as a bad friend to himself, who would not venture to prescribe to a patient, because not absolutely sure to cure his distemper: as, on the other hand, he would be accounted a man of very indifferent morals, if he rashly tampered with the health and constitution of his fellow-creature, and was bold to try conclusions only for private information. The same thing may be said with regard to attempts upon books: we should show very little honesty, or wisdom, to play the tyrants with any author's text: to raze, alter, innovate, and overturn, at all adventures, and to the utter detriment of his sense and meaning: but to be so very reserved and cautious, as to interpose no relief or conjecture, where it manifestly

labors and cries out for assistance, seems almost as absurd as the indolence of that good honest priest, who had for thirty years together mistakingly, in his breviary, read mumpsimus for sumpsimus; and being told of his blunder, and solicited to correct it, "The alteration may be just," said he; "but, however, I'll not change my old mumpsimus for your new sumpsimus."⁴⁰

During the years, then, since his early efforts in The Censor, Theobald had learned the importance of shoring up his natural equipment with some good sound scholarship. For example, in Shakespeare Restored he gives evidence that he had undertaken a number of ancillary studies, such as the language and related literature of Shakespeare's day; and he had familiarized himself with the condition and authority of the old texts which had served as the bases of the previous editions. Since he made only a handful of references to literary works by writers other than Shakespeare, and since such an important document as the First Folio was obviously not accessible to him at the time, it is apparent that these studies were barely begun; the important thing is, however, that Theobald had undertaken them in the interests of becoming a competent student of Shakespeare.

Shakespeare Restored marked the first time that Theobald put into practice the Bentleyan method of citing parallel texts

⁴⁰Theobald, Shakespeare Restored (London, 1726), p. iv.

to substantiate an emendation. He was to refine this technique and carry it over into the preparation of his complete edition of Shakespeare's plays in 1734.

Finally, it was in Shakespeare Restored that Theobald clearly marked himself as an objector to the school of editing represented by Rowe and Pope, for in the Introduction to this work he expressed a polite horror of irresponsibility in treating the texts of a long dead author:

For my own part, I don't know whether I am mistaken in judgment, but I have always thought, that whenever a gentleman and a scholar turns editor of any book, he at the same time commences critic upon his author; and that wherever he finds the reading suspected, manifestly corrupted, deficient in sense, and unintelligible, he ought to exert every power and faculty of the mind to supply such a defect, to give light and restore sense to the passage, and, by a reasonable emendation, to make that satisfactory and consistent with the context, which before was so absurd, unintelligible, and intricate.⁴¹

The finished product, then, should reflect as little of the editor's identity as possible. The irony of Theobald's life is that, in the battle of personalities that followed upon his inciting the wrath of Pope and his circle, Theobald ultimately succumbed, his name distorted into the comic "Tibbald," and his work become the symbol of useless and trivial erudition.

⁴¹Ibid., p. v. For an example of what Theobald meant by irresponsibility in editing, see Item IV of the Appendix to Shakespeare Restored.

Theobald's development as a Shakespearean editor continued in the years following Shakespeare Restored in the form of an energetic correspondence which consisted of a very lively interchange of notes, comments, emendations, conjectures, opinions, and problems. It is clear that Theobald was conscious of the value of the contents of these letters, for they represent virtually all of the correspondence that he took the trouble to preserve, and all of it deals in some way with the editing of Shakespeare.⁴² Although he was studying the works of other writers, Theobald focused his attention almost exclusively on Shakespeare. His investigation of the language and history of sixteenth-century England, his readings of the poets and dramatists of that time, his amassing of a large collection of Elizabethan plays, all of these lucubrations had as their purpose the enlarging of his knowledge of Shakespeare and Shakespeare's world. Similar in technique to Shakespeare Restored, but necessarily somewhat amorphous in arrangement by comparison, this correspondence runs from the late summer of 1726 to the winter of 1731.

⁴²All of Theobald's correspondence that was known to be extant at the time was printed intact in Vol. II of John Nichols, Illustrations . . . Eighteenth Century. A small number of letters that came to light at a later date were printed in an appendix to Richard P. Jones's study of Theobald. Unfortunately, these later discoveries add nothing to the general body of principles found in the older collection.

Theobald's most frequent correspondent was William Warburton, whose enthusiasm for emending bordered on the creative. Judging by the tone of these documents, and looking beneath the prettily elaborate stylistic etiquette that eighteenth-century letter-writers apparently observed, it is not too difficult to discern a healthy mutual respect on the part of Theobald and Warburton, and the two men were possibly good if not intimate friends. This is an interesting possibility in the light of Warburton's later defection to Pope, for it was in his correspondence that Theobald began to reveal a growing realization of the seriousness of Pope's enmity, and by 1729 his attitude toward the great poet had clearly crystallized. In a letter to Matthew Concanen, on April 15 of that year, Theobald unburdened himself of these sentiments: "If we look a little into the conduct and custom of the world, it may not appear so extraordinary as some have thought it, that Mr. Pope, because he cannot be the Fountain of Honor to mankind, should be so fond of usurping the Fountain of Infamy, and please himself with dealing out a fund of dirty promotions from that inexhaustible spring."⁴³

One important revelation found in the correspondence is that Theobald's materials improved as time went on. It is not

⁴³Nichols, II, 214.

clear whether he acquired additional Shakespeare texts at his own expense or whether he was the beneficiary of loans and gifts from sympathetic friends. Whatever the conditions, it is certain that at some time between the writing of Shakespeare Restored and the year 1729 Theobald gained access to a copy of the First Folio. In a letter to Warburton he refers with easy familiarity to this document. In making some fairly simple corrections in the text of The Taming of the Shrew, adjustments that were little more than the results of proof-reading, he wrote: "Correct [this] with the First Folio," and a few lines on, "First Folio again."⁴⁴ The off-hand manner of these adversions belies the fact that Theobald had sorely missed this indispensable volume in the past when he had had to resort to such uncomfortable circumlocutions as "all the old editions," and "all the editions that I have seen." It is quite possible, on the other hand, that he simply ignored the existence of the Third and Fourth Folios, since he says at one point that "I have . . . both the folio editions,"⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 337.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 453. This passage, by the way, presents graphic evidence of the extent to which Theobald's Shakespeare had grown, for he says that he has "many copies of this play [Richard III]; viz. both the folio editions, the following quartos, in 1597, 1598, 1602, 1612, 1629, and 1634."

meaning obviously the first and the second.

With the expansion of his holdings of primary materials Theobald was enabled to conduct his textual analysis in greater detail than was possible when he was preparing Shakespeare Restored for publication. In this respect, the correspondence reinforces to some extent the image of Theobald as the comma-hunter, the pedant of punctuation that became familiar through such works as The Dunciad and the "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot." The image, for all its exaggeration and distortion, was not wholly unearned on Theobald's part, but in a number of his letters Theobald demonstrated that incorrect punctuation could be detrimental to Shakespeare's sense. In the First Part of King Henry IV, for example, the character of Poins, at his entrance in the second scene of the first act, speaks lines that, by all the rules of logic, he should not be able to utter. Theobald theorized that somehow an early compositor, by misreading the punctuation marks, had reduced the name "Poins," spoken by Falstaff, to a speech heading, thus taking the lines away from Falstaff, to whom they obviously belonged. In the old editions the scene reads this way:

Falstaff: Why, Hal, 'tis my vocation, Hal. 'Tis
no sin for a man to labor in his voca-
tion. (Enter Poins)

Poins: Now shall we know if Gadshill have set

a match.⁴⁶

"Will anybody persuade me," asked Theobald, that "Shakespeare could be guilty of such an inconsistency, as to make Poins at his first entrance want news of Gadshill, and immediately after to be able to give a full account of him?"⁴⁷ According to Theobald, upon the entrance of Poins, Falstaff turns his attention away from Prince Hal, to whom he had been speaking, and cries: "Poins!--Now shall we know if Gadshill, etc."⁴⁸ Such a correction, which clears up the basic difficulty of the passage, obviously depends upon a special talent for rearranging commas, dashes, and exclamation points; but when one evaluates the results in such an instance, one questions the pejorative interpretation of the term "pedantry."

Theobald's talent in this respect was subject to his powers of judgment. He recognized the fact that chaotic punctuation was not always the fault of the compositor, that it was sometimes an integral part of the original text. For example, Peter Quince's introduction to his little play about Pyramus and Thisbe in the last act of A Midsummer-Night's Dream is a

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 351.

⁴⁷Ibid., pp. 351-352.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 352.

marvel of run-on sentences and misplaced accents. To revise the punctuation for clarity and coherence would be to pervert Shakespeare's intention, since "the whole glee of this prologue lies in the gross and ignorant prolocutor making flat nonsense of it, by making the rests all at false places."⁴⁹

It is clear, then, that Theobald's approach, far from being mechanical, is based upon sound logical principles. This was made evident in Shakespeare Restored, and it remained true in the work that is reflected in his letters to his colleagues in the five years or so following the appearance of that pamphlet. Probably the most general principle upon which Theobald built his editorial system was one that he referred to as the "consonance of ideas."⁵⁰ This was a principle that was brought into play in the treatment of obscurities that could not be made clear in the conventional ways, i.e., obscurities that could not be accounted for in terms of deliberate style, or of archaic language, or of deficiencies in our knowledge.⁵¹ These obscurities are found in passages that make grammatical sense,

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 238. Pope, of course, had in a sense taken the bait, and, to show that there is a little of the pedant in the best of poets, had repunctuated the speech in eighteenth-century style.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 210.

⁵¹See pp. 49-50, above.

but that have within them an elemental discrepancy, something that can only be described as a disharmony of thought. Difficulties of this type can only be cured by conjecture, since there is no evidence or primary material to fall back upon. There is not even a genuine certitude that the original text is in error; but the possibility that the suspected reading is authentic is, from the point of view of logic and esthetics, so remote, that the editor is compelled to devise a revision that renders the passage not only meaningful, but appropriate to the Shakespearean style. Two of Theobald's universally accepted emendations resulted from the application of this principle. In Antony and Cleopatra there occurs a passage in which Cleopatra, eulogizing her deceased lover, says:

For his bounty,
There was no winter in't. An Antony 'twas,
That grew the more by reaping. (V, 11, 86-88)

The difficulty that Theobald saw was that the poetic value of the passage lay in the juxtaposition of the terms "winter" and "Antony," and that the two terms were intended to afford some degree of illumination to the hearer through the perception of the naturalness or the appropriateness of their relationship. But Theobald could find no way in which Antony and winter were related, nor did he see "any common sense in an Antony growing by reaping."⁵² He substituted the word "Autumn" for "Antony."

⁵²Nichols, II, 210.

With this change a passage that had defied interpretation became pellucid, and somewhat conventional. Theobald supported the change by pointing out that "the variation from the traces of the letters is not very great, especially if we consider the old way of spelling the two words 'Antonie' and 'Autonne.'"⁵³

In the same letter, Theobald discussed a passage from Twelfth Night that posed a similar problem:

Sir Andrew: O, had I but followed the arts!
Sir Toby: Then hadst thou had an excellent head
of hair.
Sir Andrew: Why, would that have mended my hair?
Sir Toby: Past question; for thou seest it does
not cool my nature. (I, 111, 98-105)

The difficulty here is that once again the reading is grammatically impeccable. There is the remote possibility that hidden beneath Sir Toby's last phrase there is something--a pun, a topical or literary allusion--that may have been clear to the Elizabethans, may even have caused them to laugh at something that no one can understand today. But this possibility is too remote for Theobald to allow the reading to pass unchallenged. Shakespeare's puns are a little too obvious, more often than not they tend to torture the language. His abstruseness, on the other hand, teases rather than mystifies. It generally gives the reader too much room for interpretation; it rarely resists

⁵³Ibid., p. 210.

interpretation completely. The dialogue in the passage in question is very light and fast-moving, but it is not brittle, and it is certainly not exceptionally complex. Sir Toby has little difficulty in talking above the slow-witted Sir Andrew's head, and delights in doing so; but for Sir Toby to say of Sir Andrew's hair that "it does not cool my nature" is a little arcane, even for an accomplished wit. The point of Theobald's conclusion is simply that the phrase is essentially un-Shakespearean, that Shakespeare actually wrote something else that would in some way, on the printed page, resemble the corrupted text. "I dare say," he wrote to Warburton, that "I hardly need subjoin my correction to your sagacity: 'Sir Toby: Past question; for thou seest it will not curl by nature.'"⁵⁴

The principle of the "consonance of ideas," then, is both an esthetic and a practical one. It is an esthetic consideration that raises the critical doubt in the first place: the editor sees something in the text that, judging from a thorough knowledge of what is genuinely Shakespearean, is suspect. This rule cannot be put into more concrete terms since it depends to such a great extent upon the critic's taste and--to use one of

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 211. "It means no more, I think," Theobald continued, "than, if Sir Andrew had had art enough in him to tie up his hair, it had not hung so lank as it did by nature."

Theobald's favorite terms--sagacity. Theobald's own "sagacity" was clearly in a developmental stage in the interim between Shakespeare Restored and the complete edition of the plays. At the time of The Censor his approach was mainly expository, that is, he seemed to have regarded Shakespeare as a difficult writer who had to be explained to a general reading public that was willing to "appreciate" him, but that needed guidance. The experience of writing Shakespeare Restored and the intellectual companionship of such men as Concanen and Warburton had deepened his own appreciation of Shakespeare. For example, he had come to grasp one of the genuine fundamentals of the poetic aspect of Shakespeare's art, that is, that he was a master of metaphor. Theobald had learned that Shakespeare's metaphors were so subtle and complex in their multi-level meanings that we in the audience are frequently unaware of their workings in our own minds. In short, Shakespeare's intention is always to penetrate the obvious layer of meaning in the implied comparison of a metaphor. "He has a peculiarity, you know, in thinking; and wherever he is acquainted with nature, is sure to allude to her most uncommon effects and operations."⁵⁵

The principle of the "consonance of ideas" is practical

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 193.

in that Theobald's ideal is to see in the suspected reading some remnants or traces of the original. To put it very simply, the bad reading looks like the supposed good reading.

Theobald was constantly aware, however, that unintelligible and obscure readings were not always corrupt. The fault, at times, is not in the text, but in ourselves, that we are mystified. Theobald was as diligent in defending a text as he was in ferreting out errors. Despite his occasional "rage for emendation" Theobald felt that the text should stand unamended if it could be supported at all, and that it was within an editor's competence to develop techniques whereby difficult readings could be tested. On one occasion he gently scolded Warburton for relying too much upon imagination rather than scholarship: "The conjecture, like all you advance, is truly ingenious and refined; but, if I am not mistaken, struck out in the flame of an unbounded spirit."⁵⁶ It is possible that Warburton had come to look upon Shakespeare as an isolated artistic phenomenon. Theobald, on the other hand, had learned that Shakespeare wrote for an audience that was familiar with the works of other playwrights than himself. As a matter of fact, Shakespeare frequently alluded to popular contemporary

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 340.

plays, reproducing fragments of lines and snatches of songs that were on everybody's lips; he gave insights--especially in Hamlet--into the theatrical conditions of the time. In short, Shakespeare was a man of his own day, and wrote for the men of his day. Consequently, we tend to miss the point of many of his topical allusions, or that they are topical allusions to begin with. Theobald brought his growing scholarship to bear upon what he had considered to be one of the most tantalizing cruxes in Shakespeare, the term "Basilisco-like" in King John (I, 1, 244). If not a corruption it was obviously an allusion. But to what? Warburton had attempted an unsatisfactory explanation,⁵⁷ and Theobald had temporized until all the evidence was in. Finally, in a letter addressed to Warburton on November 6, 1729, he produced the results of his study of the problem:

Whether our late editor Pope had any conceit of one being dubbed Basilisco-like, or whether he had any understanding of the passage, I do not pretend to determine: but I think I may venture to say, he did not understand it, unless he knew the following piece of stage history; to the knowledge of which I presume that he will have the modesty to plead, Not guilty. The truth is, the Bastard's words carry a concealed piece of satire on an old drama that made its appearance in those times, and was printed in 1599, called Soliman and Perseda. In this place there is the character of a bragging cowardly knight, called Basilisco. Now his character of assumed valor is so

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 242.

blown and seen through, that Piston, a buffoon-servant in the play, jumps upon his back, and will not disengage him, till he makes Basilisco swear upon his dudgeon dagger, to the contents, and in the terms he dictates to him.

As you scarce have this old play, it is necessary to give you a bit of a quotation.

Bas. O I swear, I swear,
Pist. By the contents of this blade,
Bas. By the contents of this blade,
Pist. I the aforesaid Basilisco,
Bas. I the aforesaid Basilisco,
Knight, good fellow, knight, knight--
Pist. Knave, good fellow, knave, knave.

Now it seems clear to me that our Poet, sneering at this play, makes the Bastard, when Lady Faulconbridge calls him "knave," throw off that reproach, by humorously laying claim to his new dignity of knighthood; as Basilisco proudly insists on his title of "knight" in the passage quoted above.

The play is an extremely ridiculous one; and I suppose exploded with a vengeance in the representation, which might make this circumstance so well known, as to become the object of a stage sarcasm.⁵⁸

Theobald clearly could not have written this at the time of Shakespeare Restored, since his knowledge of Elizabethan literature was not then sufficiently detailed. This did not deter him, of course, from sniping at Pope on account of a similar ignorance; but the important thing is that Theobald had applied himself to a determined course of study that was ancillary to his continuing study of Shakespeare.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 256.

The educative stages through which he had passed did not, of course, blind Theobald to the fact that there were many passages in Shakespeare that amounted to learned absurdity, and that with the application of a modicum of scholarship could be rendered meaningful. "Our modern editors," he wrote to Warburton in the spring of 1729, "have an admirable trick of passing over unintelligible nonsense and fancying they comprehended it."⁵⁹ Yet, one of the main problems facing him was how to justify making permanent alterations in the early Shakespearean texts. Theobald's solution to that vexing problem was the devising of what is probably his most striking contribution to the basic techniques of editing, the single-letter emendation.

Theobald had already begun to experiment with this device in Shakespeare Restored, but during the time of the correspondence it became an important element in his set of editorial principles. The thinking behind it was that almost all of the errors that have crept into Shakespeare's text did so in the printer's shop, and the lowly compositor was generally the offender in this regard. In many instances an error was simply the result of the wrong letter being unwittingly substituted for the correct one. In some cases, the printer could not make out the handwriting

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 233.

in the manuscript and did the best he could in the absence of any editorial authority. In theory, then, the corrupt text should always bear some resemblance, albeit sometimes remote, to the authentic copy supplied by the playwright. It was up to the editor to determine the nature of the error and to supply, with varying degrees of certainty, a correct reading. Obviously, not all such mistakes involved literally a single letter; it is primarily as the expression of a principle that the term "single-letter emendation" applies.

The very first emendation to appear in the correspondence is, as a matter of fact, a specimen of this class. In a letter to Matthew Concanen, dated August 23, 1726, Theobald brought up the matter of a passage in Coriolanus that had baffled him and his correspondents for some time. The suspected lines read:

I think he'll be to Rome
As is the Asprey to the fish; he'll take it
By sovereignty of nature. (IV, vii, 33-35)

The difficulty here is that the term "asprey" is unintelligible; its meaning "could not be made out by the help of glossaries,"⁶⁰ and no clarification had been forthcoming from a fairly wide circle of reasonably learned gentlemen. The only conclusion that Theobald could draw from these facts was that the reading

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 189.

was not genuine, that Shakespeare wrote some other word. The problem was to find that word by some process other than mere guessing. Theobald examined the nature of the metaphor suggested in the passage, which was that "something must be couched under the corruption, in its nature destructive to fish, and that made a prey of them."⁶¹ Acting upon this hint, Theobald turned to the discipline of natural history and discovered that there was such a creature as an "osprey." This bird is a "species of eagle, of a strong make, that haunts the sea and lakes for its food, and altogether preys on fish."⁶² Theobald's explanation continues:

It is called the . . . aquila marina, as also avis ossifraga; and thence, as I presume, contracted first perhaps into osphrey, and then, with regard to the ease of pronunciation, into osprey. Minshew, Skinner, and Cotgrave, all give us the name of this bird; as do our Latin dictionaries Pliny has left us a description of its acute sight, and eagerness after its prey.⁶³

Admittedly, this kind of information is not essential to the full appreciation of Shakespeare's metaphor, but as a means of arriving at some degree of certainty in altering a patently corrupt text it offers considerably more substantiality than

⁶¹Ibid., p. 191.

⁶²Ibid., p. 192.

⁶³Ibid., p. 193.

could be found in the haphazard proof-reading of the folios, and the common-sense approach of Nicholas Rowe. After reading Theobald's account of his findings, it is a rare editor who will prefer to go back to the old reading. The technique has the virtue of altering the received text as little as possible: "The change, you see, is very minute; and the corruption arose in the old copies only from the mistake of an A for an O."⁶⁴

In a subsequent letter to Concanen, Theobald expressed his doubts about another passage in the same play:

Thou wast a soldier
Even to Calvus' wish, not fierce and terrible
Only in strokes, but with thy grim looks, and
The thunder-like percussion of thy sounds,
Thou mad'st thine enemies shake. (I, iv, 56-61)

The difficulty here is to determine the identity of Calvus.

"I am afraid Greek and Roman history will be at a loss to account for such a man, and such a circumstance to signalize him," wrote Theobald.⁶⁵ The only evidence that Theobald has to go on in this case is that a Roman proper noun is intended, one that is evidently expected to evoke some degree of admiration. The solution that he arrived at, while technically attenuating the principle of the single-letter emendation, is as plausible

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 192.

⁶⁵Ibid., pp. 199-200.

as the discovering of the "osprey," albeit less certain, and is faithful to the spirit of the principle. In supporting this emendation, Theobald displayed some of the knowledge of Elizabethan handwriting that he had gained: "The error probably arose," he said, "from the similitude in the manuscript of to to ly; and so this unknown wight Calvus sprung up."⁶⁶ Theobald's "sagacious conjecture" is that Shakespeare wrote "Cato."

The only remaining possible objection to the accepting of the name Cato is the determining of the appropriateness of the attribution to him of a desire for war-like ferocity in a military hero. Theobald addressed himself to the objection in an extended comment:

I flatter myself, the authorities for this emendation will hardly be disputed. Plutarch, in his life of Coriolanus, speaking of this hero, says, "He was a man (that which Cato required in a warrior) not only dreadful to meet with in the field, by reason of his hand and stroke; but insupportable to an enemy for the very tone and accent of his voice, and the sole terror of his aspect." Again in the Life of Marcus Cato the Censor, Plutarch, describing the warlike temper of that rough Roman, repeats the same sense in terms but little differing. "In engagements," says he, "he would use to strike lustily, with a fierce countenance stare upon his enemies, and with a harsh threatening voice accost them. Nor was he out in his opinion, whilst he taught that such rugged kind of behavior sometimes does strike the enemy more than the sword itself." Can we want plainer proof, when the three things mentioned in our Poet are particularized in

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 200.

both these passages of Plutarch, and said to be the qualities which Cato though requisite in a soldier?⁶⁷

Theobald's growing awareness of the vagaries of Elizabethan spelling, handwriting, and even pronunciation, helped to settle another textual difficulty for him. In A Midsummer-Night's Dream Bottom speaks the following mystifying lines:

And I will sing it in the latter end of a play
before the Duke: peradventure, to make it the
more gracious, I shall sing it at her death.
(IV, 1, 221-223)

Since there is not an antecedent for the pronoun "her" in this speech, Theobald suspects a corruption of the text, and offers the reading: "I shall sing it after death." This conjecture is supported by the dramatic situation, inasmuch as Bottom is perfectly capable of planning to step out of his role of the dead Pyramus to sing a song before the Duke and his company. "If this conjecture be right, the source of the corruption is very obvious," wrote Theobald. "The f in after being sunk by the vulgar pronunciation, the copyist might write it from the sound--a'ter; which the wise editors not understanding, concluded two words were falsely got together, so splitting them and

⁶⁷Ibid., pp. 200-201.

clapping in an h produced the present reading--at her."⁶⁸

The single-letter emendation, then, is the pre-eminently justified alteration of a received text. It has a number of virtues: it is brief, therefore it does not upset the basic fabric of a substantially good text; it supposes that some traces of the original text, even the original manuscript, are evident in what is physically present in the corruption; finally, it lends itself to the full play of the editor's logical, analytical, and investigative powers.⁶⁹

It would be a mistake to claim, however, that Theobald's skill in the use of this editorial tool was unerring. There were instances where he seemed to have become infatuated with the application of abstruse learning to the solution of Shakespearean cruxes. He overlooks the finely compressed irony of Antonio's phrase "A breed of barren metal" in The Merchant of Venice, and calls upon Latin and Greek sources to subscribe to his guess that Shakespeare really wrote "A breed of bearing metal."⁷⁰ But it was not always a case of excessive zeal and misdirected erudition that caused Theobald to make an

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 237.

⁶⁹See the letter to Warburton, dated December 13, 1729. Ibid., pp. 321-326, for some remarkable work of this kind upon unintelligible passages in Love's Labor's Lost.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 305.

untenable change. On occasion, he simply doubted the appropriateness of the phraseology of a given passage. For example, he found it difficult to believe that in his dying speech Hotspur would say to Prince Hal, "O Harry, thou hast robbed me of my youth," and ventured the opinion that he really said that he had been robbed of his "worth."⁷¹ It must be pointed out to his credit, however, that Theobald almost always had a premonition of error when he was making what later turned out to be a bad emendation, and he frequently prefaced those efforts with such qualifications as "I venture to guess," or "I have a strong suspicion that our Poet wrote thus." The percentages of such flaws, moreover, are relatively small, and in all fairness to Theobald, it ought to be pointed out that the correspondence contains a number of his really exceptionally good emendations, corrections that have been almost automatically accepted in virtually all subsequent responsible editions of Shakespeare's plays. The previously discussed passage from Twelfth Night, for example, in which Theobald changes Sir Toby's meaningless "cool my nature" to the pellucid "curl by nature"⁷² is considered one of Theobald's happiest inspirations. The quality of this emendation

⁷¹Ibid., p. 352.

⁷²See pp. 77-78, above.

is easily matched by such changes as Macbeth's "bank and school of time" to "bank and shoal,"⁷³ and Hamlet's "Woo't drink up Ehill, eat a crocodile" to "Woo't drink up eisel."⁷⁴ These are emendations of a superior class that no serious editor of Shakespeare would willingly do without, and although exceptional, they are in large measure representative of the quality of the editorial techniques that Theobald was developing during the period of his correspondence.

The Preface to the complete edition of Shakespeare's plays that appeared in 1734 marked the final stage in the development of Theobald's editorial principles.⁷⁵ This Preface, the longest sustained expository essay that Theobald composed in his lifetime, was the synthesis of the experiences through which Theobald had passed in the years that he had devoted to the study of Shakespeare. He had planned his edition ostensibly as a monument to England's greatest dramatist and poet, and inferentially as a vindication of his own theories and practices.

⁷³Nichols, II, 347.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 606.

⁷⁵For a summary of the possible reasons why the edition, although dated 1733, did not appear until 1734, see Edward Koster, "Lewis Theobald," English Studies, IV (1922), 53.

Theobald's Preface is generally reprinted in its later shortened form of 1740, the general assumption being that Theobald deleted all of the material that Warburton claimed to have furnished.⁷⁶ For the purpose of this analysis, however, the original version has been selected for a number of reasons. In principle, it is clear, the Preface is substantially Theobald's own work. There is no doubt that he received some suggestions from Warburton, but neither the extent nor the quality of those suggestions can be demonstrated.⁷⁷ Theobald might easily have been pressured into shortening his Preface (he and Pope, it must be recalled, had the same publisher for Shakespeare). In any event, the evidence against Theobald's authorship is at best inconclusive. Furthermore, the shortened form is clearly a revision for the sake of conciseness and coherence, an attempt to correct the uncomfortable sprawl of the longer version. The most important reason for accepting the essay as genuine, however, is the most subjective one: the Preface is in sound and spirit contemporaneous with Shakespeare Restored and the correspondence, and serves as an authentic and natural final stage in the

⁷⁶D. Nichol Smith, Eighteenth Century Essays on Shakespeare, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1963), pp. xlvi-xlviii.

⁷⁷A sample of the kind of emendation suggested by Warburton can be found in Nichols, II, 323; Theobald had expressed doubts concerning the phrase "school of night" in Love's Labor's Lost. On p. 347 we find that Warburton has offered the incredible "scroul of night," which Theobald politely rejected.

development of Theobald's editorial concepts.

The Preface begins with a restatement of Theobald's typical evaluation of his subject: Shakespeare was the greatest artist that England had produced, the equal of the supreme poets of antiquity, and in some respects their superior. But he was not a perfect artist, certainly not in any obvious or mechanical sense, and Theobald never became blind to his faults. In many ways Shakespeare was a mystery that Theobald never solved. The Restorer saw in his beloved subject an infinite range of artistry sometimes cheapened by a perplexing tendency toward the commonest sentiments. The important consideration, of course, was that the plays stood up under the most rigid critical tests; yet, for all their greatness they revealed not infrequent lapses in taste. "In Shakespeare," Theobald wrote, "we may find . . . some descriptions raised to that pitch of grandeur, as to astonish you with the compass and elevation of his thought; and others copying nature within so narrow, so confined a circle, as if the author's talent lay only in drawing in miniature."⁷⁸

Long before this, Theobald had come to recognize the need for something more sophisticated than Pope's habit of "degrading offending passages to the bottom of the page. As he grew in his knowledge of the literature of Shakespeare's time, he came to

⁷⁸ Preface, p. ii.

recognize the fact that the Elizabethans--especially in their dramas--were accustomed to seeing great poetry jostled by mean conceits and ribaldry. They were especially tolerant of, and probably delighted in, puns, a form of humor for which Theobald had a special distaste,⁷⁹ malapropisms, and other kinds of distorted language. Theobald settled this problem in his own mind by attributing the fault to the bad taste of the times and not to Shakespeare as an individual artist: "His clinches,⁸⁰ false wit, and descending beneath himself, seem to be a deference paid to reigning barbarism. He was a Samson in strength, but he suffered some such Delilah to give him up to the Philistines."⁸¹

Lapses of this kind in Shakespeare are not the concern of the textual critic; they are the responsibility of the esthetic critic, who can, after all, do nothing about them other than to single them out for a gentle reprimand or two. Other than to express his own disapproval on occasion, Theobald was not interested in this kind of flaw, and dispensed with any further consideration of it relatively early in his Preface. His main

⁷⁹Theobald was possibly influenced in this regard by a similar expression of distaste in The Spectator Papers.

⁸⁰Puns.

⁸¹Preface, p. xvi.

purpose in bringing the matter up was to demonstrate the fact that the editing of Shakespeare's plays was a difficult and complex task, and that a competent editor had to avoid a number of pitfalls, one of which was to get into the habit of over-correcting. One can find puns in Shakespeare that are so outrageous that they can cause genuine discomfort in the reader, but, according to Theobald's principles, if there is no evidence that Shakespeare did not write those puns, they must stand in any text that pretends to authenticity.

Theobald was concerned with the kind of flaw that resulted from inexpert or irresponsible printing. He had briefly stated his theories about the genesis of the corruptions in the received texts in the Introduction to Shakespeare Restored.⁸² Between the writing of that document and the composing of the Preface Theobald had studied the matter somewhat more deeply and had come up with a number of particular theories to account for the corrupt conditions--or deprivations,⁸³ as he called them--of the Shakespearean text. Much of the difficulty, he asserted, grew out of the fact that the acting companies carefully guarded their viable scripts. Unscrupulous publishers, on the other hand, devised clandestine methods of procuring saleable versions

⁸²See Chapter III, below.

⁸³Preface, p. xxxvii.

of the more successful productions. Theobald determined that there were two more or less practical ways of obtaining copies of those plays: one was that "many pieces were taken down in shorthand, and imperfectly copied by ear, from a representation";⁸⁴ the other was that some "were printed from piecemeal parts surreptitiously obtained from the theatres, uncorrect, and without the poet's knowledge."⁸⁵

Such dishonest practices resulted in a number of so-called "bad" quartos of Shakespearean plays, such as the 1597 quarto of Romeo and Juliet and the 1603 quarto of Hamlet. As causes of corrupt texts, however, these practices can be considered extrinsic, since they do not involve authoritative texts, that is, texts in which an editor must be able to perceive some clear reflection of the author's hypothetical manuscript. They may reproduce some traces of the original, but in substance they are too remote to be taken seriously.

The intrinsic causes of many corruptions in Shakespeare's texts were: (1) the insufficient care taken of the manuscripts; (2) the lapse of time between composition and any serious effort to preserve integral versions of the plays; (3) the incompetence and irresponsibility of the earliest publishers; and (4) the

⁸⁴ibid., pp. xxxvii-xxxviii.

⁸⁵ibid., p. xxxviii.

multiplying of typographical errors in subsequent printings which, after a century or so, left Shakespeare in a state actually worse than that of the Greek classics: "Had Homer," wrote Theobald, "or any other admired author, first started into public so maimed and deformed, we cannot determine whether they had not sunk forever under the ignominy of such an ill appearance."⁸⁶

It is the awareness of these intrinsic, or primary, causes of textual corruption that serves as a starting point in the editorial process, and Theobald felt that it was the lack of such awareness on the part of his predecessors that had led to so much bad editing in the past. An editor, even if he expected to perform only adequately, must submit to a thorough preparation and must be capable of a complex and somewhat clinical approach to his material. The limitations of those who went before were only too obvious: Rowe approached the task primarily as an actor, Pope as a poet; the "editors" or the later folios saw through the eyes of printers; Heminge and Condell were archivists. Theobald was the first to assume the mantle of the scholar-critic. He was no actor, and certainly no printer, but he had a somewhat thorough acquaintanceship with those professions. He had, on the other hand, some experience as a poet; his knowledge of English

⁸⁶Ibid., p. xxxiv.

Renaissance literature was constantly growing, and his knowledge of classical literature was unassailable. In his own view, Theobald had more qualifications than any who had gone before him, and he developed his editorial theories in the light of that assumed authority.

By the time he came to write his Preface Theobald had put aside the old question of Shakespeare's erudition and focused more deliberately upon what he considered the more important aspects of the dramatist's art. In any event, he felt, it is only in an age of classicism, or neo-classicism, that the question of learning in art is of any particular importance. Theobald, reflecting Ben Jonson's dictum that Shakespeare was not of an age but for all time, tended to veer away from prejudicial opinions concerning art. It is absurd to attempt to read Shakespeare as if he were Corneille or Racine; he must be read as Shakespeare, and Theobald saw it as one of his own responsibilities to produce a Shakespeare as near to the original as intelligence and ingenuity could manage.

Instead of dwelling, then, upon the problem of Shakespeare's learning, and dismissing the current preoccupation with it as an academic fixation of the times, Theobald preferred to find the basis of Shakespeare's appeal in his fidelity to

human nature. Admittedly, audiences and readers are attracted to the Bard because of his extraordinary expression and because of the sustained excellence of his characterizations. But what raised more elegance of language and profundity of character to the level of high universal art was Shakespeare's unerring sense of appropriateness, his rightness in matching words and traits to individual personages. Other dramatists could give their characters separate identities, but Shakespeare could give his much more. He gave them depth and complexity; he made them multi-dimensional. Theobald gives a number of examples of this power that he perceived in Shakespeare, but he singles out one as an "exquisite fine instance of this kind," in King Lear:

Where that old king, hasty and intemperate in his passions, coming to his son and daughter Cornwell, is told by the Earl of Gloucester that they are not to be spoken with: and thereupon throws himself into a rage, supposing the excuse of sickness and weariness in them to be a purposed contempt: Gloucester begs him to think of the fiery and unremoveable quality of the Duke: and this, which was designed to qualify his passion, serves to exaggerate the transports of it.⁸⁷

Theobald's point is that where other dramatists--and good ones at that--would resort to obvious bombast and the commonplace.

⁸⁷Ibid., pp. xxiii-xxiv.

emotional rhetoric of the choleric man, Shakespeare gives a living, complex human being, a king who has not yet lost his external majestic bearing, and yet a frustrated, enfeebled old man on the verge of madness and despair. This, then, as far as Theobald was concerned, was the basis of Shakespeare's "art," his own insight into human nature; it was not something learned from literary models.

Having established his position concerning what he perceived to be the basis of Shakespeare's art, Theobald turned his attention to the basis of another art, that of the critic, or what he frequently referred to as the "true duty of an editor."⁸⁸ Theobald never lost sight of the fact that textual criticism in English literature had not yet been really tested, that what had gone before had been of a highly tentative quality, and that the art was merely at the beginning of its development. It was necessary, he felt, to assert strongly the fact that the prospective editor's main responsibility was to subordinate his own personality to that of his subject. Theobald had based his editorial system on practices that he had learned from Dr. Richard Bentley, who had applied his scholarly techniques not only to

⁸⁸Ibid., p. xl.

the Ancients, but also to Milton's Paradise Lost. Theobald readily acknowledged his debt to Bentley, but he did not hesitate to demonstrate that there was an elemental difference between his application of Bentleyan methods to Shakespeare's text and Bentley's treatment of Milton, which was "a performance of another species."⁸⁹ In effect, when Bentley published his version of Paradise Lost he produced a new composition, a poem that reflected more of Bentley's personality than Milton's, and which was based upon Bentley's somewhat special canons of taste. The result of his "editing" was a concoction that Milton almost certainly would have disowned, since it was Milton filtered through the mind of Bentley. Theobald's ideal, on the other hand, was to produce a "Shakespeare" that would be entirely by Shakespeare, a "performance" in which there would actually be nothing of Theobald at all. The difference in the two conceptions, therefore, was a difference in kind, and an important kind.

Theobald made it clear, then, that criticism is both an art and a science. Insofar as it is an art, it reflects the mind and predilections of the critic, but it does so primarily in terms of his choice of methods and materials. His mastery of

⁸⁹Ibid., p. xxxix.

those materials is as much an art as a painter's mastery of his colors or a musician's of his tones. Insofar as it is a science, it demands a clinical detachment, a withdrawal of self that is as ascetic as it is esthetic. This was a hard discipline, a difficult tenet to hold, but a basic one to Theobald's philosophy, "that the editor must give what his author wrote, even if he disapproves of it."⁹⁰

It has been pointed out that Theobald reduced what he called the science of criticism to a three-fold function, that is, emendation, explication, and appreciation.⁹¹ He readily admitted that the bulk of his work fell under the first two classes, inasmuch as these represented the methods and materials that he had mastered. He had tried his hand at esthetic criticism in the past, and stated that the reader would find scattered examples of it throughout his edition. However, this kind of criticism, from the scientific point of view, is amorphous. It depends upon individual predilections, perceptions, tastes. One age sees beauties in Shakespeare that a later age is blind to, and perhaps

⁹⁰Horace M. King, "The Work of Theobald and His Predecessors on the Text of Shakespeare," Doctoral Dissertation, University of London (1940), p. 376.

⁹¹See p. 51, above.

that is as it should be. In any case, Theobald adopted a liberal attitude in that he said that this third class of criticism, the analysis of excellences and the pointing out of faults, might be undertaken by anyone who had the will, the interest, and the talent to do so, "and I shall be pleased," he concluded, "to see it the employment of a masterly pen."⁹²

That the Preface, then, especially in its original form, represents a culminating stage in both Theobald's conscious and sub-conscious development as a critical artist in his own right is demonstrated by the fact that he undertook, at this time, the statement of a summary of principles, or rules, of editing as he saw them. This summary is an apology and a manifesto. Whatever Warburton and others might claim at a later date, Theobald, in 1734, was his own master: he had shown that he had the intellect, the energy, the enthusiasm, the modesty, and ultimately the equipment to be a good editor of a great writer. This summary consists of a statement of six basic rules:

(1) Theobald took as his first rule the search for authority as the basis of authenticity. In the light of the

⁹²Preface, pp. xl-xli.

probable extinction of Shakespeare's manuscripts, an editor is compelled to consult, "by a diligent and laborious collation . . . all the older copies."⁹³ This was nothing new, of course, for Rowe and Pope had done the same thing in preparing their editions. The main difference was that in this rule Theobald called for greater thoroughness and a scientific technique, not the arbitrary methods that the former editors had employed.

(2) In dealing with Shakespeare's treatment of historical subjects, be they British, Greek, or Roman, Theobald maintained that the editor should make it his responsibility to acquaint himself with and to refer to the original documents upon which Shakespeare drew for his historical facts. This research should be undertaken in the interest of correcting possible errors that might have crept into the text, or of elucidating passages that had become corrupt through irresponsible printing. The rule is almost purely mechanical: Theobald never tired of asserting that Shakespeare frequently modified history to suit his dramatic or thematic purposes, and that he was faithful to the spirit rather than to the actuality of history.⁹⁴

(3) "Wherever the author's sense is clear and

⁹³Ibid., p. xlii.

⁹⁴See Chapter III, below.

discoverable, . . . I have not by any innovation tampered with his text out of an ostentation of endeavoring to make him speak better than the old copies have done."⁹⁵ This is Theobald's most concise restatement of one of his basic conceptions, one that has been pointed out a number of times, and that cannot be stressed too strongly as far as its importance in Theobald's overall view is involved. It is perhaps this scrupulous concern for the absolute integrity of the Shakespearean text that makes Theobald seem a more dignified and disinterested, ultimately more professional scholar than the men who had edited Shakespeare before him.

(4) Whenever a passage was so difficult or illogical that it defied natural interpretation and was obviously corrupt, Theobald attempted to bring sense out of nonsense by as unobtrusive a change as possible: "If, by the addition or alteration of a letter or two, I have restored to him both sense and sentiment, such corrections, I am persuaded, will need no indulgence."⁹⁶ This is the "single-letter emendation" that developed out of the experiments conducted in Shakespeare Restored, and in the correspondence that followed.⁹⁷

⁹⁵Preface, p. xliii.

⁹⁶Ibid.

⁹⁷See p. 83, above.

(5) Theobald felt that an emendation of any kind required at least a judgment on the part of the editor, and sometimes that judgment had more than a little of the conjecture in it. "I have constantly endeavored," he wrote, to support my corrections and conjectures by parallel passages and authorities from himself [i.e., Shakespeare] . . . the surest means of expounding any author whatsoever."⁹⁸ This rule, of course, is Theobald's major debt to Richard Bentley. It can be laid to Theobald's credit, however, that he made the method his own, both in Shakespeare Restored and in the complete edition.⁹⁹

(6) Although the conjecture plays an important part in the process of emendation, it does depend to a large extent upon the intellectual powers of the critic. It is essential,

⁹⁸Preface, p. xliii.

⁹⁹Mr. H. M. King has an interesting comment to make concerning this point: "The basic principle of Theobald's work . . . was that an author should be explained by himself. An obscurity in one place might be solved by finding what he said elsewhere. . . . Pope had altered Shakespeare's text. So had Rowe and Hughes. But all three had made corrections merely by reading through a passage and then altering to what seemed to them to make sense. They had judged the obscure passage by itself. Thus, although they had made some good emendations and many obvious corrections, they had also made some bad ones, some of which were mere mistakes, but others of which were grave blunders. Under Theobald's new principle, which was to become the canon law of Shakespearean criticism, mistakes might be made, but never again could a grave error be made by any editor working [along] Theobald's lines." P. 340.

therefore, that the reader be given a clear indication that the text has been altered in some way. "Wherever I have ventured at an emendation, a note is constantly subjoined to justify and assert the reason of it. Where I only offer a conjecture, and do not disturb the text, I fairly set forth my grounds for such conjecture, and submit it to judgment."¹⁰⁰ Theobald recognized the effectiveness of the explanatory footnote, and "endeavored to give them a variety in some proportion to their number."¹⁰¹ Many of his footnotes are of a trivial or mechanical nature, some of them dealing with such nebulous things as punctuation and spelling. But in several cases he manifested a high degree of expertise and wrote what are clearly miniature essays. Theobald was at his best when he was permitted to focus upon a single point or idea. His muse, a prosaic one at best, tired easily, inspiring him to create paragraphs rather than pages. It is perhaps because of their brevity that they make for at least easy, at times illuminating, and occasionally even entertaining reading.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ Preface, pp. xliii-xliv.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., p. xliii.

¹⁰² Theobald modestly expressed the hope that a few readers would "derive some pleasure" from the reading of his notes. Ibid.

There is one further point that Theobald brings up before entering upon the final section of his Preface,¹⁰³ but that is more in the nature of a discussion than a statement of a rule. Theobald elaborates upon the problems of dealing with obscurities in the Shakespearean texts, and briefly analyzes the various kinds of obscurities that an editor should be able to recognize.¹⁰⁴ For all practical purposes, then, this concise presentation of his six "rules" of criticism marks the completion of Theobald's conscious development as an editor. The Preface precedes, of course, the complete edition itself, which puts into practice all of Theobald's professed theories and which stands as the ultimate justification of those theories. The Preface, therefore, especially in its obvious statement of a clear set of rules, is the final summation of Theobald's editorial principles.

Theobald lived for another ten years after the first publication of his edition in 1734, yet he produced no further

¹⁰³The concluding section of the Preface, pp. xlvi-lxviii, although it deals with some relevant matters of Shakespearean editing, such as defending Shakespeare's anachronisms, defending the science of literal criticism, and pointing out some of Pope's deficiencies as an editor, strays from its immediate subject and becomes preoccupied with a discussion of the correcting of classical, especially Greek, texts. It sheds no further light on Theobald's editorial methods.

¹⁰⁴See p. 49, above.

advances in the development of a conceptual approach to Shakespearean scholarship. Although there is no certainty as to why this should be so, it is not difficult to arrive at a number of reasons through conjecture. First, Theobald may have considered that with the accomplishment of the gargantuan task of putting out a fully annotated edition of Shakespeare's plays his work had been, for all practical purposes, completed. There are some slight revisions in later issues, a few conjectures withdrawn, but no major change in critical technique or viewpoint. Perhaps he trusted that his editorial practices, as embodied in the edition, would speak for him in the future, and that later scholars would build upon the foundation that he had provided. Secondly, it must be remembered that Theobald had been, for some years, a subject of popular satire and outright lampoon. The effects of Pope's Dunciad upon Theobald's temperament must have been incalculable. All of this was compounded, at some uncertain date, by the unexpected and barely explicable loss of Warburton's friendship. Since about 1729, then, Theobald had cut a somewhat ridiculous figure in Grub Street, and although his "Shakespeare" was successful, he became the archetype of the humorless, anti-creative pedant.

A third consideration is that Theobald experienced possible financial difficulties in these years. Theophilus Cibber's

biography of him suggests that Theobald's fortunes sank disastrously toward the end of his life, and that the old Restorer barely escaped absolute poverty. A final and plausible explanation for his failure to offer anything new in his chosen field is that Theobald had gone as far as he could go. The evidence is that his ability to write had steadily dwindled for some time. If one looks over the volumes of The Censor one admits that Theobald had had some talents as an essayist, not remarkable, but at least perceptible. However, the tendency toward padding was already in evidence. As the years passed it became clear that Theobald's real power lay in the writing of annotations, many of which consisted of no more than a few paragraphs. While this change does not necessarily indicate a decline in the quality of his writing, it does suggest a decline in stamina.

As a critical theorist of his day, then, Theobald can be credited with a certain originality, even though he derived his system from Richard Bentley. He was the first to apply the method to a modern writer. He clarified, furthermore, the duties of an editor, duties he defined as the exertion of every power of the mind to restore the true reading in corrupt passages, and to illuminate those passages when their sense was dark. Therefore he did not omit--as he claimed that Pope had done--whatever he could not understand, but worked painstakingly and scientifically at removing obscurities. "The substance of his idea of an

editor's duty remains the same today--the expenditure of the greatest critical care and diligence toward making a text as intelligible as possible."¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁵Jones, p. 94.

CHAPTER THREE

SHAKESPEARE RESTORED: ITS PURPOSE, ITS CONTENT AND ITS IMMEDIATE EFFECT UPON THEOBALD'S REPUTATION

Although frequently referred to as a pamphlet, Shakespeare Restored is a volume of respectable proportions, deliberately designed in such a way that it might serve as a supplement to the six ample volumes of Pope's edition.¹ It is divided into three sections: an introduction, an extended treatise on Hamlet, and an appendix.

The introduction is actually a critical article, an essay in criticism, in which Theobald states his own scholarly credo concerning the editing of great literature and in which he attempts to lay the foundation of his editorial system. After the Preface to his edition of Shakespeare, this introduction is Theobald's clearest and most important expression of his principles. It is his statement of intent, his response to the

¹Thomas R. Lounsbury, The Text of Shakespeare (New York, 1908), p. 156.

occasion created by the appearance of Pope's Shakespeare. In it Theobald explains his reasons for undertaking the correction of Pope's work, making it clear that his primary concern is the establishing of an integral Shakespearean text. Theobald was in accord with most of the educated men of his time in that he venerated Shakespeare as a writer of incalculable greatness. It was important to him, therefore, that a standard and reliable text be settled upon. Like many of his contemporaries, he had looked to Pope for a definitive work; unlike most of them, he had been disappointed.

The condition of Shakespeare's text was such that the need for responsible editing was not simply clear, it was desperate. The youngest of the plays was over a century in age, the language was changing rapidly from one generation to the next, and the primary materials were scattered haphazardly. If for no other reason than to arrest a process of attrition, something had to be done to establish a standardized text. The editing, however, had to be done by someone with special abilities, "some fine genius," who would "contribute to the pleasure of the present and of future times in retrieving, as far as possible, the original purity of Shakespeare's text."² Rowe

²Shakespeare Restored, p. 1.

was certainly not that genius for, although he had done some things well, he had had no overall conception of the editorial function. Pope had been at least potentially qualified, in Theobald's view. He was a man of talent, ability, and of "uncommon sagacity and discernment."³ His knowledge of the classics demonstrated in his recent translations of Homer suggested a certain sophistication in the handling of primary texts. Above all, Pope was himself a creative artist, a poet. Theobald implicitly compared him to Horace when he wrote, "there is a certain curiosa felicitas . . . in that gentleman's way of working."⁴ The task, of course, was not a small nor an easy one. In the first place, there were no remaining manuscripts, so that the luxury of indisputable authority was forever denied to Shakespeare's editors. In the second place, the plays had been printed so carelessly that in some areas the texts had become hopelessly corrupt:

It must necessarily happen, that where the assistance of manuscripts is wanting to set an author's meaning right, and rescue him from those errors which have been transmitted down through a series of incorrect editions, and a long intervention of time, many passages must be desperate, and past a cure, and their true sense irretrievable,

³Ibid., p. 11.

⁴Ibid.

either to care, or the sagacity of conjecture.⁵

Theobald placed the proper blame for this state of affairs directly upon the printers themselves. Theobald's attitude toward Elizabethan publishers is clearly contemptuous. They were motivated, he believed, by a desire to turn a profit rather than to preserve great drama, and produced their books as cheaply as possible, forgoing the services of professional proof-readers, if such a profession existed in Shakespeare's time. Theobald commends them sarcastically for their frugality, saying that "they think every farthing which is given for the labor of revise to be so much money given away for nothing."⁶ The old process was clear: each new issue of a play was set up from an older copy, the compositor adding a new share of misprints and other typographical horrors, while preserving, for the most part, the mistakes that had already been committed. Thus, a kind of generative cycle came into being: "the more the editions of any book multiply, the more the errors multiply too, and propagate out of their own species."⁷

Bearing all this in mind, one can see that the editing of Shakespeare can be a career in itself. Pope apparently--at

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid., pp. 11-111.

least Theobald seemed to think so--attempted it simply as an assignment, and when he found that it demanded more than he could give, he settled upon an incomplete and inadequate technique. Theobald went so far as to maintain that Pope had in effect disclaimed the duties of an editor, even though he had produced something that looked like an edition. It is at this point in his introduction to Shakespeare Restored that Theobald, ostensibly for the first time, declares his intention to become an editor of Shakespeare in his own right: "I am assuming a task here, which this learned editor seems purposely (I was going to say, with too nice a scruple) to have declined."⁸

Theobald was aware of the fact that he was taking on not only a gigantic commission, but also a formidable antagonist in Pope. This is not to say that he foresaw that he was to evoke Pope's enmity. He looked upon Pope as an antagonist in the sense that, in terms of poetic talent, he was immeasurably Pope's inferior, that he himself lacked that very curiosa felicitas that he admired in Pope. As far as his own powers were concerned, Theobald was, in an age of boasters, disarmingly humble. "I shall venture to aim at some little share of reputation," he wrote, "in endeavoring to restore sense to passages in which no

⁸Ibid., p. 111.

sense has hitherto been found; or, failing in that hope, must submit to incur . . . the censure of a rash and vain pretender."⁹ In this respect, Theobald possibly underrated himself too severely. It was true that his creative powers were meager, especially in terms of poetry, and that as a dramatist he had proved at best ineffectual. He had even failed as a prose essayist, inasmuch as his Censor articles were too clearly modeled upon The Spectator, and suffered by too obvious a comparison with those famous papers. But what many of his contemporaries failed to see was that a good editor was a genius of another sort. It was the lack of the creative spark that qualified him for the laborious comma hunting and the discourses upon grammar and spelling that Pope considered drudgery. It prevented Theobald from either trying or wanting to remake Shakespeare in his own image by inventing subtle "improvements" of one kind or another. He was enough of a poet to exercise a proper amount of taste in treating Shakespeare's text, but he was not nearly enough of a poet to pick up where the Bard had left off.¹⁰ Theobald's best qualities in this respect were passive. He had what might be called a receptive ear, a nice ability to catch nuances of style in an

⁹Ibid., p. v.

¹⁰Richard F. Jones, Lewis Theobald (New York, 1919), p. 66.

author. It is this quality that has caused many of his emendations to be universally accepted by later scholars. Theobald's most successful corrections have such a Shakespearean ring to them that they are difficult to disregard.

In any event, Theobald took upon himself a new responsibility, not to antagonize Pope in the superficial sense of the word, but to attempt to do what Rowe and Pope had left undone. He weighed the disadvantages--another professional failure; invoking the displeasure of a large reading public already committed to Pope; dissipating his energies in the arduous mechanics of the undertaking--against the one overriding judgment that he had made: that Shakespeare was England's greatest writer, and the one who most urgently required rescuing from the relative oblivion of corrupt copy.

Theobald looked upon Shakespeare, then, as a writer of classic stature. He was represented upon English stages with predictable frequency. He was universally admired and read by all educated Englishmen, but with difficulty. "There are very few studies," Theobald maintained, "or collections of books, though small, amongst which he does not hold a place But with what pleasure can they read passages which the incorrectness of the editions will not suffer them to understand?"¹¹

¹¹Shakespeare Restored, p. vi.

Theobald was very much like Pope in that he saw himself standing at a kind of beginning; he foresaw--at least he hoped--that later and better critics would build upon his structures, incomplete and faulty as they might be. He disclaimed affinity with Pope in one important respect, however: his own failings would be in terms of omission, or lack of materials, or invincible ignorance, but wherever he emended Shakespeare he left the text in better condition, he thought, than he found it; Pope, on the other hand, had not only perpetuated old errors through similar deficiencies, but he had perpetrated new ones, adding to the stock handed down by the incompetent and reprehensible old printers.

If he were taken at his word, then, Theobald could not have proceeded from more disinterested motives. "No vein of pedantry or ostentation of useless criticism incited me to this work," he claimed. "It is a sacrifice to the pleasure of Shakespeare's admirers in general."¹² Perhaps one can read between the lines a certain note of emulation on Theobald's part. Shakespeare Restored certainly did not owe its genesis purely to the appearance of Pope's unsatisfactory edition. Theobald assures his readers that this book contains specimens of his performance drawn from a larger stock, and some time

¹²Ibid.

after publishing Shakespeare Restored he revealed in a letter to the Daily Journal¹³ that he had been studying Shakespeare for twelve years.¹⁴ Such revelations tend to reduce much of the impromptu effect of Shakespeare Restored, making it less a rising to an occasion than it seems at first sight. For the most part, however, Theobald can probably be taken at his word when he claims that he is more concerned with the integrity of Shakespeare than he is with his own reputation.

It is in his expressed attitude toward Pope that Theobald is most problematic both in the introduction to Shakespeare Restored and in the body of that work. He declared repeatedly that he did not intend to insult Pope. He insisted that he had been one of the poet's most genuine admirers, once even having dared to disagree with--and consequently to offend mortally--the critic John Dennis in commenting favorably upon the translations of Homer. There is probably little reason to believe, at this stage of their relationship, that Theobald was not sincere in his praise of Pope.¹⁵ Most assessments of this relationship

¹³November 26, 1728.

¹⁴Jones, p. 66 n.

¹⁵H. W. King, "The Work of Theobald and His Predecessors on the Text of Shakespeare," Unpublished dissertation (London, 1940), p. 339. In the thirty-third number of his Censor, Theobald attacked Dennis as a splenetic writer who allowed his professional criticism to be influenced by his animosities.

are colored by Theobald's later highly inimical attitude toward Pope. It must be borne in mind, however, that Theobald had been attacked in The Dunciad, as well as in a number of smaller but not significantly less effective documents. It is interesting to compare the polite and deferential attitude of Shakespeare Restored with that reflected in some of the comments found in Theobald's edition of Shakespeare:

This is a corruption of the modern editors
i.e. Rowe and Pope : the consequence either of
indolence or ignorance.¹⁶

Sagacity with a vengeance! I should be ashamed
to own myself a piece of a scholar, to pretend to the
task of an editor, and to pass such stuff as this
upon the world for genuine.¹⁷

If such a critic be fit to publish a stage writer,
I shall not envy Mr. Pope's admirers, if they should
think fit to applaud his sagacity.¹⁸

This is merely, I presume, ex cathedra Popiana;
for I can find no authority for it, any more than
any sense in it.¹⁹

¹⁶Theobald, The Works of William Shakespeare (London, 1733), I, 287, note 21.

¹⁷Ibid., II, 131, note 25.

¹⁸Ibid., II, 328, note 19.

¹⁹Ibid., III, 310, note 16.

It is impossible to say what Theobald's ultimate career would have been like if he had not, in actuality, deeply offended Pope; but, for the time being in 1726, he proceeded, perhaps naively, upon the assumption that he would be taken at his word, and that his expressed intention would be taken in good faith by the generality of the reading public.

In the closing sections of his introduction, Theobald states the basic dichotomy of approach to be found in Shakespeare Restored, one part of which is unpleasant for the "Restorer" and of little interest to the reader because of its anti-esthetic nature. This is the mechanical correcting of errors in punctuation, misprints, and the like. Theobald calls this the "drudgery of correction,"²⁰ and apologizes for inflicting it upon his reader. But, it is part of the duty of an editor and therefore must be done. The second part is the "more important matter,"²¹ the emendations of palpably corrupted passages.

The book proper contains an extended examination of Hamlet, or what the Restorer refers to as a series of animadversions. Theobald chose this play to serve as the body of this important pamphlet for two good reasons. First, Hamlet is

²⁰Shakespeare Restored, p. vi.

²¹Ibid., p. vii.

quite possibly the most popular of Shakespeare's plays. If not, it certainly ranks very high among the popular ones. Secondly, it is one of the most frequently performed plays in England. Theobald, in a retrospection that covered thirty years, could not recall a season in which the play had not been given at least two productions in London.²² But it would be a mistake for the reader to conclude from the lengthy treatment of Hamlet in Shakespeare Restored that it is "more fertile in errors"²³ than the other plays. On the contrary, each of Shakespeare's plays might be given similar extended treatment. This would run to a very large book indeed, and Theobald was at the time concerned mainly with giving simply an example of the sheer size of the task facing the editor of Shakespeare. In short, in this book he shows what Pope has done, what Theobald can do, and leaves the judicious reader to decide between the two.

The reader notices at once, when he begins the examination of Hamlet, that much of the work is taken up with correcting --or "restoring"--the text of Pope's edition. This is to be expected in the light of the promise made on the title page of Shakespeare Restored. Therefore, a disappointingly large

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid.

proportion of the book is somewhat pedestrian. Many of the corrections were really not Theobald's creations at all; he merely pointed out that Pope had deviated erroneously from an earlier text. The word "restored," then, has two basic meanings. The first meaning is that the text was to be put back the way it had been before Pope tampered with it. This is the original sense that Theobald had in mind when he used the word in the title of his book. The second meaning is that the text was to be restored to its original condition before the printers' and players' corruptions had set in. In other words, Theobald's ideal was to reconstitute Shakespeare's hypothetical manuscripts, or "fair copies." This is what Theobald meant when he spoke of "the original purity of his text."²⁴

It is important to understand Theobald's intention in his writing of the second and, in his view, the main section of Shakespeare Restored. "The Examination and Correction of The Tragedy of Hamlet." Theobald did not intend to write an extended expository essay. In certain contexts he makes an analytical detour, but for the most part he keeps to the business at hand, setting up a basic apparatus and adhering to it throughout. In this examination of Hamlet Theobald translates a

²⁴See p. 113, above, note 2.

theoretical credo into what is for him a living faith. Without further prologue he sets his critical machinery into motion. The section contains ninety-seven numbered items, each labeled according to the nature of the error that is being corrected. The passage under consideration is identified by act and scene, along with a page reference to Pope's edition. Theobald corrects thirty-five cases of "various readings" and twenty-five of "false pointing," i.e. incorrect punctuation. He offers thirty-nine emendations, twenty of which are conjectural, the remaining nineteen of a more automatic or mechanical nature. There are also thirteen cases in which, under the heading of "omission supplied," Theobald restores authentic passages more or less accidentally left out by Pope. The general layout of this section has an efficient and professional appearance; however, it is clear that Theobald was working under a relatively severe handicap, for he had few primary materials with which to work. Although he writes somewhat glibly of "all the printed copies that I have ever seen,"²⁵ and intimates that he has several editions of Hamlet, an analysis of Shakespeare Restored shows with fair certainty that Theobald had in his possession only a copy of the Second Folio and quarto editions of 1637, 1703, and

²⁵Shakespeare Restored, p. 90.

1718 (Hughes' quarto).²⁶ On pages 78-79 of Shakespeare Restored he mentions the Fourth Folio, but it is not clear whether or not the volume was actually in his possession.²⁷ He apparently owned a set of Rowe's edition, and, of course, he had Pope's edition.²⁸ It is interesting to note that Theobald had no materials published before 1632, the date of the Second Folio.²⁹

Having such a limited number of texts to work with, it is little wonder that Theobald placed great emphasis on the conjectural aspect of his editorial system. Even such mechanical things as punctuation and grammar, in the light of this deficiency, called for a certain amount of sagacity on the Restorer's part.

On the whole, Theobald exercised more than reasonable care in dealing with suspected corruptions in Shakespeare's text.

²⁶Pope had copies of the quartos of 1605 and 1611.

²⁷Theobald mentions the First Folio only once, in Item LXX, p. 98.

²⁸Listed as No. 140 in the catalogue of Theobald's library as "Pope's Shakespeare, 6 vols. neat."

²⁹For the rest of the plays he had to content himself with . . . the 1600 quarto of Much Ado about Nothing, the 1611 quarto of Titus Andronicus, and a 1655 quarto of King Lear." Jones, p. 90.

He endeavored to steer a sensible course between a "religious abhorrence of innovation" and a too liberal permissiveness in condemning apparent errors. At its best, Theobald's approach to the process of emendation is essentially intellectual. We see his theoretical method, adapted from Bentley, brought to bear for the first time in Shakespeare Restored. When he comes upon a passage in which he suspects a deviation from the true reading, Theobald singles out the offending word or phrase and, so to speak, lodges a complaint against it. He is conscientious, however, in his examination of the passage as it stands, in that at first he tries to make sense out of it. In other words, he asks the question, "Is it possible that, faulty as it may appear to be, this is what Shakespeare actually intended to say?" If the probabilities lean toward an affirmative answer then the text must stand unchanged. If, however, according to the logic of Theobald's enquiry, the text cannot be defended, then it must be emended. Then, as it has already been demonstrated, Theobald offers a sufficient number of parallel passages, quotations from Shakespeare himself, as evidence in support of his emendation.³⁰ A significant advantage that Theobald had over his predecessors was his ability to notice difficulties

³⁰King, p. 343.

in passages that tended to elude the unattentive eye. His self-appointed mission was to discern where nonsense had taken the place of sense.

For example, in Polonius' speech to Ophelia in the third scene of Act I, Theobald detected what he considered a very subtle corruption of the text:

In few, Ophelia,
Do not believe his vows, for they are brokers,
Not of that dye which their investments show,
But mere implorators of unholy suits,
Breathing like sanctified and pious BONDS
The better to beguile. (126-131)

The suspected word is set off in upper-case letters. The word "bonds" appears in all the folios and quartos, in Rowe's and Pope's editions, indeed in every copy printed before Theobald questioned the reading. This is an instance, then, in which Theobald is not restoring one of Pope's errors, but correcting a mistake left "unamended"³¹ by that editor. Theobald suspected the word because in the present context it seemed contrary to Shakespeare's style. Now, one of the marks of that style that most readers would recognize is Shakespeare's delight in juxtaposing opposites, sometimes for dramatic, more often for poetic effect. But even when he is straining for an effect Shakespeare is never absurd. How then, wonders Theobald,

³¹See the title page of Shakespeare Restored.

can we conceive of breathing bonds, and by what exercise of the imagination can they be sanctified and pious? "The only tolerable way of reconciling it to a meaning without a change is to suppose that the poet intends by the words 'bond,' verbal obligations, protestations, and then, indeed, these bonds may, in some sense, be said to have breath; but this is to make him guilty of overstraining the word and allusion."³² Therefore, if the text is correct as it stands, Shakespeare is guilty either of inartistically distorted language or of deliberate obscurity. He might have pleaded guilty to one or both of these charges at the time of Love's Labor's Lost, but not in one of the supreme periods of his maturity. The word, then, cannot stand. Theobald seeks the correct one, and comes up with the word "bawds." This word is acceptable, first, because it is amenable to Shakespeare's style. There is an undercurrent element of humor here in that Polonius is uttering a subtlety that he himself would not appreciate: "sanctified and pious bawds" may be incongruous, but it is an incongruity worthy of Shakespeare.

Theobald is at something of a disadvantage in applying his method at this stage, for, although Shakespeare uses the word "bawd" thirty-five times in his plays, these uses do not

³²Shakespeare Restored, p. 26.

afford Theobald an adequate number of parallel passages to support this emendation. Theobald points out, however, that it is not unusual for Shakespeare to refer to bawds as "brokers." This very word appears three lines above the emendation and to some extent substantiates Theobald's contention. Theobald then offers examples of the use of "broker" in this sense from The Two Gentlemen of Verona, All's Well that Ends Well, and two from King John in Faulconbridge's soliloquy on commodity. The last of these examples is a triumphant pairing of both terms in apposition:

This bawd, this broker, this all-changing word.
(II, 1, 582)

Theobald's conclusion to this emendation is a model of the kind of logic that he brings to the task: "Everybody . . . is satisfied that it is the custom of bawds to put on an air and form of sanctity, to betray the virtues of young ladies, by drawing them first into a kind of opinion of them, from their exterior and dissembled goodness. And bawds in their office of treachery are likewise properly brokers . . . and promoters of unholy (that is, unchaste) suits; and so a chain of the same metaphors is continued to the end."³³

It is obvious that more than a little judgment is called

³³Ibid., p. 28.

for in the use of such a method, and the results are as much dependent upon the man using it as they are upon the technique itself. Theobald was capable of misusing his method, although it was of course never his conscious intention to do so. Perhaps his critical impulse was simply too strong at times for his sagacity. In any event, on more than one occasion, Theobald's examining eye detected errors where there were none, and he made "corrections" in places where the text already made good sense and needed no defending. For example, Theobald's over-active logic could not countenance the phrase "vicious mole of nature" (I, iv, 24). A "mole" is a surface blemish on the skin and has nothing to do with the temperamental make-up or development of a human being. Theobald substitutes the word "mould" and justifies the change on the ground that "when Nature is unequally and viciously moulded . . . then reason and the other powers of the mind are impaired and prejudiced."³⁴ Perhaps this is a case where certain nuances of Shakespeare's style eluded Theobald. Happily, the Restorer offered this emendation somewhat apologetically, admitting that he was "unwilling to be too positive" and that he offered the correction with "doubt and diffidence."³⁵

³⁴Ibid., pp. 33-34.

³⁵Ibid. This is one of several emendations in Shakespeare Restored that Theobald did not retain in his edition.

It would seem, then, that Theobald suffered occasionally from an excess of diligence in ferreting out verbal errors in the old editions. Yet, for all this, there are some singular omissions in the Hamlet section of Shakespeare Restored, uncharacteristic lapses that are difficult to account for. In his examination of Hamlet's first soliloquy Theobald settles upon the lines:

Or, that the Everlasting had not fixed
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter.
(I, ii, 131-132)

He exhausts three pages of Shakespeare Restored demonstrating that the "cannon" of the folios and quartos should be "canon." The former spelling, he maintained, would mean that Hamlet was wishing that the Almighty "had not planted his artillery . . . or arms of vengeance against self-murder."³⁶ Such an image, for all its Miltonic qualities, is patently ridiculous and out of place in the present context because of the general tone of Hamlet's speech, and Theobald should have been able to see the incongruity. Furthermore, he might have guessed that an Elizabethan audience, untroubled by insignificant vagaries of spelling, would have instinctively responded to "canon" as a "church word" without undue reflection. Be that as it may, this

³⁶Ibid., p. 15.

curious item in Shakespeare Restored suggests that there may have been such a thing as the "Theobald blind spot." The real perplexities of this soliloquy are not to be found in the niceties of the spelling of the word "canon," but in deciding whether Hamlet says, in the first line, "solid," "sallied," or "sullied" flesh. The folios read "solid" and the quartos "sallied." Perhaps Theobald was unaware of the latter reading because he did not see the early seventeenth-century quartos, but one wonders why he did not question the word "solid." Somewhat later in Shakespeare Restored he questions Polonius' lines,

You laying these slight SALLIES on my son,
As 'twere a thing a little soiled i' the working.
(II, i, 39-40)

on the ground that there is not metaphorical consistency in the statement. He therefore changes the word "sallies" to "sullies," pointing out that it is characteristic of Shakespeare to use a verb as a noun.³⁷

These relatively minor lapses and inconsistencies are possibly indicative of the fact that now and then Theobald tended to overlook his own editorial principles. It should be borne in mind, moreover, that Shakespeare Restored is not in itself an edition; it is primarily a comment on and correction of

³⁷Ibid., p. 63.

another man's edition. On the other hand, Shakespeare Restored looks toward Theobald's own edition. By its very nature it is tentative and experimental. Theobald vacillates at times between a tendency to cavil over small points and a desire to be liberal in his approach to Shakespearean analysis. In Item LXII, for example, he points out that Hamlet's identification of Lucianus as nephew to the "King" is a clear mistake inasmuch as the play being performed at Elsinore is titled The Murder of Gonzago, Duke of Vienna. Therefore, "wherever the Player-King and Queen are mentioned, it ought to be Duke and Duchess."³⁸ Theobald apparently overlooked the fact that this change robbed the interior play of much of its immediacy and cogency. Logically, Claudius would not easily identify himself with a duke, who could hardly be expected to "catch the conscience of a king." Moreover, since Theobald believed that this was possibly a blunder on Shakespeare's part, to make such a change would flatly contradict the editorial ideal of retrieving, as far as possible, the original purity of Shakespeare's text. Besides, the point is so trivial that except for Pope's second edition and Edward Capell's edition of 1767, the change has been ignored, and the Players still appear before their audience as King and

³⁸Ibid., p. 89.

Queen.

On the other hand, Theobald becomes something of a defender of poetic license in Item LVI. The passage in question is the famous soliloquy beginning, "To be or not to be," and the problem is that of metaphysical incongruity. "To take arms against a sea, literally speaking, would be as unfeasible a project as the attempt to stop the tide at Gravesend with a man's thumb."³⁹ This is a case where, if one wished to succumb to the Augustan rage for order, one might justify a deviation from the ideal of textual purity. But to revise this of all soliloquies would be monumental effrontery. Theobald justified Shakespeare's lines, recalling "the great liberties that this poet is observed to take elsewhere in his diction and connection of metaphors."⁴⁰

Further on in this item, Theobald gives evidence that, all things being equal, he enjoys defending Shakespeare against charges of inconsistency. Hamlet, for example, in this same soliloquy says:

But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscovered country from whose bourn
No traveler returns, puzzles the will,
And makes us rather bear those ills we have

³⁹Ibid., p. 82.

⁴⁰Ibid.

Than fly to others that we know not of.
(III, 1, 78-82)

The critical problem here is that, if we accept him as real, The Ghost of Hamlet's father is a traveler who has returned from the bourn of that undiscovered country. Either Hamlet or Shakespeare seems to have forgotten this fact. Theobald's solution is that the Ghost has actually returned from Purgatory, which is a kind of temporary middle state, whereas by the "undiscovered country" Hamlet means the permanent, or "eternal residence of souls in a state of full bliss or misery."⁴¹ This is one of the infrequent occasions when a note begins to take on the proportions of a composition. Theobald, morally certain that he is on secure ground, and with ample material to substantiate his findings, gives in momentarily to the temptation to expatiate. In contexts such as this Theobald was on the brink of writing esthetic criticism, but he drew back, perhaps because he knew that his talents in that direction were not exceptional. He may also have felt that straight exposition was outside his province as an editor, that if he began writing essays, he would eventually stop writing emendations. Perhaps he felt also that essays were too subjective, that they depended inordinately upon personal opinion, something detrimental to his ideal of disinterested analysis.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 83.

To the same extent that he approached but never quite accomplished the writing of genuine esthetic criticism on a sustained basis, Theobald showed promise, in Shakespeare Restored, of developing a method of analyzing and evaluating Shakespeare's essential style, something that had yet to be done on a large scale. That Theobald was responsive to matters of style is evident in the quality of his best emendations. Perhaps it was the skeletal plan of his book that frustrated the promise, since the Hamlet section of Shakespeare Restored is divided into a series of ninety-seven items in an order established by the chronology of the play. This arrangement forces Theobald to start with an item concerning Act I, scene 1, and to proceed inexorably through the long series to an item dealing with the last scene of the final act. This means, of course, that items dealing with similar matters are frequently separated by many pages in Theobald's text. This means also that sustained discussion of subjects of analytical interest, such as imagery, symbolism, or structure, in this arrangement is unlikely, since the treatment of any given topic is dependent upon an occasional rather than a systematic order, that is, problems and subjects are treated as they appear in a linear pattern, not according to their categorical relationships. Although such an arrangement suits Theobald's original purpose --to point out the errors in Pope's edition--it is somewhat too

fragmented for fully developed exposition. Theobald's comments on stylistic matters are therefore scattered accidentally through the pages of Shakespeare Restored.

In the Hamlet section Theobald touches upon three aspects of Shakespeare's style: his metrics, his characteristic use of reduplications, and his grammar. The very first item in Shakespeare Restored is concerned with a question of metrics. In the following passage--as it appears in Fope's edition--

When yon same star, that's westward from the
pole,
Had made his course t'illuminate that part of heav's
Where now it burns . . .
(I, 1, 36-38)

Theobald objected to the word "illuminate," preferring instead "illumine." The difficulty here is that the substituted word spoils the scanning of the line as blank verse. Theobald's solution is simple, and gives some indication of his insight into Shakespeare's approach to metrics. "In a word," he writes, "too nice a regard must not be had to the numbers of Shakespeare. Nor needs the redundancy of a syllable here be any objection, for nothing is more usual with our poet than to make a dactyl, or allow a supernumerary syllable, which is sunk and melted in the pronunciation."⁴² Theobald sees this as a constant and

⁴²Ibid., p. 2.

therefore characteristic element of Shakespeare's style, but instead of producing corroborative instances, he is content to assert merely that it would be easy to produce over a thousand examples of this stylistic trait. It is unnecessary to do so "because they lie open to the observation of every discerning reader."⁴³

Reduplication, or anadiplosis, is the use of a key word in a closely repetitive pattern. Ordinarily one might tend to regard this either as idiosyncratic or as an affected trick of style. Theobald, however, points out that Shakespeare uses the device deliberately and with relative frequency. Moreover, the reduplication is functional in that it is a means of indicating emphasis; it is a manner of dramatic underling, of alerting the reader's--or listener's--attention. One of Shakespeare's most effective uses of reduplication in Hamlet is found in a speech of King Claudius: "But you must know, your father lost a father,/That father lost, lost his" (I, 11, 89-90). These lines are addressed to young Hamlet at a very early point in the play, at a time when the characters have not been fully established. The close repetitions and juxtapositions of the words "lost" and "father" help to set

⁴³Ibid.

set up a context for Hamlet's first soliloquy, in which he expresses the emotional and intellectual agony cause in him by his father's death and his mother's hasty remarriage.

Theobald's purpose in citing this passage is to restore the reduplication which had been dropped in Pope's edition. To support the restoration he offers examples from five other plays, in all of which Shakespeare uses the figure where he intends "either to assert or deny, augment or diminish, or add a degree of vehemence to the expression."⁴⁴ But once again, instead of developing the topic analytically, Theobald dismisses the subject by saying that the effectiveness of reduplication is easier to see than to explain, and that if it were necessary he could present a much larger number of examples.

The surprising thing about Theobald's approach to Shakespeare's grammar is that this is probably the single area in which the verbal critic approves of limited tampering with the received text. Unfamiliarity with Elizabethan grammar has always been the point of weakness in Shakespearean criticism. Even today there are fine points that either elude or annoy editors. It has already been seen that the men who prepared

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 13. See also Item XIX, p. 20, where Theobald says that reduplication of a word "seems to give a much stronger emphasis to Hamlet's concern."

the copy for the last three folios "corrected Shakespeare's grammar as a matter of course, making it conform to the usages of their own generation. There has been an almost irresistible temptation, one might say, to Londonize Shakespeare's grammar. Theobald's remarks on this subject read like the rule-making of the eighteenth-century grammarians who attempted to govern English syntax and morphology according to the laws of the Latin language. Theobald notes that Shakespeare often uses the nominative form of a pronoun where the rules of grammar call for the accusative, so often in fact that, judging by the unanimity of all the printed sources, it is Shakespeare at fault, not the presses. "Be this as it will," writes Theobald, "if grammar and the idiom of the tongue be directly against it, we have sufficient warrant to make him now, at least, speak true English."⁴⁵

But for Theobald this is a relatively unimportant matter, these fine points of grammar, and changes of this sort can be justified since Shakespeare's lines are intended to be spoken on a stage. That Theobald, on the other hand, could resist the temptation to despoil the essential purity of the text is attested to by his strong disapproval of coarse or indecent language. He would like to drop an indelicate line or an off-color pun now and

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 41.

then, but his editorial conscience is too righteous. The conversation between Ophelia and Hamlet while waiting for the Players to begin is laden with innuendos, at least on Hamlet's side. It is not the authenticity of these lines that Theobald questions, it is their morality. "Indeed, if ever the poet deserved whipping for low and indecent ribaldry, it was for this passage, ill-timed in all its circumstances and unbefitting the dignity of his characters, as well as of his audience."⁴⁶

Although the very best of Theobald's emendations are of an admittedly very high quality, it should not be inferred that this generalization holds true for all of his emendations in Shakespeare Restored, or even that Theobald functioned at this time on a consistently high level. Sometimes he made changes in the text that were patently uncalled for, in passages that make good sense as they stand, or that might have been explained by the use of editorial comments. A number of his conjectural emendations were of such a tentative nature that he could only repudiate them seven years later in his edition of Shakespeare. Some of the corrections were alterations of the punctuation where the "sense was not affected in the slightest way by the change," and where Theobald's remarks "were more worthy of an opinionated

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 87.

proof-reader than of the editor of a classic."⁴⁷

Theobald was not unaware of the fact that he had as yet only incompletely mastered the method that he had devised. The critical faculty was very strong in him, and it occasionally functioned upon impulse. There were times, one might say, when the process failed to work beyond the first step, which is the exercise of the critical doubt. For example, having come to the following passage in Pope's Hamlet--

Haste me to know't, that I, with wings as swift
As meditation or the thoughts of love,
May sweep to my revenge.
(I, v, 29-31)

Theobald doubts the authenticity of the word "sweep." Now, all readers of Shakespeare agree that the word as it appears in this context is not only appropriate, but has a metaphorical freshness that enhances the sense of motion in the lines and underscores the mounting psychological excitement in the character of Hamlet. Theobald's replacement for it, the word "swoop," although equally appropriate, robs the scene of a brilliant image and leaves a commonplace expression in its stead. Admitting that the emendation was little more than a guess, Theobald said, "I entirely submit this conjecture to judgment."⁴⁸ He ended the matter later

⁴⁷Lounsbury, p. 175.

⁴⁸Shakespeare Restored, p. 51.

when he elected to retain the word "sweep" in his edition without editorial comment. In another instance, after submitting a revision of a passage⁴⁹ that makes adequate sense as it stands in Pope's and earlier editions, Theobald admits once again that he proposes the alteration "but as a conjecture, and without laying any stress upon it,"⁵⁰ and once again he repudiated the change in his edition.

There are very few of these uncertain emendations⁵¹ in Shakespeare Restored, and properly so, for it was part of Theobald's developing conception of an editor's function that he speak with authority. Unlike most of his contemporaries and many of his successors, Theobald was eager to admit that he had made a mistake and to correct it within the limits of his own powers. On at least one occasion he found it necessary to reapply his method when it had been determined that he had been wrong. In Item L of this section, on the grounds of grammatical logic, Theobald objected to the word "another" in Polonius' line, "You must not put another scandal on him" (II, 1, 29). He reasoned that no scandal had yet been mentioned, and that "there can be

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 71.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 72.

⁵¹Another example was pointed out on p. 101, above.

no second scandal supposed without a first implied."⁵² But further study produced examples of Shakespeare's use of the word "other" in a sense similar to that of "another" in the suspected context;⁵³ therefore, acting according to his own principles, Theobald reversed the alteration and restored the original reading.⁵⁴

The worst faults in Shakespeare Restored, however, are not the honest mistakes that Theobald later corrected or retracted, but the occasional preoccupations with trifles, matters literally not worth a Shakespearean editor's time. In the years ahead, Theobald was frequently to suffer ridicule, but nothing gave his enemies greater material for attack than his excessive punctiliousness, the trait that ultimately won for him the Popean sobriquet "Piddling Tibbald." No point was too minute for his "scientific" scrutiny: when Pope says that the "ten following

⁵²Shakespeare Restored, pp. 60-61.

⁵³Richard II, I, 1, 33, and Macbeth, IV, 111, 90. See the Furness Variorum, I, 120, note to line II, 1, 29.

⁵⁴Mr. King points out that Theobald did the same remarkable thing in Item CV of the Appendix: "He struggled in vain to explain the word unbated in the expression a sword unbated. What led him astray was the reading of most editions--unbaited--and so he emended to embaited or imbaited. Thinking over the matter, however, he saw that unbated could mean UNBATED, and that imbaited was not such a good reading. And so in the Appendix he withdrew his conjecture and attacked his own first interpretation." P. 355.

verses i.e. lines are added out of the old edition," Theobald does a quick count and triumphantly announces that there are only nine lines (Item LXXVIII). In Item LXXXV, he makes an infinitesimal spelling change, pointing out that "devise" is a verb and "device" a noun. This is no worse than in Item XCI, where he alters the word "rights" to "rites," explaining that church ceremonies "are always written rites (from ritus in the Latin) and not rights."⁵⁵ These obvious spelling changes are at best unnecessary exercises of a scholarly method that Theobald had taken some pride in devising; at their worst they border on an abuse of that method.⁵⁶ Occasionally he overburdened a trivial point with a misapplication of Bentleyan logic. In Item LXXII he quotes the lines of Claudius:

Oh, my offense is rank, it smells to heaven.
It hath the primal eldest curse upon 't,
A brother's murder.

(III, iii, 36-38)

and notes that the last line is deficient in both meter and meaning. "Was a brother's murder the eldest curse? he asks, "Surely, it was rather the crime, that was the cause of this

⁵⁵Shakespeare Restored, p. 124.

⁵⁶Note, however, that such changes can be essential to the realizing of Shakespeare's intentions: In Item LV of the Appendix Theobald changes Gratiano's lines, "Not on thy soul but on thy soul, harsh Jew, / Thou mak'st thy knife keen," to read, "Not on thy sole," etc. Not only does this restore the pun, it also provides an implied stage direction.

eldest curse. . . . the authority of the printed copies is not sufficient to forbid a conjecture. Perhaps the Poet wrote: "It has the primal eldest curse upon 't/that of a brother's murder."⁵⁷ Not only is this uncertain to the point of being apologetic, the most that can be said of this effort is that it is a prosaic, poor, and unnecessary emendation, and surprisingly so, for Theobald's ear was uncommonly good in detecting Shakespearean rhythms. On more than one occasion he had been able to tell when a metrical irregularity was intentional on Shakespeare's part and when it indicated a corruption of the text. These ear-lapses on Theobald's part are difficult to explain. One would expect him, of all people, to realize that a variation of spelling was not always significant if it did not affect the sound of a word, and that it might be changed silently without calling anyone's attention to the fact. Perhaps these oversights can be taken as evidence that Shakespeare Restored was either hastily or inadequately prepared for the press; it is possible that Theobald showed insufficient discrimination in the choice of items to be printed, and that he included a few that were clearly little better than random notes. But it is pointless to dwell unduly upon such deficiencies in Theobald's work since his book of necessity

⁵⁷ Shakespeare Restored, pp. 99-100.

covered a large number of topics. In endeavoring to be particular as well as comprehensive, Theobald busied himself with problems of punctuation and spelling, with sins of omission and commission. His emendations and corrections were of many varieties and dealt with the most trivial as well as the most consequential points. Inasmuch as he was working in the concrete rather than the abstract, Theobald drew almost exclusively upon examples and illustrations. It was inevitable that some of the items would be of mediocre quality and that a few would be downright worthless.⁵⁸

One critic went so far as to maintain that there is really only one serious fault in Shakespeare Restored, and that was Theobald's silence regarding the constructive value of the work that Pope and his assistants had performed in putting together a modern text.⁵⁹ Be that as it may, it is probable that a careful assessment of Pope's accomplishment on Theobald's part was, at the time of the writing of Shakespeare Restored, a practical impossibility. First of all, Theobald was obviously immersed in his own scholarly research as evidenced by the fact that he was engaged in correspondence with a number of his contemporaries whose interests in Shakespeare were similar to his own. Secondly,

⁵⁸Lounsbury, p. 156.

⁵⁹King, p. 384.

he regarded Pope as a celebrity, a man who was bound to receive favorable comment, even adulation, whether he deserved it or not. From his position of enforced humility Theobald could see no point in discussing the excellence of Pope's work; everyone else seemed to be doing that. Finally, such an assessment--by Theobald or anybody else--could not be made easily or rapidly but would require an expenditure of time and studious labor, as well as a generous amount of respect and indulgence. Theobald was unwilling to get involved in such a study on several counts, some of them professional, some temperamental. The most obvious technical reason for Theobald's ignoring the positive aspects of Pope's work was that such an investigation fell outside of the expressed limits of Shakespeare Restored, whose primary purpose clearly was to restore the text where Pope had tampered with it. A more important reason, however, was the fact that Theobald's powers of expression were analytical rather than expository. He excelled in the writing of relatively brief annotations, but he apparently lacked either the intellectual or the critical stamina for sustained composition.⁶⁰ Largeness of conception was apparently beyond him, and he found it difficult to proceed from abstractions. He rarely sustained a given context; on the contrary, his

⁶⁰This is a point that will be more fully developed in Chapter IV.

work in Shakespearean criticism was of an occasional, and consequently fragmented nature. He literally required a mistake on the part of someone else--for example, the Elizabethan compositor or an earlier editor such as Rowe or Pope--in order to function. Once he found his target he could bring into play extraordinary powers of logic, taste, and conjecture, but a target he required. The negative aspects of such a talent are apparent; that Theobald would have cared to indulge in a more positive approach regarding Pope was very unlikely.⁶¹

Not surprisingly, then, there is remarkably little of a direct nature about Pope in this section of Shakespeare Restored. Theobald seems to take it for granted that his reader is constantly aware of the fact that the work is keyed to Pope's edition and lets it go at that. On a few occasions, Theobald mentions Pope by name, but this is inevitable under the circumstances. For the most part Theobald maintains that attitude of polite deference that was noted earlier, having acknowledged the fact that Pope's was a superior talent. One of the undertones of Shakespeare Restored is that Theobald secretly had hoped that Pope would come to look upon the Restorer as an ally, one whose aims regarding the text of Shakespeare were in harmony with his

⁶¹Evidence in favor of Theobald as an expository writer can be found in his essays in The Censor.

own. In any event, whatever his aspirations might have been as far as future relations with Pope were concerned, Theobald could scarcely conceal his impatience when he became convinced that his predecessor was guilty of slipshod methods, even if it meant resorting to the tactics of the ordinary pamphleteer. In his remarks preceding Item LIV, Theobald takes Pope personally to task for shirking his duties in the matter of proof-reading. The occasion was Pope's inadvertence in allowing a passage in one of Hamlet's soliloquies to be printed in this way:

For murder, tho' it have no tongue, will speak
With most miraculous organ, I'll observe his looks,
Play something like the murder of my father
Before mine uncle. I'll observe his looks . . .
(II, ii, 622-625)

The error is in the intrusion of the phrase "I'll observe his looks" at the second line. What Theobald found particularly exasperating about this mistake was that it was a fresh corruption of the text, a commission of the very fault that a modern editor was duty-bound to eradicate. He calls the passage "palpable nonsense," and says that "nobody shall persuade me that Mr. Pope could be awake, and with his eyes open, and revising a book which was to be published under his name, yet let such an error . . . escape his observation and correction."⁶² Apart

⁶²Shakespeare Restored, p. 75.

from the relatively strong tone of this comment, Pope comes off fairly well in the Hamlet section of Shakespeare Restored. The impression one gets is that Theobald's evaluation of Pope as an editor is gently unfavorable. But that impression is mostly the result of implication. Theobald maintains an easy pose, perhaps a little more honest than most of his critics have been willing to concede, of disinterestedness, of being more concerned with truth than with personalities. If one must read between the lines in this regard, Theobald was probably more concerned about himself than about Pope, concerned about his own reputation, which was obviously eclipsed by Pope's.⁶³

Judged by modern standards of composition, the section of Shakespeare Restored dealing exclusively with the tragedy of Hamlet ends somewhat abruptly; but that is because Theobald has reached the last of his notes or "remarks" arranged in a chronology established by the play itself. Granted its rigid and somewhat awkward structuring, it mainly accomplishes what it sets out to do in the lengthy title of the work: it "restores" the text of Hamlet as far as Pope's tamperings and omissions are concerned.

⁶³For one thing, Theobald's healthy respect for the quality of his own work caused an unhealthy fear of possible charges of plagiarism. See Shakespeare Restored, p. 102.

and where it fails to do so in particular, it demonstrates how the job can be done by other discriminating editors.

Of the three parts of Shakespeare Restored, the third, the Appendix, is of most interest to modern scholars. It has the distinction of being, in Theobald's own words, "the first essay of literal criticism upon any author in the English tongue."⁶⁴ Structurally, it is in many ways similar to the previous section, but it differs in two important respects: it is much more thorough in its analyses of passages under consideration, and it appears to have been in the process of composition for some years. The primary value of this appendix is that it demonstrates the method at its best. Theobald's ideal is to eliminate guesswork. It is here, especially, that Theobald improves upon his predecessors. In working from the Fourth Folio Rowe had occasionally hit upon a felicitous correction. Pope had, in large measure, relied upon common sense and taste. Theobald refused to rely on chance, common sense, and taste, on the ground that they were at best untrustworthy scholarly tools. Taking his lead from Bentley, he devised a scientific method of dealing with problem passages.

It will be recalled that according to Theobald's principles, the first problem of an editor is to determine that a given

⁶⁴Shakespeare Restored, pp. 23-24.

passage as it stands is actually corrupt. When this has been ascertained, the problem then is to decide upon a method of establishing a correct text. It is here that an editor must exercise both caution and self-control. There is a strong temptation to "improve" Shakespeare, to determine not what he actually wrote, but what he ought to have written. In Theobald's system the primacy of the text is of supreme importance; esthetic criticism is valuable, but it can function only after the question of a genuine text has been settled. Actually, Theobald's method was a kind of linguistic test, derived from and based upon Bentley's editions of Greek and Latin classics.

The Appendix, which, with a few exceptions, extends Theobald's method to the rest of Shakespeare's plays,⁶⁵ falls almost naturally into two parts. The first part, like the treatment of Hamlet, is concerned particularly with the enumeration and correction of Pope's mistakes. Theobald shows that Pope frequently emends in places where no emendation is necessary. Moreover, when Pope is called upon to make a choice among variant readings, he often chooses the obviously wrong one. Owing to his faulty understanding of the language of Shakespeare's time,

⁶⁵The Two Gentlemen of Verona is mentioned in the section on Hamlet, but not in the Appendix. The only other plays omitted are As You Like It and Twelfth Night.

Pope often writes explanatory notes that either fall short of Shakespeare's meaning, or that perpetuate actual misinterpretations. In this section, also, Theobald objects to Pope's practice of degrading certain passages, that is, removing them from their proper places in the text and placing them at the bottom of the page. Pope's defence of this practice was that passages of such obviously inferior quality must be interpolations. In Shakespeare Restored, Theobald claims that Pope "degrades" lines "partly, I suppose, for the reasons which he gives in his preface for these degradations; but chiefly, I believe, because he did not understand them."⁶⁶

In the second part of the Appendix, however, Theobald seems not so much concerned with pointing out Pope's mistakes as his is with applying his method directly to Shakespeare's text. This section consists entirely of emendations. (Whereas each item in the first half of the Appendix is classified according to type, such as "false pointing," "various reading," "passage omitted," "conjecture," etc., the notes in this latter half are labeled very simply: "emendation.") In these notes Theobald makes extended use of the method that he derived from Bentley, a method that demands a scrupulously careful reading of the text.

⁶⁶P. 183.

When a critically doubtful passage is discovered, the editor applies linguistic and esthetic tests in an effort to determine a true reading. "By a close study of the passage and the context he may show where there is bad grammar or a violation of metrical laws."⁶⁷ In some cases he demonstrates that there is a discrepancy between the passage in question and the context in which it appears, or that the passage itself conveys no clear meaning at all, regardless of its context. A good example of this method in practice is Theobald's handling of a passage from Act III, Scene ii, of Macbeth:⁶⁸

We have scorch'd the snake, not killed it.
She'll close, and be herself.

(13-14)

The troublesome word here--the critical doubt--is "scorch'd." Theobald, unwilling to accept it as meaningful in its context, applies a linguistic test: "Scorching would never either separate, or dilate its [the snake's] parts; but rather make them instantly contract and shrivel." "Scorched," obviously is the wrong word. But what is the right word? Again, Theobald applies a test, this time an esthetic and a logical one. He interprets the "snake" as referring to King Duncan; therefore,

⁶⁷Jones, p. 85.

⁶⁸Item XCIII.

the dismembered parts stand for his disinherited sons:

Macbeth considers them so much as members of the father, that though he has cut off the old man, he would say, he has not entirely killed him; but he'll cement and close again in the lives of his sons, to the danger of Macbeth.

The right word, then, is certainly one that harmonizes with the analogy. This is one of those instances in which Theobald "can, by the addition or alteration of a single letter . . . give him [Shakespeare] both sense and sentiment."⁶⁹ The alteration of the letter "r" to "t" yields the word "scotch'd," which, of course, is not only lucid, but eminently appropriate. Although the emended reading is a satisfactory one, according to Theobald's method it is still largely conjectural and requires further evidence. This evidence is found in what Theobald calls "parallel passages," extracts from other plays in which Shakespeare uses the same word in an identical or similar sense. In this case parallel passages using the word "scotch" are found in Act IV, Scene v, of Coriolanus,⁷⁰ and Act IV, Scene vii, of Antony and Cleopatra.⁷¹ Some of the items in Shakespeare Restored are longer, more detailed, sometimes more thorough, but this one is

⁶⁹Shakespeare Restored, p. vi.

⁷⁰As a verb.

⁷¹As a noun.

a typical example of Theobald's procedure.

Since the Appendix has to do with almost all of Shakespeare's plays, it differs formally rather than materially from the previous part, which deals with a single play. The one hundred and seven items in this section of Shakespeare Restored are arranged in the following order:

- 1 New reading disputed, number I
- 2 Degraded passages restored, numbers II-III
- 2 Conjectures refuted and supplied, numbers IV-V
- 8 Various readings disputed and/or restored, numbers VI-XIII
- 4 Mistaken glosses, numbers XIV-XVII
- 12 Rectifications of punctuation, numbers XVIII-XXIX
- 10 Transpositions, numbers XXX-XXXIX
- 11 Faults of inadvertence, numbers XL-L
- 57 Emendations, numbers LI-CVII.

Number I stands first because it is the only specimen of its kind that Theobald intends to produce, implying that there are similar cases that can be treated in a like manner. The fifty-seven emendations are grouped together at the end for obvious reasons. First, they are mainly Theobald's own work and, for the most part, they are only incidentally keyed to Pope's edition. Secondly, they represent the kind of editorial

scholarship that Theobald was most interested in. He "enjoyed textual criticism . . . he would hasten through correcting printers' errors to get to the exciting work which he loved--conjectural emendation."⁷² Finally, the ultimate position is invariably the emphatic position. This is the part that makes an indelible impression upon the reader, the fullest demonstration, at this stage of its development, of the validity of the method. It possesses, from Theobald's point of view, intrinsic interest, and almost certainly would have found its way into print in one form or another even if Pope had never published an edition of Shakespeare.

There is no apparent and consistent order among the remaining items other than that they are arranged in groups according to what Theobald would call "species."⁷³

In his opening statement to the Appendix, Theobald asserts that the examination of Hamlet is to be taken as indicative of the large number of faults to be found in all of the other plays, not only in Pope, but in every printing that has

⁷²King, p. 340.

⁷³There are also "occasional" emendations in XIX, XLI, and XLIX; an occasional correction in XVIII; and an occasional conjecture in XXIV.

come down to Theobald's generation. "I have an ample stock of matter before me,"⁷⁴ he writes, asseverating that the job of perfecting a Shakespearean text is monumental. Once again he turns himself to the paradox confronting an editor. On the one hand, he must treat the text with the respect that is due it as a classic and resist all temptations to make changes according to his own taste or the artistic exigencies of his own time. On the other hand, he must dispel the "religious abhorrence of all innovation." Some alterations have to be made, otherwise editing would be a kind of exalted stenography or advanced proof-reading. The chief problem facing him is to determine the extent of editorial authority. More than ever, now that he has reached a crucial point in Shakespeare Restored, Theobald is preoccupied with the "duty of an editor." Perhaps this preoccupation is a sign that he is himself still learning through experience, that this duty is still a formative conception for Theobald. The experience that he is in the act of acquiring in this case is the writing of Shakespeare Restored. Evidence of this is found in Item XL, almost three quarters of the way through the book, where Theobald maintains that certain textual corruptions can be cured by a knowledge of history, where the subject is historical.

⁷⁴Shakespeare Restored, p. 133.

"Diligence in this respect," says Theobald, "is certainly the duty of an editor."⁷⁵ Yet, interestingly, the subject of this particular "duty" has not previously been broached in any of Theobald's Shakespearean studies, presumably because it had not as yet occurred to him.

The primary generalization that Theobald makes concerning the editorial function is that an editor of Shakespeare ought to be a critic upon him too.⁷⁶ The question that arises here is, what does the term "critic" mean for Theobald in this context? It apparently does not denote one whose purpose is to evaluate Shakespeare as an artist, for the original hypothesis upon which the editorial art is based is that Shakespeare is a classic writer and consequently for the time being above criticism of this kind. Again, it does not refer specifically to one who engages in esthetic analysis. Theobald, of course, does not rule out this kind of analysis, inasmuch as it involves pointing out beauties and excellences in an author;⁷⁷ however, in the present context, the term most probably means one who is authorized to examine, to analyze objectively, to use his own judgment

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 159.

⁷⁶Ibid., p. 133.

⁷⁷Above, Chapter II.

and to make decisions, especially when a material change is involved.

This duty [is] the exertion of every power and faculty of the mind to supply the defects of corrupt passages, and to give light and restore sense to them. Thus, Theobald was unwilling to pass by, as he accused Pope of doing, passages he did not understand, but earnestly set about clearing up the obscurity with what materials he had at hand. His conception of what an editor was obligated to do was prophetic of the modern idea. There are three ways of removing textual obscurities: one is by explaining the passage on the basis of the current text; another is by the adoption of a variant reading, when there is one; and the last lies in emendation. Now the first two are emphasized; Theobald was inclined to emphasize the last two. Yet the substance of his idea of an editor's duty remains the same today--the expenditure of the greatest critical care and diligence toward making a text as intelligible as possible.⁷⁸

The question of what is sacrosanct, then, is obviously important. Shakespeare's spelling, it can be taken for granted, may be altered to obey the rules of any given period, since we can be almost certain that what we are seeing in the oldest printed copies is not Shakespeare's own spelling, but the compositor's; moreover, as far as Theobald is concerned--except for the uncharacteristic lapses noted above--it is the sound of the words that is of paramount importance, not their appearance on the printed page.

Of greater importance is the matter of punctuation.

⁷⁸Jones, p. 94.

Theobald's statement near the beginning of the Appendix--"As to the faults of pointing . . . I shall confine myself to remark on such only, in which the sense is palpably injured."⁷⁹--makes it clear that his interest is not mere tidiness, nor is it a perfectionist's ideal. His point is simply that it is the meaning that is important. If Shakespeare's sense is obscured, then there is no esthetic beauty or stylish felicity. Theobald seems instinctively to realize here that Elizabethan punctuation is less reliable than its spelling, and therefore that it is the least sacrosanct of the elements of an early Shakespearean printing.

It is clear, then, that at the beginning of the Appendix to Shakespeare Restored, Theobald's overall purpose has remained unchanged and that his attitude continues to be largely objective, with the usual dash of conventional humility. He is still polite toward Pope, although he is clear in his expression of disappointment in the fact that his predecessor had proved unequal to his self-appointed task, maintaining that "he seems to have erred, either from want of duly considering the poet, or of a competent knowledge of the stage."⁸⁰

⁷⁹Shakespeare Restored, p. 133.

⁸⁰Ibid., p. 133.

Two of the early items in this section serve to illustrate much of what Theobald was trying to prove in Shakespeare Restored. In the first, Item I, Theobald takes exception at the fact that an irresponsible alteration had been made in the text of Troilus and Cressida on the ground that Aristotle, whose name was invoked by Hector, actually lived some eight hundred years after time represented in the play. Clearly, the mentioning of Aristotle during the Trojan War constitutes an anachronism, but not the gross blunder that Pope makes it out to be.⁸¹ Theobald defends the original reading on a number of counts, the most obvious of which is that an audience in a theater is not expected to make rapid associations between dramatic fact and literal fact unless there is such a disjuncture between the two that the attention is disrupted. Most of the listeners would probably have found it a little puzzling and vaguely ridiculous if Hector had mentioned Cardinal Wolsey or Sir Thomas More. But Hector was a well-known character from an ancient Greek classic, and Aristotle was one of the most familiar and revered of Greek names; there was, therefore, no discrepancy that would perturb an Elizabethan audience. The other ground upon which Theobald defends the text is that anachronisms were conventional in Shakespeare's time. He gives

⁸¹The change was originally made by Rowe and supported by Pope.

eight further examples of this practice in Shakespeare,⁸² and supplements these with one from Beaumont and Fletcher, one from Dryden, and four from classical literature. The point that Theobald intends to make here is that this is simply a case of poetic license and not ignorance on Shakespeare's part. By implication, Theobald is demonstrating his principle of inherent sense over external, and therefore irrelevant logic. The name Aristotle is exactly the right word to express the desired meaning, and of course one can assume that Shakespeare's audience caught that meaning. The words are correct, therefore, in spirit, whatever the discrepancy between them and extrinsic fact.

The second of these two illustrative items is number IV, the one in which Theobald proposed his immortal phrase, "a' babbled of green fields." The purpose here is not to judge or praise Theobald for his accomplishment, but to call attention to a further criterion that guided him in the evolving of his critical principles. Whereas the first illustration pointed up the need for imagination and taste, this one points up the need for responsibility and credibility in scholarship. In order to

⁸²Ironically, the first of these examples occurs in the very next line of Troilus and Cressida, where Theobald points out that Pope allowed the term "philosophy" to stand, whereas it was invented by Pythagoras six centuries after the time of Hector.

make sense out of a patently garbled text, Pope came up with the information that "Greenfield was the name of the property-man in that time who furnished implements, etc., for the actors."⁸³ If this were demonstrably true, even if it were probably true, Pope's method of dealing with the text would have had some merit, but it seems that "if there had been any furnisher of stage-properties of the name of Greenfield, Pope was the only person to whom knowledge of the fact had been vouchsafed."⁸⁴ Theobald dismisses the fabrication of Mr. Greenfield in a single sentence, allowing that "whether it was really so, or it be only a gratis dictum, is a point I shall not contend about."⁸⁵ He goes on to prove that it was impossible, according to the stage practice of Shakespeare's day, for the indication of a property to appear in the middle of a scene and that, in any event, when properties were indicated, it was not the custom to provide the property-man's name, since there was certainly no need to do so. The irony here is that in the one case Pope altered, or at least countenanced the alteration of, a passage that he should have allowed to stand as it was, and in the other case neglected to

⁸³Pope's Shakespeare, III, 422.

⁸⁴Lounsbury, p. 164.

⁸⁵Shakespeare Restored, p. 137.

perceive that a simple textual adjustment was all that was called for. In short, Pope failed in the exercise of that authority and judgment required of an editor of Shakespeare, who "ought to be a critic upon him too," a critic, that is, in Theobald's sense.

This matter of judgment poses a great difficulty in dealing with Shakespearean texts, a difficulty that Theobald is forced to consider several times in his Shakespeare Restored. One significant problem involving judgment comes into play very shortly in the Appendix in Theobald's treatment of what he calls "Transpositions." These can fall into several categories. The first is fairly common and concerns the printed rather than the spoken text; it consists in the breaking up of full pentameter lines into shorter lines, or running a number of short lines together. By extension, this class of transposition would also include those instances where verse is printed as prose and vice versa. Ordinarily this sort of thing is noticeable when the lines are being spoken aloud; however, in the interests of integrity Theobald attempts to reproduce the original verse and prose forms as Shakespeare conceived them. Other classes of transpositions are those "where wrong names have been prefixed to the parties speaking, or parts of sentences placed to one speaker, that ought to belong to the person answering; or where stage-directions are either misplaced, or erroneously adopted into the

text."⁸⁶ Theobald gives only a few examples of transpositions because he feels that Shakespeare Restored is growing into a rather bulky volume and that the reader may find too many instances of the same thing somewhat tedious. The interesting thing about the corrections that Theobald offers in these examples is that the ones that have been accepted at all have been accepted almost universally, while those that have met with disagreement have been rejected by almost all subsequent editors.

For example, everybody accepts the change proposed in Item XXXII. In this instance, the play Titus Andronicus is approaching its sanguinary end. Aaron, the villain, clutching his illegitimate infant in his arms, is being sentenced to death by Lucius, a son of Titus and a representative of the forces of good. When Aaron hears Lucius exclaim "First hang the child, that he may see it sprawl,/A sight to vex the father's soul withal," Aaron is made to say, in the old editions, "Get me a ladder," as if intending to cooperate in the gibbeting of his own child. Theobald was the first to perceive the absurdity in this situation and assigned the words to Lucius. This alteration has been followed by virtually all modern editors of the play.

⁸⁶Ibid., p. 154.

similar mistakes are pointed out in the texts of Troilus and Cressida (XXXIII), and Antony and Cleopatra (XXXVI), and Theobald's corrections have met with little opposition. Not so with Item XXXVII, however. Theobald makes a good case for excising the phrase "Ring the alarum bell" at line 51 of the fifth scene of Act V of Macbeth. His claim that this is a genuine example of a stage direction having intruded itself into the spoken text has not found any believers.

The transposition is one of the knottiest problems in Shakespearean editing inasmuch as in almost all cases the lines make some kind of sense as they stand. The problem is rendered even more complex for Theobald since his very first article in the Appendix of Shakespeare Restored asserted and fairly well proved that Shakespeare cannot be held to strict logic in relatively unimportant matters. This is the time, then, for editorial sagacity, reinforced by a perceptive eye and a responsive ear. Mistakes of this kind are easily passed over, even by alert and knowledgeable readers.

But many matters are relatively important, and when Theobald considers them so, he holds even Shakespeare to account in terms of logic and common sense. In Item L, he turns his attention to a passage that is still considered a crux by modern editors. It occurs in Act II, Scene ii of Much Ado

about Nothing and involves some uncertainty as to whether the character Borachio is supposed to use his own name or Claudio's in carrying out a nefarious scheme. Theobald emends the phrase "hear Margaret call me Claudio" to read "hear Margaret call me Borachio" on the assumption that the ensuing plot lines centering upon jealousy and misunderstanding simply are not plausible if the text is allowed to remain unchanged. Theobald bases his assumption once again upon the fact that these lines are to be spoken on a stage, and that an audience would be puzzled by the apparent discrepancy, that is, the question as to why Claudio should be incited to jealousy and anger upon hearing his own name would be unanswerable. Critics and editors have defended the old reading very capably,⁸⁷ but their involved reasoning is at home more in the study than in the theater. It is possible, of course, that the mistake is Shakespeare's, and if it is--logical or not--it should stand. Theobald, however, applies the critical doubt in cases of this kind, which means that if the "error" is detrimental to the sense of the passage, not only is an emendation justified, it is obligatory.

This item marks the end of what appears to be the first half of the Appendix. Theobald apparently intended the whole

⁸⁷See note to Item L, Furness Variorum edition of Much Ado about Nothing (Philadelphia, 1899), pp. 101-103.

section to be similar in layout to the Hamlet section, and it is so superficially; but in one important respect it is structurally dissimilar to that section. Since the Appendix deals with many plays, it cannot follow the strictly linear plan that Theobald had found convenient in examining a single play. The last fifty-seven items are labeled simply "Emendations." They are not sub-divided according to classes as were the first fifty. The only clear principle of order that can be discerned is that when there are two or more emendations from the same play, Theobald groups them together and arranges them in the order in which they appear in the play.

This last part of the Appendix, Items LI to CVII, is not dependent upon Pope to the extent that previous items had been. Theobald still refers to Pope, frequently as "the former editor"; the entries are still keyed, at least by page numbers, to Pope's edition; and the uncorrected quotations with which Theobald begins each of his items appear as Pope left them. But there is a clear impression that this material had been in preparation for a much longer period of time than the one year that elapsed between the publication of Pope's Shakespeare and the appearance of Shakespeare Restored. The probability is that the majority of the notes upon which they are based had been composed some time in the past and that Theobald checked them against Pope's text

to see if that editor had made the necessary corrections. These fifty-seven items are Theobald's selection of the most important, or at least the most representative, errors that Pope had overlooked.

One of the most interesting aspects of this concluding part of the Appendix is that Theobald seems to be aware of the argumentative quality of much of what he is about to do. At the beginning of the Appendix he had expressed his appreciation of the fact that on some occasions the Shakespearean editor, for all the scientific bias of the impulse motivating him, was forced to resort to the expediency of the guess, or to use Theobald's somewhat more elevated word, the conjecture. As he approaches the end of this document, he admits that there is a fine line between the emendation and the conjecture, and that it is not always easy to discern that line, certainly not as easy as we would like it to be.

The quality of Theobald's writing undergoes a subtle change at this point. Here he is less the technician than he has been in earlier passages, nor does he appear to be as eager to pounce upon every error that Pope makes or fails to emend. His style takes on, now and then, a discursive air suggestive of the ease of familiarity. On an occasion or two one can detect the presence of Theobald the letter-writer, suggesting that many of the emendations had been discussed and refined in the course

of correspondence with colleagues and friends. Perhaps this is further evidence that these notes had been fermenting in Theobald's workshop for some time.

The Restorer immediately exhibits his fondness for his "single-letter" emendations. The first one, number LI, is strangely enough one of Theobald's poorer efforts. He changes the word "colt" to "dolt," failing to see the appropriateness between "colt" and "horse," which follows only ten words later. This kind of "correction" is uncharacteristic of Theobald in that it tampers with a text that makes perfectly good sense as it stands; it is one of the rare cases where Theobald seems to go hunting for a corruption in the received text and succeeds in finding more than his own law allows. There is a strong probability that if Pope had made this change, Theobald would have restored the original reading. Number LIII, on the other hand, is one of Theobald's happiest single-letter emendations, and one that has been generally accepted. The line, "So is Alcides beaten by his rage," makes a kind of sense and is no more obscure than many authentic lines in Shakespeare; but it does not pass Theobald's critical test in that it is faulty in its logic and it does not harmonize with the context in which it appears. Theobald, by "cutting off the tail of a single letter,"⁸⁸

⁸⁸Shakespeare Restored, p. 166.

changing the word "rage" to "page," gives the line the kind of sense that it ought to have. One can see why this kind of emendation found such favor with Theobald: it corrects the most plausible type of error, the "eye fault," and such mistakes were to be expected on the part of compositors who were copying from manuscripts that had been prepared in a handwriting that was, even in its own time, notoriously difficult to read. There was a further complication in the fact that printers occasionally tended to pick up the wrong letter when setting their type. Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch points out in his note on this same emendation that "in the compositor's lower case the 'p' is just above the 'r.'"⁸⁹

Further on in this section there are four emendations of texts from Antony and Cleopatra, three of which are of remarkably high quality. In the first, number LXXXVII, Theobald converts the awkward and senseless phrase "That which most with/You should save my going," to the unusual but thoroughly Shakespearean "That which most with/You should salve my going." In the next item he changes the phrase "Lashing the varying tide" to "Lackying the varying tide," and in the next, "The near lust-wearied Antony"

⁸⁹The New Cambridge Shakespeare: The Merchant of Venice, edited by Quiller-Couch and John Dover Wilson (Cambridge, 1968), p. 132.

becomes the "ne'er lust wearied Antony." These corrections seem obvious now, but they had been overlooked or bungled in the past. They are exceptional in that they are the result of the exercise of an unerring sense of style and a feeling for Shakespearean expression that reveals, if not an affinity with, certainly an awareness and understanding of Shakespeare's individual way with words, especially verbs. There is no certainty that Shakespeare deliberately used the work "lucky" as a verb, but it would have been very much like him to do so. Item number LXXXVIII can be taken as unique, then, in that it called for powers of creativity as well as the usual perceptiveness. It would probably be going too far to say that it might never have occurred to anyone other than Theobald, but that probability is very remote.

In the concluding paragraphs of Shakespeare Restored, Theobald explains that the present work is merely a sampling of the kind of critical attention that Shakespeare's plays require, that the number of errors still to be corrected is much larger than that found in the present book. Before he closes, he allows himself a brief display of self-esteem. He puts forward the claim that Shakespeare Restored is "the first essay of literal criticism upon any author in the English tongue." Not surprisingly, Theobald had a premonition that his book might prove to have some importance in English literary history, and no one could

dispute that his boast was justified, that he did produce the first document in which there is an attempt to create a scientific method of editing a native English classic writer. He might also have boasted that he had proved that if one is to be successful in determining what Shakespeare actually wrote, one must set aside pure esthetics, and anything else that might hinder an editor whose purpose is not to rewrite, or to improve, but literally to restore Shakespeare:

No unauthorized assertions, no random conjectures took the place of investigation in Shakespeare Restored. In short, Theobald's method was the method of a scholar, and wherever he erred, it was the error of a scholar, and not of a haphazard guesser.⁹⁰

Theobald anticipated the reception that he was going to get in Grub Street, and maintained that he was prepared to despise the unheroic wielders of the satiric couplet. He did expect, however, the approbation of his predecessor: "Wherever I have the luck to be right in any observation," he wrote, "I flatter myself, Mr. Pope himself will be pleased, that Shakespeare receives some benefit."⁹¹

Not only did Theobald flatter himself, he also deceived himself, for although there was "not the slightest trace of

⁹⁰Lounsbury, p. 160.

⁹¹Shakespeare Restored, p. 194.

malevolence"⁹² in Shakespeare Restored. Pope was heartily displeased at the ostensible belligerence in the suggestion that as an editor of Shakespeare he had committed many errors and left many others unamended.⁹³ He was aware, however, that the integrity of Theobald's pamphlet was unassailable, that it had demonstrated, clearly and irrefutably, where and how frequently he had blundered in his editing of the plays. The question in the poet's mind was: how to refute the irrefutable? He was too astute to meet Theobald on his own grounds, where the odds were decidedly in the latter's favor. Pope, realizing that he had lost the first battle as an editor, resolved to win any and all further battles as a poet, for, whereas he had proved Pope's insufficiency as a critic, Theobald had long ago demonstrated his own incompetence as a poet. Pope, therefore, began "a campaign of misrepresentation and abuse,"⁹⁴ aimed at making Theobald look like a fool in the eyes of the public:

Till Theobald was discredited he remained a source of irritation; the best defence in this case was an attack so devastating that his reputation would be ruined. But Pope could not hope to destroy Theobald with his own weapons; the pedantic critic had exposed the amateurishness and insufficiencies

⁹²Lounsbury, p. 195.

⁹³See the subtitle of Shakespeare Restored.

⁹⁴Lounsbury, p. 195.

of the poet turned scholar, and if Pope was to reply, it must be as a poet, not as a scholar.⁹⁵

The question that seems most difficult to answer is, why did Pope consider it necessary to retaliate at all? In his second edition of Shakespeare's works, published in 1728, he adopted, grudgingly, a fairly large number of Theobald's restorations and emendations, and the matter might well have ended there. The most probable answer is that Pope looked upon Shakespeare Restored as an attack not only upon his integrity, but also upon his dignity. There was, he must have felt, a thinly veiled insult in the subtitle, "a specimen of the many errors as well committed as unamended, by Mr. Pope,"⁹⁶ an insult that, in the mind of an extremely sensitive poet might easily have been construed as evidence of "wanton malignity."⁹⁷

In his earliest attacks upon Theobald, Pope made use of the writings of the Scriblerus Club, the principal members of which were John Gay, John Arbuthnot, Jonathan Swift, and,

⁹⁵James Sutherland, ed., The Dunciad, p. xii.

⁹⁶W. J. Courthope, it is interesting to note, misquotes this sub-title thus: "an exposure of the blunders committed and unamended." The Works of Alexander Pope, ed. Courthope and W. Elwin (London, 1882), IV, 27.

⁹⁷Ibid.

of course, Pope himself. "The more memorable productions of the Club's members--Gulliver's Travels, The Dunciad, and the Memoirs--have at least one purpose in common: to satirize undigested and misapplied learning."⁹⁸ As early as 1717, Gay, Pope, and Arbuthnot had collaborated upon a comedy called Three Hours after Marriage which ridiculed one Dr. John Woodward, whom the members of the Club considered typical of those guilty of "disputatious knowledge and frivolous speculation."⁹⁹ Since Theobald had taken it upon himself to deal in misplaced commas and traces of letters, he rendered himself fit material for Scriblerian satire, which delighted in poking fun at all pedants. He found his place in the Peri Bathous--published in the "Last Volume of the Miscellanies of Pope and Swift"--among the insignificant and contemptible geniuses of the day. In the sixth chapter of this prose satire, subtitled "Martinus Scriblerus, His Treatise of the Art of Sinking in Poetry," Pope defines the pedant in Scriblerian terms:

It is affirm'd by Quintillian, that the same genius which made Germanicus so great a general, would with equal application have made him an

⁹⁸Edna Leake Steeves, The Art of Sinking in Poetry: A Critical Edition (New York, 1952), p. xliii.

⁹⁹Ibid.

excellent heroic poet. In like manner, reasoning from the affinity there appears between arts and sciences, I doubt not but an active catcher of butterflies, a careful and fanciful pattern-drawer, and industrious collector of shells, a laborious and tuneful bagpiper, or a diligent breeder of tame rabbits, might severally excel in their respective parts of the Bathous.¹⁰⁰

He goes on to classify modern writers under various types of animals. Theobald appears, among a company of about two dozen other writers, first with the swallows, and then with the eels. Swallows, according to the satirist, "are authors that are eternally skimming and fluttering up and down, but all their agility is employed to catch flies";¹⁰¹ eels are obscure authors "that wrap themselves up in their own mud, but are mighty nimble and pert."¹⁰² Theobald appears only by his initials in "The Art of Sinking in Poetry," not by name. Pope directed, however, a most telling blow at his opponent in the "Fragment of a Satire" (substantially aimed at Addison, but expanded to include other writers of the time), a brief poem in which Theobald is labeled

¹⁰⁰ Pope and Swift, "Peri Bathous: or, Martinus Scriblerus, His Treatise of the Art of Sinking in Poetry," Miscellanies: The Last Volume (London: 1727), pp. 25-26.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., p. 26.

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 28.

a "word-catcher, that lives on syllables."¹⁰³ It was also here that the word "piddling" was first applied to the unhappy Theobald's name. "and by the keenness and brilliancy of the lines reflecting upon him Pope fixed permanently this epithet upon his critic."¹⁰⁴ certainly, by 1735 and the "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot," the adjective had stuck:

Did some more sober critic come abroad?
If wrong I smiled; if right I kissed the rod.
Pains, reading, study are their just pretense,
And all they want is spirit, taste, and sense.
Commas and points they set exactly right,
And 'twere a sin to rob them of their mite.
Yet ne'er one sprig of laurel graced these ribalds,
From slashing Bentley down to piddling Theobalds.¹⁰⁵

Pope's attacks upon Theobald reached their climax with the appearance, in 1728, of the first version of the Dunciad. In this work, Theobald suffered the imputation of dullness, a word of wide denotation in the poet's vocabulary. Dullness, in Pope's philosophy, is the worst charge that can be leveled at a writer, or, in the larger sense, an artist. In his Essay on Criticism Pope had given expression to an important article in his artistic credo, and that was that taste was an indispensable

¹⁰³Pope, Minor Poems, ed. Norman Ault (London, 1954), p. 283.

¹⁰⁴Lounsbury, p. 203.

¹⁰⁵Lines 157-164, cited in Lounsbury, p. 203.

quality in both critics and writers. Whatever taste might or might not be--and, like most theoretical terms, it is subject to a variety of definitions--one thing is certain: its opposite is dullness, which includes "every sort of rebellion against right reason."¹⁰⁶

The "dunce," therefore, is the exponent of "dullness." Not necessarily an unintelligent man, he is more often one who misuses his knowledge, who dissipates his energies upon trivialities and particularities. "As Pope uses the word, it suggests not stupidity or ignorance, but a perverse misapplication of intelligence, learning without wisdom, the precise opposite of all that is implied in the term 'humanist.'"¹⁰⁷ Dunces were writers whom Pope considered antipathetic to the ideals that he had expressed in his poetry; they were the denizens of Grub Street, the cheap hack writers of the day, or they were dull and laborious critics, who were not writers at all. Among these last Pope clearly placed Richard Bentley and Theobald.

The original Dunciad opens with a description of "Dullness," depicted by Pope as a primeval goddess:

¹⁰⁶Courthope, V, 28.

¹⁰⁷Robert K. Root, The Dunciad Variorum (Princeton, 1929), p. 15.

In eldest time, e'er mortals writ or read,
E'er Pallas issued from the Thund'rer's head,
Dulness o'er all possess'd her antient right,
Daughter of Chaos and eternal Night:
Fate in their dotage their fair idiot gave,
Gross as her sire, and as her mother grave,
Laborious, heavy, busy, bold, and blind,
She rul'd, in native Anarchy, the mind.¹⁰⁸

All of the qualities mentioned in this early description are, of course, later transferred to Theobald by implication. Dulness is then represented as taking a view of her "mighty" forces, which are divided into three classes, "party writers, dull poets, and wild critics."¹⁰⁹ The goddess is seeking a worthy successor to Elkanah Settle, the moribund reigning dunce. The new ruler must be one who has in himself all the attributes of the goddess herself. As she views a large number of worthy candidates, her eye rests upon Theobald, the greatest of the dunces:

She saw old Fryn in restless Daniel shine,
And Busden eke out Blackmore's endless line;
She saw old Philips creep like Tate's poor page,
And all the Mighty Mad in Dennis rage.

¹⁰⁸I, lines 7-14, Sutherland ed., p. 61.

¹⁰⁹"Martinus Scriblerus, of the Poem," Sutherland ed., p. 51. Scriblerus continues: A person must be fix'd upon to support this action, who (to agree with the said design) must be such an one as is capable of being all three. He seeks for one who hath been concerned in the journals, written bad plays or poems, and published low criticisms: he finds his name to be Tibbald, and he becomes of course the Hero of this poem."

In each she marks her image full exprest,
But chief, in Tibbald's monster-breeding breast;
Sees Gods with Daemons in strange league ingage,
And earth, and heav'n and hell her battles wage.¹¹⁰

Pope treated the name "Tibbald," for all practical purposes, as if it were his own invention. He uses the spelling almost exclusively in the Dunciad and elsewhere. One gets the impression, in reading the Dunciad, that Pope uses "Tibbald" as a word, sometimes as a concept, rather than as an actual name.¹¹¹ "Theobald," therefore, always equals "Tibbald," a thing, sometimes ugly, sometimes mean, invariably ludicrous. The sound, "Tibbald," like a chameleon, takes on the color of its surroundings. This one device, the distorting of Theobald's name, is perhaps the most effective weapon in Pope's arsenal, and by using it with expert precision, he worked incalculable harm upon the poor Restorer's reputation, for "if one takes the view that names can somehow define personality, then to distort a person's name amounts to a distortion of his personality or identity."¹¹²

There would be little point in multiplying examples from the Dunciad illustrating Pope's comic technique. The entire

¹¹⁰I, lines 101-108, Sutherland ed., pp. 71-76.

¹¹¹Aubrey L. Williams, Pope's Dunciad. A Study of Its Meaning (Baton Rouge, 1955), p. 68

¹¹²Ibid.

poem--certainly the entire first book--is an example of the power of satire. The Dunciad by itself was a potent enough poem to discredit poor Theobald. Relatively few people had read the Peri Bathous and the "Fragment of a Satire"; in 1729 almost everybody was reading the Dunciad.¹¹³ The blow delivered by this poem was as damaging to Theobald's image as Dryden's MacFlecknoe had been to Shadwell's. Even the term "Restorer" itself had taken on a comic connotation. Pope's victory was decisive because he commanded the superior weapons. Theobald's genteel and occasionally quaint prose, buried in unpublished letters and meagerly circulated journals, was no match for the poet's wit.

Although the Dunciad deals with other writers, Theobald, since he was the hero, suffered the greatest obloquy. Few men of consequence at the time cared--or dared--to point out that much of this obloquy was undeserved, that technically Theobald had not actually attacked Pope, and that he was not really a critic in the sense understood by the laymen of the first half of the eighteenth century, that is, he was not an irresponsible fault-finder. Be that as it may, the case of the Dunciad was one-sided, and so was the popular verdict for some time to come:

Once let a damaging view be taken of a work or

¹¹³Theobald possessed a copy of the 1743 edition. See Item 137 of the Catalogue of Theobald's Library.

of a writer by a person in a position to make his opinions known and respected, it will be adopted and re-echoed by multitudes, even if they are perfectly well aware that the depreciatory estimate is due to prejudice or personal dislike. Ignorance continues what malice originated. The hostile view taken is at last embalmed for all time in books of reference. From generation to generation the same remarks, the same misstatements, and frequently the same inanities continue to be repeated by the whole herd of critics, without examination and without reflection. Never has any author furnished in so many ways more signal proofs of the truth of this observation than has Theobald.¹¹⁴

Professor Lounsbury's critique may be somewhat funereal, but it is not inaccurate. But Pope's poem, however, effective as it may have been, was only partly responsible for the durability of Theobald's disgrace. Many readers accepted Pope's viewpoint not because he was right, but because he was entertaining.

Since it was easy to evoke laughter at Theobald's expense, a number of writers and poets joined in the sport. David Mallet, in a poem openly addressed to Pope, expressed the keynote of the anti-critical literature of the 1730's. The following example gives some idea of the kind of watered-down Dunciad that Theobald had to put up with, literally for the rest of his life:

Best genius! who bestows his oil and pains
On each dull passage, each dull book contains;
The toil more grateful, as the task more low:

¹¹⁴Lounsbury, p. 186.

So carrion is the quarry of a crow.
Where his fam'd author's page is flat and poor,
There most exact the reading to restore;
By dint of plodding and by sweat of face,
A bull to change, a blunder to replace:
Whate'er is refuse critically gleaning,
And mending nonsense into doubtful meaning.¹¹⁵

This kind of shoddy versifying is merely symptomatic of an already existing prejudice of the time: an almost universal detestation of the critic as a type.

The energetic contempt for critics--especially verbal critics--received much of its impetus in the days of the famous Phalaris controversy. In his Tale of a Tub, Jonathan Swift had excoriated the class in general. "True critics," he had written, "are known by their talent of swarming about the noblest writers, to which they are carried merely by instinct, as a rat to the best cheese, or a wasp to the fairest fruit."¹¹⁶ In this statement Swift set forth the basic distinction: the "noblest writers" are creative artists; the critics are parasites. Moreover, the parasites lacked true taste, that is, the ability to discern what was of genuine value in the works of artists:

A true critic, in a perusal of a book, is

¹¹⁵Of Verbal Criticism (London, 1733), lines 75-84,
p. 7.

¹¹⁶With Other Early Works, 1696-1707, ed. Herbert Davis
(Oxford, 1957), p. 63.

like a dog at a feast, whose thoughts and stomach are wholly set upon what the guests fling away, and consequently, is apt to snarl most, when there are the fewest bones.¹¹⁷

Thus the very distinct distrust and dislike of critics provided a salutary atmosphere for Pope's Dunciad. By itself, the poem was brilliant and effective enough to blast Theobald's reputation; coming at a time when verbal criticism was in a very low state, its effect was magnified to an extent that offered little hope that the critic's respectability would ever be restored.

On the other hand, the critics themselves were in large measure responsible for the public disfavor in which they frequently found themselves. They seldom worked in harmony among themselves. As E. S. Dallas points out, they "have always had a strong cannibal instinct. They have not only snapped at the poets: they have devoured one another."¹¹⁸ It was Theobald's misfortune to be associated in the popular mind with Bentley, Rymer, Wotton, and Dennis, all of whom were mentioned by name in A Tale of a Tub.¹¹⁹ As a result of his unwitting membership in this uncomfortable fraternity, he became a representative of

¹¹⁷Ibid., p. 64.

¹¹⁸The Gay Science (London, 1866), I, 13.

¹¹⁹p. 57.

the type of ungentlemanly scholar that could never be admired in England. Because they are always fighting among themselves, they are always, according to Thomas Seward, in a kind of critical disgrace:

If the professors of the same science are continually cuffing and buffeting each other, the world will set them on, laugh at, and enjoy the ridiculous scuffle. Is it not amazing, that ignorant, absurd, blundering dunces and blockheads should be the common epithets and titles, that gentlemen of learning and liberal education bestow on each other? . . . If we ourselves are guilty of the very same sort of mistakes for which we stigmatize others as blunderers and blockheads, we brand our own foreheads by our own verdict, obloquy upon us is bare justice, and we become blunderers and blockheads upon record.¹²⁰

In addition to calling down upon himself the wrath of the greatest satirist of the age, the unhappy Restorer suffered the misfortune of losing the friendship of William Warburton. It is difficult to determine the reason for the rift between the two scholars. Inasmuch as Warburton had engaged in friendly and cooperative correspondence with Theobald, the expression of ill-will on his part is hard to explain. It is possible that Warburton became angry on the ground that he expected but did not receive particular accreditation in Theobald's Preface to the Shakespeare edition of 1733. He claimed that he had thought out

¹²⁰ "Preface," The Works of Mr. Francis Beaumont and Mr. John Fletcher, ed. by Theobald, Seward, and J. Sympson (London, 1750), I, lx-lxi.

many of the editorial principles enunciated in that essay.¹²¹ Warburton, according to the list of subscribers, had purchased two complete sets of Theobald's edition of Shakespeare. In one of those sets he carefully marked off all material that he claimed as his own. This material includes sizeable portions of the Preface and numerous explanatory and emendatory notes throughout the volumes. D. Nichol Smith sees no reason to believe that he was untruthful: "Warburton could have had no evil motive in marking those passages in his private copy."¹²² Be that as it may, Theobald withdrew much of the offending material when he came to produce his second edition of Shakespeare's works.¹²³ In spite of this fact, Warburton continued to show all of the signs

¹²¹Eighteenth Century Essays, pp. xiv-xli.

¹²²Ibid., p. xlviii. Warburton's veracity, however, has been called into question on at least one other matter: "Warburton wrote . . . parts of the commentary to the 'New Dunciad' in 1742. When he published his edition of Pope's works in 1751, he appended initials to the notes to the 'Dunciad,' in order to distinguish Pope's notes from his own. But though he could not have written a note which appeared before 1742, he lays claim to many of those which appear in the earlier editions." Elwin and Courthope, IV, 37.

¹²³Smith thinks Theobald confirmed the authenticity of Warburton's claim by omitting in his second edition several passages either claimed by Warburton or known to be his. Since the editor omitted some passages that were not claimed by his assistant and retained some that were, little reliance can be placed upon evidence of this kind." Jones, p. 167.

of "a hot friend cooling." In any event, "by the end of 1734 Warburton had quarreled with Theobald, and by 1740, after a passing friendship with Sir Thomas Hanmer, had become definitely attached to the party of Pope."¹²⁴ William Maginn expressed the opinion that Warburton was never actually Theobald's friend; that, being an "embryo bishop," he cultivated only those associations that might be of some profit to him. When Pope made Theobald the hero of the Dunciad, and consequently something of a laughing stock, it became necessary that Warburton should "for ever disclaim all association with his quondam brother in Grub Street, and shew, by a perpetual strain of insult, that nothing beyond a slight and contemptuous approach towards the relation of patron and dependent ever existed between them."¹²⁵ When Warburton came to publish his edition of Shakespeare in 1747, he added a preface of his own in which he attempted to set matters right between himself and his old friend.

Warburton's preface adds little, if anything, of critical value to what had already been done by his predecessors. Too much of the essay is concerned with discrediting the work of Theobald and Hanmer, so much so that Warburton at times seems to

¹²⁴Smith, p. li.

¹²⁵"Dr. Farmer's 'Essay on the Learning of Shakespeare' Considered," Fraser's Magazine, XX (1839), 267.

be interested more in personalities than in Shakespearean scholarship. His assessment of Theobald is largely a restatement in prose of Pope's verse attacks. The Restorer's primary flaws as an editor are catalogued as dullness, incompetence, and myopic pedantry:

Mr. Theobald was naturally turned to industry and labor. What he read he could transcribe: but, as what he thought, if ever he did think, he could but ill express, so he read on; and by what means got a character of learning, without risking, to every observer, the imputation of wanting a better talent. . . . He wanted sufficient knowledge of the progress and various stages of the English tongue, as well as acquaintance with the peculiarity of Shakespeare's language, to understand what was right; nor had he either common judgment to see, or critical sagacity to amend, what was manifestly faulty. Hence he generally exerts his conjectural talents in the wrong places: he tampers with what is sound in the common books; and, in the old ones, omits all notice of variations the sense of which he did not understand.¹²⁶

Theobald, of course, never saw these lines, since he had been dead for three years when they were printed. Warburton, secure in the knowledge that Theobald could not retaliate, was simply trying to bury the reputation with the man, a not too difficult accomplishment in the light of Pope's utterly detrimental attacks in the Dunciad and other works. The effects of Warburton's claims were such that Theobald was left with virtually nothing to call his own. "What was good in Theobald's edition, due to his own

¹²⁶Smith, p. 99.

labors, was passed over to the credit of Warburton. What was bad in it . . . was ascribed to Theobald. This estimate of the value of the respective shares of the two men in the undertaking is found flourishing in full vigor during the latter half of the eighteenth century."¹²⁷

At one end of the spectrum, Theobald has been called the father of Shakespearean criticism; at the other end he has been dubbed a dunce, a pedant, and a charlatan. The Restorer, if he could comment today, would call this state of affairs "a paradox in sense."¹²⁸

¹²⁷Lounsbury, p. 523.

¹²⁸Shakespeare Restored, p. 172.

CHAPTER FOUR
EVALUATION OF THEOBALD

Before the appearance of Shakespeare Restored in 1726, Theobald had achieved a small but fair reputation as a man of letters. He had tried his hand at poetry, but was almost totally unsuccessful. Such efforts as The Mausoleum (1714) and the Cave of Poverty (1715) show that he was, at best, a derivative writer. He lacked the very qualities that he admired most in Shakespeare: a creative imagination and felicity in lyrical expression. His verses are sophomoric, slow, and plodding; even where he imitated, he imitated badly. He had better success as a playwright than as a poet. But again he proved deficient in those things that he admired in Shakespeare. His characters are mere lay-figures, consistent only in their flatness. It is safe to say that as a dramatist Theobald never held the mirror up to nature.

It was as a translator of classical works that Theobald began to earn a modest reputation before 1726. He published

versions of Sophocles' Electra and Oedipus the King in 1714 and 1715 respectively. In the latter year he also translated Aristophanes' Clouds, and in the following year the first book of Homer's Odyssey. Thus, at least ten years before the writing of Shakespeare Restored, it had become clear that if Theobald were to function at all in the world of literature, it would not be as a creative artist in his own right, but as a handler, a reviser, an editor of the works of other men.

Having become a moderate success as a translator of the classics, Theobald tried his hand at the periodical essay. Early in the year 1716, he began contributing a series of articles to Mist's Daily Journal under the title of The Censor. After the thirtieth number had appeared in the issue of June 17, publication ceased. Theobald began reissuing The Censor on New Year's Day of 1717, as a separate publication. The ninety-sixth and last issue appeared on the following first of June. The Censor failed, Theobald thought, because it had followed "too close upon the heels of the inimitable Spectator."¹

It was during the publication of this periodical that Theobald began to attract the attention of his contemporaries in the world of letters, and it was here that he first revealed his

¹Quoted in Richard F. Jones, Lewis Theobald (New York, 1919), p. 17.

unfortunate skill in making enemies in print, for "by delivering his opinion with two [sic] little reserve concerning some eminent wits, he exposed himself to their lashes, and resentment."² In the thirty-third number of his Censor, Theobald launched a partly professional, partly personal attack upon the venerable critic John Dennis, calling him the modern Furius, who "is led to be looked upon as more the object of pity, than that which he daily provokes, laughter and contempt."³ Theobald objected to Dennis' penchant for injecting his prejudices and his personality into his criticism. "His very panegyric," said Theobald, "is spiteful. . . . His applause is not the tribute of his heart, but the sacrifice of his revenge."⁴

Dennis, of course, retaliated with that same kind of "panegyric" for which Theobald had expressed a distaste. In his Remarks upon Mr. Pope's Translation of Homer (1717) he calls Theobald "a notorious ideot [sic], one hight Whachum, who from an under-spur leather to the law, is become an under-strapper to the playhouse, who has lately burlesqued the Metamorphoses of Ovid,

²Theophilus Cibber, "Mr. Lewis Theobald," The Lives of the Poets of Great Britain and Ireland (London, 1753), V, 276.

³(London, 1717), II, 48.

⁴Ibid., p. 48.

a vile translation of him. . . . This fellow is concerned in an impertinent paper which is called the Censor."⁵

Thus, in 1717, at the age of twenty-nine, Lewis Theobald, although he was unaware of the fact at the time, had received the first of the many attacks upon his competence and his integrity. Unfortunately for his later reputation, he had failed to secure for himself a place of even minor importance among "the Grubstreet race."⁶ Instead of winning recognition as a first-rate writer and editor, in the years ahead of him he was to become the object of a contempt that seems to have been almost universal. Criticism of his work was largely antipathetic, and his name became synonymous in most quarters with "creeping pedantry,"⁷ and despite the fact that his edition of Shakespeare's plays, published in 1734, was a popular success,⁸ Theobald continued to decline in reputation throughout the remainder of the eighteenth century, and there was

⁵The Critical Works of John Dennis (Baltimore, 1943), II, 122-123.

⁶Alexander Pope, The Dunciad (A), I, 42, ed. James Sutherland (London, 1953), 2nd ed., rev., p. 65.

⁷John Churton Collins, "The Person of Shakespearean Criticism," Essays and Studies (London, 1895), p. 264.

⁸It went through nine editions by 1777.

no serious attempt on anyone's part to rehabilitate his reputation until very late in the nineteenth century.

The reasons for this prolonged obloquy are not difficult to find. First, in publishing Shakespeare Restored Theobald incurred the enmity of Alexander Pope, a most articulate and effective adversary. Second, he lost the friendship, and therefore the partisanship, of William Warburton. Finally, he was a casualty of the criticism of Samuel Johnson.

No one can say with certainty what were the causes of Warburton's change of heart toward Theobald. The two men had made the acquaintance of each other at a meeting of a group known as the "Concanen Club," which included, besides its titular leader, Matthew Concanen, such contemporary luminaries as John Dennis and Thomas Cooke. A genuine affinity seems to have been discovered, owing to the great admiration Theobald and Warburton shared for the works of Shakespeare.⁹ Abundant evidence of the genuineness of their friendship can be found in their correspondence,¹⁰ and Warburton "was of considerable assistance to Theobald in rendering him sympathy, encouragement, and inspiration to pull through the

⁹Edward B. Koster, "Lewis Theobald," English Studies, IV (1922), 29.

¹⁰See Chapter II, above.

dark years following The Dunciad." Perhaps Warburton was disgruntled over Theobald's failure to credit him with his supposed assistance in the composition of the Preface to the edition; in any event, the rupture, whenever it came, was irreparable.¹²

The most that one can say is that the source of Warburton's antagonism was possibly a professional quarrel, during the course of which Theobald was unlucky enough to have died, therefore losing by default.

The cause of the antagonism that Theobald aroused in Samuel Johnson was probably temperamental. Although Johnson did not actually attack Theobald, he made his dislike explicit in the preface to his edition of Shakespeare and in his biography of Pope. It is obvious that Johnson accepted Warburton's estimate: "O poor Tib! (said Johnson) he was ready knocked down to my hands; Warburton stands between me and him."¹³ Moreover, Johnson felt antipathetic toward Theobald both as a critic and as a man. Theobald was a man "of narrow comprehension and small acquisitions, with no native and intrinsick splendour of genius, with little of the artificial light of learning, but zealous

¹¹Koster, p. 29. See p. 191, above, for a slightly different view.

¹²Ibid., pp. 57-58.

¹³James Boswell, The Life of Samuel Johnson (London, Everyman's Library, 1906), II, 200.

for minute accuracy, and not negligent in pursuing it."¹⁴

Johnson did not always feel so strongly antipathetic toward Theobald. There had been a time when he actually found something to admire--not very strongly, to be sure--in the older man's work. "There are," he wrote in 1745, "among Mr. Theobald's alterations others which I do not approve, though I do not censure them; for some of his amendments are so excellent, that, even when he has failed, he ought to be treated with indulgence and respect."¹⁵ Some time between 1745 and 1756 his estimate underwent a definite, if not very pronounced, change: "Mr. Theobald, if fame be just to his memory, considered learning only as an instrument of gain, and made no further inquiry after his author's meaning, when once he had notes sufficient to embellish his page with the expected decorations."¹⁶ It is apparent, then, that Johnson disliked the old Restorer because he thought him intellectually dishonest. Theobald, "a man of heavy diligence,

¹⁴Samuel Johnson, "Preface to Shakespeare," in Rasselas, Poems, and Selected Prose, ed. Bertrand H. Bronson (New York, 1952), p. 271.

¹⁵"Miscellaneous Observations on the Tragedy of Macbeth," The Works of Samuel Johnson (London, 1825), V, 60.

¹⁶"Proposals for Printing the Dramatic Works of William Shakespeare (1756)." Ibid., V, 100.

with very slender powers,"¹⁷ was attempting to achieve easy immortality in associating his name with that of Pope. Johnson loathed his "contemptible ostentation," "the exuberant excrescence of his diction," and his "inflated emptiness."¹⁸

There are other probable reasons why Johnson rejected Theobald both as a man and as a scholar. First, as it has already been shown, by the latter half of the eighteenth century verbal criticism had become almost universally disliked, and Johnson, both as an admirer of Pope and as an editor of Shakespeare in his own right, reflected that dislike. He agreed with Pope and Warburton that Theobald was excessively preoccupied with the trivia of textual scholarship. Some of Theobald's notes, he claimed, "were too minute to merit preservation."¹⁹ Furthermore, Johnson felt that Theobald was critically incompetent in that he was incapable of evaluating either his own material or his own accomplishment; he could not distinguish between the important, the unimportant, and the insignificant: "I have sometimes adopted his restoration of a comma, without inserting the panegyrick in which he celebrated himself for his achievement."²⁰

17 "The Life of Pope," ed. Bronson, p. 337.

18 "Preface to Shakespeare," p. 272.

19 Ibid., p. 271.

20 Ibid., p. 272.

Secondly, as an admirer of Pope and a lover of Shakespeare, Johnson had obviously developed a strong contempt for what he could only interpret as vindictiveness in Theobald. Johnson has been called the last great representative of the "judicial manner"²¹ in Shakespearean criticism, and as such he strongly resented the venting of personal animosities and petty resentments in textual materials ostensibly dealing with purely literary problems. Johnson especially disliked the heavy-handed insults and sarcasm which frequently flawed Theobald's notes.²²

Finally, Johnson's own approach to the technique of editing Shakespeare had undergone significant modifications since 1745. When he first considered the prospect of becoming an editor he felt that the problem of emending corrupt passages was an important one. Within two decades he had become a proponent--perhaps the founder--of the "common sense" school of criticism. He preferred plausible elucidation to doubtful emendation. "As I practiced conjecture more," he wrote, "I learned to trust it less; and after I had printed a few plays, resolved to insert none of my own readings in the text. Upon this caution I now congratulate

²¹D. Nichol Smith, Shakespeare Criticism: A Selection (London, 1916), p. xvi.

²²See p. 121, Chapter III, above, for examples of this kind of note that aroused Johnson's dislike.

myself, for every day encreases my doubt of emendation."²³

In his remarks upon Theobald Johnson lacked both the immediacy and the intensity of the attacks of Pope and Warburton. Possibly, he considered Theobald something of a dead issue, a primitive scholar who had once had something to offer, but not much, and who would be remembered, not for his own merits, but because he had won a minor battle against a great poet:

Theobald, thus weak and ignorant, thus mean and faithless, thus petulant and ostentatious, by the good luck of having Pope for his enemy, has escaped, and escaped alone, with reputation, from this undertaking. So willingly does the world support those who solicit favour, against those who command reverence, and so easily is he praised, whom no man can envy.²⁴

The effects of the enmity of Theobald's three major adversaries were long lasting. For the remainder of the eighteenth century and for most of the nineteenth, readers of Shakespeare's plays saw the old Restorer mainly through the eyes of Pope the satirist. It is safe to say that after its initial popularity had worn off no one troubled himself to read Shakespeare Restored in many ways a difficult work and of lasting interest only to the professional scholar. But the Dunciad became a poem that every Englishman knew and--if not loved--delighted in. The

²³"Preface to Shakespeare," pp. 282-283.

²⁴Ibid., p. 272.

brilliance of Pope's wit is dimmed today only by the loss of topicality, whereas from the point of view of simple entertainment, Theobald's work is certainly not brilliant, and can hardly afford any amusement at all.

Even when his editorial accomplishments were recognized (and sometimes praised), Theobald the man was either attacked or brushed off as a humorless hack. Joseph Warton gave Theobald credit for being the first to discover a reasonable and workable method of editing Shakespeare. Yet Warton called Theobald a "very dull and laborious man,"²⁵ and dismissed him as "a cold, plodding, and tasteless writer and critic."²⁶ Warton's estimate was echoed by a number of self-appointed experts upon literary matters. Richard Farmer, a prominent essayist, summed up Theobald's accomplishment as a "deal of learned dust,"²⁷ and William Maginn, who found it difficult to agree with Farmer on any point whatsoever, and who was fair enough to admit that Theobald was a skillful and original workman, thought that he was "full of self-conceit, and inspired by a jealous dislike of

²⁵An Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope (London, 1806), II, 229.

²⁶Ibid., p. 365.

²⁷An Essay on the Learning of Shakespeare (London, 1789), p. 38.

Pope, which tinges his notes with unpleasant acerbities, and crowds them with disproportionately triumphant swellings over the detection of real or supposed errors in the meanest trifles."²⁸

This species of depreciation and downright denunciation continued well into the nineteenth century. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, temperamentally poles away from the Restorer, called him "honest dull Theobald,"²⁹ and considered him a "miserable defender,"³⁰ guilty of "absurd ingenuity."³¹ Coleridge implicitly echoes the charges of dullness and incompetence: "Thus it is," he wrote, "for no-poets to comment on the greatest of poets,"³² and when the mood was upon him he could deliver Theobald's own brand of sarcasm: "What a noble pair of ears this worthy Theobald must have had!"³³

Like their eighteenth-century prototypes, some nineteenth-century commentators gave Theobald a slight, grudging recognition.

²⁸Pp. 265-266.

²⁹Coleridge's Shakespearean Criticism, ed. Thomas M. Raysor (London, 1930), I, 141.

³⁰Ibid., p. 29.

³¹Ibid., p. 46.

³²Ibid., p. 54.

³³Ibid., p. 101.

Henry Hallam thought he was "the first who did a little."³⁴ Yet, the effects of the Dunciad can still be perceived in a statement such as this: "Theobald was one of the worms of literature, a painful antiquarian, devoting his feeble powers to the illustration of obscure passages in Shakespeare's writings."³⁵ To William J. Courthope, Pope's biographer, writing late in the century, Theobald was "pedantic, poor, and somewhat malignant,"³⁶ totally lacking in wit or originality, he simply applied Bentley's methods to the Shakespearean text. "He was in fact," Courthope concluded, "utterly insignificant."³⁷ In the last decade of the century, the Encyclopaedia Britannica, making an excursion into literary prophecy, announced that Theobald "will survive as the prime butt of the original Dunciad when as a playwright, a litterateur, and even as a Shakespearean commentator, he will be entirely forgotten. . . . He was a man with literary impulses,

³⁴Introduction to the Literature of Europe, part III, chapter VI, paragraph 54.

³⁵Thomas B. Shaw, Outlines of English Literature (London, 1847), p. 220.

³⁶Introduction to the Dunciad, Works of Alexander Pope, IV, 27.

³⁷v, 218.

but without genius, even of a superficial kind."³⁸

This negative approach to Theobald has continued into the twentieth century. D. Nichol Smith, writing in 1903, maintained that Theobald lacked the courage of originality, and that he "was bound to go astray when he ventured beyond the collation of texts."³⁹ Almost everything of value in his edition, Smith claims, can be accredited to Warburton, "for Theobald had not taste enough to keep him right when he stepped beyond collation of the older editions or explanation by parallel passages."⁴⁰

It is probably this matter of taste that has been the great stumbling block in the evaluation of Lewis Theobald. Several critics who would prefer to honor him as an innovator feel that he is too mechanical, too calculating. They recall Johnson's denunciations of his "panegyriks: and his self-congratulatory flourishes:

The most serious general stricture which can be made on his work is his apparent lack of any sense

³⁸Vol. XXIII (1892), 252. J. C. Collins commented upon this entry in the Britannica: "A model, . . . both in style and matter, of what an article in an Encyclopaedia should be." P. 275.

³⁹Eighteenth Century Essays, p. xxiv.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 1. However, according to John S. Warren, "the best notes in Theobald's edition, of every kind, were unquestionably Theobald's own." The Life of William Warburton (London, 1863), p. 37.

of proportion. He pounces with the same correcting zeal on a mistaken punctuation as on a more material corruption. Throughout, his method is that of the triumphant logician; rarely if ever does he seem conscious, even in a passing word, of the fact that he is concerned with great poetry.⁴¹

Probably more effective than the commentators in perpetuating Theobald's unfavorable reputation after his death were his fellow scholars, the men who succeeded him as Shakespeare editors. The results of the antipathy of William Warburton and Samuel Johnson have already been discussed. There were others, especially in the later eighteenth century, who continued the process of depreciation. Benjamin Heath, who, although he did not produce an actual edition, published a sizeable volume of elucidations and emendations, thought that Theobald was a fair collator, but that his critical talents "in the way of conjecture" were only feeble.⁴² Edward Capell, a great Shakespearean editor in his own right, had almost nothing to say about Theobald, except that his edition was "only a little better" than Pope's, because he had "a few more materials; of which he was not a better collator than the other."⁴³ What Capell

⁴¹Root, p. 30.

⁴²A Revisal of Shakespeare's Text (London, 1765), p. vii.

⁴³Mr. William Shakespeare: His Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies (London, 1767-1768), I, 17.

neglected to say one of his anonymous reviewers supplied: "Mr. Theobald, who obtained some degree of fame merely by being the adversary of Pope, possessed neither ingenuity, judgment, nor common sense."⁴⁴

Capell was followed by Edmond Malone, who commented upon Theobald only once in a long, cumbersome preface:

That his work should at this day be considered of any value, only shews how long impressions will remain, when they are once made; for Theobald, though not so great an innovator as Pope, was yet a considerable innovator; and his edition being printed from that of his immediate predecessor, while a few arbitrary changes made by Pope were detected, innumerable sophistications were silently adopted. His knowledge of the contemporary authors was so scanty, that all the illustration of that kind dispersed throughout his volumes, has been exceeded by the researches which have since been made for the purpose of elucidation of a single play.⁴⁵

Not all of the comments about Theobald in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were unfavorable. The primary difference between the Restorer's enemies and his friends was that the voices of the former were loud and strong, while those of the latter were faint and, for the most part, feeble. Thomas Cooke, for example, protested that Theobald is treated in an "unhandsome

⁴⁴English Review, III (1784), 171.

⁴⁵The Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare (London, 1790), I, lxxvii.

foolish, and petulant" manner throughout the Dunciad.⁴⁶ But this disclaimer appears in a footnote, in fine print. Almost a century later, Maginn, who tempers praise with blame, exclaimed that there was not a worse used man in English literature than poor Theobald, who "was, in truth, the first useful commentator on Shakespeare. . . . It is the commentary of Theobald that guides all his successors, including those who most insult him."⁴⁷ An anonymous critic agreed with Maginn, adding that "without Theobald's notes and most sagacious amendments, ordinary readers would be puzzled to read Shakespeare."⁴⁸

In the middle of the nineteenth century, Richard Grant White asserted that Theobald was the first to do any serious service to the science of Shakespearean editing, and maintained that the edition of 1734 was "by far the best text of Shakespeare which had appeared."⁴⁹

Theobald received a remarkable compliment in 1863 from the editors of the Cambridge Shakespeare. These editors belonged

⁴⁶"The Battle of the Poets," Original Poems, with the Imitations and Translations (London, 1742), p. 190, note to Canto I, line 175.

⁴⁷P. 265.

⁴⁸S. H., Notes and Queries, IV (1851), 28.

⁴⁹Shakespeare's Scholar (New York, 1854), p. 9.

to no party; they approached their task without prejudice. Their primary objective was to produce a standard, reliable text that would have many of the virtues and none of the flaws of previous editions. They stated without reservation that they "often had recourse to Theobald's ingenuity"⁵⁰ in dealing with corrupt passages. They go on to state that:

Theobald, as an editor, is incomparably superior to his predecessors, and to his immediate successor, Warburton. . . . He was the first to recall a multitude of readings of the first Folio unquestionably right, but unnoticed by previous editors. Many most brilliant emendations, such as could not have suggested themselves to a mere "cold, plodding, and tasteless critic," are due to him. If he sometimes erred-- "humanum est."⁵¹

Sir Sidney Lee not only concurs in this estimate but goes the Cambridge editors one better, for he stated bluntly that Theobald was "the most inspired of all the textual critics of Shakespeare."⁵²

The foregoing comments, however favorable, constitute no more than occasional remarks. Until near the end of the nineteenth century no writer or critic had undertaken a full-

⁵⁰ The Works of William Shakespeare, ed. William G. Clark and John Glover (London, 1863), I, xii.

⁵¹ Ibid., xxxi.

⁵² A Life of William Shakespeare (New York, Macmillan, 1899), p. 316.

scale work on Theobald, favorable or otherwise. The rehabilitation of Theobald's reputation begins with the publication, in 1895, of a book of articles by John Churton Collins in which there is an essay entitled "The Person of Shakespearean Criticism." Collins' thesis is that Theobald has been the victim of unbelievable neglect and injustice on the part of his fellow commentators on Shakespeare. "Generation after generation," he says, "it has been the same story. After plundering his notes and appropriating his emendations, sometimes with, but more generally without, acknowledgment, they all contrive . . . to reproduce Pope's portrait."⁵³ Yet, concludes Collins, the study of Shakespeare owes an incalculable debt to Theobald, for he found the text in a deplorable condition, and accomplished more toward the ascertainment of a genuine, intelligible, text than all other editors from Rowe to Dyce.⁵⁴

Collins' article was followed by Thomas Lounsbury's book, The Text of Shakespeare.⁵⁵ Ostensibly a study of the earliest editors of Shakespeare, the book is actually an extended

⁵³P. 263.

⁵⁴Ibid., pp. 263-265.

⁵⁵(New York, 1906).

apologia pro Theobaldo. Lounsbury called Shakespeare Restored "the pioneer work in a path which has since been trodden by thousands of feet,"⁵⁶ and makes a convincing case for Theobald's primacy and excellence in his field. He examines the so-called Dunciad controversy in detail and proves, at least to his own satisfaction, that Theobald was more sinned against than sinning.

The ultimate success of Lounsbury's book in rehabilitating Theobald's reputation cannot be determined, but it led to the production of another full-length study of the Restorer, this time by Richard Foster Jones, whose book, Lewis Theobald (New York, 1919), covered much of the same ground. The main difference between Jones's study and Lounsbury's is that the former does not adopt a tone of injured merit. Jones does not attempt to lay to rest the ghosts of Pope, Warburton, and Johnson, and if his book lacks some of the intensity and interest of Lounsbury's, it is in some respects more disinterested and, on the whole, more scholarly. His main intention, however, is very similar to Lounsbury's, that is, to counteract the effect of Pope and his adherents, to remove the dunce's hat once and for all.

There are two primary reasons why the Restorer's reputation sank easily and rapidly. For one thing, Theobald was not in his own right a genuine literary figure. He left no enduring

⁵⁶p. 155.

work of genius--rather of creative genius--to keep his name alive, or to be the subject of a rediscovery or reevaluation. For another, his method, the subject of violent controversy during the lives of Theobald, Pope, and Warburton, fell into inevitable disuse. "It is curious to observe," wrote a nineteenth-century critic, "how much of Shakespearean criticism . . . is devoted to hostile criticism of fellow critics, living and dead. It is submitted that this . . . has tended to bring disrepute on this branch of literature."⁵⁷ In the last quarter of the eighteenth century and the first quarter of the nineteenth Shakespearean scholarship became less technical; approaches became increasingly thematic, intellectual, romantic, even inspirational. Such writers as Maurice Morgann and S. T. Coleridge were typical of this basically unscientific bias. No wonder, then, that Theobald, who, in the eyes of many literary men, excelled only in the emendation, lapsed into oblivion. Still very much a forgotten man, he has had to settle for a kind of quasi-immortality: he survives in the footnotes and unread critical introductions found in various modern editions of Shakespeare.⁵⁸

⁵⁷H. H. Furness, The New Variorum Shakespeare: Hamlet (Philadelphia, 1877), III, x.

⁵⁸For an example of this kind of note, see Ibid., p. 456, where Furness, pointing out an unimportant error, calls Theobald "one of the best editors Shakespeare ever had."

But Theobald deserves better than that. He deserves, at least, to be evaluated in terms of what he set out to do. The miscalculation of most of those who degraded him was that they tended to judge him as if he were an artist. If one adopts that view, then of course Theobald is very deficient. But he was a scholar, and it is on that basis that he should be weighed.

Theobald's credentials as a scholar are based, ultimately, upon three things: his substantial knowledge of literature, the result of wide reading and intense study; his ability to track down and evaluate source materials; and his predilection for order, which enabled him to organize and unify apparently disparate masses of material.

Theobald was an apt disciple of Bentley in that his acquaintance with the literature of his own time was extraordinarily extensive:

Moreover, he was a diligent reader of a different species of literature. The antiquaries Stowe, Camden, and Dugdale he used to good advantage. Besides the chronicles of Hall and Holinshed, he was familiar with such semi-historical works as Hakluyt's voyages. Lydgate and Caxton were known to him With Chaucer and Spenser he was intimately acquainted, and, in a much less degree, with the sixteenth-century lyricists such as Wyatt, Surrey, Daniel, and Lodge.⁵⁹

⁵⁹Jones, p. 175.

As a result of this remarkable familiarity with literature, Theobald was successful in the discovery of sources. He acquainted himself with the Italian short stories and novelle that were the bases of a number of Shakespeare's plays. He read North's translation of Plutarch, and "was the first to discover how closely Shakespeare followed Holinshed."⁶⁰ He was also one of the first to examine internal evidence that might lead to the determination of the date of composition of a given Shakespearean play. He points out, for example, that in the Tempest Shakespeare mentions the Bermudas, "which were unknown to the English, till, in 1609, Sir John Summers made a voyage to North America, and discovered them, and afterwards invited some of his countrymen to settle a plantation there."⁶¹

Theobald was also like his mentor Bentley in that he exercised full control over both his method and his material. Despite the fact that he was working with a large corpus of plays and an enormous accumulation of notes and source studies that would have overwhelmed a less indefatigable scholar, Theobald never allowed himself to get lost in a labyrinth of loosely organized materials. He learned from Bentley how to systematize

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 187.

⁶¹Theobald's Preface, p. x.

his knowledge so that he could "focus upon a point, however minute, almost all that could throw any light upon it."⁶²

Theobald is somewhat less difficult to evaluate as a scholar than as a writer of prose. Basically, his writing was delinquent on two main counts. He was apparently incapable of sustained composition, and his efforts lacked creative drive. He wanted insight and imagination; in fact, almost all of the qualities that distinguished the great prose artists in the eighteenth century were missing in Theobald.

Theobald's talent as a writer seemed to be limited to the production of extremely short articles, extended notes, emendations, and corrections of or comments upon other men's work. He had a brief career as a journalist during which he wrote a series of articles and essays for Mist's Journal and his own Censor. But his essays, despite the fact that they gave some indication of what was to come as far as Theobald's abilities as a Shakespearean editor were concerned, were much too desultory in technique and limited in scope. Theobald produced only two fully developed prose essays: the introduction to Shakespeare Restored and the Preface to his edition of Shakespeare's plays.

It is doubtful that Theobald would ever have won fame as a prose essayist, even if he had wanted to, for his genius

⁶²Jones, p. 35.

was simply not equal to the task. The outstanding quality of his prose is its exceptional lucidity and directness, although it tends somewhat toward the verbose. The fact that Theobald was preoccupied with composing explanatory notes probably accounts for his essays being written on a predominantly literal level. One finds an occasional use of metaphorical language, such as the comparison of the condition of Shakespeare's text to Hamlet's "unweeded garden grown to seed,"⁶³ and the opening lines of the Preface, where he compares the attempt to write upon Shakespeare to "going into a large, a spacious, and a splendid dome through the conveyance of a narrow and obscure entry."⁶⁴ But when Theobald did use a metaphor he generally carried it too far. He was not content simply to make his point, he pursued it until it lost its immediacy.

As a prose writer Theobald lacked the Latinate grandeur and structural balance of Samuel Johnson, as well as the brilliant insights of that learned doctor. Such metaphors as "If the flights of Dryden . . . are higher, Pope continues longer on the wing,"⁶⁵ were ordinarily beyond the Restorer's slender powers.

⁶³Shakespeare Restored, p. 1.

⁶⁴P. 63.

⁶⁵Charles F. Johnson, Shakespeare and His Critics (Boston, 1909), p. 386.

Theobald was, moreover, somewhat deficient in humor. Although he was adept at judging other men's wit, he was clumsy in the exercise of his own. His attempts at humor were for the most part either obvious or homely. His story of the priest who refused to change his old mumpsimus for anybody's gumpsimus⁶⁶ is a case in point. It is fairly safe to say that he was absolutely incapable of true irony. Whenever he attempted any kind of indirect ridicule he invariably lapsed into sarcasm. This characteristic of his writing is not especially evident in Shakespeare Restored, but it mars some of the otherwise best annotations in his edition. His comment upon Pope's rendering of a line from Richard II,⁶⁷ "This is merely, I suppose, ex cathedra Popiana; for I can find no authority for it, any more than I can find any sense in it," is another case in point.

It is obvious that Theobald is much less valuable to English literature as a writer than as an editor. In an age of great masters his accomplishments as a prose artist were negligible. But as a literary scientist, Theobald claims a place of modest honor.

⁶⁶ Shakespeare Restored, p. 111.

⁶⁷ "My wretchedness suits with a row of pines." III, iv.
26. In Pope's edition, III, 152.

⁶⁸ Theobald's edition, III, 310.

He is important because he was a genuine innovator. He was the first scholar to apply a fully developed editorial technique to a native author, and his edition of Shakespeare's plays is universally recognized as the first one of real critical value. Before Shakespeare Restored, there was no verbal criticism apart from that applied to classical authors, and the editing of English works, where it took place at all, was inefficient. Theobald showed that it could be methodical.

He is important also because he was a great systematizer. Some of his terminology and much of his critical apparatus, such as marginal notations, asterisks, daggers, are either obsolescent or of limited practical use today, but he demonstrated a viable method, one that in modified form is still in use today.

Some of the quality of that method becomes evident if one compares Theobald with his rivals, Pope and Warburton. Pope's gifts as an editor were not negligible. He was the first to collate the folios and quartos on a large scale, and he is responsible for reinstating a large number of important lines that had fallen out of the "standard" text.⁶⁹ But Pope's

⁶⁹Notably the third scene of the fourth act of King Lear. All four folios and Rowe omit the entire scene.

approach is not a true method. For one thing, it relies too much upon instinct. Secondly, a large proportion of Pope's explanatory notes are based on unsupported conjecture, as in the case of Greenfield, the property man whose table has baffled many scholars and editors.⁷⁰ These two practices--the use of instinct instead of sound technique and the tendency to substitute guesswork for actual evidence--are exactly what Theobald's method was designed to eliminate.

The contrast between Theobald and Warburton is not so much technical as temperamental. In the rivalry between these two men we find modified genius and taste opposed to haphazard word-hunting. It has been suggested that Theobald owed a debt to Warburton larger than he has paid, that he had received a substantial number of emendations from the learned divine, along with more than ample professional assistance in the writing of the Preface to his edition of Shakespeare.⁷¹ Actually, Theobald's debt to Warburton is of no genuine importance, for it is not upon the mere number of critical notes that the Restorer's reputation rests, but upon their quality. Theobald's importance lies not in a simple accumulation of sagacious conjectures, but in the development and demonstration of an editorial method. In a

⁷⁰Shakespeare Restored, pp. 137-138.

⁷¹Smith, Eighteenth Century Essays, pp. xlviil-li.

comparison of their respective accomplishments, Theobald almost always appears in a more favorable light, if only because of his apparent disinterestedness.⁷² He seems more sincerely concerned with purifying the Shakespearean text than he is in achieving immortality at the Bard's expense.

Theobald is facile princeps of all emenders of the text. Slight corrections eliminated, there remain some four hundred and twenty-nine emendations for which he had to rely upon his genius and learning alone. Of these one hundred and fifty have been accepted, so that a little less than thirty-seven per cent of his corrections have stood the test of time and the scrutiny of scholars.⁷³

As far as subsequent scholarship is concerned, the importance of Theobald's work lies in the fact that, besides inspiring an interest in their native writers on the part of scholars, it "created a demand for critical editions of English poets, and made popular a method which, with amplifications and modifications, has come down to the present day."⁷⁴ This new edition of Shakespeare Restored has been undertaken so that a judicious estimate of Lewis Theobald's value to English literary history may be made by the general reader. Theobald's memory

⁷²Except, of course, when he is thrown onto the defensive by attacks from his enemies.

⁷³Jones, p. 219.

⁷⁴Koster, p. 55.

has been rankly abused, and, like the Ghost of Hamlet's father, his is a perturbed spirit seeking rest.

The present text of Shakespeare Restored is based on the first issue of 1726, and has been taken directly from a copy in the possession of the Harper Library at the University of Chicago. The following changes have been made: the present editor has modernized Theobald's spelling, subdued his enthusiasm for italics, and ignored his predilection for the antiquated custom of capitalizing all nouns. Theobald's punctuation, however, except in cases where it affects clarity, has been preserved.

Shakespeare Restored is keyed to Pope's edition of 1725, from which Theobald cites act, scene, and page references. He does not give the volume number, however, and this information has been supplied. Theobald's marginal classifications have been incorporated into the headings of the items to which they pertain. All other marginal material that has been retained has been reduced to footnotes.

Notes appearing for the first time in this edition are unmarked. Theobald's notes are identified by the symbol (T).

For the reader's convenience, all passages from Shakespeare's plays have been identified by act, scene, and line numbers. These references are taken from Shakespeare: The Complete Works, edited by G. B. Harrison, and published by Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc. (New York, 1952).

SHAKESPEARE RESTORED:
OR, A SPECIMEN OF THE
MANY ERRORS AS WELL
COMMITTED, AS UNAMENDED, BY MR. POPE
IN HIS LATE
EDITION OF THIS POET.

DESIGNED
NOT ONLY TO CORRECT THE SAID EDITION, BUT TO RESTORE THE TRUE
READING OF SHAKESPEARE IN ALL THE EDITIONS EVER
YET PUBLISHED.

BY
MR. THEOBALD

SHAKESPEARE RESTORED:

DEDICATION TO JOHN RICH¹

Sir: It may seem a little particular, that, when I am attempting to restore Shakespeare, I should address that work to one, who has gone a great way towards shutting him out of doors; that is, towards banishing him the benefit of the stage, and confining us to read him in the closet.² Let me stand excused from intending any personal accusation here; for it is not

¹John Rich (1682?-1761), a successful London theatrical producer, began his career in 1714 with the opening of a theater in Lincoln's Inn Fields, where he produced Theobald's Harlequin Sorcerer in 1724. Rich's most memorable production was John Gay's Beggar's Opera in January, 1728. Dictionary of National Biography, XVI, 1000-1004.

²Rich's pantomimes at Lincoln's Inn Fields were held responsible for a general debasement of taste among London's theater-goers. In order to attract full houses Colley Cibber began staging pantomimes at Drury Lane. "By 1727, pantomime was the vogue for both houses. Harlequin was king of the stage, and John Rich was king of the Harlequins." Jimmy Deloach Willis, "An Analysis of the Shift in Emphasis from the Spoken Word to Spectacle Through the Theater Management of Sir William Davenant, Christopher Rich, and John Rich" (unpublished Master's thesis, Tulare University, 1965), p. 38.

you, indeed, but that affection, with which entertainments of a different species are pursued, has done this; and therefore I would fain transfer the fault from you to the town. Let us lay it upon the times, as we are pleased to do some of our sins upon fate and providence. Or, perhaps, the very frame of our nature is concerned; and the dissecters of an eye and ear can tell us to what membranes, or organs, we owe the communication of pleasures, in which the rational soul has no share. So shall we be able to account both for the reception of Grotesque and Opera.

If pantomiming be a debauchery of the stage, it is a vice which is so becoming in the excellence of your own performance, that I can scarce find in my heart to be the first to wish it cured. Yet, as it is fabled of Achilles' spear, that it had a virtue to heal the wounds it made; so we may prophesy, one time or other, that the rust of pantomimes will be a salve for the recovery of dramatic poetry.

I am justified in this address by another consideration, which is, that however you may have been a sinner against Shakespeare, you are not an impenitent one. And as King Henry IV erected a chapel to expiate the injuries which he had done to his predecessor, King Richard; so, the town at least say, you intend to appease the manes³ of our Poet by erecting a monument

³Departed spirit.

to him. Go on in that pious, that reputable intention; and, while the taste of the public demands it of you, continue to sacrifice fresh pantomimes to his memory; when their palates alter, convince them that you are provided to entertain them with an elegance suitable to their expectations.

But I am fallen into a strain which I had no thoughts of pursuing, when I first sat down to write this epistle. The great Otway dedicated one of his plays to his bookseller, as a receipt for the copy-money; and I meant this merely (si parva licet componere magnis)⁴ as an acknowledgment of some obligations received, which you will not expect me to specify in print. I designed it to carry the sentiments of friendship and gratitude; but, where it falls short in those points, let it make amends by this profession, that you are always entitled, to the utmost of my poor power, to demand all the service of,

Sir,

Your most obliged, and

Faithful humble servant,

March 18, 1725

Lewis Theobald.

⁴If small things may be compared to great ones. Virgil, Georgics, Book IV, line 176.

SHAKESPEARE RESTORED:

THEOBALD'S INTRODUCTION

I have very often declared, and that in a number of companies, that what through the indolence, what through the ignorance of his editors, we have scarce any book in the English tongue more fertile of errors, than the plays of Shakespeare. And, I believe, whenever I have fallen on this subject, I have not failed to express my wish, that some fine genius, equal to the task, would befriend the memory of this immortal poet, and contribute to the pleasure of the present and of future times, in retrieving, as far as possible, the original purity of his text, and rooting out that vast crop of errors, which has almost choked up his beauties.

It was no small satisfaction therefore to me, when I first heard Mr. Pope had taken upon him the publication of Shakespeare.¹ I very reasonably expected, from his known talents

¹The Works of Shakespeare, Collated and Corrected by Mr. Pope (7 vols.; London: Jacob Tonson, 1723-1725).

and abilities, from his uncommon sagacity and discernment, and from his unwearied diligence and care of informing himself by a happy and extensive conversation, we should have had our author come out as perfect, as the want of manuscripts and original copies could give us a possibility of hoping. I may dare to say, a great number of Shakespeare's admirers, and of Mr. Pope's too, (both of which I sincerely declare myself,) concurred in this expectation: for there is a certain curiosa felicitas,² as was said of an eminent Roman poet,³ in that gentleman's way of working, which, we presumed, would have laid itself out largely in such a province; and that he would not have sat down contented with performing, as he calls it himself, the "dull duty" of an editor only. Shakespeare's works have always appeared to me like what he makes his Hamlet compare the world to, "an unweeded garden grown to seed."⁴ And I am sorry there is still reason to complain, the weeds in him are so very sparingly thinned, that, not to speak out of compass, a thousand rank and unsightly ones are left to stare us in the face, and clog the delight of the

²Literally, "diligent felicity." In the Satyricon of Petronius, Chapter XIV, "it refers to the impression of ease and rightness that is the final result of technical mastery and painstaking care." S. H. Monk, ed., Norton Anthology of English Literature (New York: Norton, 1962), I, 1733.

³Horace.

⁴I, 11, 135-136.

expected prospect.

It must necessarily happen, that where the assistance of manuscripts is wanting to set an author's meaning right, and rescue him from those errors which have been transmitted down through a series of incorrect editions, and a long intervention of time, many passages must be desperate, and past a cure, and their true sense irretrievable, either to care, or the sagacity of conjecture.

And there is one unhappiness too, which generally attends the republication of English books, which is, that being the property of some persons in trade, who, too often, know nothing more of their copy than that there is a demand for reprinting it; and who are, withal, persons of such commendable frugality, that they think every farthing which is given for the labor of revise,⁵ to be so much money given away for nothing: the press is set to work from a printed precedent, and so the more the editions of any book multiply, the more the errors multiply too, and propagate out of their own species. Of this, to borrow the words and observation of my ingenious friend, Mr. Sewell:

Shakespeare is a very remarkable instance, who has been handed down, from age to age, very incorrect, his errors increasing by time, and being almost constantly republished to his disgrace. Whatever were the faults of this great poet, the printers have been

⁵A revised or corrected form of proof-sheet. OED.

hitherto as careful to multiply them, as if they had been real beauties; thinking, perhaps, with the Indians, that the disfiguring a good face with scars of artificial brutes, had improved the form and dignity of the person.⁶

This, indeed, has not been altogether the case in the late edition of Shakespeare: the bookseller, who farms a right to some part of this author, and claims a right to some other part of him, has so far misunderstood himself, (I mean, in contradiction to the rule of trade,) as to be at the expense of having his author revised; and therefore we promised ourselves, this work should be complete.

I have so great an esteem for Mr. Pope, and so high an opinion of his genius and excellencies, that I beg to be excused from the least intention of derogating from his merits, in this attempt to restore the true reading of Shakespeare. Though I confess a veneration, almost rising to idolatry, for the writings of this inimitable poet, I would be very loath even to do him justice at the expense of that other gentleman's character. But, I am persuaded, I shall stand as free from such a charge in the execution of this design, as, I am sure, I am in the intention of it; for I am assuming a task here, which this learned editor seems purposely (I was going to say, with too nice a scruple) to

⁶In his preface to the seventh volume of the Works of Shakespeare, in Quarto. (T)

have declined.

To explain myself, I must be obliged to make a short quotation from Mr. Pope, in his Preface to Shakespeare: "In what I have done," says he:

I have rather given a proof of my willingness and desire, than of my ability to do him justice. I have discharged the dull duty of an editor, to my best judgment, with more labor than I expect thanks, with a religious abhorrence of all innovation, and without any indulgence to my private sense of conjecture.⁷

I cannot help thinking this Gentleman's modesty in this point too nice and blameable; and that what he is pleased to call "a religious abhorrence of innovation," is downright superstition: Neither can I be of opinion, that the writings of Shakespeare are so venerable, as that we should be excommunicated from good sense, for daring to innovate properly; or that we ought to be as cautious of altering their text, as we would that of the sacred writings. And yet even they, we see, have admitted of some thousands of various readings; and would have a great many more, had not Dr. Bentley some particular reasons for not prosecuting his undertaking upon the New Testament, as he proposed.

Certainly, that physician would be reckoned a very un-serviceable member in the republic, as well as a bad friend to

⁷Reprinted in Eighteenth Century Essays on Shakespeare, ed. D. Nichol Smith (2d ed.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), p. 57.

himself, who would not venture to prescribe to a patient, because not absolutely sure to cure his distemper: as, on the other hand, he would be accounted a man of very indifferent morals, if he rashly tampered with the health and constitution of his fellow creature, and was bold to try conclusions only for private information. The same thing may be said with regard to attempts upon books: we should show very little honesty, or wisdom, to play the tyrants with any author's text; to raze, alter, innovate, and overturn, at all adventures, and to the utter detriment of his sense and meaning: but to be so very reserved and cautious, as to interpose no relief or conjecture, where it manifestly labors and cries out for assistance, seems almost as absurd as the indolence of that good honest priest, who had for thirty years together mistakingly, in his breviary, read mumpsimus for sumpsimus; and being told of his blunder, and solicited to correct it, "The alteration may be just," said he, "but, however, I'll not change my old mumpsimus for your new sumpsimus."

For my own part, I don't know whether I am mistaken in Judgment, but I have always thought, that whenever a gentleman and a scholar turns editor of any book, he at the same time commences critic upon his author; and that wherever he finds the reading suspected, manifestly corrupted, deficient in sense, and unintelligible, he ought to exert every power and faculty of the mind to supply such a defect, to give light and restore

sense to the passage, and, by a reasonable emendation, to make that satisfactory and consistent with the context, which before was so absurd, unintelligible, and intricate.

This is a task, which, as I above intimated, Mr. Pope has purposely disclaimed, and which I (by what faculty, or with what event, I know not;) have taken upon myself to prosecute. I am not insensible under what disadvantages I must set out upon such a work, and against such an antagonist--impar congressus Achilli.⁸ But as I have laid it down as a rule to myself not to be arbitrary, fantastical, or wanton, in my conjectures upon our author, I shall venture to aim at some little share of reputation in endeavoring to restore sense to passages in which no sense has hitherto been found; or, failing in that hope, must submit to incur, which I should be very unwilling to do, the censure of a rash and vain pretender.

As Shakespeare stands, or at least ought to stand, in the nature of a classic writer, and, indeed, he is corrupt enough to pass for one of the oldest stamp, everyone, who has a talent and ability this way, is at liberty to make his comments and emendations upon him. This is a palm, which (as Terence said,

⁸Unequally matched with Achilles. Virgil, Aeneid, Book I, line 475. The allusion ironically foreshadows the damage that Theobald's reputation was to suffer as a result of arousing Pope's superior powers of recrimination.

of writing comedies) is in common to every poetical contender:

In medio omnibus
Palmas esse positam, qui artem tractant musicam.⁹

And he, who has the luck to be allowed any merit in it, does not only do a service to the poet, but to his country and its language. This author is grown so universal a book, that there are very few studies, or collections of books, though small, among which it does not hold a place: and there is scarce a poet, that our English tongue boasts of, who is more the subject of the ladies' reading. But with what pleasure can they read passages, which the incorrectness of the editions will not suffer them to understand? No vein of pedantry, or ostentation of useless criticism, incited me to this work: it is a sacrifice to the pleasure of Shakespeare's admirers in general; and should it fail of all the success which I wish, it may chance to work this good effect, that many will be tempted to read this poet with a more diligent eye than hitherto: the consequence of which will be, that better critics will make their own observations, with more strength than I can pretend; and this specimen prove only an invitation to lead them into nobler corrections. If, however, till that happens, where Shakespeare has yet, through all his

⁹The prize goes to him who involves himself in the treatment of music (i.e., poetry or learned studies). Terence, Phormio, Prologue, lines 16-17.

editions, labored under flat nonsense, and invincible darkness, I can, by the addition or alteration of a single letter, or two, give him both sense and sentiment, who will be so unkind to say, this is a trifling or unwarrantable attempt? Or, rather, if I may dare to flatter myself so far, what true lover of this poet, who shall find him so easily cured, will not owe his thanks for a passage retrieved from obscurity, and no meaning? and say, Shakespeare must certainly have written so? But I remember a line in Horace, which ought to stop me short, and give me some fears:

Quid dignum tanto feret hic promissor hiatu?¹⁰

I am running too largely in debt, upon promise, to my readers, and they are calling for payment in some specimens of my performance.

I am sorry that the use and intention of this undertaking ties me down to the necessity of one unpleasant office, that of setting right the faults in pointing, and those merely literal, committed by the printer, and continued by too negligent a revisal. This is the drudgery of correction, in which I could wish to have been spared, there being no pleasure in the execution of it, nor any merit, but that of dull diligence, when executed. But, unpleasant as it is, even this part must be

¹⁰What is the value of this boaster's proud pretense? Horace, Ars Poetica, line 138.

dispensed with;¹¹ and all that I can do, to ease myself or readers in it, is to mark these minute corrections with all possible brevity, and proceed to more important matter.

I can scarce suspect it will be thought, if I begin my animadversions upon The Tragedy of Hamlet, that I have been partial to myself in picking out this play, as one more fertile in errors than any of the rest: on the contrary, I chose it for reasons quite opposite. It is, perhaps, the best known, and one of the most favorite plays of our author: for these thirty years last past, I believe, not a season has elapsed, in which it has not been performed on the stage more than once; and, consequently, we might presume it the most purged and free from faults and obscurity. Yet give me leave to say, what I am ready to prove, it is not without very gross corruptions. Nor does it stand by itself for faults in Mr. Pope's edition: No, it is a specimen only of the epidemical corruption, if I may be allowed to use that phrase, which runs through all the work: and I cannot help saying of it, as Aeneas does of the Greeks' treachery upon the instance of Sinon's,

Crimine ab uno
Disce omnes.¹²

If Hamlet has its faults, so has every other of the

¹¹Excused. OED.

¹²From one fault learn to know them all. Virgil, Aeneid, Book II, lines 65-66.

plays; and I therefore only offer it as a precedent of the same errors, which, everybody will be convinced before I have done, possess every volume and every play in this impression.

But to proceed from assertion to experiment: in order to which I shall constantly be obliged, that the emendations may stand in a fairer light, to quote the passages as they are read, with some part of their context, in Mr. Pope's edition; and likewise to prefix a short account of the business and circumstances of the scenes from which the faulty passages are drawn; that the readers may be informed at a single view, and judge of the strength and reason of the emendation, without a reference to the plays themselves for that purpose. But this will be in no kind necessary, where faults of the press are only to be corrected: where the pointing is wrong, perhaps, that may not alone be the fault of the printer; and therefore I may sometimes think myself obliged to assign a reason for my altering it.

As every author is best expounded and explained in one place, by his own usage and manner of expression in others; wherever our poet receives an alteration in his text from any of my corrections or conjectures, I have throughout endeavored to support what I offer by parallel passages, and authorities from himself: which, as it will be my best justification, where my attempts are seconded with the concurrence of my readers; so,

it will be my best excuse for those innovations, in which I am not so happy to have them think with me.

I have likewise all along, for the greater ease and pleasure of the readers, distinguished the nature of my corrections by a short note¹³ to each of them, namely "False Pointing," "False Print," "Various Reading," "Passage Omitted," "Conjectural Emendation," "Emendation," and the like; so that everybody will at once be apprised what subject matter to expect from every respective division.

¹³Theobald's original reads "a short marginal note." Cf. page 223, above, for account of the editorial change regarding this detail.

SHAKESPEARE RESTORED:
THE EXAMINATION AND CORRECTION OF
THE TRAGEDY OF HAMLET

I. Various Reading.
Act I. Scene 1. Vol VI,¹ p. 346.

When you same star, that's westward from the pole,
Had made his course t'illumine that part of heav'n
Where now it burns . . . (I, 1, 36-38.)

Some of the old editions read, t'illumine; which seems to be the truest derived word (from illumino in the Latin) and is the word used by our author in another place:

The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Vol. I, p. 195.

If I be not by her fair influence
Poster'd, illumin'd . . . (III, 1, 183-184.)

In another of his plays, our poet has extended this word to illuminate:

Julius Caesar, Vol. V, p. 234.

What trash is Rome?

¹Since every item in this section of Shakespeare Restored is keyed to Hamlet, the volume number, which is constant, is noted only in Item I.

What rubbish, and what offal? when it serves
For the base matter to illuminate
So vile a thing as Caesar? (I, iii, 108-111.)

And I almost think, Mr. Pope was of the opinion that illumine,
rather than illum, in this place in Hamlet, is the right word;
since he, in another of the tragedies, has written relumine,
though one of the old editions there have it relume.

Othello, Vol. VI, p. 578.

I know not where is that Promethean heat,
That can thy light relumine. (V, ii, 12-13.)

But may it not be objected, that if we should read,

Had made his course t'illumine that part of heaven, &c.
this additional syllable spoils the scanning of the verse? In a
word, too nice a regard must not be had to the numbers of
Shakespeare: nor needs the redundance of a syllable here be any
objection; for nothing is more usual with our poet than to make
a dactyl, or allow a supernumerary syllable, which is sunk and
melted in the pronunciation. It were most easy to produce above
a thousand instances of this custom in him; but unnecessary,
because they lie open to the observation of every discerning
reader.

II. False Pointing.
Act I, Scene 1. P. 347.

So frown'd he once, when in an angry Parle[,]
He smote the sledded Polack on the Ice. (I, 1, 62-63.)

All the old editions, which I have seen, read it rightly

without the second comma:

So frown'd he once, when in an angry parle
He smote &c.

III. Various Reading.
Act I, Scene 1. P. 350.

Shall I strike [] it with my partizan? (I, 1, 140.)

The versification manifestly halts here, without any necessity. The second edition in folio, printed in 1632, and which is one of those that Mr. Pope professes to have collated, makes out the numbers of this line by reading,

Shall I strike at it with my partizan?

IV. False Pointing.
Act I, Scene 1. P. 350.

I have heard,
The cock [] that is the trumpet to the morn,
Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat &c.
(I, 1, 149-151.)

It ought to be pointed, as it is in the quarto edition of 1637
(of which I shall have occasion to speak anon):

I have heard,
The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,
Doth &c.

V. False Pointing.
Act I, Scene 1. P. 351.

But look, the morn in russet mantle clad [,]
Walks o'er the dew &c. (I, 1, 166-167.)

Here again, either the second comma must be entirely taken away,
or this passage must be stopped thus:

But look,--the morn, in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew &c.

VI. False Pointing and
Conjectural Emendation.
Act I, Scene 1. P. 352.

Claudius, King of Denmark, his Queen, Hamlet, and courtiers, coming upon the stage, the King makes a speech, apologizing, and giving reasons, for his hasty marriage with his brother's widow. He then proceeds to acquaint them, that Fortinbras of Norway, supposing the state of Denmark to be much weakened and disjointed by the death of the late king, had demanded, with threats of invasion, certain lands lost by his father to the said late Danish king; and that therefore he (Claudius, the now king) had written letters to the old King of Norway, desiring him to suppress his nephew Fortinbras' unjust procedure in that affair. This is the business and import of the speech; let us now see how it stands in the edition.

Nor have we herein barr'd
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
With this affair along [,] (for all, our thanks.)
Now follows [,] that you know [] young Fortinbras,
Holding a mean supposal of our worth;
Or thinking by our late dear brother's death
Our state to be disjoint and out of frame [,]
COLLEAGUED with this dream of his advantage [;]
He hath not failed to pester us with message, &c.
(I, 11, 14-22.)

Though all the printed copies, that ever I have seen, concur in reading "colleagued" in this place, I cannot but think it carries a harsh and intricate sense, and does not so aptly fall in with the context. This makes me suspect it corrupted from a word very near it, both in sound and writing, and which carries a much more plausible meaning, as well as connects better both with what precedes and follows. 'Tis true, "colleagued" signifies "joined with, putting himself on the side or faction of," etc., and therefore it is not to be utterly disallowed in sense. But if we can only, with the alteration of a letter or two, substitute another word that gives a stronger and more proper image, and connects better with the reasoning of the passage; I hope, I shall be allowed to offer it, at least, as a conjecture, if not as a correction. Suppose therefore that Shakespeare might write it thus:

Nor have we herein barr'd
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
With this affair along: (for all, our thanks.)
Now follows that you know, young Fortinbras,
Holding a weak supposal of our worth;
Or thinking, by our late dear brother's death,
Our state to be disjoint, and out of frame;
COLLOGUED² with this dream of his advantage,
He hath not fail'd to pester us with message, &c.

²Collogue, blanditiis tentare, parum deflexo sensu, a Lat. Colloqui; vel si a Germanica origine: deducere malis; a Teut. Rosen, garrire, & Lugen; Belg. Logen, mentiri: q.d. Roslogen, eliso propter euphonium: q.d. blandis mendaciis imponere. Skinner's Lexic. Etymolog. (T) Collogue, "to bribe

Here you have a reason for the young man's opinion, and proceeding, and for his insolence in making the demand on Denmark, namely he being flattered, imposed on, cajoled, by the dream of his advantage. However, if the readers are inclined to embrace the first reading, I am willing to retract mine, or at least keep it to myself, which I proposed but as a guess. The correction of the next passage shall be founded on something more than conjecture.

VII. False Pointing.
Act I, Scene 2. P. 352.

We have here writ
To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras,
Who [] impotent and bed-rid, scarcely hears
Of this his nephew's purpose, to suppress
His further gate herein [.I]n that the levies,
The lists, and full proportions are all made
Out of his subjects [;] (I, ii, 27-33.)

That is, "we have written to the old king to stop his nephew's expedition, because his army is composed all out of the old king's subjects." But this passage is so pointed, that, by the reasoning being disjoined from the sentence of which it ought to

with flatteries," slightly altered in meaning from the Latin Colloqui; also of Germanic origin: "to induce toward evils," from the Teutonic Rosen, "to chatter," and Lugen; Belgian Logen, "to lie," so as to say Roslogen, elided for euphony; meaning, "to deceive with alluring lies." Stephen Skinner, Etymologicon Linguae Anglicanae (London: T. Roycroft and H. Brome, 1671).

be a part, the sense is so much weakened, that it is almost lost. Restore it therefore, as some of the editions lead the way:

We have here writ
To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras,
Who, impotent and bed-rid, scarcely bears
Of this his nephew's purpose, to suppress
His further gale herein; in that the levies,
The lists, and full proportions, are all made
Out of his subjects:

VIII. Conjectural Emendation.
Act I, Scene 2. P. 352.

and we here dispatch
You, good Cornelius, and you Voltimand,
FOR bearers of this greeting &c. (I, ii, 33-35.)

The word "for" here seems to be merely supplemental, and introduced to keep the verse from halting; besides that, "to dispatch for bearers," is a bald and poor expression. It certainly will be more in the style of majesty, if we may suppose the poet wrote:

and we here dispatch
You, good Cornelius, and You, Voltimand,
OUR bearers of this greeting &c.

This speaking in the plural number connects exactly with the beginning of the sentence last quoted, "We have here writ," and "We here dispatch you, and you, Our bearers of this greeting to old Norway." Besides, the mistake of "for" instead of "our" is so easy, that, in the second folio edition, it has happened again in this very Act in another passage; and the plain sense has led

the later editions to correct it.

Hamlet: Never to speak of this that you have seen,
Swear by my sword.

Ghost: Swear.

Hamlet: Hic et ubique? Then we'll shift FOR ground.
(I, v, 154-156.)

IX. Various Reading.
Act I, Scene 2. P. 352.

Giving to you no further personal power
OF TREATY with the king, &c. (I, ii, 36-37.)

This is a reading adopted, and of a modern stamp, as I take it, either from want of understanding the poet's genuine words, or on a supposition of their being too stiff and obsolete. All my old copies have it, as I think it ought to be restored,

Giving to you not further personal power
TO BUSINESS with the king, &c.

i.e., to negotiate, or transact with him. It is a license in our poet, of his own authority, to coin new verbs both out of substantives and adjectives; and it is, as we may call it, one of the quidlibet audendi's³ very familiar with him. I'll throw in a few instances of the like kind, and it were very easy, with little pains, to produce a crowd more.

A. Proofs of Substantives Made Verbs:

(1) The Tempest, Vol. I, p. 32.

The setting of thine eye and cheek proclaim

³Literally, "daring anything's."

A matter from thee, and a birth indeed,
Which throes⁴ thee much to yield.
(II, 1, 229-231.)

- (2) So again, The Tempest, Vol. I, p. 54.

And the thunder,
That deep and dreadful organ-pipe, pronounc'd
The name of Prosper; it did base⁵ my trespass.
(III, 111, 97-99.)

- (3) A Midsummer-Night's Dream, Vol. I, p. 138.

And as imagination bodies⁶ forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shape, etc. (V, 1, 14-16.)

- (4) The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Vol. I, p. 213.

Recking as little what betideth me,
As much I wish all good befortune⁷ you.
(IV, 111, 40-41.)

- (5) Measure for Measure, Vol. I, p. 370.

Lord Angelo dukes⁸ it well in his absence, &c.
(III, 11, 100-101.)

- (6) And again, Measure for Measure, Vol. I, p. 371.

Either this is envy in you, folly, or mistaking;
the very stream of his life, and the business
he hath helmed⁹ &c. (III, 11, 149-151.)

⁴"Throes" signify a woman's pains in child-bearing; and he here uses the word for "pains thee," or "gives thee those pains." (T)

⁵It did play a terrible base to it; resounded hoarsely in a base tone. (T)

⁶Gives them bodies. (T)

⁷Fall to you by good fortune. (T)

⁸Acts, represents, the duke. (T)

⁹Managed, steered, as at the helm. (T)

- (7) The Merchant of Venice, Vol. II, p. 20.

Give him direction for this merry bond,
And I will go and purse¹⁰ the ducats straight.
(I, iii, 174-175.)

- (8) King Lear, Vol. III, p. 49.

I could as well be brought
To knee¹¹ his throne, and, squire like,
Pension beg, &c.
(II, iv, 216-217.)

- (9) King Henry IV, Part II, Vol. III, p. 352.

And therefore will he wipe his tables clean,
And keep no tell-tale to his memory,
That may repeat and history¹² his loss, &c.
(IV, i, 201-203.)

- (10) King Henry V, Vol. III, p. 418.

Why! what read you there,
That hath so cowarded¹³ and chased your blood
Out of appearance?
(II, ii, 74-76.)

- (11) King Henry VIII, Vol. IV, p. 444.

And his own letter,
(The honorable Board of Council out,)
Must fetch in him he papers.¹⁴
(I, i, 78-80.)

- (12) Timon of Athens, Vol. V, p. 7.

His large fortune,
Upon his good and gracious nature hanging,

¹⁰Put them in a purse. (T)

¹¹Bend the knee to. (T)

¹²Tell the history of. (T)

¹³Frighted, made a coward of. (T)

¹⁴Marks down on paper. (T)

Subdues and properties¹⁵ to his love and
tendence
All sorts of hearts. (I, i, 55-58.)

(13) Coriolanus, Vol. V, p. 128.

That to 's power he would
Have made them mules, silenc'd their pleaders
and
Disproperty'd¹⁶ their freedoms.
(II, i, 262-264.)

(14) And again, Coriolanus, Vol. V, p. 200.

Now, by the jealous Queen of Heaven, that kiss
I carried from thee, dear; and my true lip
Hath virgin'd¹⁷ it e'er since.
(V, iii, 46-48.)

(15) Macbeth, Vol. V, p. 547.

I've seen
Hours dreadful, and things strange; but this
sore night
Hath trifled¹⁸ former knowings. (II, iv, 2-4)

(16) Antony and Cleopatra, Vol. V, p. 402.

Would'st thou be window'd¹⁹ ^{Eros,} in great Rome, &c.
(IV, xiv, 71-72.)

15Makes them his own; gives him a property in them. (T)

16Took away the property of. (T)

17Kept it chastely as a virgin. (T)

18Made trifles of. (T)

19Placed in a window. (T)

- (17) Othello, Vol. VI, p. 501.

He hath achiev'd a maid
That paragons²⁰ description and wild fame.
(II, 1, 61-62.)

- (18) Troilus and Cressida, Vol. VI, p. 24.

And with ridiculous and awkward action
(Which, slanderer! he imitation calls;)
He pageants²¹ us. (I, 111, 149-151.)

I am afraid of growing too luxuriant in examples of this sort,
or I could stretch out the catalogue of them to a great extent.
I shall only show by a few instances that it is as familiar with
him to make verbs out of adjectives, and so shall return to
Hamlet.

B. Proofs of Adjectives made Verbs.

- (1) The Winter's Tale, Vol. II, p. 594.

Which had been done,
But that the good mind of Camillo tardied²²
My swift command. (III, 11, 163-165.)

- (2) Cymbeline, Vol. VI, p. 213.

You married,
If each of you would take this course, how many
Must murder wives much better than themselves
For wrying but a little?²³

²⁰Out-goes, sets a paragon, or pattern to. (T)

²¹Plays us over, shows us as in a pageant. (T)

²²Stopped, made slow, or tardy. (T)

²³Going awry. (T)

- (3) Troilus and Cressida, Vol. VI, p. 111.

Hark! how Troy roars, how Hecuba cries out,
How poor Andromache shrills²⁴ her dolor forth.
(V, 111, 83-84.)

- (4) Julius Caesar, Vol. V, p. 288.

And nature must obey necessity,
Which we will niggard²⁵ with a little rest.
(IV, 111, 227-228.)

- (5) Titus Andronicus, Vol. V, p. 433.

Patient²⁶ yourself, Madam, and pardon me.
(I, 1, 121)

- (6) Antony and Cleopatra, Vol. V, p. 322.

And all this
(It wounds thine honor that I speak it now,)
Was born so like a soldier, that thy cheek
So much as lank'd²⁷ not. (I, iv, 68-71.)

- (7) Antony and Cleopatra, Vol. V, p. 337.

Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale²⁸
Her infinite variety. (II, 11, 240-241.)

X. Various Reading.

Act I, Scene 2. P. 352.

²⁴Screams shrilly. (T)

²⁵We will make but short rest, be niggards of it. (T)

²⁶Make yourself patient. (T)

²⁷Crew lank, or lean. (T)

²⁸Make stale. (T)

Voltimand: In that, and all things, will we show our
duty.

King: We doubt IN nothing, &c. (I, ii, 40-41.)

All the editions, that I have seen, read, I think, more rightly,

We doubt IT nothing.

i.e., We in no wise doubt, but you will.

XI. Various Reading.

Act I, Scene 2. P. 354.

But you must know, your father lost a father,
That father [] his, &c. (I, ii, 89-90.)

All the editions, that I have met with, old and modern, (and
so, I know, the players to this day constantly repeat it) read,

But you must know, your father lost a father,
That father lost, lost his . . .

The reduplication of the word "lost" here gives an energy and
an elegance, which is much easier to be conceived, than ex-
plained in terms. Every reader of this poet, however, must have
observed how frequent it is with him to use this figure (which
the rhetoricians have called anadiplosis) where he intends
either to assert or deny, augment or diminish, or add a degree
of vehemence to his expression. Of this usage, were it neces-
sary, I could bring a great number of examples; but the
instances, that I can at present remember in him, which seem
most to resemble this before us, are the following.

(1) Othello, Vol. VI, p. 483.

The Duke does greet you, General,
And he requires your haste, post-haste appearance.
(I, 11, 36-38.)

- (2) King Henry IV, Part I, Vol. III, p. 239.

And that would nothing set my teeth on edge,
Nothing so much as mincing poetry.
(III, 1, 133-134.)

- (3) Romeo and Juliet, Vol. VI, p. 272.

Fain would I dwell on form, fain, fain deny
What I have spoke. (II, 11, 88-89.)

- (4) Timon of Athens, Vol. V, p. 58.

Who dares, who dares,
In purity of manhood, stand upright,
And say, this man's a flatterer? (IV, 111, 13-15.)

- (5) Macbeth, Vol. V, p. 581.

I know him now. Good God betimes remove
The means, the means, that make us strangers.
(IV, 111, 162-163.)

XII. False Pointing.
Act I, Scene 2. P. 354.

As any the must vulgar thing to sense. (I, 11, 99.)

Correct it,

As any the most vulgar thing, &c.

XIII. False Pointing.
Act I, Scene 2. P. 355.

And the king's rouse the heav'n shall bruit again []
Respeaking earthly thunder. (I, 11, 127-128.)

Read it with a comma:

And the king's rouse the heav'n shall bruit again,
Respeaking earthly thunder.

XIV. Conjectural Emendation.
Act I, Scene 3. P. 355.

The King, Queen, and Court, quitting the stage, Hamlet remains, and makes a soliloquy; beginning with this double wish, either that his too solid flesh would melt away into a dew,

Or, that the Everlasting had not fixt
His CANNON 'gainst self-slaughter. (I, ii, 131-132.)

There is a variant reading upon this passage, as Mr. Pope might have observed, which, in my opinion, merits a consideration, and, possibly, may give us the poet's own words. If he wrote it as it now stands, his thought is, "Or that the Almighty had not planted his artillery, his resentment, or arms of vengeance against self-murder." But the quarto edition, published in 1703 (which, indeed, has no other authority, than its professing to be printed from the original copy) and the impression of Hamlet set out by Mr. Hughes,²⁹ both read,

²⁹John Hughes (1677-1720), assisted Nicholas Rowe in his edition of Shakespeare. Cf. Isaac Reed, The Variorum Shakespeare (London, 1803), II, 149, cited in Smith, Eighteenth Century Essays, p. xliii. No copy of the Hughes quarto of Hamlet, to which Theobald makes frequent reference, is known to exist. Cf. H. H. Furness, New Variorum Edition of Hamlet (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1877), II, 35.

because the error has not only obtained in the old and common modern editions, but has likewise got a new sanction in Mr. Pope's edition.

Timon of Athens, Vol. V, p. 59.

Religious CANNONS, civil laws are cruel,
Then what should war be? (IV, 111, 60-61.)

The propagation of this fault is manifestly owing to the negligence of revisal; and all future impressions must correct it, "Religious canons, &c." But to pass from these mistakes of the press, there is another passage in King John, where the poet uses the word canon to signify decree or ordinance, Vol. III, page 129.

The CANON of the law is laid on him, &c.
(II, 1, 180.)

So in Coriolanus, Vol. V, pp. 119-120.

Where I find him, were it
At home, upon my brother's guard, even there
Against the hospitable CANON would I
Wash my fierce hand in's heart. (I, x, 24-27.)

But besides that the poet frequently employs the term, I have two or three reasons more which induce me to think, that, in this place of Hamlet, he intended the injunction, rather than the artillery of heaven. In the first place, I much doubt the propriety of the phrase, "fixing cannon," to carry the meaning here supposed. The military expression, which imports what would be necessary to the sense of the poet's thought, is,

"mounting" or "planting cannon." And whenever cannon is said to be "fixed," it is when the enemy become masters of it, and nail it down. In the next place, to "fix" a canon or law, is the term of the civilians peculiar to this business. This Virgil had in his mind, when he wrote,

Leges fixit pretio, atque refixit.³⁰

And it was the constant custom of the Romans to say, upon this occasion, figere legem.³¹ But my last reason, and which sways most with me, is from the poet's own turn and cast of thought: for, as he has done in a great many more instances, it is the very sentiment which he falls into in another of his plays, though he has clothed it in different expressions.

Cymbeline, Vol. VI, p. 178.

'Gainst self-slaughter
There is a PROHIBITION so divine,
That cravens my weak hand. (III, iv, 78-80.)

XV. False Pointing and
Various Reading.
Act I, Scene 3. P. 355.

After Hamlet has finished the two before mentioned wishes, he falls into this descent on the grossness of the world, and on his mother's hasty marriage with his uncle:

³⁰He set up and pulled down the laws for bribery.
Aeneid, Book VI, line 622.

³¹To fix, or set up, the law.

How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable []
 Seem to me all the uses of this world [?]
 Fie on't! oh fie! 'tis an unweeded garden []
 That grows to seed; things rank, and gross in nature []
 Possess it merely [] that it should come thus [.]
 But two months dead! &c. (I, ii, 133-138.)

Besides that the hemistich "that it should come thus" is very mean and bald, as well as very indifferent English; I think, the editor ought to have taken notice, that there is a various reading of old date; which I verily believe to be the true one, because it makes the passage much more elegant, and connective with what follows. The whole passage should be pointed, and stand thus:

How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable,
 Seem to me all the uses of this world!
 Fie on't! oh, fie! 'Tis an unweeded garden,
 That grows to seed: Things rank, and gross in nature,
 Possess it merely.--That it should come to this!--
 But two months dead! &c.

This is an exclamation that our poet makes his Lear, when in the height of agony for his daughter's ingratitude to him, stopping short his passion, break into:

King Lear, Vol. III, p. 27.

Old fond eyes,
 Beweep her once again, I'll pluck you out,
 And cast you, with the waters that you lose,
 To temper clay.--Ha!--Is it come to this?
 (I, iv, 323-325.)

So likewise Cleopatra, when Antony is rating and taxing her with incontinence, for suffering Caesar's agent to kiss her hand,

surprised at the extremity of his jealousy, cries out, Vol. V,
p. 381:

Oh! Is't come to this? (III, xlii, 115.)

So Hamlet, here, having made his general reflections upon the grossness of the world, breaks into an interjection of surprise at once, and turns his thoughts in particular upon his mother's conduct with regard to her second marriage: and so proceeds gradually to the consideration of her late husband's tenderness to her, and a comparison betwixt him and her present consort.

XVI. Emendation.
Act I, Scene 3. P. 355.

So excellent a king, that was, to this,
Hyperion to a satyr: so loving to my mother,
That he permitted not the winds of heav'n
Visit her face too roughly, (I. 11, 139-142.)

Here, again, is a passage in which we have a sophisticated reading, copied from the players in some of the modern editions, for want of understanding the poet, whose text is corrupt in the old impressions: all of which, that I have had the fortune to see, read:

So loving to my mother,
That he might not BETEENE the winds of heav'n
Visit her face too roughly.

'Tis true, there is no such word in English, that I know of, as "beteene"; and yet I am verily persuaded, our author's words were so very like it, that it is only a corruption from the mistake of a single letter, and two words getting too close together.

See, how easy a change restores you the poet's own words and meaning:

So loving to my mother,
That he might not LET E'EN the winds of heav'n
Visit her face too roughly.

XVII. Various reading.
Act I, Scene 3. P. 355.

Married with mine uncle,
My father's brother; [] no more like my father,
Than I to Hercules. (I, ii, 151-153.)

Thus Mr. Pope reads it, with a nice regard to the numbers; not considering how perpetually the poet, as I before remarked, melts a syllable in pronunciation. The generality, if not all, of the editions have it with an emphatical disjunctive in the middle of the reflection:

Married with mine uncle,
My father's brother:--but not more like my father,
Than I to Hercules.

XVIII. False Printing.
Act I, Scene 4. Page 358.

Two-nights together &c. (I, ii, 196.)

Correct, with all the editions,

Two nights together &c.

There is no more reason for the hyphen here, than there would be a little lower at this verse,

And I with them the third night held &c. (I, ii, 208.)

XIX. Various Reading.
Act I, Scene 4. P. 358.

Hamlet: Indeed, [] Sirs, but this troubles me.
(I, 11, 224.)

The second folio edition (as Mr. Pope might have observed, who in so many passages has a particular regard to the numbers) makes a full verse of this:

Indeed, indeed, Sirs, but this troubles me.

Which reduplication of the word seems to give a much stronger emphasis to Hamlet's concern.

XX. False Printing.
Act I, Scene 4. P. 359.

Hamlet: His beard was grisly?
Horatio: It was, as I have seen it in his life,
A sable-silver'd. (I, 11, 240-242.)

Here again, with the old editions, the hyphen ought to be removed, and we must read,

A sable silver'd.

i.e. a black ("beard" understood) grown white, or silvered over with age.

XXI. False Pointing.
Act I, Scene 5. Pp. 360-361.

but you must fear []
His greatness weighed, his will is not his own.
(I, 111, 16-17.)

As this is pointed, the sense is absolutely maimed; for "greatness" appears the accusative case to the verb "fear"; whereas, in the poet's meaning, it is an ablative absolute. Read it therefore,

but you must fear,
His greatness weighed, his will is not his own.

That is, "his greatness being weighed or considered by you, you must have this fear, that his will is not in his own power, but subject to the state."

XXII. Conjectural Emendation.
Act I, Scene 5. P. 361.

for on his choice depends
The SANCTITY and health of the whole state.
(I, 111, 20-21.)

I do not well understand the force, or reason, of the word "sanctity" in this place. Does it mean the sacredness and reverence due to majesty? They could not so well suffer by Hamlet's choice of a wife; but the health, or preservation of the state might, in some degree, be concerned by it. The quarto edition of 1637 has a various reading, which I find Mr. Hughes has espoused in his impression of this play, viz. the safety and health, &c. The meaning, 'tis true, of the poet is here implied, though not expressed in his own terms; but the versification is miserably crippled by it. To depart therefore not above a

letter or two from the present reading for the poet's own word, as I conceive; suppose, he might have written,

for on his choice depends
The SANITY, and health, of the whole state.

i.e. the "welfare, preservation &c." The word "sanity" might not be so well known to the first editors, as the other; as therefore suspecting it a mistake of their copy, they, with the more readiness, might substitute "sanctity" in its room. Not but this very term occurs again afterwards in the second act of this play. And that "sanity" and "health" may not be thought a tautology to be questioned in our author, in the next passage, where I find it, it is likewise joined with a synonymous word of its own efficacy and signification:

Hamlet, p. 386.

How pregnant, sometimes, his replies are!
A happiness that often madness hits on,
Which SANITY and reason could not be
So prosperously deliver'd of. (II, 11, 211-214.)

For by "sanity" here is meant not the health of body, but soundness of understanding. Now, to show how natural it is for the press to make a mistake betwixt words so like one another, as "sanctity" and "sanity": it happens that the quarto edition of Hamlet, which I above mentioned, printed in 1703, reads the very passage, last quoted, in this corrupt manner: "How pregnant sometimes his replies are! A happiness that often madness hits on,

which reason and sanctity could not so happily be delivered of." Here "sanctity," as in the other passage, is erroneously substituted in the place of "sanity." And to deal freely, I have suspected that the same literal slip upon this word had been made in another passage of our poet: I say, it has been a suspicion of mine; for I urge it no farther than as such, and with the utmost diffidence. However, I shall give it here, as occasion offers, and submit it to the decision of better judgments. The place is in Macbeth, Vol. V, p. 580, where Malcolm, Macduff, and an English physician are talking of the extraordinary gift to King Edward the Confessor, of curing by his touch poor souls that could find no relief from the aid of physic, in that distemper which succeeding times have called "the King's Evil." The words are these:

Malcolm: Comes the King forth today?
Doctor: Ay, Sir; there are a crew of wretched souls
That stay his cure; their malady convinces
The great assay of art. But at his touch,
Such SANCTITY hath heaven given his hand,
They presently amend. (IV, iii, 140-145.)

I do not entirely object to this reading that has the warrant of all copies on its side; nor am I at a loss, I think, to understand its meaning. Edward the Confessor was a man of singular holiness, for which heaven blessed him with that miraculous power of curing by a touch. But did the "sanctity" of his hand

do these cures? Or was it a healing property imparted by heaven, in reward of his rare piety? Certainly, the latter. And this has induced me to suspect that our poet wrote:

But at his touch,
Such SANITY hath heaven given his hand,
They presently amend.

i.e. "Such a quality and power of making whole all whom he touches." This conjecture, perhaps, will receive some strength from certain expressions in the reply of Malcolm to this account of the Doctor:

A most miraculous work in this good king;
Which often since my here-remain in England,
I've seen him do. How he solicits heav'n,
Himself best knows; but strangely-visited people,
All swollen and ulcerous, pitiful to the eye,
The mere despair of surgery, he cures;
Hanging a golden stamp upon their necks,
Put on with holy prayers: And, 'tis spoken,
To the succeeding royalty he leaves
The healing benediction. (IV, 111, 147-156.)

I shall leave it here naked, without any reinforcing, to be embraced, or rejected, at every reader's pleasure: being resolved not to draw upon myself the odium of imposing what I professed to offer but as a guess; or the chance of being laughed at for too fondly maintaining what may happen to be repugnant to every good judge's sense and understanding.

XXIII. Conjectural Emendation.
Act I, Scene 6. P. 362.

Yet here, Laertes! get aboard for shame [.]

The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
And you are stayed for [] there [.] My blessing with
you; (I, 111, 55-57.)

Here again the editor seems in the first verse to have a nice regard to the numbers. In all the old editions, that I have seen, the first verse is:

Yet here, Laertes! Aboard, aboard, for shame;
But the variation is of no moment. But then, in the third line, why is not "And you are stayed for" as good, and as full sense as "And you are stayed for there"? This adverb in the close seems a dragging and an idle expletive; and of no use but to support the measure of the verse. But if we come to point this passage right, and to the poet's intention in it, we shall find it neither unnecessary, nor improper, in its place. In the speech immediately preceding this, Laertes taxes himself for staying too long; but seeing his father approach, he is willing to stay for a second blessing, and kneels down to that end.

Laertes: I stay too long. But here my father comes:
A double blessing is a double grace;
Occasion smiles upon a second leave. (Kneeling.)
(I, 111, 52-54.)

Polonius gives him his blessing accordingly; and therefore it ought to be read (as I perceive my two quarto editions of 1637 and 1703 have it) in support of my conjecture:

Yet here, Laertes! Aboard, aboard, for shame:

The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
And you are stayed for.--There,--my blessing with you;
(Laying his hand on Laertes's head.)

XXIV. Omission Supplied.
Act I, Scene 6. P. 363.

What is't, Ophelia he [] said to you? (I, 111, 88.)

All my editions have it, more numerously:

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

XXV. Various Reading and
Conjectural Emendation.

Tender yourself more dearly;
Or (not to crack the wind of the poor phrase)
WRONGING it thus, you'll tender me a fool.
(I, 111, 107-109.)

The second folio editon and Mr. Hughes read, "Roaming it thus," which word, indeed, as our etymologists explain it, metaphorical-ly takes in our poets meaning: and in such sense is frequently used by him in several others of his plays. But as "Wronging it" has the authority of several old books, we may correct the passage with much less variation from the present text, thus:

Tender yourself more dearly;
Or, (not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,)
RANGING it thus, you'll tender me a fool.

i.e. "You, behaving yourself with so much carelessness and

liberty, will bring me into contempt for not taking stricter care of your conduct."

XXVI. Conjectural Emendation.
Act I, Scene 6. P. 364.

Ophelia having received the addresses of Hamlet, Polonius, her father, takes her to task for indiscretion in too lightly giving an ear to the Prince's protestations. He tells her, that Hamlet may walk with a greater latitude, than her honor and reputation will admit her to imitate: and besides that, being in the heat of youth, and professing himself a lover, his soul was prodigal to lend his tongue vows; which Polonius cautions her to look upon not as the real sentiments of his heart, but as baits to betray her virtue. Upon which he counsels her thus:

In few, Ophelia,
Do not believe his vows; for they are brokers,
Not of that die which their investments show
But mere implorers of unholy suits,
Breathing like sanctified and pious BONDS,
The better to beguile. (I, iii, 126-131.)

Thus indeed all the impressions, which have ever come in my way, read this passage;³² even that edition of Hamlet, revised

³²Theobald is in error here. In place of "that die" in the second line, the Folios read "the eye." For "implorers" in the next line they read "implorators."

by the late accurate Mr. John Hughes. I must own, I have always stumbled at it; and been surprised how men of genius and learning could let it pass without some suspicion. What ideas can we form to ourselves of a "breathing" BOND, or of its being "sanctified" and "pious"? Surely, so absurd a thought could scarce come from Shakespeare. The only tolerable way of reconciling it to a meaning without a change, is to suppose that the poet intends by the word BONDS, "verbal obligations, protestations"; and then, indeed, these bonds may, in some sense, be said to have breath: but this is to make him guilty of overstraining the word and allusion; and it will hardly bear that interpretation, at least, without much obscurity. As he, just before, is calling amorous vows, "brokers," and "implorers of unholy suits"; I think, a continuation of the plain and natural sense directs us to an easy emendation, which makes the whole thought of a piece, and gives it a turn not unworthy of our poet. I am, therefore, very willing to suspect it came from his pen thus, though none of his editors have ever been aware of it:

In few, Ophelia,
Do not believe his vows; for they are brokers,
Not of that die which their investments show,
But mere implorers of unholy suits,
Breathing like sanctified and pious BAWDS,
The better to beguile.

It is usual with our poet, as his critical readers must have

observed, to give those infamous creatures the style and title of "brokers"; of which it may not be amiss to subjoin a few examples. In his Two Gentlemen of Verona, Vol. I, p. 161, Lucetta, the servant of Julia, having received a love letter to her mistress as in her name, Julia, who has a mind to show a dislike of this proceeding in her maid, thus reprimands her:

Now, by my modesty, a goodly BROKER!
Dare you presume to harbor wanton lines?
To whisper and conspire against my youth?
Now, trust me, 'tis an office of great worth;
And you an officer fit for the place.

(I, 11, 41-45.)

Where it is plain that "broker" is used but as a more modest word for "bawd"; and the business of such a one is described in the lines that follow it.

So likewise in All's Well That Ends Well, Vol. II, p. 420, Helena, discoursing with the Widow her hostess, concerning Count Rousillon's conduct; and the Widow intimating that her daughter Diana might have an affair with him, if she pleased; Helena says that, it may be, the amorous Count solicits her in the unlawful purpose: to which the Widow replies,

He does indeed,
And brokes with all that can in such a suit
Corrupt the tender honor of a maid. (III, v, 73-75.)

Where "brokes," or "brokers," evidently implies "tampers with, treats with," as with "bawds."

So likewise in King John, Vol. III, p. 142. Falconbridge descanting on commodity and self-interest, and how all ranks and degrees of persons were subservient to it, and, as it were, seduced and betrayed to forsake virtue through its instigations, uses these expressions:

That BROKER, that still breaks the pate of faith,
That daily break-vow, he that wins of all,
Of kings, of beggars, old men, young men, maids,
Who having no external thing to lose
But the word "Maid," cheats the poor maid of that, &c.
(II, 1, 568-572.)

And, afterwards, a little lower he subjoins,

This BAWD, this BROKER, &c. (II, 1, 582.)

Besides, what strengthens my suspicion, and makes this emendation the more necessary and probable, is, the words with which the poet winds up his thought, "the better to beguile." Everybody, I believe, is satisfied that it is the custom of "bawds" to put on an air and form of "sanctity," to betray the virtues of young ladies; by drawing them first into a kind opinion of them, from their exterior and dissembled goodness. And bawds in their office of treachery are likewise properly brokers; and the "implorers," and promoters, of unholy (that is, unchaste) suits; and so a chain of the same metaphors is continued to the end.

XXVII. Emendations.
Act I, Scene 7. P. 365.

We come now to a degraded passage, as Mr. Pope styles it; that is, one not received into the text, but placed (as suspected and too bad to belong to Shakespeare) at the bottom of his page. I must transcribe the whole passage, though long, before I attempt to set it right; because it happens to labor under false spelling, false pointing, false reading, false concord, and flat nonsense. Mr. Pope introduces the verses with this short note: "These twenty-one lines following are in the first edition, but since left out, perhaps being thought too verbose." Since left out? I have a quarto edition, which I suppose, Mr. Pope never saw (printed by R. Young and John Smethwicke, in the year 1637) where they are not left out; but inserted with an addition, which, though very corruptly printed, when amended, I doubt not will appear to be of our author's own writing; and they are again inserted in the other quarto edition published in 1703, and in the Hamlet revised by Mr. Hughes. So that they have not been left out, altogether, from the time of the first publication. But to the lines:

Hamlet, holding the watch with Horatio, in order to see his father's apparition, a noise of warlike music is heard: which Horatio desirous to know the meaning of, Hamlet tells him, that the King sat up to drink, and whenever he took his draught, the kettle-drum and trumpet proclaimed the triumph of his pledge.

Horatio asking, whether it was a custom; Hamlet replies, Yes: but one that, in his opinion, it were better to break, than observe: and then falls into the following reflection, how the Danes were reproached for drunkenness, and what a blot that character was in their escutcheons.

This heavy-handed revel, east and west [;]
Makes us traduc'd, and taxed of other nations [.]
They CLIP us drunkards, and with swinish phrase
Soil our addition; and indeed it takes
From our achievements, though perform'd at height,
The pith and marrow of our attribute.
So of it chances in particular men,
That for some vicious MOLE of nature in them,
As in their birth (wherein they are not guilty,
Since nature cannot choose his origin [])
By the o'ergrowth of some complexion,
Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason;
Or, by some habit, that too much o'er-leavens
The form of plausible manners; that these men
Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,
(Being nature's livery, or fortune's STAR [])
HIS virtues else, be they as pure as grace,
As infinite as man may undergo,
Shall in the general censure take corruption
From that particular fault. [The dram of EASE
Doth all the noble substance of A DOUBT
To his own scandal.] (I, iv, 17-38.)

I come now to the corrections, in which I'll endeavor to be as brief as the proofs, in support of the, will give me leave. The first three lines are mighty easily rectified, being only accidentally, as I suppose, wrongly pointed; and one word as accidentally, for want of due care in the revisal, wrongly spelled: which mistakes, however, both alter and injure the sense. They must be read, as some of the editions rightly have

them:

This heavy-handed revel, east and west,
Makes us traduc'd, and taxed of other nations;
They CLEPE us drunkards,

The sense and signification are very different betwixt the words "clip" and "clepe"; and the latter is manifestly intended here, viz. They "call" us drunkards. The same error has slipped the editor's diligence in another of our author's plays, where this word occurs again in the sense of "calling":

Macbeth, Vol. V, p. 552.

Water-rugs, and demi-wolves are CLIPT
All by the name of dogs. (III, 1, 94-95.)

In which place it must be corrected,

Water-rugs, and demi-wolves are CLEPT
All by &c.

And so yelep'd and yelep't are to be met with an hundred times in Chaucer, Spenser, and Hudibras. But, in another place of our poet, I observe, the editor has taken care to spell this word as it ought to be.

The Winter's Tale, Vol. II, p. 556.

Three crabbed months had soured themselves to death,
E'er I could make thee open thy white hand,
And CLEPE thyself my love: then didst thou utter,
I'm yours for ever. (I, 11, 102-105.)

Now, to "clip," is illegally to cut or maim the coin; and likewise to grip or embrace: in both which senses Shakespeare has

more than once used the word. As, in the sense of cutting the coin:

- (1) Kent in King Lear, Vol. III, p. 93.

To be acknowledged, Madam, is o'erpaid;
All my reports go with the modest truth,
Nor more, nor clipt, but so. (IV, vii, 4-6.)

- (2) So, King Henry V in the play which bears his name, Vol. III, p. 459.

Indeed, the French may lay twenty French crowns to one they will beat us, for they bear them on their shoulders: but it is no English treason to cut French crowns; and tomorrow the King himself will be a clipper.
(IV, 1, 242-246.)

So, in the sense of "embracing."

- (1) King John, Vol. III, p. 188.

O nation, that thou couldst remove!
That Neptune's arms who clippeth thee about &c.
(V, 11, 33-34.)

- (2) Coriolanus, Vol. V, P. 179.

Here I clip
The anvil of my sword, &c. (IV, v, 115-116.)

- (3) Antony and Cleopatra, Vol. V, p. 351.

Whate'er the ocean pales, or sky in-clips,
Is thine, if thou wilt ha't. (II, vii, 74-75.)

- (4) Cymbeline, Vol. VI, p. 157.

His meanest garment,
That ever hath but clipt his body, &c.
(II, 111, 138-139.)

- (5) Cymbeline, Vol. VI, p. 239.

Unknown to you, unsought, were clipt about
With this most tender air. (V, v, 451-452.)

(6) Othello, Vol. VI, p. 542.

Witness, you ever-burning lights above!
You elements, that clip us round about!
(III, 111, 463-464.)

Occasional Correction. There is one place, indeed, in which Mr. Pope, and some of the former editors, have written this word differently; but it ought to be corrected.

King Henry VI, Part II, Vol. VI, p. 169.

And now loud howling wolves arouse the jades,
That drag the tragic melancholy night;
Who with their drowsy, slow, and flagging wings
Cleap dead men's graves; (IV, 1, 3-6.)

It should be, clip dead men's graves, if I understand the sense of the passage; i.e. "clasp, hover over, brood upon &c." But to return to the passage immediately under correction:

So [] oft it chances in particular men,
That for some vicious MOLE of nature in them,
As in their birth (wherein they are not guilty,
Since nature cannot choose his origin [])
By the o'ergrowth of some complexion,
Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason;

What relation is there betwixt a "vicious mole" of nature, and the over-growth of a complexion? Or how can a "vicious mole" be said, or supposed, in any degree to break down the fences of "reason," or blemish the understanding? A mole is an exterior defect, appearing upon the surface of the skin: and the over-growth of a complexion is, as I take it, an unequal mixture of the temperaments in the frame and composition of our nature;

through which we become faulty by the defect of some good, or the redundance of some ill, quality. I am unwilling to be too positive in my correction in this place; but, I think from the tenor of the context, there is great room to conjecture that our author wrote:

So, oft it chances in particular men,
That for some vicious MOULD of nature in them, &c.

When nature is unequally and viciously moulded, when any complexion is too predominant, these accidents may have an effect both on constitution, and the intellectual faculties too; and then reason, and the other powers of the mind, are impaired and prejudiced: and this I conceive to have been the poet's sentiment. To make amends for my doubt and diffidence in this last correction, I'll venture to be more positive in the next that I attempt.

That these men,
Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,
(Being nature's liver, or fortune's STAR[])

The poet is insinuating that men, carrying the stamp but of one defect, whether it be nature's livery, or fortune's "star," (that is, whether it is owing to nature, or accident;) that shall in character overpoise and blemish the whole catalogue of their virtues; and give them the mark of vicious and corrupt men. But is fortune presumed to give a "star," where she means a

disgrace? I should much rather suppose it an ensign of her favor, than designed to set a mark of infamy. In short, the cure of this fault is so easy and obvious, that, I doubt not, but my readers will acquiesce with me in thinking, that the poet's words were:

(Being nature's livery, or fortune's SCAR,)

And so the sense of the whole passage hangs together. I am very willing to believe that our poet intends nature's livery as a term of reproach, and the distinction of some discrediting quality: and, in this light, I find him using it in his poem called Tarquin and Lucrece:³³

Oh! That is gone, for which I sought to live,
And therefore now I need not fear to die;
To clear this spot by death, at least I give
A badge of fame to Slander's livery;
A dying life to living infamy.

And the word "scar" is employed by our poet, not only in its natural sense, to signify a wound in body; but, metaphorically, a blemish to reputation. So, in his Antony and Cleopatra, Vol. V, p. 379:

The SCARS upon your honor, therefore, he
Does pity as constrained blemishes,
Not as deserved. (III, xiii, 59-60.)

Emendation.

HIS virtues else, be they as pure as grace . . .

³³Theobald means, of course, The Rape of Lucrece, lines 1051-1055.

The poet speaking all along before in the plural number, as, "in particular men, that these men, &c." it is necessary, to preserve the concord, to read here:

THEIR virtues else, &c.

Not but it is frequent with Shakespeare, whether through negligence, or licentiousness, to change his numbers in this sort.

Omission Supplied and Emendation.

I come now to the concluding sentence of this degraded passage:

[The dram of EASE
Doth all the noble substance of A DOUBT
To his own scandal.]

Which, indeed, looks to be so desperate, that, I suppose, Mr. Pope for that reason only entirely left it out of his quotation. In reality, I do not know a passage, throughout all our poet's works, more intricate and depraved in the text, or less meaning to outward appearance, or more likely to baffle the attempts of criticism in its aid. It is certain, there is neither sense, grammar, nor English, as it now stands: yet with a slight alteration I'll endeavor not only to give it all three, but a sentiment too, that shall make the poet's thought close nobly. What can a "dram of EASE" mean? Or what can it have to do with the context, supposing it were the allowed expression here? Or, in a word, what agreement in sense is there betwixt a "dram of ease" and the

"substance of a DOUBT"? It is a desperate corruption; and the nearest way to hope for a cure of it, is, to consider narrowly what the poet must be supposed to have intended here. The whole tenor of the sentences foregoing is, that "let men have never so many, or so eminent virtues, if they have one defect which accompanies them, that single blemish shall throw a stain upon their whole character; and not only so," if I understand him right, "but shall deface the very essence of all their goodness, to its own scandal; so that their virtues themselves will become their reproach." This is not only a continuation of his sentiment; but carries it up with a fine and proper climax. I think, therefore, it ought to be restored:

The dram of BASE
Doth all the noble substance of WORTH OUT
To his own scandal.

The dram of "base," i.e. the least alloy of baseness or vice. It is very frequent with our poet to use the adjective of quality instead of the substantive signifying the thing. Besides, I have observed that, elsewhere, speaking of "worth" he delights to consider it as a quality that adds weight to a person, and connects the word with that idea. So, particularly, in All's Well That Ends Well, Vol. II, p. 417:

Let every word weigh heavy of her WORTH,
That he does weigh too light. (III, iv, 31-32.)

And I am the more inclined to flatter myself that my emendation may have retrieved the poet's very words, because I find him using something like the same thought and metaphors in another of his plays, and putting the same terms of baseness and worth in opposition to one another.

Cymbeline, Vol. VI, p. 185.

From whose so many weights of BASENESS cannot
A dram of WORTH be drawn. (III, v, 88-89.)

But I have intimated that it is frequent with our poet to use the adjective of quality, instead of the substantive signifying the thing; and it may be expected of me to allege a few instances of this practice in him.

Proofs of adjectives instead of substantives:

(1) Measure for Measure, Vol. I, p. 358.

As for you,
Say what you can, my false o'erweighs your true.
(II, iv, 169-170.)

i.e. "My falsehood o'erweighs your truth."

(2) Twelfth Night, Vol. II, p. 488.

How easy is it for the proper false
In women's waxen hearts to set their forms!
(II, ii, 30-31.)

i.e. "Falsehood, or disguise, in a proper outward appearance."

(3) King Lear, Vol. III, p. 71.

If wolves had at thy gate howled that stern time,

Thou shouldst have said, good poeter, turn the key:
All cruels else subscribe: But I shall see
The winged vengeance overtake such children.
(III, vii, 63-66.)

i.e. "All things of cruelty else."

(4) And again, King Lear, Vol. III, p. 73.

Full oft 'tis seen,
Our mean secures us, and our mere defects
Prove our commodities. (IV, 1, 21-23.)

i.e. "Our meanness, our low fortune, middling state."

(5) King John, Vol. III, p. 128.

This little abstract doth contain that large
Which died in Geoffrey. (II, 1, 101-102.)

i.e. "That complete largeness, that full size."

(6) And Coriolanus, Vol. V, p. 149.

The accusation,
Which they have often made against the senate,
All cause unborn, could never be the native
Of our so frank donation. (III, 1, 127-129.)

i.e. "The natural cause, the nativity, birth, source."

But to proceed: as I have been obliged to branch out this
degraded speech into so many parcels; and divide it, the better
to give the reasons of the emendations; it may not be improper
to subjoin it once more entire, as corrected; and leave it to
the judgment of the public, whether, notwithstanding the
verboſeness objected to it, it ought for the future to be de-
graded, or received into the text of our author.

This heavy headed revel, east and west,
 Makes us traduced, and taxed of other nations;
 They clepe us drunkards, and with swinish phrase
 Soil our additions; and, indeed, it takes
 From our achievements, though performed at height,
 The pith and marrow of our attribute.
 So, oft it chances in particular men,
 That for some vicious mould of nature in them,
 As in their birth, (wherein they are not guilty,
 Since nature cannot choose his origin;)

By the o'ergrowth of some complexion,
 Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason;
 Or by some habit, that too much o'er-leavens
 The form of plausible manners: that these men
 Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,
 (Being nature's livery, or fortune's scar.)
Their virtues else, be they as pure as grace,
 As infinite as man may undergo,
 Shall, in the general censure, take corruption
 From that particular fault. The dram of base
 Doth all the noble substance of worth out.
 To his own scandal.

XXVIII. False Pointing and
 Emendation.

Act I, Scene 7. P. 366.

What may this mean?

That thou dead corse again in complete steel
 Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,
 Making night hideous [?] and WE fools of nature [.]
 So HORRIDLY to shake our disposition
 With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls [.]
 Say, why is this? (I, iv, 51-57.)

Besides that this passage is several times faulty in the pointing,
 it is likewise faulty in language. 'Tis true, WE fools--is a
 reading that has the countenance of all the printed copies; but

that authority must not give a sanction to nonsense, and false grammar, to the injury of our author, when a plain and unexceptionable remedy is at hand. "Making night hideous, and making WE fools of nature"---everybody must immediately see it not English. I must not, however, dissemble, that there are a few passages more in our poet, where I have observed the nominative of pronouns is used, though grammar requires the accusative, as,

- (1) Coriolanus, Vol. V, p. 202.

And to poor WE
Thine enmity's most capital. (V, 111, 103-104.)

But here it is a fault as well as in Hamlet, and ought likewise to be corrected, "And to poor US." There is another of this sort which I have observed too, in the Duke's speech to Angelo in the second scene of Measure for Measure. Vol. I, p. 322:

- (2) Thyself and thy belongings
Are not thine own so proper, as to waste
Thyself upon thy virtues; THEY on thee.
(I, 1, 30-32.)

It is requisite, to make it true English, to read, "THEM on thee," i.e. as, either, "to waste thyself on thy virtues," or "thy virtues on thyself." So again, in Antony and Cleopatra, Vol. V, p. 380:

- (3) Should I find them
So saucy with the hand of SHE here, (what's her
name,
Since she was Cleopatra?) (III, xiii, 97-99.)

Grammar requires that it should be, "So saucy with the hand of HER here." And so again in Macbeth, (where Ross is describing the miseries of Scotland from the cruelty of that tyrant;) Vol. V, p. 581:

(4)

The dead man's knell

Is there scarce asked, for WHO: (Iv, 111, 170-171.)

For so the second folio edition, and some of the common modern editions read it; but Mr. Pope, in his edition, has rightly corrected it "for WHOM." It may be alleged from these instances, and some few more that might be gathered, that this was a liberty which Shakespeare purposely gave himself, and that therefore it is not an error of the copies. Be this as it will; if grammar and the idiom of the tongue be directly against it, we have sufficient warrant to make him now, at least, speak true English.

But to proceed to my remarks upon the next line of this passage,

So horridly to shake our disposition, &c.

I suspect, in the word "horridly," a literal deviation to have been made from the poet by his copyists: and I'll give my reasons presently for this suspicion. But, first, it will be proper to subjoin my correction of the passage, and the pointing of it, which is manifestly faulty. For, why is there a note of interrogation at "hideous," to divide the verb from the second

accusative case which is governed by it, when the question evidently goes on to the very close of the sentence? I think, it ought to be pointed, and restored thus:

What may this mean?

That thou dead corse again in complete steel
Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,
Making the night hideous, and US fools of nature
So HORRIBLY to shake our disposition
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?
Say, &c.

The change of "horridly" into "horribly" is very trivial as to the literal part; and therefore, I hope, the reason for the change will be something more considerable. 'Tis true, "horrid" and "horrible" must be confessed to bear in themselves the same force and signification: so horridum and horribile were wont to do among the Latins. But "horrid," in the most common acceptation and use, seems to signify rather "hideous, uncouth, ugly, enormous," than "terrible" or "frightful": and it is generally so applied by our author. I remember a passage in his King Lear, where it, particularly, stands for ugly. It is in a speech by the Duke of Albany, reproaching his wife Goneril with her unnatural behavior:

King Lear. Vol. III, p. 77.

See thyself, Devil;
Proper deformity seems not in the fiend
So horrid as in woman. (IV, 11, 59-61.)

I cannot, however, deny, but that our poet sometimes employs

the word "horrid" in the sense of "frightful, terrible": but every observing reader of his works must be aware that he does it sparingly, and, ten times for every once, seems fond to use "horrible" and "terrible." It is obvious, that he prefers both these terms, as more sonorous and emphatical than "horrid"; and the proof that he does so, is, (which laid the foundation of my conjecture here,) that he almost constantly chooses them, even where the numbers of his verse naturally require "horrid." I shall subjoin a few instances of both for confirmation; to which I could have amassed twenty times as many; but these are enough, at least, to excuse me, though I should be deceived in judgment, from the censure of being too hypercritical in my observation.

A. Proofs of horrible instead of horrid:

- (1) The Tempest. Vol. I, p. 73.

Where but even now with strange and several
noises
Of roaring, shrieking, howling, jingling chains,
And more diversity of sounds, all horrible,
We were awaked. (V, 1, 232-235.)

- (2) King Lear. Vol. III, p. 41.

And with this horrible object, from low farms,
Poor pelting villages, &c. (II, 111, 17-18.)

- (3) And again, King Lear. Vol. III, p. 55.

I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness;
I never gave you kingdom, called you children,
You owe me no subscription. Then let fall
Your horrible pleasure; (III, 11, 16-19.)

- (4) And again, King Lear, Vol. III, p. 83.

Gloucester: Methinks, the ground is even.
Edgar: Horrible steep.
Hark, do you hear the sea?
(IV, vi, 3-4.)

- (5) King Henry VIII, Vol. IV, p. 457.

With one hand on his dagger,
Another spread on's breast, mounting his eyes,
He did discharge a horrible oath, &c.
(I, ii, 204-206.)

- (6) Timon of Athens, Vol. V, p. 61.

For those milk-paps,
That through the window-barn bore at men's eyes,
Set 'em down horrible traitors. (IV, iii, 115-
118.)

- (7) Antony and Cleopatra, Vol. V, p. 342.

Hence,
Horrible villain! or I'll spurn thine eyes
Like balls before me! (II, v, 62-64.)

- (8) Macbeth, Vol. V, p. 561.

Hence, horrible shadow!
Unreal mockery, hence! (III, iv, 106-107.)

- (9) Hamlet, p. 367.

What if it tempt you toward the flood, my lord?
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff,
That beetles o'er his base into the sea,
And there assume some other horrible form, etc.
(I, iv, 69-72.)

- (10) And Othello, Vol. VI, p. 561.

Desdemona: What is your pleasure?
Othello: Let me see your eyes:

Look in my face,
Desdemona: What horrible fancy's this?
(IV, 11, 25-26.)

B. Proofs of terrible instead of horrid:

- (1) The Tempest, Vol I, p. 15.

This damn'd witch Sycorax,
For mischiefs manifold, and sorceries terrible
To enter human hearing, &c. (I, 11, 263-265.)

- (2) And again, The Tempest, Vol. I, p. 35.

Even now we heard a hollow burst of bellowing,
Like bulls, or rather lions; did't not wake you?
It struck mine ear most terribly.
(II, 1, 310-312.)

- (3) Macbeth, Vol. V, p. 535.

I'm settled, and bend up
Each corporal agent to this terrible feat.
(I, vii, 79-80.)

- (4) And again, Macbeth, Vol. V, p. 555.

But let both worlds disjoint, and all things
suffer,
E'er we will eat our meal in fear, and sleep
In the affliction of these terrible dreams, &c.
(III, 11, 16-18.)

- (5) And so, Othello, Vol. VI, p. 478.

What is the reason of this terrible summons?
(I, 1, 82.)

XXIX. Conjectural Emendation.
Act I, Scene 8. P. 368.

Hamlet, being retired to a remote ground with his
father's apparition, the Ghost immediately discloses himself,

and the circumstances he was under in the other state, as far as he was licensed, or it was proper for him to declare:

I am thy father's spirit;
Doomed for a certain term to walk the night,
And for the day, confined to FAST in fires;
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature
Are burnt and purged away. (I, v, 9-13.)

Though all the copies, old and modern, agree, in this reading, I cannot help suspecting (at least, till I am better informed of the force of it;) the expression, "to fast in fires." If these are the poet's words, his meaning in them must be, "to do penance in fires": as fasting is often a part of penance enjoined by the church for our sins. But could it be any great punishment for a spirit, a being which requires no sustenance, to fast? Or could fasting in fires burn and purge away crimes more effectually, than the not being in such a state of abstinence? The poet certainly, in my opinion, intends to mix the old pagan system here with the more modern notion of a local purgatory; and to intimate, that souls are cleansed and purified from their mortal stains by the torment of fire. The variation will be but very small, to suppose he might have written:

And, for the day, confined to ROAST in fires;

Now this takes in all the ideas necessary to the punishment, of being burnt, scorched, pained, &c. (and the word, thus metaphorically used, conveys no meaner an image than carving, scalding,

wringing, and a hundred other technical terms do, frequent in the most elevated poetry;) but that this was the very case too of our Ghost, his own words, in a speech but just before, sufficiently testify:

My hour is almost come,
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself. (I, iv, 2-4.)

And our poet, I remember, afterwards in this very play, p. 393, again uses the expression; speaking of Pyrrhus in the heat of rage, and running about the flaming streets of Troy:

ROASTED in wrath and fire, &c. (II, ii, 483.)

There is another fine passage, that I at present remember, in which our poet has touched this subject of punishments after death, and there he does not say the least word of "fasting in fires": but he makes a supposition of fiery floods, like the infernal rivers, fabled in the old heathen poets, and that the spirits of the deceased should be doomed to bathe in them.

Measure for Measure, Vol. I, p. 363.

Ay, but to die, and go we know not where:
To lie in cold obstruction, and to rot;
This sensible warm motion to become
A kneaded clod; and the delighted spirit
To BATHE in fiery floods, or to reside
In thrilling regions of thick-ribbed ice,
To be imprisoned in the viewless winds,
And blown with restless violence round about
The pendent world; (III, i, 118-126.)

Now, either to be "roasted," or "bathed," in fire, takes in the

idea of being burnt and punished; and comes up to the term in Latin, exurere igni.³⁴ Whoever will allow Shakespeare to have imitated any passages of the Ancients, will, I believe, be of opinion with me, that in these two descriptions he had those fine verses of Virgil in his eye upon this topic: there are such strokes of similitude, as well in the thought as the diction, of both poets:

Non tamen omne malum miseris, nec funditis omnes
Corporeae excedunt pestes: penitusque necesse est
Multa diu concreta modis inolescere miris.
Ergo exercentur poenis, veterumque malorum
Supplicia expendunt: aliae panduntur inanes
Suspensae ad ventos; aliis sub gurgite vasto
Infectum eluitur scelus, aut exuritur igni.³⁵

Which passage is thus translated by Mr. Dryden:

Nor death itself can wholly wash their stains;
But long contracted filth ev'n in the soul remains.
The relics of inveterate vice they wear;
And spots of sin obscene in every face appear.
For this are various penances injoin'd;
And some are hung to bleach upon the wind:
Some plunged in waters, others purged in fires,
Till all the dregs are drained, all the rust expires.

XXX. Occasional Emendation.
Act I, Scene 8. P. 369.

And each particular hair to stand ON end,
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine.
(I, v, 19-20.)

³⁴To consume by fire.

³⁵Aeneid, VI, 736-742.

Thus Mr. Pope writes this passage, as it ought to be; whereas all the editions, both old and modern, that I have seen, concur in reading "stand an end, &c." And yet this passage either seems to have been rectified by chance, or some others, where the same phrase recurs, have been revised with a strange carelessness. For in King Henry VI, Part II, Vol. IV, p. 164, we find him reading with the old impressions,

Mine eyes should sparkle like the beaten flint,
Mine hair be first AN end, like one distraught.
(III, ii, 317-318.)

And so in Hamlet, p. 424.

Your bedded hairs, like life in excrements,
Start up, and stand AN end. (III, iv, 121-122.)

Occasional Explanation. Whereas in both these places we likewise ought to restore it, "ON end." I cannot dismiss this last quoted passage from Hamlet, without taking notice, that I think the expression "like life in excrements," as much wants an explication, as any the most antiquated word in our poet wants a gloss. Mr. Hughes, in his impression of Hamlet, has left it out; either because he could make nothing of it, or thought it alluded to an image too nauseous. The poet's meaning is founded on a physical determination, that the "hair" and "nails" are excrementious parts of the body, as indeed they are, without life or sensation: and yet that fear and surprise had such an

effect upon Hamlet, that his hairs, as if there were life in those excrements, started up and stood on end: or, as he expresses it in his Tempest, Vol. I, p. 13:

With hair upstaring, then like reeds, not hair.
(I, 11, 213.)

That our poet was acquainted with this notion in physics, of the hair being without life, we need no stronger warrant, than that frequently he mentions the hair as an excrement. So,

The Comedy of Errors, Vol. I, p. 432.

Why is Time such a niggard of hair, being as it is,
so plentiful an excrement? (II, 11, 78-79.)

The Merchant of Venice, Vol. II, p. 49.³⁶

How many cowards, whose hearts are all as false
As stairs of sand, wear yet upon their chins
The beards of Hercules, and frowning Mars:
Who, inward searched, have livers white as milk?
And these assume but valor's excrement³⁷
To render them redoubted. (III, 11, 83-88.)

And in Love's Labor's Lost, Vol. II, p. 147.

For I must tell thee, it will please his Grace (by the
World!) some time to lean upon my poor shoulder, and
with his royal finger thus dally with my excrement, with
my mustachio. (V, 1, 106-109.)

But besides that he so often makes use of this term, to put the matter out of all dispute, he has the very thought, which

³⁶In the original, in this place, Theobald refers to this play as the Jew of Venice.

³⁷A beard. (T)

he has here in Hamlet, again in his Macbeth, and expressed in much plainer words, Vol. V, p. 592:

I have almost forgot the taste of fears:
The time has been, my senses would have cooled
To hear a night-shriek, and my fell of hair
Would at a dismal treatise rouse, and stir
As life were in't. (V, v, 9-13.)

XXXI. Conjectural Emendation.
Act I, Scene 8. P. 369.

The Ghost intimating how foully he had been murdered, conjures Hamlet by his filial love to revenge his death. The Prince starting at this dreadful information, and the Ghost proceeding to remark, that any murder, though ever so favorable in its circumstances, is bad enough, but that the murder of him was strangely unnatural; Hamlet, impatient to be told the whole story, says thus:

Haste me to know, that I with wings as swift
As meditation or the thoughts of love,
May SWEEP to my revenge. (I, v, 29-31.)

Hamlet makes use of the metaphor here of a bird using its wings swiftly, to express his speed in the pursuit of his revenge. 'Tis true, to "sweep" may carry the sense of gliding smoothly, and swiftly along; (generally, along the surface of anything;) but I don't remember the word ever employed to signify the action of a bird in the circumstances of pursuing its prey; that is, of moving its wings impetuously for that purpose. In falconry, a

hawk is said to sweep, when she wipes her beak after she has fed. But I observe that our poet, for the most part, uses the word in the plain and natural sense, of clearing, brushing away, or trailing on the earth. So,

King Henry VI, Part II, Vol. IV, p. 171.

Thy lips, that kissed the Queen, shall sweep the ground.
(IV, 1, 75.)

King Henry VIII, Vol. IV, p. 541.

Pray, sir, be patient. 'Tis as much impossible,
(Unless we swept them from the door with cannons,)
To scatter 'em, as 'tis to make them sleep
On May-day morning, &c. (V, iv, 12-15.)

Antony and Cleopatra, Vol. V, p. 373.

Friends, be gone; you shall
Have letters from me to some friends, that will
Sweep your way for you. (III, xi, 15-17.)

Macbeth, Vol. V, p. 553.

And though I could
With bare-faced power sweep him from my sight.
(III, 1, 118-119.)

He uses it once, I think, to describe the smooth march of a body of soldiers in gallant array, and coming timely to the succor of their party:

King Henry VI, Part III, Vol. IV, p. 297.

And lo! where George of Clarence SWEEPS along,
Of force enough to bid his brother battle.
(V, 1, 76-77.)

But in none of these places, or elsewhere that I know, is it

connected with the metaphor of wings, or introduced to denote the swift and furious descent of any fowl at its prey, or enemy. I had almost forgot to take notice, that some of the editors of this play seem to have suspected the propriety of this word here, by a change which they have made of it: for both the quarto edition of 1703, and Mr. Hughes's, have substituted in its place--"May fly to my revenge." But to proceed to my own conjecture: there is another word, indeed, so very near it in sound and writing, and so peculiar to the business of a bird falling on its prey, that, perhaps, the poet might have written:

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

I entirely submit this conjecture to judgment; but I am sure it is the very phrase of our poet upon an occasion of the like kind. Macbeth having murdered the wife and children of Macduff, the latter, upon notice of it, falls into these mixed exclamations of tenderness and resentment, Vol. V, p. 583:

He has no children.--All my pretty ones?
Did you say, all? What, All? O hell-kite! What?
What all my pretty chickens, and their dam,
At one fell SWOOP? (IV, iii, 216-219.)

And to swoop, among fowlers, is to fly down hastily, and catch up with the talons, as birds of prey do: an action which, I humbly conceive, our author intended to allude to, in the vehement resentment and desire for revenge, with which he inflames

his Hamlet.

XXXII. Various Reading and
Emendations.
Act I, Scene 8. P. 370.

The Ghost of Hamlet's father, having recounted to him the process of his murder, proceeds to exaggerate the inhumanity and unnaturalness of the fact, from the circumstances in which he was surprised.

Thus was I sleeping, by a brother's hand,
Of life, of crown, of Queen at once dispatched;
Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,
UNHOZZLED, UNANOINTED, unanel'd;
No reckoning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head. (I, v, 74-79.)

To which three words Mr. Pope has subjoined this gloss:

Unhouzzled: without the Sacrament being taken.
Unanoointed: without extreme unction.
Unanel'd: no knell rung.

I am very much afraid (and as apt to believe I shall prove it, to the satisfaction of every judge, before this note is ended;) that this passage is neither rightly read, nor, as it is read, rightly explained, throughout. In the first place, instead of "unhouzzled" it ought to be restored: "unhousel'd"; from the old Saxon word for the Sacrament, "husel." So our etymologists and Chaucer write it; and Spenser, accordingly, calls the sacramental fire, "housling" fire. This, however, is but a trivial slip, in comparison with the next that offers itself. I don't pretend to

know what glossaries Mr. Pope may have consulted, and trusts to; but whose soever they are, I am sure their comment is very singular upon the word I am about to mention. I cannot find any authority to countenance "unaneal'd" in signifying, "no knell rung." This is, if I mistake not, what the Greeks were used to call an apaz legomenon, and interpretation that never was used but once. Nor indeed, can I see how this participial adjective should be formed from the substantive KNELL. It could not possibly throw out the K, or receive in the A. We have an instance in our poet himself, where the participial adjective of the verb simple from this substantive retains the K; and so Mr. Pope writes it there:

Macbeth, Vol. V, p. 598.

Had I as many sons as I have hairs,
I would not wish them to a fairer death;
And so his knell is knolled. (V, viii, 48-50.)

The compound adjective, therefore, from that derivation must have been written "unknelled" (or, "unknolled"), a word which will be no means fill up the poet's verse, were there no stronger reasons to except against it; as it unluckily happens, there are. Let us see what sense the word "unanel'd" then bears. Skinner, in his lexicon of old and obsolete English terms, tells us that ANEALED is unctus; ³⁸ from the Teutonic: AN, and OLE, oleum; ³⁹ so

³⁸Anointed.

³⁹Oil.

that UNANELED must consequently signify, "not being anointed," or, "not having the extreme unction." But what must we then do with the word, immediately preceding it, "unanointed"? For, the addition of it is such a manifest and absurd tautology, as Shakespeare could not be guilty of. We must therefore have recourse to the various readings, and see if any printed copies will help us out. The second edition in folio, the quarto in 1637, the Hamlet revised by Mr. Hughes, and several other impressions, all read, instead of "unanointed,"

DISAPPOINTED, unanel'd;

as I verily believe it ought to be read. Now, the word "appoint," among other significations, has that of "composing, reconciling"; and the word "disappointed" consequently means, unreconciled to heaven, unabsolved, and no appointment or penance, or atonement made for sin; a work of the utmost concern and moment to a dying person. And our poet, I remember, in another of his plays, as Othello is at the very point of killing his wife upon suspicion of adultery, makes him exhort her thus:

Othello, Vol. VI, p. 587.

If you bethink yourself of any crime
Unreconciled as yet to heaven and grace,
Solicit for it straight. (V, ii, 27-29.)

But it happens very luckily too, in support of the old reading which is necessary to be restored here, that the poet has again,

in another play, made use of APPOINTMENT in this very sense of reconciliation. In Measure for Measure, Claudio is sentenced to die for having debauched a maiden, and his sister brings him word, that his execution is to be instant; therefore bids him prepare his self-examination, and to make his peace with heaven with all speed.

Measure for Measure, Vol. I, p. 361.

Lord Angelo, having affairs to heaven,
Intends you for his swift ambassador;
Where you shall be an everlasting leiger.
Therefore your best APPOINTMENT make with speed;
Tomorrow you set out. (III, 1, 57-61.)

So that, this reading and this sense being admitted, the tautology is taken away; and the poet very finely makes his Ghost complain of these four dreadful hardships, viz. that he had been dispatched out of life without receiving the (Host, or) Sacrament; without being reconciled to heaven and absolved; without the benefit of extreme unction; or, without so much as a confession made of his sins. The having no knell rung, I think, is not a point of equal consequence to any of these; especially, if we consider that the Roman church admits the efficacy of praying for the dead.

XXXIII. Emendation from
Various Reading.
Act I, Scene 9. P. 372.

Horatio and Marcellus coming to Hamlet, after the Ghost

is departed, and, questioning him with some impatience, to know the reason of the spirit's walking; Hamlet, resolved to keep the contents a secret, answers them in a wild, confused manner; which not giving the desired satisfaction, Horatio replies to him:

These are but wild and HURLING words, my Lord.
(I, v, 133.)

The editor, indeed, has the countenance of several editions for this reading: though here again, as it happened in a former instance, some of the editions seem to have suspected the word, and therefore have printed this passage thus:

These are but wild and windy words, my Lord.

But in what sense is "hurling" to be taken here? It is always used to signify throwing, casting, darting out, and, as we are told, in the Old English, "making a noise": none of which are within the poet's meaning, who intends, "wild" and "giddy." It must, therefore, certainly be restored, as my quarto editon of 1637, though corrupt in the spelling, meant to exhibit it:

These are but wild and WHIRLING words, my Lord.

The acceptation of this word is so universally known, as well as so apt and peculiar to our author's meaning, that, I believe, few will doubt that it was his own expression in this place: and I have nothing more to do (in support of this conjecture, if it needs any;) than to produce a few instances from him, to show that he understood and used "hurl," and "whirl," in the

respective and distinct senses which I have above mentioned to belong to them.

A. Passages in which "hurl" signifies to "throw," or "cast," and nothing else:

- (1) King Richard II, Vol. III, p. 96.

And interchangeably hurl down my gage
Upon this over-weening traitor's foot, &c.
(I, 1, 146-147.)

- (2) King Henry VI, Part I, Vol. IV, p. 21.

Then broke I from the officers that led me,
And with my nails digged stones out of the
ground,
To hurl at the beholders of my shame.
(I, iv, 44-46.)

- (3) Julius Caesar, Vol. V, p. 293.

Come, Antony;
Defiance, traitors, hurl we in your teeth.
(V, 1, 63-64.)

- (4) Antony and Cleopatra, Vol. V, p. 313.

What our contempts do often hurl from us,
We wish it ours again. (I, ii, 27-28.)

- (5) And Othello, Vol. VI, p. 587.

When we shall meet at compt,
This look of thine will hurl my soul from
heaven,
And fiends will snatch at it.
(V, ii, 273-275.)

B. Passages in which "whirl" signifies "agitating, turning round, in a vehement and giddy manner":

- (1) Love's Labour's Lost, Vol. II, p. 144.

And justice always whirls in equal measure.
(IV, 111, 384.)

- (2) King John, Vol. III, p. 154.

I am with both, each army hath a hand,
And in their rage, I having hold of both,
They whirl asunder, and dismember me.
(III, 1, 328-330.)

- (3) And again, King John, Vol. III, p. 175.

My Lord, they say, five moons were seen tonight;
Four fixed, and the fifth did whirl about
The other four, &c. (IV, 11, 182-184.)

- (4) King Henry VI, Part I, Vol. IV, p. 24.

My thoughts are whirled like a potter's wheel.
(I, v, 19.)

- (5) Titus Andronicus, Vol. V, p. 486.

To calm this tempest whirling in the court.
(IV, 11, 160.)

- (6) And again, Titus Andronicus, Vol. V, p. 502.

And then I'll come and be thy waggoner,
And whirl along with thee about the globes;
(V, 11, 48-49.)

- (7) And Troilus and Cressida, Vol. VI, p. 58.

I'm giddy; expectation whirls me round.
(III, 11, 19.)

XXXIV. False Pointings and
Emendation.
Act I, Scene 9. P. 374.

We come now to a speech towards the conclusion of this act, which labors under so many faults of pointing, as well as come of language, that the sense is very much perplexed, and the

text false both in meaning and grammar. I must transcribe the whole, first, as it stands; and then give it entire with its corrections:

But come,
Here as before, never [] so help you mercy [.]
[(] How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself,
[] As I perchance hereafter shall think meet
To put an antic disposition on [])
That you [] at such time seeing me, never shall
[] With arms encumbered thus, or this head shake [;]
Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase [;]
As [] well,--we know,--or, we would, and if we could--
Or, if we list to speak,--or, there be and if there
might--
Or such ambiguous giving out [] TO NOTE,
That you know ought of me; this do ye swear [.]
So grace and mercy at your most need help you.

Whoever will take this speech asunder, and examine the structure and connection of it, will easily find that something is wanting to support the sense and grammar of the whole. Hamlet is conjuring them to a repetition of their oath of secrecy, as to what they knew concerning the walking of his father's spirit. Let us dismount it from the verse, and see what we can make of the passage, as the sense plainly will lead us. "Here as before," says he, "you shall swear (so mercy help you!) that, however oddly I shall think fit to carry myself, you seeing me so transformed, never shall--(by motions, shrugs, or any ambiguous giving out to note,)--that you know anything of me." This is the whole scope, in miniature, of this passage; and now for the syntax of it. "Never shall"--do what? The verb is manifestly

wanting, and the sense consequently defective. Then, why "ambiguous giving out to note?" Does not, "ambiguous giving out," comprehend all the poet intends here, without words in the tail to clog the clearness of his meaning? In short, it is necessary, to make the whole intelligible, to point and correct it thus:

But come;

Here as before, Never,--So help you mercy!
How strange or odd so'er I bear myself,
(As I, perchance, hereafter shall think fit
To put an antic disposition on:)
That you, at such time seeing me, never shall
(With arms encumbered thus, or this head shake,
Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,
As, well,--we know--or, we could, and if we would--
Or, if we list to speak,--or, there be, and if there
might--
Or such ambiguous giving out;) DENOTE
That you know aught of me. This do you swear;
So grace and mercy at your most need help you.

This small change of two letters not only gives us a verb that makes the whole tenor of the speech clear and intelligible; but a verb too, that carries the very force and sense which we before wanted in this place. To "denote," as very raw grammarians know, implies, to signify, to show by marks: and thus it is usual with our poet to employ this very word. So in Othello, Vol. VI, p. 540:

Othello: O monstrous! monstrous!
Iago: This was but his dream.
Othello: But it denoted a foregone conclusion.
(III, iii, 427-428.)

And so Hamlet, in a speech to his mother, upon the nature of his

grief for his father's death, p. 354:

'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
Nor customary suits of solemn black,
Nor windy suspiration of forced breath,
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
Nor the dejected 'havior of the visage,
Together with all forms, moods, shows of grief,
That can DENOTE me truly. (I, ii, 77-83.)

I have, at length, got through the first act of this tragedy; and hope, as well for the ease of my readers as myself, that, in the remaining parts, faults will neither rise so numerous, nor require so much prolixity in the grubbing up. The proofs of several kinds, which I have already given to maintain any correction, must naturally save some trouble in what is to follow: and I am sufficiently aware what room my APPENDIX will demand; in which I have engaged to show, that the same sorts of errors are scattered through the other plays; and that Shakespeare is to be restored to his genuine reading, with the same method and ease of cure.

XXXV. False Pointing and
Conjectural Emendation.
Act II, Scene 1. P. 376.

Polonius, about to dispatch his servant Reynaldo for France with commands to his son Laertes, bids him, before he makes his visit, first enquire into his son's character; and the

better to sift into it, commissions him to lay several levities to his charge; (such as are usual with youth, but none so rank in quality, as might discredit him;) as gaming, drinking, fencing, swearing, quarreling, drabbing. Reynaldo, objecting that to accuse him of drabbing might dishonor him, Polonius replies:

Faith [] no [,] as you may season it in the charge;
You must not put ANOTHER scandal on him,
That he is open to incontinency,
That's not my meaning; (I, 1, 28-31.)

The old gentleman, 'tis plain, is of opinion, that to charge his son with wenching would not dishonor him, consequently would be no scandal to him: for every scandal, in such degree as it affects any man, proportionably dishonors him. Why then should he caution Reynaldo from putting another scandal on him? Methinks, there is some reason to suspect this word of not being altogether so proper here, if no scandal at all had been yet offered. There can be no second scandal supposed, without a first implied. The poet's meaning is, as I conceive it, simply this: to say, that he wenches, without aggravation in the circumstances, lays but a venial liberty of youth at his door; but to say, that he is open and addicted to incontinency, amounts to a habit of license, and throws an actual scandal. A very slight change will reconcile the passage to this sense; and therefore, if I am right in the author's meaning, we may suppose he wrote:

No, faith; as you may season it in the charge;

You must not put AN UTTER scandal on him,
That he is open to incontinency,
That's not my meaning; but breathe his faults so
quaintly,
That they may seem the taints of liberty:

i.e. "So far from their being an absolute, entire, and utter scandal to him, that they may be none at all, but appear at worst the liberties of youth."

XXXVI. Emendation from
Various Reading.
Act II, Scene 1. P. 376.

Marry, Sir, here's my drift;
And I believe it is a fetch of WIT. (II, 1, 37-38.)

There is a various reading upon this passage, which deserved notice of the editor; because, if I am not much deceived, it seems to have the genuine stamp of our author upon it. The second edition in folio, and some other of the impressions, read:

And, I believe, it is a fetch of WARRANT.

Which I take to be the very words and meaning of the poet for this reason, because he makes Polonius speak dubiously of his intention. Nobody is so doubtful of his own judgment and talents, but that he knows absolutely whether his drifts and purposes are designed with wit, or no, though he cannot be so certain, as to their being justifiable. A man may much easier be mistaken, as to the legality, than as to the sagacity, of any fact; because

something more than private opinion, or naked belief, is wanting to determine positively whether a thing be warrantable. Besides, I observe, that it is very familiar with Shakespeare to use the words "warrant" and "warranty" to signify a justification. So,

Othello, Vol. VI, p. 484.

I therefore apprehend, and do attach thee,
For an abuser of the world, a practiser
Of arts inhibited, and out of warrant.

(I, 11, 77-79.)

Titus Andronicus, Vol. V, p. 509.

A reason might, strong, and effectual,
A pattern, precedent, and lively warrant,
For me, most wretched, to perform the like.

(V, 111, 43-45.)

King John, Vol. III, p. 176.

It is the curse of kings to be attended
By slaves, that take their humors for a warrant,
To break into the bloody house of life.

(IV, II, 208-210.)

King John, Vol. III, p. 189.

Look, where the holy legate comes apace,
To give us warrant from the hand of heaven.

(V, II, 65-66.)

The Merchant of Venice.⁴⁰ Vol. II, p. 9.

And from your love I have a warranty
T'unburthen all my plots and purposes, &c.

(I, 1, 132-133.)

Othello, Vol. VI, p. 580.

⁴⁰In Theobald's original, The Jew of Venice.

never loved Cassio,
But with such general warrant of heaven
As I might love. (V, 11, 59-61.)

Not, warrantry: as it is in this last place erroneously printed
in Mr. Pope's edition.

XXXVII. Correction from
Various Reading.
Act II, Scene 1. P. 376.

You laying these slight SALLIES on my son,
As 'twere a thing a little soiled i'th'working.
(II, 1, 39-40.)

'Tis true, "sallies" and "flights" of youth are very frequent
phrases; but what agreement is there betwixt the metaphors of
"sallies," and a thing "soiled"? Correct, as all the editions,
that I have ever seen, have it:

You laying these slight SULLIES on my son,
Perhaps, this substantive may be of his own coining, from the
verb "to sully": but that, as I have already amply proved, is a
liberty which he eternally assumes through his whole works.

XXXVIII. Conjecture from
Various Reading
Act II, Scene 4. P. 381.

Cornelius and Voltimand, being returned from their em-
bassy to Norway, bring word, that that monarch had suppressed
his nephew Fortinbras's expedition; which he at first supposed
designed against Poland, but found, upon inquiry, to be leveled

at Denmark. That he had put Fortinbras under arrest, who had obeyed it; and, upon a check received, had made protestation before his uncle nevermore to make any hostile attempts against the Danish state:

Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,
Gives him THREE thousand crowns in annual fee;
And his commission to employ those soldiers,
So levied as before, against the Polack.
(II, 11, 72-75.)

so, indeed, the generality of the editions read; but my two quartos, of 1637 and 1703, both have it:

Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,
Gives him THREESCORE thousand crowns in annual fee, &c.

This addition of a syllable gives a little roughness to the beginning of the verse; but one syllable in the first foot of it must be resolved in the pronunciation; which is very usual, as I have observed, with our poet. 'Tis true, this alteration is of no moment to the sense of the passage; but, methinks, "three-score thousand" crowns are a much more suitable donative from a king to his own nephew, and the general of an army, than so poor a pittance as "three thousand" crowns, a pension scarce large enough for a dependent courtier.

XXXIX. Correction from
Various Reading.
Act I, Scene 4. P. 382.

That he is mad 'tis true; 'tis true, 'tis pity;
And pity, it is true. (II, 11, 97-98.)

Thus, indeed, several of the editions read this place; but they do not seem to enter entirely into the poet's humor. Polonius, (an officious, impertinent, old courtier,) priding himself in the discovery which he supposes he has made of the cause of Hamlet's madness, is so full of the merit of it, that he cannot content himself to deliver it in a plain and easy manner; but falls into an affected jingling sort of oratory, as he fancies; and ringing the chimes, backwards and forwards, upon the same words. Nobody can read this speech without observing, that these figures and flowers of rhetoric are not only sprinkled, but poured out, through the whole. They are strokes of low humor, thrown in purposely, ad captandum populum; ⁴¹ or, to use the poet's own phrase, "to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh."⁴² I think, therefore, it should be written, as three of my editions have it; and as I know it is constantly pronounced on the stage:

That he is mad, 'tis true; 'tis true, 'tis pity;
And pity 'tis, 'tis true.

XL. False Pointing.
Act II, Scene 4. P. 382.

For this effect defective , comes by cause ,
(II, 11, 103.)

⁴¹To capture the fancy of the more vulgar elements in the audience.

⁴²Hamlet, III, 11, 45-46.

Either the comma after "defective" must be taken out, or another added before it; otherwise, the substantive is disjoined from its verb. Restore it:

For this effect, defective, comes by cause;

XLI. Correction from
Various Reading.
Act II, Scene 4. P. 384.

Into the madness wherein now he raves,
And all we wait for.
King: Do you think [] this?
Queen: It may be very likely. (II, ii, 150-152.)

Polonius having explained to them the nature of Hamlet's lunacy, and from what cause he imagines it to have sprung; the king asks the Queen, if she is of opinion that it had such a rise; which, she confesses, seems very probable to her that it might. Restore, therefore, as all my editions have it:

King: Do you think 'tis this?
Queen: It may &c.

XLII. False Pointing.
Act II, Scene 4. P. 384.

Take this from this, if this be otherwise [,]
(II, ii, 156.)

Polonius thinks himself so certain of being right in his discovery, that he is willing the King should take his head from his shoulders, if he is out in his politics. It must be pointed:

Take this from this,--if this be otherwise;

XLIII. Various Reading.
Act II, Scene 4. P. 384.

If he love her not,
And be not from his reason fall'n thereon,
Let me be no assistant for a state,
AND keep a farm and carters. (II, 11, 164-167.)

Instead of the copulative AND, which does not make the sense so clear, my two quarto editions read it, I think, better, with a conjunction disjunctive.

If he love her not,
And be not from his reason fall'n thereon,
Let me be no assistant for a state,
BUT keep a farm and carters.

XLIV. Conjectural Emendation.
Act II, Scene 6. P. 391.

These are now the FASHION, and so berattle the common STAGES (so they call them,) that many wearing rapiers are afraid of goose-quills, and dare scarce come thither. (II, 11, 355-360.)

I'll give the reading first as I think it ought to be restored, and then assign the reasons.

These now are the FACTION, and so berattle the common STAGERS (so they call them,) that many wearing rapiers are afraid of goose-quills, and dare scarce come thither.

The poet, as it were, here steps out of Denmark into England, and makes Rosencrantz, in talking of theaters, allude to the

plays performed at home by the Children of the King's Chapel; who were in great estimation at that time of day, and out-rivaled the gentlemen of the profession. The variation of fashion into faction we owe to Mr. Hughes; I think it much the more forcible and expressive term: implying, that those children were not only in fashion and esteem; but were a prevailing faction against the other playhouses, or had a faction made by the town in their favor. As to the other alteration of common stages into common stagers, which is a conjecture of my own, my reason for it is this: the poet cannot intend by his "many wearing rapiers," that gentlemen spectators were afraid to go to the common theaters, for fear of the resentment of these children, who so berattled the common stages. What greater affront could Shakespeare put upon his audience, than to suppose any of them were of such tame and cowardly spirits? No, if I understand him, he seems to me to hint, that this young fry were so pert upon the professed actors, that even they, though they wore swords, were afraid of going near them, lest they should be bantered or insulted, past sufferance. What further induces me to think, it should be common stagers, rather than common stages, is, that, in the speech immediately following, Hamlet, speaking of these children, retorts upon them,--"If they should grow themselves to common PLAYERS" and does not say, "If they should come themselves

to the common PLAYHOUSES, or stages."

XLV. False Pointing.
Act II, Scene 6. P. 391.

What, are they children? Who maintains them? How are they escoted? Will they pursue the quality no longer than they can sing? Will they not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players [?] [] as it is most like, if their means are no better: [] their writers do them wrong to make them exclaim against their own succession [.] (II, 11, 361-368.)

The pointing of the latter part of this speech is so very faulty, that the sense of it is but barely intelligible. Restore it, as Mr. Hughes's edition partly leads the way:

Will they not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players, (as it is most like, if their means are not better;) their writers do them wrong to make them exclaim against their own succession?

I cannot help observing, that the beginning of this speech contains one of those passages in which the poet may be said to overshoot himself; and be guilty of an absurdity, by making his actor say what he cannot be supposed to know in character: Which is confounding the person of the drama with a poeta loquitur.⁴³ Hamlet, replying to Rosencrantz concerning these young players, asks, "What, are they children? Who maintains them? How are they escoted?" These questions argue him a stranger to them,

⁴³Poet speaking in his own identity.

and their quality: yet, without any information, he immediately after cries, "Will they pursue the quality no longer than they can sing?"--which is intimating tacitly, as I take it, that, he knew them to be the singing boys of the King's chapel: a knowledge, no ways to be accounted for, as I can imagine, unless the poet had given his Hamlet a portion of Sir John Falstaff's instinct.⁴⁴ I must own, Shakespeare is not without some more samples of these self-contradictions; and one great one, that has been generally imputed to him, will fall under consideration in the next act. But of that in its own place.⁴⁵

XLVI. Conjecture.
Act II, Scene 6. P. 391.

Faith, there has been much to do on both sides; and the nation holds it no sin, to tarre them [] to controversy.
(II, ii, 369-371.)

I think it will be more numerous to the ear, and, perhaps, requisite in point of language, to read:

And the nation holds it no sin to tarre them on to controversy.

To "tarre on" is an old English word, signifying, to provoke, urge on, set on, as we do dogs to fighting. And so, I observe, Shakespeare in other passages writes it.

⁴⁴See King Henry IV, Part I, Act II, Scene iv, lines 294 ff.

⁴⁵See Item LVI, p. 337, below.

King John, Vol. III, p. 169.

And like a dog, that is compelled to fight,
Snatch at his master that doth tarre him on.
(IV, 1, 116-117.)

And, so again, in Troilus and Cressida, Vol. VI, p. 32.

Two curs shall tame each other; pride alone
Must tarre the mastiffs on, as 'twere their bone.
(I, 111, 391-392.)

XLVII. False Pointing.
Act II, Scene 7. P. 391.

I will prophesy, he comes to tell me of the Players .
Mark it , you say right, Sir; (II, 11, 403-405.)

This ought to be pointed as in Mr. Hughes's impression:

I will prophesy, he comes to tell me of the Players;
Mark it:--You say right, Sir;

XLVIII. Various Reading and
Omission Supplied.
Act II, Scene 7. P. 392.

I remember one said, there was no salts in the lines, to
make the matter savory; nor no matter in the phrase, that
might indite the author of AFFECTION; but called it, an
honest method. (II, 11, 461-465.)

I must own, I can have no tolerable comprehension of what
is meant here by the word "affection": Hamlet is speaking of
some play, to the strolling Players, which he liked very well,
but which did not so currently go down with the multitude. One,
it seems, who had a mind to make a criticism upon it, hints, that

there was no matter in its phrase that could indict the author of "affection." Now, what can "affection," as a quality with regard to a play, signify, but "passion"? Yet surely the author could not intend to mean that it wanted that. Hamlet speaks to the Master Player to give him a taste of his quality in a passionate speech; directs him to a tragedy, which he says, in his judgment was an "excellent play, well digested in the scenes, and set down with as much modesty as cunning"; and then points out a speech in it, which he chiefly loved, and which contained the account of Priam's slaughter, and the distress of Hecuba at the sight of that terrible action. The subject alone, never so inartificially told, certainly could not be altogether divested of passion. Besides, could not the phrase of a play carry passion with it, and yet the poet use an honest method? The second folio edition (which, in the generality, is esteemed as the best impression of Shakespeare;) has a different reading, which, at least, deserved a slight notice from the editor: and which, I believe, is more likely to express our author's meaning. We, there, find it written thus:

I remember, one said, there was no sallets [which Mr. Pope very justly restores to, salts] in the lines to make the matter savory; nor no matter in the phrase, that might indict the author of AFFECTATION; but he called it an honest method.

i.e. if I understand it at all, that as there was no poignancy

of wit or virulence of satire, on the one hand; so there was nothing to condemn it of affectation, on the other. And if it wanted affectation, the poet might more properly be said to use an honest method: for affectation is either the masquerade of nature in a habit of ridicule, or the abuse of it by a designed disguise of a worse sort. Three of my editions (the oldest of which is the quarto of 1637;) exhibit this passage with an addition in its close; which though I cannot warrant to be the author's own genuine words, yet make the sentence end more roundly, and therefore might have been degraded, at least, to the bottom of Mr. Pope's page, and been noted as an interpolation of the stage, as, perhaps, indeed they may be. The words however are these:

But called it an honest method, as wholesome as sweet;
and, by very much, more handsome than fine.

XLIX. False Printing.
Act II, Scene 7. P. 393.

And thus o'er-cised with coagulate gore,
(II, 11, 484.)

It must be restored with the second folio edition, and some of the more modern ones:

And thus o'er-sized with coagulate gore,
For the glue, or composition used by plasterers, painters, &c.
is called size, and derived from the gisa of the Italians.

L. Conjecture.
Act II, Scene 7. P. 393.

unequal MATCH'D,
Pyrrhus at Priam drives, in rage strikes wide;
But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword
Th'unnerved father falls [.] THEN SENSELESS [] Ilium,
Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top
Stoops to his base, &c. (II, ii, 493-498.)

In the first place, "unequal matched" by the position must be a nominative, and consequently relate to Pyrrhus. Now if Pyrrhus was unequal matched, in the sense and general acceptation we must understand that he was over-matched, and had the worst of it: not that he was an over-match for Priam, which was the truth of the fact. I believe therefore it should be, as the second folio edition has it, (and the impression, said to be revised by Mr. Rowe, whether by chance or design;) with an alteration in the pointing;

Unequal MATCH!

For the substantive thus, with a note of admiration after it, relates indifferently to Pyrrhus and Priam, and signifies that each was unequal to the other, the first in strength, the latter in weakness. But to go lower into the passage, (though all the editions agree in the reading,) I can hardly be persuaded it is printed as the poet intended it; or that he would have industriously chosen to prefix an epithet to Ilium, which makes a paradox in the context. If Ilium was then senseless, why should it seem to feel the blow? Or, if Ilium was senseless, why should

it then seem to feel it?--for one of the two ways it must be taken. I know very well it may be resolved thus; that Ilium, quoad⁴⁶ the bricks and stones, was absolutely senseless; yet the buildings, falling into the fire just at the instant when Priam fell to the ground, seemed, as it were, to be sensible of that blow. I confess, this may be a poetical inference; but a little hard strained, and in no wise necessary. Perhaps, with a small variation in the text and pointing, the passage may lie more easy and natural thus.

Unequal match
Pyrrhus at Priam drives; in rage strikes wide;
But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword
Th'unnerved father falls down senseless.--Ilium,
Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top
Stoops to his base, &c.

I propose this last alteration but as a conjecture, and without laying any stress upon it: and the rather too, because, perhaps, the whole passage concerning Priam and Hecuba may not be of our poet's writing, but a quotation from some play of a contemporary, which he had a mind to put in the mouth of a strolling player. I should, indeed, suspect it to be our poet's from one reason only; and that is, from its subject. I think the observation has never yet been made, and therefore I shall give it here; that there is scarce a play throughout all his works, in

⁴⁶As far as [the bricks and stones] are concerned.

which it was possible to introduce the mention of them, where he has not by simile, allusion, or otherwise, hinted at the Trojan affairs; so fond was he of that story.

II. Emendation.
Act II, Scene 7. P. 393.

But as we often see against some storm,
A silence in the heav'n, the RACK stand still,
The bold wind speechless, and the orb below
As hush as death; (II, ii, 505-508.)

Though all the editions, that have fallen in my way, write this passage as the editor does; I know no sense, in which the word "rack" is ever used, that will serve the purpose here. It must certainly be corrected:

A silence in the heav'n, the WRACK stand still,
i.e. the tempest; the hurry, confusion, and outrage of the elements: and so, in this admirable passage of The Tempest.
Vol. I, p. 60.

Those our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits, and
Are melted into air, into thin air;
And, like the baseless fabric of their vision,
The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a RACK behind! (IV, i, 148-156.)

It must be corrected:

Leave not a WRACK behind!

i.e. if I conceive the poet's meaning rightly, not a fragment, or minutest particle, to show that a "wrack" has been.

III. Various Reading.
Act II, Scene 7. P. 395.

Look IF he has not turned his color, and has tears in's eyes. Prithee no more. (II, II, 542-543.)

All the editions, that I have ever met with, read:

Look, WHERE he has not turned his color, and has tears in's eyes. Prithee, no more.

i.e. "Look, whether he has not, &c." 'Tis true, as Mr. Pope writes it, the same sense is conveyed; but the other is the poet's word: and it is frequent with him, though the editor did not remember it here, to use it in that signification. So in the Second Part of King Henry VI, Vol. IV, p. 162:

And therefore do they cry, though you forbid,
That they will guard you where you will, or no.
(III, II, 264-265.)

And again, p. 168:

Died he not in his bed? Where should he die?
Can I make men live where they will, or not?
(III, III, 9-10.)

As, in these instances, (and, perhaps, where ever else it occurs in our author;) the strictness of the numbers requires a single syllable in the place where this word stands, it may be, it is used by contraction only, for "whether."

LIII. False Printing.
Act II, Scene 7. P. 395.

After your death, you were better have a bad epitaph,
then their ill report while you lived. (II, ii, 550-551.)

This is only a slight literal fault of the press, and the reviser. Correct it, as it ought to be:

After your death, you were better have a bad epitaph,
than their ill report while you lived.

The next, with which my remarks on this act conclude, is a slip of such a kind, that I do not know to whose account, properly, to place it. There are many passages of such intolerable carelessness interspersed through all the six volumes, that, were not a few of Mr. Pope's notes scattered here and there too, I should be induced to believe that the words in the title page of the first volume--COLLATED, and CORRECTED by the former editions, by Mr. POPE--were placed there by the bookseller to enhance the credit of his edition; but that he had played false with his editor, and never sent him the sheets to revise. And, surely, this must have been the case sometimes: for nobody shall persuade me that Mr. Pope could be awake, and with his eyes open, and revising a book which was to be published under his name, yet let an error, like the following, escape his observation and correction.

LIV. Correction.
Act II, Scene 8. P. 397.

For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak
With most miraculous organ. I'll OBSERVE HIS LOOKS,
Play something like the murder of my father
Before mine uncle. I'll observe his looks.
I'll tent him to the quick; if he but blench,
I know my course. (II, 11, 622-627.)

This is palpable nonsense, from an error in the compositor to the press; occasioned by his throwing his eye two lines lower than he should have done, and so printing the same hemistich twice over. This error could not be repeated by an editor in revising, his eye and attention going together in that task: this, therefore, must be one of those sheets, which, as I before hinted, were never sent to Mr. Pope for his revisal. Restore it, as the meaning of the place requires, and as all the former editions have it:

For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak
With most miraculous organ. I'll HAVE THESE PLAYERS
Play something like the murder of my father
Before mine uncle. I'll observe his looks;
I'll tent him to the quick; if he look pale,
I know my course.

But because it may seem a little too hard, upon a single instance of this kind, to suspect that the sheets might not be all revised by the editor, as I just now hinted; I'll subjoin another flagrant testimony of the same sort of negligence: and I shall do it the more willingly, because I would embrace an opportunity of clearing Brutus from the imputation of a murder, which

Shakespeare is made to throw upon him, though he never had it in his head to think him guilty of it.

William de la Pole, the wicked Duke of Suffolk, being banished out of England by King Henry the Sixth, as he is making off in disguise, is upon the coast of Kent taken by pirates. Behaving himself to them in a manner they did not care to brook, he was ordered to the long boat's side, there to have his head struck off. As he is dragging away, he comforts himself that his death will be memorable, from the circumstances of his being murdered by such mean and vile fellows; as it had happened to many great men before him.

Omission Supplied.

King Henry VI, Part II, Vol. IV, p. 173.

That this my death may never be forgot.
Great men oft die by vile Bezonians.
A Roman sworder and bandetto slave
Murdered sweet Tully. Brutus' bastard hand
Pompey the great; and Suffolk dies by Pirates.
(IV, 1, 133-137.)

Tully indeed was killed by Herenius, a Centurion, whom the poet here calls, by way of ignominy, a Roman sworder; and by Popilius, a Tribune, who is likewise here called a bandetto slave, probably because he had formerly murdered his father, and was defended, upon his trial for that fact, by Tully. But would not anybody now, taking Mr. Pope's for a correct and infallible edition, begin to wonder how Shakespeare could be so precise in Roman

history as to the death of Cicero; and so ignorant, as to lay the murder of Pompey upon Brutus? If we were to take this fact for granted, we should find our poet guilty of a strange self-contradiction, or Pompey the father of a very degenerate son. For Sextus Pompeius, in another of our author's plays, gives Brutus such a character and commendation, as no man certainly would bestow on his father's murderer. See

Antony and Cleopatra, Vol. V., p. 345.

I do not know,
Wherefore my father should revengers want,
Having a son and friends; since Julius Caesar,
(Who at Philippi the good Brutus ghosted,)
There saw you laborin' for him. What was it
That moved pale Cassius to conspire? And what
Made thee all-honor'd, honest Roman Brutus,
With the armed rest, courtiers of beauteous freedom,
To drench the Capitol, but that they would
Have but one man, a man? And that is it
Hath made me rig my navy: at whose burden
The angered ocean foams, with which I meant
To scourge th'ingratitude that despiteful Rome
Cast on my noble father. (II, vi, 10-23.)

The sentiments of filial piety, and resolutions of avenging his father's murder, are too strongly expressed, to suppose he would in the same breath bestow an eulogium on the man who killed him. But when I first quoted this passage, I little suspected it would have furnished work for correction. What! Were the Conspirators presumed to have killed Caesar, because they would have but one man, a man? What mock reasoning is this? If they would have

but one man, a man, (I.e. a man eminent above, and over-topping, all others;) it was the height of Caesar's ambition to be such a one, and therefore they should rather have let him live. If I understand the meaning of the poet, he would infer, that the noble conspirators stabbed Caesar, because they would have, or suffer, any one man to be but a man; i.e. they would have no one aim at arbitrary power, and a degree of pre-eminence above the rest. Restore the place therefore with the second folio edition:

but that they would
Have one man, but a man?

But to return to the question of Pompey being killed by Brutus. I have before hinted, that our poet never designed a charge of this sort against poor Brutus; and in short, Shakespeare will presently stand acquitted of this blunder; and the fault appear to have arisen from a negligence of revisal, or rather from a want of revising at all. But that this suspicion of mine may not appear a mere gratis dictum,⁴⁷ I'll now give the reason that induced me to it; and from which, I think, the source of the error may be fairly accounted for. The cases is, a material line is left out of another edition, in duodecimo, likewise published by Mr. Tonson about ten years ago;⁴⁸ so that it seems

⁴⁷An assertion unsupported by evidence.

⁴⁸Nicholas Rowe's second edition of 1714.

most probable, that the press was set to work and corrected by this duodecimo edition; without any collation with the old editions mentioned in Mr. Pope's Table of Editions at the end of his sixth volume. This deduction, I am sure, is fair and natural for the second folio edition (one of the editions there mentioned) exhibits the passage entire, and as the poet wrote it; and even the fourth edition in folio (which, indeed, is but a faulty one;) printed no longer ago than the year 1685, likewise has it as it should be. Restore it therefore with them, and we come back both to the truth of the history, and the poet's text into the bargain.

That this my death may never be forgot.
Great men oft die by vile Bezonians,
A Roman sworder, and Bandetto slave
Murdered sweet Tully. Brutus' bastard hand
STABBED Julius Caesar. SAVAGE ISLANDERS
Pompey the Great: And Suffolk dies by Pirates.

Occasional Explication. I cannot help, though this passage has already taken up some length, throwing in an explication upon it, which will be new to some readers, at least, of Shakespeare: and, consequently, I shall not lose all my labor in it. I had once a suspicion that the poet intended to make Suffolk reproach Brutus with cowardice, for dishonorably stabbing Caesar; and that the text, to support this meaning, should have been altered to

Brutus' DASTARD hand
Stabbed Julius Caesar.

A mistake of the like kind has happened upon the very same words in another of our author's plays. In King Richard II, Bolingbroke being required to throw down the Duke of Norfolk's gage, and withdraw his own challenge, refuses at first upon a point of honor, and throws out this contemptuous reflection against the Duke:

Shall I seem crest-fallen in my father's sight?
Or with pale beggar-fear impeach my height,
Before this out-dared DASTARD? (I, 1, 188-190.)

Where some of the editions erroneously express it,

Before this out-dared BASTARD?

But I have since found reasons to retract this opinion, and to be convinced that the poet, in calling Brutus BASTARD, designed a much deeper contumely than that of cowardice; viz. the blackest ingratitude and most detestable parricide. Shakespeare has elsewhere taken notice of Caesar's excessive love to Brutus, and of the ingratitude of the latter for being concerned in his murder.

Julius Caesar, Vol. V, p. 271.

Through this, the well-beloved Brutus stabbed,
And, as he plucked his cursed steel away,
Mark how the blood of Caesar followed it!
As rushing out of doors to be resolved,
If Brutus so unkindly knocked or no;
For Brutus, as you know, was Caesar's angel.
Judge, oh, you gods, how dearly Caesar loved him!
This, this, was the unkindest cut of all;
For when the noble Caesar saw him stab,

Ingratitude, more strong than traitor's arms,
Quite vanquished him. (III, 11, 180-190.)

But this amounts to no more than a positive accusation against Brutus of ingratitude, because Caesar loved him to that degree. We know nothing from hence of the spring or Caesar's affection, or why Brutus, even for assisting in his murder, should be stigmatized with bastardy. As this piece of secret history is nowhere else so much as hinted at, that I know of, or can recollect, throughout all our author's works, I shall give it from Plutarch in the "Life of Marcus Brutus." Caesar, before the great battle of Pharsalia, had ordered his commanders to spare Brutus, and bring him safe to him, if he would willingly surrender himself; but if he made any resistance, to suffer him to escape, rather than to kill him. "And this he is believed to have done," says the historian, "out of a tenderness to Servilia, the mother of Brutus: for Caesar had it seems, in his youth, been very intimate with her, and she passionately in love with him. And considering that Brutus was born about that time, in which their loves were at the height, Caesar had some reason to believe that he was begot by him."--This Shakespeare knew, and therefore reviles Brutus with being the bastard issue of the man whom he so ungratefully killed.

LV. Various Reading.
Act III, Scene 1. P. 399.

Good gentlemen, give him a further edge,
And drive his purpose INTO these delights.

But two speeches above, Rosencrantz had informed the Queen, that there did seem a kind of joy in Hamlet to hear of the actors coming, and that they had already orders to play before him: What occasion, therefore, was there to drive his purpose into these delights? He had already seemed to give in to them; and the King desires Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to promote and further that bent and disposition which Hamlet showed to that sort of pleasures. I think, therefore, the second folio edition expresses this passage more rightly:

Good gentlemen, give him a further edge,
And drive his purpose ON TO these delights.

And so the poet expresses himself before in the second act of this play, where the King entreats Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, as old school-fellows of Hamlet, to stay a while at court in order to divert him. See p. 379:

I entreat you both,
That being of so young days brought up with him,
And since so neighbored to his youth and humor,
That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court
Some little time, so by your companies
To draw him ON TO pleasures. (II, ii, 10-15.)

LVI. Text Vindicated.
Act III, Scene 2. P. 400.

To be, or not to be?--That is the question--

Whether 'tis nobler in the mind, to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune;
Or to take arms against a SEA of troubles,
And by opposing end them? (III, i, 56-60.)

A late eminent author, I think, took the beginning of this noble speech to task, for employing too great a diversity of metaphors, that have no agreement with one another, nor any propriety and connection in the ideas. "To take arms against a sea," literally speaking, would be as unfeasible a project, as the attempt to stop the tide at Gravesend with a man's thumb. Mr. Pope subjoins a note, that instead of a "sea" of troubles, it might have been "perhaps, 'siege'; which continues the metaphor of slings, arrows, taking arms; and represents the being encompassed on all sides with troubles." The editor is not the first who has had the same suspicion: and I may say, because I am able to prove it by witnesses, it was a guess of mine, before he had entered upon publishing Shakespeare. But, perhaps, the correction may be, at best but a guess; considering the great liberties that this poet is observed to take, elsewhere, in his diction and connection of metaphors: and considering too, that a sea (among the ancient writers, sacred and profane, in the Oriental, as well as the Greek and Latin, tongues;) is used to signify not only the great, collected, body of waters which make the ocean, but likewise a vast quantity, or multitude, of anything else. The Prophet Jeremiah, particularly, in one passage, calls a prodigious army

coming up against a city, "a sea." See chapter 51, verse 42: "The sea is come up upon Babylon; she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof."⁴⁹ So here, I conceive, "to take arms against a sea of troubles," is, figuratively, to bear up against the troubles of human life, which flow in upon us, and encompass us round, like a sea.

But there is another passage in this soliloquy of Hamlet, which, I hinted, in my remarks upon the last act, would demand some consideration in its proper place; and, therefore, it naturally falls in here.

But that the dread of something after death
(That undiscovered country, from whose bourn
No traveler returns;) puzzles the will;
And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of.

(III, 1, 78-82.)

The critics have, without the least scruple, accused the poet of forgetfulness and self-contradiction from this passage; seeing that in this very play he introduces a character from the other world, the Ghost of Hamlet's father. I would not be so hardy to assert peremptorily, that Shakespeare was aware of this seeming absurdity, and despised it; any more than I would pretend to justify him against this charge to all his objectors. If he

⁴⁹John Bright, translator of Jeremiah for "The Anchor Bible" (New York: Doubleday, 1965), renders this line, "The sea has surged over Babylon," and in his notes says, "Not literally, of course. Babylon's foes surge over her like the chaotic waters of the primeval ocean," p. 358.

foresaw anything of it, perhaps, he sheltered himself from their criticisms under some reserve⁵⁰ like this: 'Tis certain, to introduce a ghost, a being from the other world, and to say that no traveler returns from those confines, is, literally taken, as absolute a contradiction as can be supposed. But we are to take notice, that Shakespeare brings his ghost only from a middle state, or local purgatory; a prison house, as he makes his spirit call it, where he was doomed, for a term only, to expiate his sins of nature. But the "undiscovered country," here mentioned, he may, perhaps, mean that last and eternal residence of souls in a state of full bliss and misery: which spirits in a middle state (either under purgation, or in the prisons of hope, as, I think, one of the Apostles⁵¹ calls them;) could not be acquainted with, or explain. So that, if any latitude of sense may be allowed to the poet's words, though he admits the possibility of a spirit returning from the dead, he yet holds that the state of the dead cannot be communicated, and, with that allowance, it remains still an undiscovered country. We are to observe too, that even this Ghost who comes, as I hinted above, from Purgatory, (or, whatever else has been understood under that

⁵⁰A thing or means to which one may have recourse. OED.

⁵¹Theobald may have in mind Chapter 9, Verse 12, of The Prophecy of Zacharias: "Return to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope."

denomination;) comes under restrictions: and though he confesses himself subject to a vicissitude of torments, yet he says at the same time, that he is forbidden to tell the secrets of his prison house. If these qualifications will not entitle the poet to say, that no traveler returns from the verge of the other world, i. e. to disclose any of its mysteries, without a contradiction to the liberty he has taken of bringing apparitions upon the stage, it is all the salvo⁵² I can put in for him, and I must give him up to the mercy of the cavillers. The ancients had the same notions of our abstruse and twilight knowledge of an after-being. Virgil, before he enters upon a description of hell, and of the Elysian Fields, implores the permission of the infernal deities, and professes, even then, to discover no more than hearsay concerning their mysterious dominions:

Dii, quibus imperium est animarum, umbraeque silentes,
Et Chaos, et Phlegeton, loca nocte tacentia late,
Sit mihi fas audita loqui, sit numine vestro
Pandere res alta terra et caligine mersas.⁵³

I shall conclude all I have to remark on this fine soliloquy, when I have subjoined an explication to one word; in which I may perhaps take the poet in a meaning different from what the

⁵²Defense.

⁵³Gods who are sovereign over souls! Silent ghosts, and Chaos and Phlegeton, the wide dumb realm of night! As I have heard, so let me tell, and according to your will unfold things sunken deep under earth in gloom. Aeneid, Book VI, lines 264-267, trans. by J. W. Mackail, Virgil's Works (New York: Modern Library, 1950), p. 110.

generality of his readers understand him. But if my singularity in this point be justified by a reason, I hope it will secure me from the censure of being idly singular. He is saying, that were it not for the dread of an unknown state after this, who would bear the plagues and calamities here, when he could himself put an end to them, and his own life too? His words are these:

For who would bear the whips, and scorns of time,
.....
When as himself might his quietus make
With a bare BODKIN? (III, 1, 70-76.)

I know that the poet is generally interpreted to mean in this place, when we might give ourselves a release by any, the least, weapon of offence that can be. 'Tis true, this exaggerates the thought in that particular; but I can scarce suppose that he intended to descend to a thought, that a man might dispatch himself with a "bodkin," or little implement with which women separate and twist their hair. I rather believe, the poet designed the word here to signify, according to the old usage of it, "a dagger." Though the glossaries give us no such interpretation, the use of an old and learned poet, who may weigh against their comments, I am sure will support me in it. Chaucer, in his Monk's Tale, recounting the murder of Julius Caesar, has this stanza:

This Julius unto the Capitol went,
Upon a day, as he was wont to gone,
And in the Capitol anon him hent

This false Brutus, and his other fone,
And sticked him with BODKINS anone
With many a wound, and thus they let him lie:
But never grutched he at no stroke but one,
Or else at two, but if his story lie. (Lines 705-712.)

'Tis plain, that the poet here means "daggers" by this word: and no one ever yet thought that Brutus and Cassius, or any other of the conspirators, stabbed Caesar with their ladies' bodkins.

LVII. False Pointing.
Act III, Scene 6. P. 407.

King: I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet, these words are not mine.

Hamlet: No, nor mine [n]ow, my Lord [.] You played once i'th'University, you say?
(III, 11, 101-104.)

Hamlet gives the King an abrupt, gruff, answer; and immediately applies himself and his discourse to Polonius. Correct it therefore, as the second and fourth folio editions have it:

King: I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet; these words are not mine.

Hamlet: No, nor mine.--Now, my Lord,--You played once i'th'University, you say?

LVIII. Omission Supplied.
Act III, Scene 6, P. 408.

Hamlet: Lady, shall I lie in your lap?

Ophelia: No, my Lord.

Hamlet: []
Do you think I meant country matters!

Certainly, Hamlet's answer is more natural, and less abrupt, if we restore this passage from the second folio edition thus:

Hamlet: Lady, shall I lie in your lap?
Ophelia: No, my Lord.
Hamlet: I mean, my head upon your lap?
Ophelia: Ay, my Lord.
Hamlet: Do you think I meant country matters?

But indeed, if ever the poet deserved whipping for low and indecent ribaldry, it was for this passage; ill-timed in all its circumstances, and unbecoming the dignity of his characters, as well as of his audience.

LIX. Omission Supplied.
Act III, Scene 7. P. 408.

Enter a King and Queen very lovingly; the Queen embracing him, and he her. [] He takes her up, and declines his head upon her lap. (III, 11, stage direction following line 145.)

Mr. Pope here makes the King take her up before she's down. It must be restored as the second folio edition, and several others, rightly have it.

Enter a King and Queen, very lovingly; the Queen embracing him, and he her. She kneels, and makes show of protestation unto him: he takes her up, and declines his head upon her lap.

LX. Emendation.
Act III, Scene 7. P. 410.

And women's fear and love hold quantity,
'Tis either none, or in extremity;
Now what my love is, proof hath made you know,
And as my love is FIX'D, my fear is so.
(III, 11, 177-180.)

So several of the editions exhibit this passage; but, I think, the sense of the context shows it to be wrong. My quarto edition of 1637 has it:

And as my love is CIZ'D, my fear is so.

And the second folio edition reads,

And as my love is SIZ, my fear is so.

Now, from these two mistaken readings, and as the Queen evidently is talking here of the quantity of her love and fear, this proportion, not their continuance or duration, I am persuaded, the whole passage ought to be restored thus:

And women's fear and love hold quantity,
'Tis either none, or in extremity;
Now what my love is, proof hath made you know,
And as my love is SIZ'D, my fear is so.

i.e. "As you know by proof the quantity of my love; so my fear for you is one of the same size as my love is."⁵⁴

LXI. False Printing.
Act III, Scene 7. P. 412.

King: What do you call the play?
Hamlet: The Mouse-trap. Marry, how? TOPICALLY.
This play is the image of a murder done in
Vienna;
Gonzago is the Duke's name, his WIFE Baptista;
&c. (III, 11, 246-250.)

⁵⁴This item provides fairly clear evidence that by 1726 Theobald had not had an opportunity to examine a First Folio, which reads "siz'd" in this place.

Correct it, as it ought to be:

King: What do you call the play?

Hamlet: The Mouse-trap. Marry, how? TROPICALLY.
This play is the image of a murder done in
Vienna;

Gonzago is the Duke's name, his WIFE'S Baptista.

Well; immediately upon this enters Lucianus; and Hamlet, continuing his relation, tells his uncle:

LXII. Emendation.

Act III, Scene 7. P. 412.

This is one Luicanus, nephew to the KING.

(III, 11, 254.)

All the editions whatever, 'tis true, concur in this reading; and therefore we are to presume the blunder was original, either in the poet's inadvertence, or the mistake of the first transcript. Nephew to what King? The story of the introduced play is the murder of Gonzago, Duke of Vienna: as is plain from the preceding part of this very speech. It therefore ought to be corrected, in spite of all the printed copies:

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the DUKE.

So, wherever the Player-King and Queen are mentioned, it ought to be DUKE and DUCHESS. The source of these mistakes is easily to be accounted for, from the stage's dressing of the characters. Regal coronets, perhaps, being by the poet at first ordered for the Duke and the Duchess, the succeeding players, who did not so strictly observe the quality of the characters and circumstances

of the story, mistook them for a King and Queen; and so the error was deduced down from thence to the present times.

LXIII. Emendation.
Act III, Scene 7. P. 412.

Ophelia: You are keen, my Lord, you are keen.
Hamlet: It would cost you a groaning, to take off
my edge.
Ophelia: Still WORSE and worse.
Hamlet: So you must take your husbands.
(III, ii, 259-262.)

Surely, this is the most uncomfortable lesson that ever was preached to the poor ladies: and I can't help wishing, for our own sakes too, it may not be true. 'Tis too foul a blot upon our reputations, that every husband that a woman takes must be worse than her former. The poet, I am pretty sure, intended no such scandal upon the sex. The second and fourth folio editions, and the quarto of 1637, read the latter part of this dialogue thus:

Ophelia: Still better and worse.
Hamlet: So you mistake husbands.

"Mistake," in the last line, runs through all the printed copies that I have ever seen, from the second folio edition downwards. Mr. Pope, who very justly restores the true reading there, takes no manner of notice of the various reading in the last line but one: though, if I understand the poet's conceit at all, the whole smartness of the repartee depends upon it. I think,

therefore, the entire passage ought to stand thus.

Ophelia: You are keen, my Lord, you are keen.
Hamlet: It would cost you a groaning to take off
mine edge.
Ophelia: Still BETTER and WORSE.
Hamlet: So you must take your husbands.

In short, Hamlet has been all along talking to the young lady in double entendre's, or, rather, in a strain of freedom which scarce admits of that nice distinction. She tells him once before, that "he's naught," and "she'll mark the play." He still keeps up his vein of drollery, and throws in such plain hints, that she is forced to parry them by an indirect answer; and remarks, as I conceive, that his wit is smarter, though his meaning is more blunt. This, I think, is the sense of her "Still better and worse." And then there is some reason and acuteness in Hamlet's answer, "So you must take your husbands." For he certainly alludes to the words in the church-service of matrimony, where the husband and wife promise alternately to take each other for BETTER, for WORSE; for richer, for poorer, &c.

LXIV. Omission Supplied.
Act III, Scene 7. P. 413.

Ophelia: The King rises,
[]
Queen: How fares my Lord?
Polonius: Give o'er the play.
King: Give me some light, away. (III, 11, 276-280.)

As Hamlet had thrown some apposite lines into the play, in order to sift the King's conscience as to the fact of his father's murder, and was resolved to watch his looks and behavior narrowly during the representation; when the scene comes to touch the poisoning in the garden, and the King, struck with the image of his own deed, can sit it out no longer, methinks, it is very improbable that Hamlet, upon this pleasing stroke of conviction, should not express his satisfaction in one half-line at least, upon the play having a proper effect, and his being convinced of his uncle's guilt. The passage ought certainly to be supplied from the second folio edition, and three more impressions now before me.

Ophelia: The King rises.
Hamlet: What, frighted with false fire?
Queen: How fares my Lord?
Polonius: Give o'er the play.
King: Give me some light, away.

LXV. Conjectural Emendation.
Act III, Scene 8. P. 413.

Would not this, Sir, and a forest of feathers, if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me, with two provincial roses on my RAY'D shoes, get me a fellowship in a cry of players, Sir? (III, ii, 286-289.)

Hamlet, applauding himself upon the discovery his additional lines in the play have made of his uncle's villainy, asks Horatio, whether he does not think, that his skill, and a few theatrical

equipments joined with it, would not, upon a shift, help him into a share among the players by their own voices. But, what are we to understand by "ray'd" shoes? Mr. Pope tells us, at the bottom of his page, that in some books he had found it "raced"; in others, "racked." 'Tis true; and no less than three editions that I know of, (viz. the quartos of 1637 and 1703, and Mr. Hughes's impression,) have it, "raz'd"; and all the four readings, I believe, are equally mistaken; though the last mentioned, perhaps, will bring us nearest to the true one. 'Tis plain to me, Hamlet, from the discovery that his lines in the play have extorted, is complimenting himself on his taste and judgment in the powers of tragedy; and seems to think that he wants nothing but a stock of plumes, and buskins, to set him up for one of the profession. If this be the true sense of the passage, as I believe verily it is, I am apt to think the poet wrote it thus.

Would not this, Sir, and a forest of feathers, if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me, with two provincial roses on my RAIS'D shoes, get me a fellowship in a cry of players, Sir?

By "rais'd" shoes, as I take it, he means the tragedy-buskin, (or cothurnus, as it was called by the Romans;) which was as much higher in the heel than other common shoes, as the "chopines,"⁵⁵ worn by the Venetians, are, mentioned by our poet

55II, 11, 446. A lady's shoe with a thick cork sole.

in the foregoing act of this play. It was the known custom of the tragedians of old, that they might the nearer resemble the heroes they personated, to make themselves as tall in stature, and, by an artificial help to sound, to speak as big, as they possibly could. But of this I shall have occasion to speak more at large in the dissertation to be prefixed to my translation of the tragedies of Aeschylus.⁵⁶ Horace, in his short "History of the Progress of the Stage," takes notice of these two things, as peculiar supplements to tragedy--magnumque loqui, nitique cothurno.⁵⁷ And Shakespeare himself, in his Troilus and Cressida, seems to rally the actors both on account of stretching their voices and persons, Vol. VI, p. 24:

And like a strutting player, whose conceit
Lies in his ham-string, and doth think it rich
To hear the wooden dialogue, and sound,
'Twixt his STRETCH'D footing and the scaffoldage--
(I, 111, 153-156.)

LXVI. Conjectural Emendations.
Act III, Scene 8. P. 413.

For thou dost know, oh Damon dear,
This realm dismantled was
Of Jove himself, and now reigns here
A very very PEACOCK. (III, 11, 292-295.)

The generality of editions have another reading, (which is,

⁵⁶Never published. See Jones, Lewis Theobald, p. 3.

⁵⁷I spoke loudly (or grandly); I stood upon (or depended upon) the cothurnus.

indeed, a corrupt one as printed,) but Mr. Pope has espoused this, and subjoined a note for his reason; that it alludes to a fable of the birds choosing a king, instead of the Eagle, a Peacock. I suppose, the editor must mean the fable of Barlandus, in which it is said, the birds, being weary of their state of anarchy, moved for the setting up of a king. The Peacock, on account of his gay feathers, put in for the office; and the choice upon the poll falling to him, a Magpie stood up with this speech in his mouth: "May it please your majesty," says he, "we should be glad to know, in case the Eagle should fall upon us in your reign, as he has formerly done, how will you be able to defend us?" But, with submission, in this passage of Shakespeare, there is not the least mention made of the Eagle, unless, by an uncommon figure, "Jove himself" stands in the place of this bird. The, we do not find that Hamlet intends to speak of his uncle, as of a person unable to defend the realm; nor, indeed, do we find that the realm had been yet attacked, or wanted a defender. In short, I think, Hamlet is here setting his father's and uncle's characters against each other; and means to say, that by his father's death, the state was stripped of a god-like monarch, in excellence rivalling Jove: and that now, in his stead, reigned the most despicable animal that could be. I say, that Hamlet intends a comparison betwixt his father and his uncle; or, at least, to

speaking greatly to the disadvantage, and in contempt of the latter. But the Peacock, surely, is too fine a bird to be thus degraded; though the Eagle has the preference in strength, spirit, and fierceness. Besides, what features of resemblance are there betwixt a tame Peacock and a King, who had courage enough to usurp a crown, to make away with his own brother to make way for himself, and to jostle his brother's son, Hamlet, out of the election, though he was a favorite of the people?

First Conjecture:

Were it necessary to suppose, that the poet meant, Hamlet should revile his uncle here for a tame, cowish spirit, and as one inheriting none of the masculine qualities of his predecessor; the change of a single letter will give us this sense, and a word too that has the warrant of our poet, in another place, to bear that signification. I would then read,

and now reigns here
A very, very MEACOCK.

Now a MEACOCK or MEWCOCK, besides its proper signification of a cravenly bird, is taken metaphorically to mean a dastardly effeminate fellow: And in that acceptation we find it used in the Taming of the Shrew, Vol. II, p. 312.

Oh, you are novices; 'tis a world to see,
How tame (when men and women are alone,)
A MEACOCK wretch can make the curstest shrew.
(II, 1, 313-315.)

But not to fix ourselves down absolutely to this reading, let us first have recourse to the various reading in some of the copies, and see what help we can derive from thence. The second and fourth editions in folio, the quarto of 1637, and, if it be worth mentioning, the duodecimo impression, published by Mr. Tonson in 1714, all have it:

and now reigns here
A very, very, PAJOCK.

I must own, I know no such term; but there is one so very near it in sound, and one which suits the author's meaning in sense so aptly, that it is not improbable that he might write originally:

Second Conjecture:

and now reigns here
A very, very, PADDOCK.

Here you have the old word PADDE, a toad. Our author was very well acquainted with the word, and has used it more than once, or twice. In the first scene of the Witches in Macbeth we have these words:

First Witch: I come, Grimalkin.
Second Witch: PADDOCK calls. (I, 1, 9-10.)

Where the hags speak of the screaming of the cat, and the croaking of the toad, which they are supposed to hear from the organs of their familiars. But what makes it the more probable that this term should be used here, Hamlet, again, afterwards, speaking of his uncle to the Queen his mother, among other

contemptuous additions, gives him this very appellation of
"Paddock":

'Twere good, you let him know;
For who, that's but a Queen, fair, sober, wise,
Would from a PADDOCK, from a bat, a gib,
Such dear concernings hide? (III, iv, 188-191.)

Third Conjecture:

But again: if we will, with Mr. Pope, suppose, that the
poet alludes to the Eagle, and some inferior bird in quality that
has got the start of him; another small variation from the text
will bring us to all we want for this purpose. Why, then, might
not the poet make his Hamlet say,

and now reigns here
A very, very PUTTOCK.

i.e. a ravenous kite, a mere bird of prey; a devourer of the
state and people; without any of the excellencies and defensive
virtues of the royal eagle, his father? Here again we have a
word, which the poet was as well acquainted with, as with the
two already quoted.

King Henry VI. Part II. Vol. IV, p. 160.

Who finds the partridge in the PUTTOCK's nest,
But may imagine how the bird was dead,
Although the kite soar with unbloodied beak?
(III, ii, 191-193.)

But what might go a good way towards supporting a conjecture that
this was our author's word here, is, that there is a particular
passage in another of his plays, where the eagle and the puttock

are placed comparatively, and in a light of opposition to one another:

Cymbeline, Vol. VI, p. 128.

Cymbeline: Thou might'st have had the sole son of
my Queen.

Imogen: O blest, that I might not!--I chose an
EAGLE,
And did avoid a PUTTOCK. (I, 11, 138-139.)

I shall leave these conjectural readings entirely to the arbitration of better judgments: but, I think, I may with modesty affirm every one of them to be more just, and better grounded, than that espoused by the editor; and that therefore the peacock may even be content to wait for another election.

LXVII. Various Reading and
Pointing
Act III, Scene 8. P. 415.

Oh wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother .
But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother-
admiration? (III, 11, 340-342.)

Correct, as some of the better books exhibit it:

Oh wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother!--
But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's
admiration?

LXVIII. Various Reading.
Act III, Scene 8. P. 416.

Hamlet: Methinks it is like an *ouzle.
Polonius: It is black like an ouzle. (III, 11, 396-397.)
*An Ouzle, or blackbird, it has been printed by
mistake a "weasel," which is not black. (Pope's note.)

I have nothing to object against this alteration by Mr. Pope; or, why an "ouzele" may not be as proper as a "weasel": but I am afraid his reasoning, that "it has been printed by mistake a weasel, because a weasel is not black," will not be altogether so incontestible; when we come to see that the second edition in folio, and several other of the copies have a various reading, in which there is not the least intimation of blackness. There, you read it,

Hamlet: Methinks, it is like a weasel.

Polonius: It is BACK'D like a weasel.

LXIX. False Printing.
Act III, Scene 8. P. 416.

Hamlet: Then will I come to my mother by and by; they fool me to the top of my bent. I will come by and by. Leave me, friends. I will say so. By and by is easily said. (III, ii, 400-405.)

We have already, in the course of these remarks, conversed with a place or two, which have given reason to presume, that, if corrected at all, they could be corrected only by the servants at the press. Here again is a passage so confused, and so indiscriminately printed, that it furnishes a strong suspicion of never having been revised by the editor. Could so nice a judge as Mr. Pope pass over such absurd stuff as is jumbled here together, and not observe a fault that is so plain and palpable? Correct it with all the editions that I have ever seen, except

the quartos of 1637 and 1703, in which the text is likewise shuffled and faulty:

Hamlet: Then will I come to my mother by and by.--
They fool me to the top of my bent.--I will
come by and by.
Polonius: I will say so. (Exit Polonius)
Hamlet: By and by is easily said. (Exeunt Rosencrantz
and Guildenstern)

LXX. Omission Supplied.
Act III, Scene 8. P. 417.

I will speak daggers to her, but use none.
My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites!
(Exit)
(III, 11, 414-415.)

The editor might have taken notice that a couplet follows here, in several of the printed copies, which he mistrusted not to be Shakespeare's. I will not warrant the lines to be his, but they are obsolete enough in the phrase to be so; neither are they so bad, as to be positively disputed. He has many couplets full as bald and poor in the diction; and these have an authority as old as the second folio edition, and have found a place in most of the more modern copies too. The verses are these:

I will speak daggers to her, but use none.
My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites!
How in my words soever she be shent,⁵⁸
To give them seals never my soul consent. (Exit.)

LXXI. False Printing.
Act III, Scene 9. P. 417.

⁵⁸Put to confusion, roughly treated. (T)

I like him not, nor stands it safe with us
To let his madness rage. (III, 111, 1-2.)

Restore, with all the editions,

To let his madness range.

LXXII. Correction from
Various Reading.
Act III, Scene 9. P. 417.

Most holy and religious fear it is,
To keep those many bodies safe, that live
And feed upon your majesty. (III, 111, 8-10.)

The last line here is lame, and shorter by a foot than it should be, without any necessity. The second folio edition is likewise faulty, for there the last line but one is defective, and the verses are placed thus:

To keep those many bodies safe,
That live and feed upon your majesty.

A different disposition of the verses, and of so long a date, gives a proof of a fault, and a sort of inlet to the cure.

The quarto edition of 1637, is the only one that I have observed, which makes the verses complete; and adds a fine and forcible emphasis to the sentence, by the repetition of one word; a figure (as I have before observed in the Remark No.

XI) very familiar with Shakespeare. Restore them thus:

Most holy and religious fear it is,
To keep those many, many, bodies safe,
That live and feed upon your majesty.

LXXIII. Conjecture.
Act III, Scene 9. P. 418.

Oh my offence is rank, it smells to heav'n,
It hath the primal eldest curse upon it,
[] A brother's murder. Pray, I cannot, &c.
(III, 111, 36-38.)

Here again the last verse halts in the measure, and, if I do not mistake, the sense is a little lame too. Was a brother's murder the eldest curse? Surely, it was rather the crime, that was the cause of this eldest curse. We have no assistance, however, either to the sense or numbers, from any of the copies. All the editions concur in the deficiency of a foot; but if we can both cure the measure, and help the meaning, without a disgrace or prejudice to the author, I think, the authority of the printed copies is not sufficient to forbid a conjecture. Perhaps, the poet wrote:

It has the primal eldest curse upon't,
THAT OF a brother's murder. Pray, I cannot, &c.

LXXIV. Emendation.
Act III, Scene 10. P. 420.

Up, sword, and know thou a more horrid TIME;
When he is drunk, asleep, or in his rage, &c.
(III, 111, 88-89.)

This, as I take it, is a sophisticated reading, espoused by Mr. Pope from the more modern editions. The second folio edition and the quarto of 1637, both read:

Up, sword, and know thou a more horrid HENT.

The editor has taken notice, at the bottom of his page, of this word, as a various reading; but, as I humbly presume, without guessing at the reason of it. 'Tis true, there is no such substantive, I believe, as "hent"; and yet the true word of the poet, I am satisfied, lies hid under it, by a slight literal corruption. Restore it therefore:

Up, sword, and know thou a more horrid BENT;
i.e. drift, scope, inclination, purpose, &c. and there is scarce any word more frequent than this with our poet, where he has occasion to express himself in those senses.

Much Ado About Nothing, Vol. I, p. 510.

They have the truth of this from Hero, they seem to pity the lady: it seems, her affections have the full BENT. (II, iii, 230-231.)

The Winter's Tale, Vol. II, p. 559.

To your own BENTS dispose you; you'll be found,
Be you beneath the sky. (I, ii, 179-180.)

Julius Caesar, Vol. V, p. 243.

Leave me to work;
For I can give his humor the true BENT;
And I will bring him to the Capitol. (II, i, 209-211.)

Troilus and Cressida, Vol. VI, p. 28.

I bring a trumpet to awake his ear,
To set his sense on that attentive BENT,
And then to speak. (I, iii, 251-253.)

Cymbeline, Vol. VI, p. 123.

But not a courtier,
(Although they wear their faces to the BENT
of the King's looks;) but hath a heart that is not
Glad at the thing they scowl at. (I, 1, 12-15.)

Romeo and Juliet, Vol. VI, p. 274.

If that thy BENT of love be honorable,
Thy purpose, marriage; (II, 11, 143-145.)

Hamlet, p. 380.

But we both obey,
And here give up ourselves in the full BENT,
To lay our service freely at your feet. (II, 11, 29-31.)

Hamlet, p. 416.

They fool me to the top of my BENT. (III, 11, 401.)

I am surprised the editor could remember this word from none of these instances, and a number more that lie interspersed in our poet; especially as it is a word of his own too in his Preface to the edition, page 4: "He hits upon that particular point, on which the BENT of each argument turns, or the force of each motive depends."⁵⁹ I did not think, when I began this work, to collate the more recent folio editions, especially the fourth, published in 1685, for I had it not then by me; but upon throwing my eye over it lately, I find it is there printed, as I have here corrected it--"a more horrid BENT." I thought myself

⁵⁹Smith, Eighteenth Century Essays, p. 45.

obliged to make this confession, that I might not be accused of plagiarism, for an emendation which I had made, before ever I saw a single page of that book.

LXXV. Various Reading.
Act III, Scene 10. P. 421.

Queen: Have you forgot me?
Hamlet: No, by the rood, not so;
You are the Queen, your husband's brother's
wife,
AND (would it were not so) you are my mother.
(III, iv, 14-16.)

If I understand all of what Hamlet should be presumed to say here, I think, the editor has adopted a reading directly opposite to the sentiment the poet would express. Surely, Hamlet does not so much wish that the Queen was not his mother, as that she was not his uncle's wife. He loves and honors her as his mother; and therefore, out of those regards, wishes she had not that disgrace upon her character, of having married his uncle, whom he knew to be his father's murderer. The passage, certainly, ought to be distinguished as the second folio edition, and several other of the better copies, lead the way:

Queen: Have you forgot me?
Hamlet: No, by the rood, not so;
You are the Queen, your husband's brother's
wife,
BUT, would you were not so!--You are my mother.

LXXVI. Omission Supplied.
Act III, Scene 10. P. 422.

Ha! have you eyes?
You cannot call it love; for at your age,
The hey-day of the blood is tame, it's humble,
And waits upon the judgment; and what judgment
Would step from this to this? [

] what devil was't
That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman blind?

(III, iv, 67-77.)

There is an addition, in several of the copies, which, though it has not the sanction of any older edition, that I know of, than the quarto of 1637, yet has so much of the style, diction, and cast of thought peculiar to our poet, that, I think, we may warrant it to be his, and not an interpolation of the players without that authority. Perhaps, it was not written when he first finished the play; or it was left out in the shortening the play for the representation, and so lost its place in the first editions, which were printed from the players copies. The verses are these:

Ha! have you eyes?
You cannot call it love; for at your age
The hey-day of the blood is tame, it's humble,
And waits upon the judgment; and what judgment
Would step from this--to this--? Sense sure you have,
Else could you not have motion; but that sense
Is apoplexed; for madness would not err;
Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so
thrall'd,

But it reserved some quantity of choice
To serve in such a difference. What devil was't, &c.

The same book exhibits another small addition, which is so

much inferior to the former, that I dare not so boldly vouch for its being genuine.

What devil was't,
That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman blind?
Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all,
Or but a sickly part of one true sense,
Could not so mope. (III, iv, 76-81.)

LXXVII. Various Reading
Restored and Explained.
Act III, Scene 10. P. 423.

Nay, but to live
In the rank sweat of an INCESTUOUS bed,
Stewed in corruption, honeying and making love
Over the nasty sty. (III, iv, 91-94.)

Here again, as I conceive, we have a sophisticated reading palmed upon us, probably from the players first, who did not understand the poet's epithet, and therefore conscientiously substituted a new one. If we go back, however, to the second folio edition (which is one of those collated by the editor) we have there a various reading, of which he is not pleased to take the least notice, though, as I verily believe, it restores us the poet's own word:

Nay, but to live
In the rank sweat of an ENSEAMED bed,
Stewed in corruption, honeying and making love
Over the nasty sty.

i.e. gross, fulsome, swinish bed. For, not to dwell too long upon an unsavory image, the sweat of any other bed of pleasure

will be as rank as that of an incestuous bed. But besides, when we come to the etymology, and abstracted meaning of "enseamed," we shall have a consonancy in the metaphors, and a reason for the poet's calling the bed a nasty sty. In short, the glossaries tell us that SEAM is properly the fat, or grease, of a hog: and though I do not remember the compound adjective from it used in any other place of the poet than this before us; yet he has elsewhere employed the substantive; and making Ulysses speak contemptuously of Achilles, who had sequestered himself from the Grecian captains and the war, he compares him tacitly to a hog in his sty, feeding on his own pride, and self-sufficiency:

Troilus and Cressida, Vol. VI, p. 49.

Shall the proud lord,
 That bastes his arrogance with his own SEAM,
 And never suffers matters of the world
 Enter his thoughts, save such as do revolve
 And ruminatè himself; shall he be worshippèd
 Of that we hold an idol more than him?

That were t'enlard his pride, already fat, etc.

(II, iii, 194-199; 206)

LXXVIII. False Pointing.

Act III, Scene 10. P. 426.

No, in despite of sense and secrecy,
 Unpeg the basket on the house's top,
 Let the birds fly, and like the famous ape []

To try conclusions [;] in the basket creep,
And break your own neck down. (III, iv, 192-196.)

The ape crept into the basket, to try conclusions; that is the meaning of the poet: but by the semicolon, wrong-placed, the sense is interrupted, and the substantive divided from its verb. It ought to be pointed, as some of the editions rightly have it:

and like the famous ape,
To try conclusions, in the basket creep,
And break your own neck down.

I have at last, I think, got through all the errors of this long act, save a slight one, in which Shakespeare is no ways concerned, committed by Mr. Pope, in a note of his own, upon the last speech of it. "The ten following verses," says he, "are added out of the old edition." It must for the future be printed, "The nine following verses, &c." for no more than that number are restored either from the old edition, or those modern ones which have inserted them.

LXXIX. Various Reading.
Act IV, Scene 1. P. 428.

We would not understand what was most fit,
But like the owner of a foul disease,
To keep it from divulging, LETS it feed
Ev'n on the pith of life. (IV, 1, 20-23.)

The syntax of this passage is evidently bad, for WE is the nominative to both verbs, and therefore they both must be plural.

Three of my impressions, viz. the quartos of 1637, and 1703, and that by Mr. Hughes, have it as it ought to be:

We would not understand what was most fit:
But like the owner of a foul disease,
To keep it from divulging, LET it feed
Ev'n on the pith of life.

LXXX. Omission Supplied and
Text Conjecturally Restored.
Act IV, Scene 1. P. 429.

Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends,
And let them know both what we mean to do,
And what's untimely done: [

] O come away,
My soul is full of discord and dismay. (IV, 1, 38-45.)

The quarto edition of 1637 had an addition in this place, which has been admitted into most of the modern editions; though it has not the authority of any earlier date in print, as I know of, than that quarto; and yet seems to bear the very stamp of Shakespeare upon it. The coin, indeed, has been clipped from our first receiving it; but it is not so diminished, but that, with a small assistance, we may hope to make it pass current. The reading, as it has hitherto come to us, is thus:

Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends,
And let them know both what we mean to do,
And what's untimely done.
Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,
As level as the cannon to his blank,
Transports his poisoned shot, may miss our name,
And hit the woundless air: O, come away;
My soul is full of discord and dismay.

'Tis plain here the sense is defective, as well as the verse imperfect, which introduces it: and from the additional lines beginning with the relative WHOSE, without any preceding nominative of which it is governed, it is as plain that the latter part of the foregoing hemistich fell out in the printing, or was so blind in the copy as not to be guessed at, and therefore necessarily came to be committed. I wonder, Mr. Hughes, who inserted this passage in his impression, and could not but see that something was wanting, did not at the same time endeavor to supply it. We have not, indeed, so much as the footsteps, or traces, of a corrupted reading here to lead us to an emendation; nor any means left of restoring what is lost but conjecture. I shall therefore offer only what the sense of the context naturally seems to require. I am far from affirming that I shall give the poet's very words, but 'tis probably that they were, at least, very near what follows in substance.

Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends,
And let them know both what we mean to do,
And what's untimely done. Happily, slander,⁶⁰
Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,
As level as the cannon to his blank,
Transports his poisoned shot, may miss our name,
And hit the woundless air. O, come away;
My soul is full of discord and dismay.

'Tis evident, this restores us the sentiment seemingly requisite,

⁶⁰Or rumor. (T)

and there is the more room to suppose it the very sentiment of our Shakespeare. The poet, I remember, has the same thought about the diffusive powers of slander in another of his plays; though he has expressed it with some difference, as well as with greater diversity of metaphor and allusion:

Cymbeline, Vol. VI, p. 176.

No, 'tis SLANDER,
Whose edge is sharper than the sword, whose tongue
Out-venoms all the worms of Nile, whose breath
Hides on the posting winds, and doth belie
All corners of the world. (III, iv, 35-39.)

LXXXI. False Pointing and
Various Reading Restored.
Act IV, Scene 3. P. 432.

Thou may'st not coldly set
Our sovereign process, which imports at full
By letters CONGRUING to that effect,
The present death of Hamlet. (IV, iii, 64-67.)

Methinks, there is an unnecessary tautology in this term "congruing," which is avoided by the various reading that possesses many of the editions, and is taken notice of by the editor at the bottom of his page. If the letters, importing the tenor of the process, were to that effect, they were certainly "congruing" but of no great use, when the sovereign process imported the same thing. Now a process might import a command, and letters conjuring a compliance with it be sent, and be of great efficacy.

where the execution of the command was to be doubted of, or might admit of a demur. I cannot therefore but think the other reading the truest; and the passage ought to be pointed thus:

Thou may'st not coldly set
Our sovereign process, which imports at full,
By letters CONJURING to that effect,
The present death of Hamlet.

Hamlet, who put a change upon his uncle's commission, and reversed the substance of it, 'tis likely, kept to the model of it in that which he drew up: and, where he recounts the contents of it to Horatio, we find him beginning his command by forcible conjurations implying the necessity of it. See page 460:

Hamlet: Wilt thou know
 Th' effect of what I wrote?
Horatio: Ay, my good Lord,
Hamlet: An earnest CONJURATION from the King,
 As England was his faithful tributary,
 As peace should still &c. (V, ii, 36-39; 41.)

Perhaps, the editor might dislike the word "conjuring" here, because the cadence of the verse requires that the accent should lie upon the antepenultima; and the sense, that it should lie upon the penultima. To explain this difference: when we intend by "conjure," to signify a solemn adjuration only, we lay the accent upon the last syllable; where we mean by it a magical invocation or effect, the accent falls upon the first. But our poet uses the word in both these senses promiscuously, without regard to this difference in the pronunciation; and, I believe,

generally, if not always, will be found to lay the stress upon the first syllable. So, again, in Hamlet, page 457:

What is he, whose griefs
Bear such an emphasis? whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wandering stars, and makes them stand
Like wonder-wounded hearers? (V, 1, 287-290.)

So, in Macbeth, Vol. V, p. 568.

I conjure you by that which you profess,
Howe'er you come to know it, answer me.
(IV, 1, 50-51.)

So, in Romeo and Juliet, Vol. VI, p. 268.

I conjure thee by Rosalines's bright eyes,
By her high forehead, &c. (II, 1, 17-18.)

And, again, in the next page:

my invocation is
Honest and fair, and in his mistress' name
I conjure only but to raise up him. (II, 1, 27-29.)

Indeed, but three lines before the last quoted instance, he seems to lay the accent upon the last syllable of this word by the necessity of the numbers; though the sense and acceptation, which it carries, require it to be pronounced with the accent on the first:

letting it there stand,
Till she had laid it, and conjur'd it down.
(II, 1, 25-26.)

Occasional Conjecture:

But, perhaps, either the copyists, or the press, by mistake, made a small variation from the author here; and this wrong

cadence is easily cured by only taking out the first it, which is of no use there; and extending the second verb to three syllables, by pronouncing it, without the apostrophe, at length; than which nothing is more frequent throughout our author's works: as

Till she had laid, and conjured it down.

LXXXII. False Pointing and
Correction from Various Reading.
Act IV, Scene 7. P. 440.

It shall as level to your judgment pierce,
As day does to your eye. (A noise within.)
(Enter Ophelia fantastically dressed, &c.)

Laertes: Let her come in. How now? What noise is that?
Oh heat [] dry up my brains [.] tears []
seven times salt []
Burn ON the sense and virtue of mine eye.
(IV, v, 151-155.)

Had I never seen any other edition of Shakespeare than Mr. Pope's, I could not have but suspected something wrong here, though I should not, perhaps, have known so easily how to rectify it. Just before the entrance of Ophelia, a noise is heard behind the scenes, viz. of some, that would have the young lady admitted; and of others, that would keep her out. Laertes's friends, as we may observe at the beginning of the preceding scene, where he rushes in by force upon the King, are set to guard the door; and they might be solicitous that Laertes should see his sister in her madness, to heighten his resentments for the death of his father. But it is certainly very absurd that Laertes should know who it

is without, upon the noise made; that Ophelia should come in; and then that he should desire, that "she" may come in; and then after all, that he should enquire into the meaning of the noise. I think, the second folio edition sets the whole passage right; and it seems to me that it ought to be corrected as that copy, and several others, which come after, exhibit it with more propriety thus:

It shall as level to your judgment pierce,
As day does to your eye.

(A noise within, "Let her come in.")

Laertes: How now? What noise is that?

(Enter Ophelia fantastically dressed, &c.)

Oh heat, dry up my brains; tears, seven times
salt,

Burn OUT the sense and virtue of mine eye.

'Tis natural for Laertes, who was in a riotous proceeding against the king, to be alarmed at the tumult without, least his party could not maintain the door: and as soon as he sees the occasion of the noise, in the admission of his distracted sister, his deep concern makes him wish at once that he were deprived both of sense and sight. But why, "burn ON the sense"? This reading, in Mr. Pope's impression, is, as I apprehend, a literal mistake of the press instead of "burn OUT"; and it is a mistake so easy to happen, that I think in another place the same error has passed through all the editions of Shakespeare; and, as I suppose, was not so much as suspected by our editor, because he has given us the passage as he found it:

Occasional Emendation:

In The Winter's Tale, Florizel, Prince of Bohemia, in a pastoral habit, addresses Perdita, an outcast princess of Sicily, but supposed of mean extraction; who was taken up an infant, in a desert of Bohemia, by a shepherd, and educated as his daughter. As the Prince is courting, caressing, and whispering her at a sheep-shearing feast, Polixenes, his father, and an old courtier attending him, come to the rural entertainment. They fix their eyes on the young amorous couple, and observing something in the virgin above her outward seeming and rank, fall to making these observations on them:

The Winter's Tale, Vol. II, p. 613.

Polixenes: This is the pettiest low-born lass that ever
Ran on the green-sward; nothing she does,
or seems,
But smacks of something greater than herself,
Too noble for this place.

Camillo: He tells her something,
That makes her blood look ON'T.
(IV, iv, 156-160.)

In the first verse a literal error is committed at press, for the other editions all read, as it ought to be:

This is the prettiest low-born lass.

But what sense is there in Camillo's speech, that "the Prince tells her something which makes her blood look on't"? This to me seems obscure even to the degree of being unintelligible. The Spectator, if I remember right, tells us somewhere a story of a

climate so cold at one season, that it congealed words in the pronunciation; and so soon as a thaw came, they were distinctly repeated and heard: But, I must own, I never heard of any words so condensed as to be visible to the eye, much less to the blood. If I understand anything of the poet's meaning here, he certainly wrote:

He tells her something,
That makes her blood look OUT.

i.e. that calls the blood up into her cheeks, and makes her blush. Perdita, but a little before, in the self-same page, uses a like expression to describe the Prince's sincerity, which appeared in the honest blood rising on his face:

Your praises are too large; but that your youth
And the true blood, which peeps forth fairly through it,
Do plainly give you out an unstained shepherd, &c.
(IV, iv, 147-149.)

LXXXIII. Various Reading Restored.
Act IV, Scene 9. P. 444.

I loved your father, and we love YOURself;
And that I hope will teach you to imagine,
(IV, vii, 34-35.)

My quarto editions of 1637 and 1703, have a different reading of this passage, which is espoused too by Mr. Hughes, and which I take to comprehend the genuine meaning of our poet:

I loved your father, and we love OURself;
And that I hope will &c.

I will now give the reasons for my being on this side of the

question. Laertes is complaining, that (because the King did not dare to pursue Hamlet to the death for killing Polonius, but had only sent him out of the way;) he has lost a father, and the opportunity of being revenged on his murderer. The King bids Laertes not to break his sleep about the want of his revenge; "for," says he, "I loved your father, and I love myself; and both these are my motives to that end." But how did the King's love of himself contribute to his desire of revenge on Hamlet? Thereon lies the stress of the alteration. Now there are two speeches of the King in this very scene, that persuade me to espouse this reading, and believe it preferable to that of the editor: For the King says expressly, that Hamlet had sought his life too; and that he was not so unapprehensive of danger, as to be negligent in defending himself from it.

Page 443:

Sith you have heard, and with a knowing ear,
That he, which hath your notable father slain,
Pursued my life. (IV, vii, 4-5.)

And page 444:

You must not think
That we are made of stuff so flat and dull,
That we can let our beard be shook with danger,
And think it pastime. (IV, vii, 29-32.)

LXXXIV. Omission Supplied.
Act IV, Scene 9. P. 444.

And that I hope will teach you to imagine--
(Enter Messenger.)

[
Messenger: These to you Majesty, this to the Queen.
King: From Hamlet? Who brought them?

(IV, vii, 35-39.)

The King, as the text here stands, had no other way of knowing that his letter was from Hamlet, than by knowing his character⁶¹ upon the superscription. And he had very little reason to credit the similitude of the hand, or to expect a salutation from Hamlet, whom, he knew well, he had despatched away for England, with an absolute order for his execution as soon as ever he should set footing there. The second folio edition, I think, sets right this passage, by a small addition, which, though it should have no earlier authority from the press, we have no reason but to think came from the poet's own hand.

And that I hope will teach you to imagine--
(Enter Messenger.)

How now? What news?
Messenger: Letters, my Lord, from Hamlet.
King: These to your Majesty: this to the Queen.
From Hamlet? Who brought them?

Now here the King asks the question, as he naturally might, with a surprise, and a reasonable distrust, circumstances considered, that he could have any letter from Hamlet: and, perhaps, the pointing would be juster, if the first interrogation was turned into a note of admiration:

King: From Hamlet! Who brought them?

⁶¹Handwriting.

LXXXV. False Printing.
Act IV, Scene 9. P. 445.

I will work him
To an exploit now ripe in my devise,
Under the which he shall not choose but fall:
(IV, vii, 64-66.)

It must be restored, as all the editions have it:

I will work him
To an exploit now ripe in my device,
Under &c.

To "devise," the verb, is written with an "s"; but the substantive from it always with a "c."

LXXXVI. Various Reading.
Act IV, Scene 9. P. 445.

He made confession of you,
And gave you such a masterly report
For art and exercise in your defence;
And for your rapier most especial,
That he cried out 'twould be a FIGHT indeed,
If one could match you. (IV, vii, 96-101.)

All the editions, that I have seen, except the duodecimo published by Mr. Tonson in 1714, with a small variation in the pointing, read this passage thus:

He made confession of you,
And gave you such a masterly report
For art and exercise in your defence,
And for your rapier most especially,
That he cried out, 'twould be a SIGHT indeed,
If one could match you.

LXXXVII. Omission Supplied.
Act IV, Scene 9. P. 445.

The quarto edition of 1637, has an addition immediately following the last quoted passage, which has been inserted in the quarto of 1730, and Mr. Hughes's impression; and which, if an interpolation by the players, has such a resemblance of Shakespeare, and exaggerates the description of Laertes's excellence at the sword so aptly, that I think it may be given to our author without any injury.

That he cried out, 'twould be a sight indeed,
If one could match you. The SCRIMERS⁶² of their nation,
He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor eye,
If you opposed them. Sir, this report of his, &c.
(IV, vii, 100-103.)

The two latter editions, which, as I said, have inserted this addition, instead of "scrimers" substitute "fencers." Perhaps, they might understand the first term, (but thought it too obsolete to be retained;) for the alteration is just and pertinent to the sense. Shakespeare, I am well satisfied, knew the propriety

⁶²SCRIMER is properly a gladiator, fencer, or one that stands on his guard. Skinner's Etymology (in the word SKIRMISH;) gives us a number of derivations of it, but all centering in the same point. Among the rest, he tells us, that the Ars Gladiatoria or science of defence, was called by the Dutch, SCHERM; by the Italians, SCHERMA and SCRIMA; and by the French, ESCRIME: As the Anglo-Saxons of old used to call a fencer or swordsman, SCRIMBRE; which (the b being left out, and a small metathesis made in the letters of the last syllable;) is the very word used by our author. (T)

of the old word, and its derivation. I think, his acquaintance with the Italian tongue neither has been, nor can be, disputed; as he has founded so many of his plots on Italian novels, and so often scatters remnants of that tongue through his plays.

LXXXVIII. False Printing.
Act IV, Scene 9. P. 447.

And then this "should" is like a spendthrift's sigh,
That hurts by easing; (IV, vii, 123-124.)

I look upon this to be a slight error of the press and revisal: for how does a "spendthrift's" sigh hurt more than any other body's? All the editions that I have seen, which insert this passage, concur in reading it, as undoubtedly it ought to be:

And then this "should" is like a spendthrift sigh,
That hurts by easing.

LXXXIX. Conjectural Emendation.
Act IV, Scene 9. P. 447.

He being remiss,
Most generous and free from all contriving,
Will not peruse the foils; so that with ease,
Or with a little shuffling, you may choose
A sword UNBATED, and in a pass of practice
Requite him for your father. (IV, vii, 135-140.)

We meet this word again, afterwards, in page 468:

The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,
UNBATED and envenomed.

The generality of the editions consent in reading, as the derivation of the word seems to require, UNBAITED. But still, I must confess, I want to be taught how "unbaited" comes to signify "baited"? UN is a negative particle (equivalent to the aneu of the Greeks;) which is prefixed to thousands of English words, and always deprives them of their native sense, making them signify the direct contrary. And whenever it is so prefixed, I do not know an instance either in our poet, in Spenser, or in Chaucer, that the compound word signifies what the simple word did before it was annexed. If I am not mistaken in this observation, or it has not its particular exceptions to which I am a stranger, perhaps, we may with a very slight change set our two passages right. Why might the poet not write:

A sword IMBAITED

And so in the other passage,

IMBAITED and envenomed.

To "imbait," is exactly what the Latins express by their inescare,⁶³ or esca illinere;⁶⁴ and we have a multitude of words, in our own idiom, compounded in the self-same manner: as, "imbar-go, imbark, imbase, imbattle, imbellish, imbezzle, imbibe, imbody,

⁶³To lure by means of bait.

⁶⁴To smear with bait.

imbolden, imboss, imbowel, imbroil, imbrue, imbue, imburse, immerge, immit, immolate, immure, impact, impair, inpale, &c."

Occasional Conjecture:

I can remember but a single passage, in all the works of Shakespeare, where a word, with the particle un prefixed to it, should seem to signify the same thing as the simple word would do; and even there I violently suspect the present reading. It is in his King John, Vol. III, p. 151, where Lady Constance advises the Dauphin of France not to sacrifice his oath and conscience to the temptations of a young fair bride. Her words are these:

Lewis, stand fast; the devil tempts thee here
In likeness of a new UNTRIMMED bride.

(III, 1, 208-209.)

I cannot conceive what the poet is supposed to mean here by "untrimmed," unless its opposite, as I take it, in sense, "trim"; i.e. neat, spruce, fine. But I cannot admit it, without some proof for conviction, to carry that signification. Again, there is no room surely to imagine that the poet intends to compare the Lady Blanche, as unmarried, to a vessel wanting either the proportion of her ballast or rigging, or not being complete in her trim, as the sea-phrase is; and therefore calls her "untrimmed." This would be a remote allusion with a vengeance; and, especially, when it is put in the mouth of a woman, too.

As I profess myself to have suspected the passage, so I endeavored as far as an unsupported conjecture, or two, would go, to reconcile it to an intelligible meaning. I say, a conjecture or two, for which I have no warrant or assistance from the copies; and therefore I shall urge them, barely as such, and leave them to be embraced, or renounced, at pleasure. If it did not depart too widely from the present text, to make such a correction reasonable, it is not impossible but the poet might have written:

First Conjecture:

The devil tempts thee here
In likeness of a new UNTAMED bride.

i.e. a virgin-bride; a bride yet unbedded. I cannot, indeed, recollect any instance, in which the poet has ever taken the liberty of using this epithet in that metaphorical sense: but it is a sense, in which I am sure he may be borne out, and justified, by the usage of other languages. An "untamed bride" exactly amounts to what the Latins called virgo indomita; which I believe they borrowed from the parthenos adamastos of the Greeks; that is, a bride "untasted, unenjoyed." And it will be no new doctrine, to say, that temptation and desire are generally heightened in man by that circumstance.

But I observe that "trim" is used as an epithet by our author, to signify not only "neat, spruce, &c" but substantively

too, for a peculiar quaintness and elegance of habit:

King Henry IV, Part I, Vol. III, p. 200.

When I was dry with rage, and extreme toil,
Breathless and faint, leaning upon my sword,
Came there a certain lord, neat, TRIMLY dressed;
Fresh as a bridegroom, &c. (I, iii, 31-34.)

Cymbeline, Vol. VI, p. 181.

and forget
Your laborsome and dainty TRIMS, with which
You made great Juno angry. (III, iv, 166-168.)

And he employs it besides to signify personal beauty, and the
hue and brightness of colors. So in his poem of Venus and

Adonis:

The flowers are sweet, their colors fresh and TRIM,
But true sweet beauty lived, and died, in him.
(1079-1080.)

Second Conjecture:

It is not improbable therefore, that the passage before
us ought to be restored thus:

Lewis, stand fast; the devil tempts thee here
In likeness of a new BETRIMMED bride.

i.e. adorned, and decked with charms. It is familiar with our
poet to use the word "betrim" in these senses; and it is certain-
ly of Saxon derivation; among whom getrymmed signified "neat,"
"fine," "finished, &c." The transmutation of g into b was custo-
mary in words of Saxon original; as gewarian, to "beware"; ge-
leafan, to "believe," &c.

Third Conjecture:

But if "betrimmed" may seem to any to depart too far from the traces of the text, as it now stands, I will propose another correction that requires but a very minute change, and comes up to the sense of the former; as,

Lewis, stand fast; the devil tempts thee here
In likeness of a new and TRIMMED bride.

i.e. of a new bride, and one, as I said before, decked with all the charms of personal beauty.

I have hinted above, that I remembered but a single passage in our author, where a word, with the particle "un" prefixed to it, should seem to signify the same thing as the simple word would do: but I find since, there are some other instances of this kind; one, at least, in which Shakespeare is countenanced by the usage of other writers: some, in which his present reading is certainly to be disputed, and therefore ought to be corrected:

King Henry VIII., Vol. IV, p. 487.

for where I'm robbed and bound,
There must I be unloosed, &c. (II, iv, 146-147.)

'Tis evident here, that "unloosed" signifies "loosed"; and so we find it used by other writers. To go no farther for authorities than the translation of our New Testament, there is a passage where in three of the Evangelists, the word "unloosed" is made to mean "loosed";--"Whose shoe-latchet I am not worthy to

unloose, &c."⁶⁵ This term therefore, without any more ado, must be admitted equivocal in its signification. But let us try our author upon another doubtful passage, and then I have done with this remark. I observe he uses the term, to "bonnet," in the sense of to "pull off the cap to."

Coriolanus, Vol. V, p. 130.

He hath deserved worthily of his country; and his ascent is not by such easy degrees as those who have been supple and courteous to the people, bonnetted without any further deed to heave them at all into their estimation and report. (II, ii, 27-31.)

i.e. that have won the people's hearts, only by submission, and pulling off the hat to them. Now as "bonnetted" here manifestly signifies "pulling off" the hat; so, on the other hand, if you can believe our author's text, "unbonnetted" is in another place employed to mean "having the hat on."

Othello, Vol. VI, p. 482.

I fetch life and being
From men of royal siege; and my demerits
May speak, unbonnetted, to as proud a fortune,
As this that I have reached. (I, ii, 21-24.)

Will anybody pretend that the idiom of our tongue can admit "unbonnetted" here to intend, "with the hat on," as the sense of the place necessarily requires? I cannot help saying with Horace:

⁶⁵Matthew, 3:11; Mark, 1:7; and Luke, 3:16.

Credat Judaeus Apella,
Non ego.⁶⁶

Occasional Emendation:

In short, I dare affirm, the press, or the transcribers, have palmed a reading upon the author contrary to his intention. I am of opinion, that, to "bonnet," is equivocal, and signifies, as the context may require, either to "pull off," or "put on," the hat; but that, to "unbonnet," is always to "pull it off." I make no scruple, therefore, but that the author wrote thus:

I fetch life and being
From men of royal siege; and my demerits
May speak, and bonnetted, to as proud a fortune,
As this that I have reached.

XC. Correction from
Various Reading.
Act V, Scene 1. P. 450.

For here lies the point; if I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act; and an act hath three branches. It is AN ACT TO DO, and TO PERFORM, argal, &c.
(V, 1, 10-12.)

Very notably made out! If an act has three branches, as the honest clown here defines it to have, it would puzzle a good arithmetician to find them out from this reading. 'Tis true, the folio editions exhibit it thus; and so, indeed, does the duodecimo edition published by Mr. Tonson in 1714. But, surely, to

⁶⁶Let Apella the Jew believe it, not I. Iambics, 100-101.

"do," and to "perform," can be but two branches; and if we admit this for the true reading, then we ought to correct the passage: "And an act hath two branches; it is an act to do, and to perform." But the quarto edition of 1637, I believe, will instruct us to read the place exactly as the poet intended it.

For here lies the point; if I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act; and an act hath three branches; it is,-- to ACT,--to DO,--and to PERFORM,--argal, &c.

XCI. False Printing.
Act V, Scene 2. P. 456.

What is that they follow,
And with such maimed RIGHTS? (V, 1, 241-242.)

The church ceremonies, that are ordered either in marriages or funerals, always are written rites, (from ritus, in the Latin;) not rights. Correct therefore:

What is that they follow,
And with such maimed RITES?

The same literal mistake, I find, is made in The Tempest, Vol. I, p. 55:

If thou dost break her virgin knot, before
All sanctimonious ceremonies may
With full and holy right be ministered, &c.
(IV, 1, 15-17.)

Where, likewise it must be restored, RITE. And so Mr. Pope at other times takes care to spell this word; as thrice in this very play of Hamlet:

Page 442:

No noble RITE, nor formal ostentation. (IV, v, 215.)

And, page 457:

Yet here she is allowed her virgin RITES. (V, 1, 255.)

And again, page 471:

And for his passage,
The soldier's music, and the RITES of war,
Speak loudly for him. (V, 11, 409-411.)

And so in Romeo and Juliet, Vol. VI, p. 274.

If that thy bent of love be honorable,
Thy purpose marriage, send me word tomorrow,
By one that I'll procure to come to thee,
Where, and what time, thou wilt perform the RITE.
(II, 11, 143-146.)

And in many other places.

XCII. Various Reading.
Act V, Scene 3. P. 461.

Horatio: How was this sealed?
Hamlet: Why ev'n in that was heaven ORDINATE.
(V, 11, 46-47.)

So the folio editions write this passage with the editor; and so I find, Mr. Tenson's duodecimo, so often mentioned, likewise exhibits it. But why a passive participle here, when the sense, I think, plainly requires an active? "Ordinate," must signify ordered, directed, agreed to; not ordering, directing, concurring with, as the poet's meaning seems to demand. My quarto editions, which are followed by Mr. Hughes in his impression, read, as I

verily believe the passage ought to be restored:

Horatio: How was this sealed?

Hamlet: Why ev'n in that was heaven ORDINANT.

XCIII. Omission Supplied.
Act V, Scene 3. P. 461.

Horatio: So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to't.

Hamlet: [They are not near my conscience; their defeat
Doth by their own insinuation grow.
(V, 11, 56-59.)]

The second folio edition begins Hamlet's speech with a verse, which we have no reason to believe is not Shakespeare's; and which, I think, is very essential to explain the two verses that follow it. I do not know whether Mr. Pope suspected, or overlooked it; but, I am sure, it may be restored without any detriment:

Horatio: So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to't.

Hamlet: Why, man, they did make love to this employment:

They are not near my conscience; their defeat
Doth by their own insinuation grow.

XCIV. Various Reading
Restored and Explained.
Act V, Scene 4. P. 464.

Hamlet: It is but foolery; but it is such a kind of game-giving as would perhaps trouble a woman.

Horatio: If your mind dislike anything, obey it. I will forestall their repair hither, and say you are not fit.
(V, 11, 225-229.)

I do not know whether the editor designed this reading, which, I find, possesses some of the editions besides; or whether it be a literal error of the press only. I must own, I am at a loss to understand the meaning of "game-giving." The quarto edition of 1703, and Mr. Hughes agree in reading, "But it is such a kind of boding, &c." 'Tis certain, they express the author's sense exactly in this word; but they have put a change upon him, for want of understanding the original. The second folio edition reads the passage, as it ought to be restored:

It is but foolery; but it is such a kind of gain-giving, as would, perhaps, trouble a woman.

To "gain-give," is to distrust, or, as we more vulgarly express it, to misgive. It is of Saxon derivation, among whom gean signified "against"; and so we at this day use "gain-say," to imply contradict, say against.

XCV. Various Reading
Restored and Asserted.
Act V, Scene 5. P. 466.

And in the cup an ONYX shall he throw,
Richer than that which four successive kings
In Denmark's crown have wore. (V, 11, 283-285.)

So again, p. 468.

Drink off this potion: is the ONYX here?
(V, 11, 337.)

I find, this reading possesses several of the editions, and even that of the accurate Mr. Hughes. I do not know upon what authority it first obtained; but it seems evident to me, whoever introduced it, did not mind to expound the author by himself; which is the surest means of coming at the truth of his text. The second folio edition has it in both places:

And in the cup an UNION shall he throw,
Richer than that, &c.

And so in the second passage:

Drink off this potion; is thy UNION here?

Mr. Pope, indeed, takes notice of this as a various reading, but in both places substitutes "onyx." I am clearly for the "union" being restored; and shall submit my reasons for it to judgment. An onyx, as we may find from Pliny and the other naturalists, was a small stone gem; and was likewise a coarser species of lucid stone, of which they made both columns and pavements for ornament. An union is a fine sort of pearl, so called, either because it is found single, or because it resembles an onion in shape, &c. But the etymology of the name is of no consequence here. I will transcribe the King's whole speech, by which it will appear for what, and upon what terms, he promises to throw a jewel into the cup; and after that another short speech, from

which I believe it will be apparent, that "union" ought to be restored instead of "onyx":

Set me the stoops of wine upon that table:
If Hamlet give the first or second hit,
Or quit in answer of the third exchange,
Let all the battlements their ordinance fire:
The King shall drink to Hamlet's better breath;
And in the cup an onyx shall he throw,
Richer than that which four successive kings
In Denmark's crown have worn. (V, 11, 278-285.)

Well; Hamlet and Laertes immediately fall to play with the foils; Hamlet gives Laertes the first hit; and the King thereupon, in performance of his promise, says:

Stay, give me drink: Hamlet this PEARL is thine;
Here's to thy health; give him the cup.
(V, 11, 293-294.)

Now if an union be a species of pearl, as it certainly is; and if an onyx be a transparent gem, quite differing in its nature from pearls; the King saying that Hamlet has earned the pearl, I think, amounts to a demonstration, that it was an union-pearl he meant to throw into the cup; and that therefore, as I said before, union ought to be restored into the poet's text; and onyx cashiered as a spurious reading. Besides, if I am not mistaken, neither the onyx, nor sardonyx, are jewels, which ever found place in an imperial crown.

XCVI. Various Reading.
Act V, Scene 6. P. 470.

Oh proud death!
 What feast is towered in thine ETERNAL cell,
 That thou so many princes at a shot
 So bloodily hast struck? (V, ii, 375-378.)

I can see no great propriety here in this epithet of "eternal"; nor does it communicate any image suitable to the circumstance of the havoc, that Fortinbras looks on, and would represent in a light of horror. He, upon the sight of so many dead bodies, exclaims against death, as an execrable, riotous destroyer; and as preparing to make a savage and hellish feast. The quarto edition of 1637 seems to give us an epithet more forcible, and peculiar to this sense of action.

Oh proud death!
 What feast is towered in thine INFERNAL cell,
 That thou so many princes at a shot
 So bloodily hast struck?

XCVII. Correction from
 Various Reading.

Fortinbras: Let four captains
 Bear Hamlet like a soldier OFF the stage;
 (V, ii, 406-407.)

As errors made their appearance very early in this play, so they keep their ground to the very close of it. Why "bear" Hamlet OFF the stage? I meet with this reading nowhere but in the fourth folio edition; and in the duodecimo published by Mr. Tonson which does not much out-do the other in correctness. Surely, Fortinbras cannot be supposed to consider either himself, or

Hamlet, here, as actors before an audience; and upon the stage of a theatre. The poet must very strangely forget himself, to be guilty of such an absurdity: but I daresay, he may be cleared from a suspicion of it. In short, the case is this: Hamlet, upon the point of death, conjures Horatio, who was desirous to have poisoned himself, to relinquish those thoughts, and to live, and by a true representation of occurrences, rescue his character and memory from scandal.

Page 469:

Oh, good Horatio, what a wounded name,
Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me!
If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity awhile,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,
To tell my tale. (V, ii, 355-360.)

Horatio, in obedience to this command, desires Fortinbras will order, that the dead bodies may be placed on a public stage, or scaffold, and he will speak to the business of their disastrous deaths.

Page 470:

Give order that these bodies
High ON A STAGE be placed to the view,
And let me speak to the yet unknowing world
How these things came about. (V, ii, 388-391.)

Nay, and he desires that this may be done with all possible despatch, lest, through a delay, any further accidental mischance might intervene.

But let this same be presently performed,
Ev'n while men's minds⁶⁷ are wild, lest more mischance
On plots and errors happen. (V, 11, 404-406.)

Fortinbras likes the proposal, expresses himself in haste to hear what Horatio has to say; and is for convening the noblest persons of the state to the audience of it. There is no doubt, therefore but we ought to restore this passage, as all the better editions have it:

Fortinbras: Let four captains
 Bear Hamlet like a soldier TO the stage;

that is, to the stage, or scaffold, from whence Horatio desired to explain the casual and plotted calamities, that had befallen them in the persons of their princes.

⁶⁷It is in Mr. Pope's edition, by a fault of the press, men minds. (T)

SHAKESPEARE RESTORED:

THE APPENDIX

The examination of this single play has driven out into such a length, that I am almost afraid to think of an Appendix to it. But I have tied myself down by express engagement, at my setting out; and I am satisfied, unless an author acquits himself very badly, the public never care to bate¹ him his promises. I undertook, I think, boldly to prove, that, whatever errors occurred in Hamlet, errors of the same species should be found in the other plays, throughout the volumes. 'Tis evident, the faults of that play have branched out into many classes: and I have an ample stock of matter before me, to make good my assertion upon every individual species. As this is but a specimen, I shall be excused from pointing out those innumerable literal faults of the press, which every reader can correct, that does

¹To except (OMI), to remit.

but throw his eye over the passages. As to the faults of pointing too, I shall confine myself to remark on such only, in which the sense is palpably injured; in which the editor has followed the old printed copies, and in which he has either not seemed to suspect a fault, or not understood how to rectify it.

The design of this work was an honest endeavor to restore Shakespeare from the corruptions, that have taken place in all his editions: and, to this end, I gave it as my opinion, that an editor of him, ought to be a critic upon him too. The want of originals reduces us to a necessity of guessing, in order to amend him; but these guesses change into something of a more substantial nature, when they are tolerably supported by reason or authorities. There is certainly a degree of merit in a good conjecture; though it be not so thoroughly satisfactory and convincing, as the party, who advances it, flatters himself it must be. This calls to my mind a sentiment in an old Latin verse, though I do not remember at present to what author we owe it:

Bene qui coniectet, vatem hunc perhibebo optimum.²

I am far from entertaining so vain a hope, that every conjecture, which I have ventured to make, shall be followed with the concurrence and applause of the readers: but I may dare to

²I shall always assert that the best guesser is the best prophet. Cicero, De Divinatione, II, 5.

assert, some of them are so well-grounded and certain, that they renew in me a wish, that Mr. Pope had proposed to himself to enter upon this province. This would naturally have led him to weigh every line of his author with that care and judgment, that, I believe, then he would have retracted some few of those conjectures which he has made; and in which he seems to have erred, either from want of duly considering the poet, or of a competent knowledge of the stage. The cause of Shakespeare is here engaged, and the restitution of him concerned; and therefore I must beg Mr. Pope's pardon for contradicting some of his conjectures, in which he has mistaken the meaning of our author. No other cause, but this, should provoke me to run so bold a risk; and if I have the ill fortune to deceive myself in the attempt, I shall willingly submit to own myself, (as Hamlet says to Laertes,) his foil in my ignorance.³

The exceptionable conjectures of the editor, I think, may be ranged under these heads: as, where he has substituted a fresh reading, and there was no occasion to depart from the poet's text; where he has maimed the author by an unadvised degradation; where he has made a bad choice in a various reading, and degraded the better word; and where he, by mistaking the

3v, 11, 266.

gloss of any word, has given a wrong turn to the poet's sense and meaning.

Of the first species of these I shall produce but a single instance, because my defence of the poet will take up some room: but, I am in hope, the novelty of the subject, and the variety of the matter, will make it not appear too tedious. The passage, upon which I make my observation, is this:

I. New Reading Disputed and Text Defended:

Troilus and Cressida, Vol. VI, p. 42.

Paris and Troilus, you have both said well;
And on the cause and question now in hand
Have glossed but superficially; not much
Unlike young men, whom GRAVER SAGES think
Unfit to hear moral philosophy. (II, ii, 163-167.)

The editor, I remember, in his Preface, speaking of the method taken in his edition, tells us that "the various readings are fairly put in the margin, so that everyone may compare them"; and those he has "preferred into the text are constantly ex fide codicum, upon authority."⁴ I heartily beg the pardon of this gentleman, if, through ignorance, I shall assert a falsehood here, in being bold to say, that this may be called an exception to his rule; that "graver sages" is preferred into the text without any authority, and that all the printed copies read the

⁴Page 22. (T) Smith, Eighteenth Century Essays, p. 57.

passage thus:

not much
Unlike young men, whom ARISTOTLE thought
Unfit to hear moral philosophy.

Anachronism Considered:

'Tis certain, indeed, that Aristotle was at least eight hundred years subsequent in time to Hector; and therefore the poet makes a remarkable innovation upon chronology. But Mr. Pope will have this to be one of those palpable blunders, which the illiteracy of the first publishers of his works has fathered upon the poet's memory, and is of opinion that it could not be of our author's penning; "it not being at all credible, that these could be the errors of any man who had the least tincture of a school, or the least conversation with such as had."⁵ 'Tis for this reason, and to shelter our author from such an absurdity, that the editor has expunged the name of Aristotle, and substituted in its place "graver sages." But, with submission, even herein he has made at best but half a cure. If the poet must be fettered down strictly to the chronology of things, it is every whit as absurd for Hector, to talk of philosophy, as for him to talk of Aristotle. We have sufficient proofs, that Pythagoras was the first who invented the word philosophy, and called himself a

⁵Preface, p. 14. (T) Smith, p. 52.

philosopher: and he was nearly six hundred years after the date of Hector, even from his beginning to flourish. 'Tis true, the thing, which we now understand by philosophy, was then known; but it was only till then called knowledge and wisdom. But to dismiss this point; I believe this anachronism of our poet, (and, perhaps, all the others that he is guilty of,) was the effect of poetic license in him, rather than ignorance.

Anachronisms Familiar with Shakespeare:

It has been very familiar with the poets, of the stage especially, upon a supposition that their audience were not so exactly informed in chronology, to anticipate the mention of persons and things, before either the first were born, or the latter thought of. Shakespeare again, in the same play compares the nerves of Ajax with those of "bull-bearing Milo of Crotona,"⁶ who was not in being till six hundred years after that Greek; and was a disciple of Pythagoras. Again, Pandarus, at the conclusion of the play, talks of a "Winchester-geese."⁷ Indeed, it is an address to the audience; and then there may be an allowance, and greater latitude for going out of character. Again, in Coriolanus

⁶II, 111, 258.

⁷V, x, 55.

Menenius talks of Galen,⁸ who was not born till the second century of the Christian era; and the very hero of that play talks of the grievance that he must stoop to, in begging voices of Dick and Hob,⁹ names which I daresay the editor does not imagine, that shakespeare believed were ever heard of by that Roman. From his many plays founded on our English annals, and the many points of history accurately transmitted down in them, I suppose it must be confessed that he was intimately versed in that part of reading: yet, in his King Lear, he has ventured to make Edgar talk of the curfew,¹⁰ a thing not known in Britain, till the Norman invasion. In his King John he above fifty times mentions cannons, though gunpowder was not invented till above a century and a half after the death of that monarch; and what is yet more singular, (as he could not be a stranger to the date of a remarkable man, who lived so near his own time;) twice in the story of Henry VI he makes mention of Machiavelli as a subtle politician: though, 'tis very well known, he was chief counsellor to the wicked Cesare Borgia, and a favorite to the Popes Leo X and Clement VII, the

⁸II, 1, 128.

⁹II, 111, 123.

¹⁰III, 1v, 121.

latter of whom did not come to the Papal Chair till the fifteenth year of King Henry VIII.

All these transgressions in time therefore, as I said before, are liberties taken knowingly by the poet; and not absurdities flowing from his ignorance. There is one passage, I remember, in our author, in which, if I am not mistaken, he may be presumed to sneer at his own licentiousness in these points. It is in his King Lear: The King's Fool pronounces a sort of doggerel prophecy; and as soon as he has finished it, cries, "This prophecy Merlin shall make, for I do live before his time."¹¹

Nor have these liberties been taken alone by Shakespeare among our own poets. In The Humorous Lieutenant of Beaumont and Fletcher, all the characters of which play are the immediate successors of Alexander the Great: Demetrius, Prince of Macedon, comes out of his chamber with a pistol in his hand, above fifteen hundred years before fire-arms were ever thought of. So, in the Oedipus of Dryden and Lee, there is a mention of the machines in the theatre at Athens; though neither plays, nor theatres, were so much as known to the world till above five hundred years after that prince's days. And yet I daresay, neither Beaumont and Fletcher ever supposed, or thought to make their audiences believe

¹¹III, ii, 95.

that pistols were used in Demetrius' time; nor were Dryden and Lee so ignorant in dramatic chronology, as to suppose tragedy of as early a date as Oedipus.

But that the poets of our own nation may be justified in these liberties by examples of the Ancients, I will throw in a few instances of the like sort from their predecessors in the art at Greece. The great Sophocles, in his Electra, supposes that Orestes was thrown from his chariot, and killed, at the Pythian games; which games, as the scholiast tells us, were not instituted till six hundred years afterwards by Triptolemus. And frequent instances occur in Athenaeus, that show, beyond exception, how free the comic poets made with chronology. Alexis, in his comedy called Hesione, introduces Hercules drinking out of a Thericlean cup; now this was a species of cup, invented by Thericles a Corinthian potter, who was contemporary with Aristophanes, above eight hundred years after the period of Hercules. Anaxandrides, in his Protesilaus, a hero that was killed by Hector, brings in Hercules again, and talks of Iphicrates the Athenian general, and Cotys the Thracian king, both living in the poet's own days. And Diphilus, in his Sappho, makes Archilochus, and Hipponax, both address that poetical lady, though the first was dead a century before she was born; and though she was dead

and rotten before the latter was born.

If these instances of transgression in time may go any way towards acquitting our poet for the like inconsistencies, I will at any time engage to strengthen them with ten times the number, fetched from the writings of the best poets, ancient and modern, foreign and domestic.

II. Degraded Passage Restored:

I come now to consider a degraded passage, by which I think we may safely affirm the poet's sense to be maimed. It may be very justly said of Shakespeare's style, as he himself says of the web of human life, it "is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together."¹² And therefore it must be owned, Mr. Pope has very often with great judgment thrown out of the text such low trash, as is unworthy of the poet's character, and must disgust a reader who is desirous to be pleased. But if unhappily some of his mean conceits are so intermingled either with the business, or the sense of the context, that they cannot be rejected without leaving an imperfection, there we must dispense with¹³ them; and content ourselves to be sorry for the levity of the author's pen, or the vice of the times that forced him to bring in such bald

¹²All's Well that Ends Well, IV, 111, 83-84.

¹³Put up with. OED.

witticisms. Let us now examine the editor's rule in making these degradations. "Some suspected passages," says he, "which are excessively bad, (and which seem interpolations, by being so inserted that one can entirely omit them without any chasm or deficiency in the context,) are degraded to the bottom of the page; with an asterisk referring to the places of their insertion."¹⁴

I am afraid, all the degraded passages are not thrown out with that due care, but that there is left an actual deficiency in the context for want of their insertion. As for example:

In Troilus and Cressida, Vol. VI, p. 87. Antenor, the Trojan, a prisoner of the Greeks, being agreed to be exchanged for Cressida the daughter of Calchas, Diomede is sent from the Greeks to bring her from Troy; and upon her arrival at the Grecian camp with him, she receives a welcome from the princes.

Agamemnon: Is this the Lady Cressida?

Diomede: Ev'n she.

Agamemnon: Most dearly welcome to the Greeks, sweet lady.*

Diomede: Lady, a word,--I'll bring you to your father.

Nestor: A woman of quick sense.

(Diomede leads out Cressida, then returns.) (IV, v. 17-18; 53-54.)

If I am not deceived, no less than three blunders are committed in this scene on account of Cressida. To set them right methodically, we must go back to the beginning of the

¹⁴Preface, p. 22. (T) Smith, p. 57.

scene, and examine the parties entering.

Page 86. Scene VIII

The Grecian Camp

Enter Ajax armed, Agamemnon, Achilles, Patroclus,
Menelaus, Ulysses, Nestor, CALCHAS, &c.

Now here the editor, for want of due care, runs into an error with the printed copies. If Diomede leads Cressida off, as the poet certainly means he should, in order to deliver her up to her father, 'tis plain, as the sun at noon-day, that Calchas cannot be supposed upon the stage: his name therefore must be expunged from among the names of those that are said to enter.

In the second place, is it not very absurd for Diomede to bring her on where so many princes are present, and preparing to give her a welcome, and then to lead her off abruptly, so soon as ever Agamemnon has said a single line to her? But it is still more absurd, when Cressida is made to be led off without uttering one single syllable, for Nestor to observe, that "she is a woman of quick sense"; as if she had said several witty things. The truth is, in the old copies, Agamemnon, Nestor, Achilles, Patroclus, and Menelaus, all kiss Cressida; and, after the line at which the asterisk is placed, there follows the quantity of a page of repartee betwixt Menelaus, Patroclus, Ulysses, and Cressida; in which Cressida bears her full share. Indeed, the matter of the dialogue is but poor, and consists of conundrums and low conceits; yet it

contains so much raillery on the part of Cressida, that there is some color for Nestor to say, "She is a woman of quick sense." This dialogue therefore, mean as it is, must be restored, or Nestor's character of her wit, from her saying nothing, will be as extraordinary as the two Kings of Brentford hearing the whisper, though they are not present, in The Rehearsal.

And, in the third place, Diomede is said to lead out Cressida, and then return. Now, no re-entry of him being marked in the books, this note, according to the custom of the stage, implies, that he only goes with Cressida to the scene, and comes back immediately; but it is intended that he should surrender her to her father's hand at his tent; which, let it have been ever so near to that of Agamemnon, must take up some little space of time; and therefore, I think, it ought to be said only thus,--Exit Diomede, leading Cressida:--and that, immediately before this verse in page 89:

Agamemnon: Here is Sir Diomede: Go, gentle knight, &c.
(IV, v, 88.)

The re-entry of Diomede ought to be marked: for thus above thirty verses are allowed for the interval of his absence; and the beginning of Agamemnon's speech seems to intimate, that Diomede comes back, and joins them, at the very instant he is uttering his words.

III. But if (as in marking the entrance of Calchas, when he ought not to be brought on) Mr. Pope has erred once by following all the printed copies, I will produce another instance from the same play, in which, I think, he is as plainly mistaken by departing from the whole set of editions.

Troilus and Cressida, Vol. VI, p. 12.

Pandarus: Good morrow, cousin Cressid: What do you talk of? * How do you, cousin? When were you at Ilium?
(I, 11, 44-46.)

* Good morrow Alexander, is added in all the editions very absurdly, Paris not being on the stage.

This is the note Mr. Pope has subjoined as his reason for throwing out of the text those words. I confess, I want a better reason, before I can think of following the editor's private opinion, in this case, against the authority of all the impressions. I am very well persuaded, notwithstanding Paris is not on the stage, there is no such absurdity as Mr. Pope has suspected, but that the words, "Good morrow, Alexander," ought to be honestly restored to the poet's text. In short, before the entrance of Pandarus, Cressida and her man are upon the stage together, discoursing about Hector's resentment against Ajax, and for what cause. And why might not Alexander be the name of Cressida's man? Paris had no patent, I suppose, for engrossing the name to himself. Besides, Pandarus being of a busy, fiddling, insinuating character, 'tis

natural for him, as soon as he has given his cousin the good morrow, to pay his civilities too to her attendant. And to this I will add another observation, which falls out very unluckily for the editor's remarks; that though Paris is, for the generality, in Homer called Alexander, yet, in this play of our author, by any one of the characters introduced, he is called nothing but Paris. I gave the play a fresh reading all through, on purpose to confirm myself in this observation: and it convinces me that, by Alexander, the poet here intended Cressida's man. Restore the passage therefore, as all the editors before read it:

Pandarus: Good morrow, Cousin Cressid: What do you talk of? Good morrow, Alexander;--How do you, Cousin? When were you at Ilium?

IV. Conjecture Refuted:

I will now proceed to consider a conjecture of the editor's, which I am very free to own is ingeniously urged: but there is something more than ingenuity required, to guess for the stage rightly. His conjecture is grounded upon a marginal interpolation, that had crept into the text of some later editions, in Dame Quickly's admirable description of the manner in which Falstaff died.

King Henry V. Vol. III, p. 422.

For after I saw him fumble with the sheets, and play with

flowers, and smile upon his finger's end, I knew there was but one way; for *his nose was as sharp as a pen.

(II, 111, 14-18.)

*His nose was as sharp as a pen, and a table of green fields.

These words, "and a table of green fields," are not to be found in the old editions of 1600 and 1608. This nonsense got into all the following editions by a pleasant mistake of the stage-editors, who printed from the common piece-meal written parts in the playhouse. A table was here directed to be brought in, (it being a scene in a tavern where they drink at parting,) and this direction crept into the text from the margin. Greenfield was the name of the property-man in that time who furnished implements, &c. for the actors. A Table of Greenfield's.

So far, the note of the editor. Something more than ingenuity is wanting, as I said before, to make these conjectures pass current; and that is, a competent knowledge of the stage and its customs. As to the history of Greenfield being then property-man, whether it was really so, or it be only a gratis dictum, is a point which I shall not contend about. But allowing the marginal direction, and supposing that a table of Greenfield's was wanting; I positively deny that it ever was customary (or, that there can be any occasion for it) either in the prompter's book, or piece-meal parts, where any such directions are marginally inserted for the properties, or implements wanted, to add the property-man's name whose business it was to provide them. The stage-necessaries are always furnished between the property-man and the scene-keeper; and as the direction is for the prompter's

use, and issued from him, there can be no occasion, as I said, for inserting the names either of the one, or the other.

But there is a stronger objection yet against this conjecture of the editor's, in the manner he supposes it; which he must have foreseen, had he had that acquaintance with stage books, which it has been my fortune to have. Surely, Mr. Pope cannot imagine, that when implements are wanted in any scene, the direction for them is marked in the middle of that scene, though the things are to be got ready against the beginning of it. No; the directions for entrances, and properties wanting, are always marked in the book at about a page in quantity before the actors quoted are to enter, or the properties to be carried on. And therefore Greenfield's table can be of no use to us for this scene.

I agree, indeed, with Mr. Pope, that these words might be a stage-direction, and so crept into the text from the margin: but, I insist, that they must be a direction then for the subsequent scene, and not for the scene in action. I do not care therefore if I venture my conjecture too upon the passage: I'll be sure at least, if it be not altogether right, it shall not be liable to the absurdity or the objection last struck at. I suppose, with the editor, that over against the words of the text, there might be this marginal quotation so close to them, that the ignorance of the stage-editors might easily give them admittance

into the text.

. . . . his nose was as
sharp as a pen.

Chairs, and a table
off. Green Fields.

The scene in action is part of *Dame Quickly*, the hostess, her house; and chairs and table were here necessary: the following scene carries us into the French dominions. I therefore believe this was intended as a direction to the scene-keepers, to be ready to remove the chairs and table so soon as the actors went off; and to shift the scene, from the tavern, to a prospect of "green fields," representing part of the French territories.

But what if it should be thought proper to retract both Mr. Pope's and my own conjecture, and to allow that these words, corrupt as they now are, might have belonged to the poet's text? I have an edition of Shakespeare by me with some marginal conjectures of a gentleman some time deceased, and he is of the mind to correct this passage thus:

for his nose was as sharp as a pen, and a' talked of
green fields.

It is certainly observable of people near death, when they are delirious by a fever, that they talk of moving; as it is of those in a calenture,¹⁵ that they have their heads run on green fields. The variation from "table" to "talked" is not of a very great

¹⁵A disease incident to sailors within the tropics, characterized by delirium in which, it is said, they fancy the sea to be green fields and desire to leap into it. OED.

latitude; though we may still come nearer to the traces of the letters, by restoring it thus:

for his nose was as sharp as a pen, and a' babled
of green fields.

To "babe," or "babble," is to mutter, or speak indiscriminately, like children that cannot yet talk, or dying persons when they are losing the use of speech.

V. Conjecture Disputed and Supplied:

The next conjecture, which I shall produce of the editor's, is likewise upon a corrupted passage of the author; but I am afraid his attempt to cure it is questionable for more than one reason.

King Henry IV, Part I, Vol. III, p. 211.

I am joined with no foot-land rakers, no long-staff-sixpenny strikers, none of those mad-mustachio-purple-hued-malt worms; but with nobility and tranquility; burgomasters and great *ONE-EYERS, &c. (II, 1, 80-84.)

*Perhaps, Oneraires, trustees or commissioners.

I must own, I am at a loss about this conjecture of Mr. Pope's. Gadshill, the highwayman, is here boasting to the chamberlain of the inn, that he is in no fear of hanging; because he is not linked with a gang of common little rogues, but countenanced and borne out in his occupation by the society of persons of great rank; alluding, to Prince Henry's sometimes joining with

them in their robberies. But the Prince was no trustee or commissioner; nor had they any such linked with them in their gang, as I can find anywhere hinted by the poet. Nor can I, indeed, conceive how "Oneraire" comes to signify (or, by whom besides the editor it is so interpreted) trustees or commissioners. The word is apparently of French termination; and must have its derivation from onus of the Latins; and accordingly the French says nefs onerares, to signify ships of burden, for carriage, &c., and it is always an adjective, and is only used, as I know, in those senses. There is another French word, which I think would have much more nearly served Mr. Pope's purpose, though not have amounted directly to his gloss; and that is, honorares, i.e. honorable persons, persons worthy of honor; and so chevaliers honorares, we find, were such as were knights by the privilege of their birth, and not in the right of any order. But I am of opinion that not even this word restores us the poet's text. For supposing Shakespeare himself acquainted with the meaning of the term, honoraire; we have no reason to think he would have put it in the mouth of so mean a fellow as Gadshill: no other part of his dialect savors of so much politeness, or knowledge in language. If I may interpose my conjecture, I believe the poet's word here was one much more vulgarly known, and adopted familiarly into our tongue; and besides, not greatly differing in the literal part,

and much less in the sound, from the present corrupted reading.

I cannot help suspecting that he wrote,

but with nobility and tranquility; burgomasters,
and great SEIGNIORS, &c.

As I have expressed myself desirous, as often as may be, to expound the author by himself, I espouse this my conjecture with the more willingness, because I find him coupling the same terms in another of his plays. See,

The Merchant of Venice, Vol. II, p. 5.

Your mind is tossing on the ocean,
There, where your argosies with portly sail,
Like SEIGNIORS and rich BURGHERS on the flood, &c.
(I, 1, 8-10.)

VI. Various Reading Disputed and Supplied:

I will next proceed to examine a few passages, in which, as I conceive, Mr. Pope has adopted a various reading for the worse, and rejected the better term. So, in

Cymbeline, Vol. VI, p. 197.

I do note,
That grief and patience, rooted in him both,
Mingle their *POWERS together. (IV, 11, 56-58.)

*Spurs.

I must own, I cannot tell for what reason, unless he did not remember the signification of the term, Mr. Pope has degraded "spurs" here, and substituted "powers" in its place. I am sure,

there is much greater consonancy of the metaphors, in "rooted" and "spurs"; than in "rooted" and "powers." For spurs do not only signify those sharp irons which we wear at our heels to make a horse mend his pace; and those horny substances upon a cock's legs, with which he wounds his antagonist in fighting; but likewise the fibers, or strings, which shoot out from the roots of plants and trees, and give them a fixure and firmness in the earth. Neither Skinner, Cotgrave, nor Bailey,¹⁶ remember to mention the word in this sense; but Shakespeare knew the propriety of the term, and, as Mr. Pope might have observed, has used it in this signification in his very first play;¹⁷

The Tempest, Vol. I, p. 66.

The strong based promontory
Have I made shake; and by the SPURS plucked up
The Pine and cedar. (V, 1, 46-48.)

I think this therefore a sufficient authority to restore this term in the passage now before us, as the most proper, and expressive of the poet's meaning.

VII. Various Reading Disputed and Supplied:

King Lear, Vol. III, p. 47.

¹⁶Stephen Skinner (1623-1667), English philologist; see note 2, pp. 244-245, above. Randle Cotgrave (d. 1634?) and Nathan Bailey (d. 1742), English lexicographers.

¹⁷Theobald means here simply that The Tempest is the first play in Pope's edition, not that it is Shakespeare's first play.

Strike her young bones,
*INFECTING airs, with lameness. (II, iv, 165-166.)

*You taking airs.

Here again, I think, the editor has espoused the worse reading, and degraded a term, that has the authority of most of the copies, as well as it is peculiar to the author's sense, and frequently used by him to signify, blasting, bewitching, &c.

So, afterwards, in the very play before us, Vol. III, p. 61.

Edgar: Bless thee from whirlwinds, star-blasting,
and TAKING! (III, iv, 59.)

So, in The Merry Wives of Windsor, Vol. I, p. 300.

And there he blasts the tree, and TAKES the cattle.
(IV, iv, 32.)

And so in Hamlet, Vol. VI, p. 351.

The nights are wholesome, then no planets strike,
No fairy TAKES (I, 1, 162-163.)

And in several other places: from which it is plain, that "to take," of old, not only signified to receive; but was equivalent to the attaquer of the French, and invadere of the Latins; to lay hold on, attack, invade.

VIII. Various Reading Disputed and Supplied:

King Lear, Vol. III, p. 55.

I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness;
I never gave you Kingdom, called you children,

You owe me no *SUBMISSION.

(III, 11, 16-18.)

*Subscription.

Here again the editor has degraded a term, which takes possession of the greatest part of the printed copies; and one which the poet chooses to use in other places, at least the verb of it, rather than the more common word "submit." So afterwards in this very play, Vol. III, p. 71.

If wolves had at thy gate howled that stern time,
Thou shouldst have said, good porter, turn the key;
All cruels else SUBSCRIBE. (III, vii, 63-65.)

So in Titus Andronicus, Vol. V, p. 485.

Advise thee, Aaron, what is to be done,
And we will all SUBSCRIBE to thy advice.
(IV, 11, 129-130.)

And so, in Troilus and Cressida, Vol. VI, p. 90.

For Hector in his blaze of wrath SUBSCRIBES
To tender objects; but he in heat of action
Is more vindicative than jealous love.
(IV, v, 105-107.)

IX. Various Reading Disputed and Supplied:

King Lear, Vol. III, p. 26.

Blasts and fogs upon thee!
Th' *UNTENDER woundings of a father's curse
Pierce every sense about thee! (I, iv, 321-323.)

*Untented.

I cannot help thinking here again, but that the degraded word, which is likewise in most of the copies, is the most expressive,

and conveys an image exactly suiting with the poet's thought. 'Tis true, "untender" signifies sharp, severe, harsh, and all the opposites to the idea of "tender." But as a wound "untented" is apt to rankle inwards, smart, and fester, I believe, Shakespeare means to intimate here, that a father's curse shall be a wounding of such a sharp, inveterate nature, that nothing shall be able to "tent" it, i.e. to search the bottom, or assist in the cure of it.

X. Various Reading Disputed and Supplied:

King Lear, Vol. III, p. 109.

Kent: No, my good Lord, I am the very man--

Lear: I'll see that straight.

Kent: That from your life of difference, and decay,
Have followed your sad steps.

Lear: You're welcome hither.

Kent: *'T'WAS no man else; all's cheerless, dark, and
deadly. (V, 111, 286-290.)

I am mightily deceived if Mr. Pope here again, by espousing this reading, enters into the poet's thought, which seems to be this: Kent having convinced the old King first that he was Kent, and then that he had attended him in disguise under his misfortunes, as his servant Caius; Lear, pleased with the information, says, "You're welcome hither"; but Kent, reflecting on the dismal accidents that surrounded them, says:

NOR no man else;

i.e. "Neither I, nor any man, can be said to be welcome hither, where the scene is all calamity." And I want no better proof to persuade me this is the genuine meaning, than the reasons which Kent immediately subjoins for his saying so: there can be no such thing as welcome here; for

all's cheerles, dark, and deadly;
Your eldest daughters have foredone themselves,
and desperately are dead. (V, iii, 290-292.)

XI. A Midsummer-Night's Dream, Vol. I, p. 145.

Theseus: Now is the *MOON used between the two neighbors.

Demetrius: No remedy, my Lord, when walls are so wilful to hear without warning.
(V, i, 209-212.)

*Now is the #moral down between the two neighbors.
Old edit.

#Mural.

A burlesque representation is made, in this odd play, of the loves of Pyramus and Thisbe; and one Flute, a bellows-mender, properly equipped, plays the part of the wall, through a cranny of which the two lovers were used to whisper their passion. This part of the interlude being over, the passage now under consideration immediately follows. But how can Theseus be supposed to speak of the moon, which has never yet entered? Or, what relation has Demetrius' reply, concerning Wall's being wilful, to

Theseus' speech about the moon? Sure, this would be playing at cross purposes. But I am very apt to think the poet wrote the passage thus:

Theseus: Now is the MURE ALL down between the two neighbors.

And then Demetrius' reply is apposite enough. What confirms me that it should be restored thus, is another passage afterwards:

Theseus: Moonshine and Lion are left to bury the dead.
Demetrius: Ay, and Wall too.
Bottom: No, I assure you, the WALL is down, that parted their fathers.

The mure (or, wall) perhaps is a substantive of the poet's own coining from murus in Latin. But whether he first employed this word in English, or no, 'tis certain he has used it in another of his plays; and, possibly oftener than once.

King Henry IV. Part II. Vol. III, p. 366.

Th'incessant care and labor of his mind
Hath wrought the MURE that should confine it in,
So thin, that life looks through, and will break out.
(IV, iv, 118-120.)

And so, in Troilus and Cressida, he styles the walls of Troy, the "immures."

and their vow is made
To ransack Troy, within whose strong IMMURES
The ravished Helen, Menelaus' Queen,
With wanton Paris sleeps: and that's the quarrel.
(Prologue, 7-10.)

XII. Various Reading Restored:

Othello, Vol. VI, p. 490.

Of being taken by the insolent foe,
And sold to slavery; of my redemption thence,
And WITH IT ALL my travel's history;*

*This line is restored from the old edition; it is in the rest: "And PORTANCE in my travels history, &c."

If "portance" be in itself a proper and significant term, and a term of our author's too, as it possesses all the other editions but the first, we have great reason to believe it was an alteration of the poet's own, and which he thought better than the first reading. Shakespeare was a fond imitator of Spenser's diction, who uses this word in the very sense required for it in the passage before us. See his Faerie Queene, Book II, Canto III, Stanza 21.

Eftsoon there stepped forth
A goodly Lady, clad in hunter's weed,
That seemed to be a woman of great worth,
And, by her stately PORTANCE, born of heav'nly birth.

Mr. Hughes, in his glossary upon this author, very rightly tells us that "portance" signifies behavior; from the French se porter, to behave oneself. What does Shakespeare make his Othello say more than this, that he told his mistress of his being taken a prisoner, his redemption, and his behavior in the whole history of

his travels? In the like signification we find him using this word in another of his plays:

Coriolanus, Vol. V, p. 142.

With what contempt he wore the humble weed,
How in his suit he scorned you! But your loves,
Thinking upon his services, took from you
The apprehension of his present PORTANCE, &c.
(II, 111, 229-232.)

I think therefore "portance" ought to be restored, as a reading of the poet's own choice.

XIII. Various Reading Restored:

I cannot say that in the passage, which now comes under consideration, the editor has designedly chosen the worse term; for, though there be a various reading, as he has taken no notice of it, we cannot say certainly whether he overlooked or despised it: but whichever was the case, I think, we may affirm, without scruple, that it ought to be restored to our author's text:

Troilus and Cressida, Vol. VI, p. 9.

When I do tell thee, there my hopes lie drowned,
Reply not in how many fathoms deep
They lie INTRENCHED. (I, 1, 49-51.)

Besides that, to "intrench by fathoms," is a phrase which we have very great reason to suspect; what agreement in sense is there betwixt "drowned" and "intrenched"? The first carries the idea

of destruction, and the latter of security; and this discordance, if I at all understand the author, absolutely destroys his meaning. All the editions, that I have seen, read the passage, as there is no question but it ought to be restored:

When I do tell thee, there my hopes lie drowned;
Reply not, in how many fathoms deep
They lie INDRENCHED.

"Indrenched" corresponds exactly with "drowned," and signifies immersed in the deep, or, as the poet in another place calls it, "ensteeped."

Othello, Vol. VI, p. 502.

The guttered rocks, and congregated sands,
(Traitors ensteeped to clog the guiltless keel;) (II, 1, 69-70.)

The editor, here, I do not know for what reason, subjoins a doubt whether it ought not to be "Traitors enured to clog, &c." I cannot see that there is any need to disturb the poet's text; his own word is very expressive, and his meaning as obvious, to wit, that rocks and shoals lurk under, and lie covered by the deep, treacherously to destroy vessels which happen to be thrown upon them.

XIV. Mistaken Gloss; and Emendation:

I shall now address myself to consider a few of the editor's glosses, in which he has either mistaken the meaning of the words he would explain, or, where they are equivocal, has

taken the wrong interpretation to the prejudice of the author's sense.

The Merchant of Venice, Vol. II, p. 8.

O my Antonio, I do know of those,
That therefore only are reputed wise,
For saying nothing; who, I'm very sure,
If they should speak, would almost *DAMM those ears,
Which, hearing them, would call their brothers fools.
(I, 1, 95-99.)

*Daunt.

I cannot pretend to account where Mr. Pope has met with the word DAMM to signify "daunt." I cannot find it ever so interpreted: but granting it should ever be used in that acceptation, I dare affirm that neither the word itself, nor its gloss, ought to have a place here. Why should one man's speaking foolishly be presumed to daunt another's ears? The discourse of a fool naturally makes us laugh at, or despise him, but does not, as I conceive, put a damp upon our spirits. I cannot but wonder the editor did not trace the author's thought in this place, as it is evident he did not, both by the text, and gloss upon it; but it leaves me the pleasure of explaining, beyond exception, a passage, which this ingenious gentleman did not so much as guess at. Upon the first reading, I immediately suspected it should be restored, as I since find the fourth folio edition, and some other more modern ones, happen to exhibit it:

who, I'm very sure
If they should speak, would almost DAMN those ears,
Which, hearing them, would call their brothers fools.

The author's meaning is directly this: that some people are thought wise, while they keep silence; who, when they open their mouths, are such stupid praters, that their hearers cannot help calling them fools, and so incur the judgment denounced upon them in the Gospel. It is very familiar with Shakespeare to allude to passages of Scripture; and it is plain to me, even to demonstration, that he had here before his eye this text of St. Matthew, 5:22, "And whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the Council: but whosoever shall say, thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire."

Because I would not assert anything, but what I would be willing to second with a proof, I'll subjoin a few instances, out of a great number that may be collected, in which our poet has an eye to Scripture-history; and others, in which he both alludes to, and quotes the very texts from Holy Writ.

In All's Well that Ends Well, Vol. II, page 445, he talks of Nebuchadnezzar's eating grass (IV, v, 21-22); in Love's Labor's Lost, Vol. II, page 104, of Sampson's carrying the city gates on his back (I, 11, 74-76.); in the Merry Wives of Windsor, Vol. I, page 308, of Goliath and the weaver's beam (V, 1, 23); in King Richard II, Vol. III, page 162, of Pilate's washing his hands

(IV, 1, 239); in the First Part of King Henry IV, Vol. III, pages 261-262, Falstaff's soldiers are compared to Lazarus, and to the Prodigal Son (IV, 11, 27; 37); and in the Third Part of King Henry VI, Vol. IV, page 7 (V, 1, 91) and in Hamlet, Vol. VI, page 391, there is an allusion to Jephthah's daughter (II, 11, 422-431).

I'll now quote a few passages in which texts are either, as I said, evidently alluded to, or literally quoted.

All's Well that Ends Well, Vol. II, p. 445.

Matthew, 7:13-14. I am for the house with the narrow gate, which I take to be too little for pomp to enter; some, that humble themselves, may; but the many will be too chill and tender, and they'll be for the flowery way that leads to the broad gate, and the great fire.
(IV, v, 52-57.)

Much Ado About Nothing, Vol. I, p. 548.

Genesis, 3:8. All, all; and moreover, God saw him when he was hid in the garden.
(V, 1, 181-182.)

Love's Labor's Lost, Vol. II, p. 136.

Matthew, 7:3. You found his mote, the King your mote did see;
But I a beam do find in each of three.
(IV, 111, 161-162.)

King Richard II, Vol. III, p. 180.

Matthew, 19:24. It is as hard to come, as for a camel To thread the postern of a needle's eye.
(V, v, 16-17.)

King Henry IV, Part I, Vol. III, p. 195.

Proverbs, 1:20. Thou didst well, for Wisdom cries out in the street, and no man regards it. (I, 11, 99-100.)

King Henry V. Vol. III, p. 448.

Proverbs, 26:11 and 2 Peter, 2:22.

Le chien est retoune a son propre vomissement, et la
truie lavede au bourbier. (III, vii, 68-69.)

Hamlet. Vol. VI, p. 464.

Matthew, 10:29. There is special Providence in the fall
of a sparrow. (V, ii, 230-231.)

XV. Mistaken Gloss; and emendation.

King Henry IV. Part I. Vol. III, p. 270.

Worcester: For I do protest,
I have not sought the day of this dislike.
King: You have not sought it, Sir? How comes it,
then?
Falstaff: Rebellion lay in his way, and he found it.
Prince: Peace, *CHEVET, peace. (V, i, 25-29.)

*Chevet, a bolster.

I entirely accord with Mr. Pope, that chevet is the French word
for a bolster; but I cannot so easily agree that chevet is
Shakespeare's word here. Why should Prince Harry call Falstaff
a bolster, for interposing in the discourse betwixt the King and
Worcester? With submission, he does not take him up for his un-
reasonable size, but for his ill-timed, unseasonable chattering.
I much rather think it ought to be restored, as the generality of
the editions have it, and as the gentlemen of the stage, I know,
constantly repeat it:

Prince: Peace, CHEWET, peace.

A CHEWET, or CHUET, is a noisy chattering bird; that sort of magpie which by the French is called goubelet. This carries a proper reproach to Falstaff for his meddling and impertinent jest; and besides, if the poet had intended that the Prince should flee at Falstaff on account of his corpulency, I doubt not but he would have called him a bolster in plain English, and not have wrapped up the abuse in the French word chevet.

XVI. Mistaken Gloss; and Emendation.

King Henry VIII, Vol. IV, p. 478.

and which gifts
(Saving your mincing,) the capacity
Of your soft *CHIVEREL conscience would receive,
If you might please to stretch it. (II, iii, 30-33.)

*i.e. tender, from cheverillus, a young cock, a chick.

It ought to be restored--cheveril conscience.--This word recurs in another place of our author concerning a wanton, playing wit.

Romeo and Juliet, Vol. VI, p. 281.

Oh, here's a wit of CHEVERIL, that stretches from an inch narrow to an ell broad. (II, iv, 87-88.)

But in neither of these passages is "cheveril" derived as the editor supposes. 'Tis true, in Bailey's dictionary, we are told that cheverillius was an old Latin word for a cockling, or young cock. I do not know from what authority he says this; for neither Calepine nor Vossius takes any notice of such a word.¹⁸ And to this

¹⁸Ambrogio Calepino (1435-1511), Italian lexicographer; Gerhard Vossius (1577-1649), German philologist.

I will produce a third passage from our author, which I presume will make it evident beyond a doubt, that "cheveril" must have a different derivation.

Twelfth Night, Vol. II, p. 505.

A sentence is but a CHEVERIL glove to a good wit; how quickly the wrong side may be turned outward.

(III, 1, 12-13.)

I never yet heard of any leather made of a cockerel's skin, and believe it will hardly come into experiment in Mr. Pope's, or my time. In short, Skinner, Cotgrave, and Bailey too, might have informed the editor, as the truth is, that cheveril leather is made of the skin of a kid, or goat; which was called by the Latins caprillus, caprellus, and capreolus; by the Italians, ciaverello; and by the French, chevereul; from which last, our word "cheveril" is immediately deduced; so that "cheveril" is tender, or stretching, from chevereul, a kid, or wild goat.

XVII. Mistaken Gloss; and Emendation.

This Appendix insensibly stretcheth out to such a compass, that I must be obliged to pass over from mistaken gloss, to faults of other kinds. I shall produce one more, however, which is made upon a word of a double signification, and where the editor has happened to take it in a sense, which I believe is very contrary to the poet's intention.

King Henry IV. Part II. Vol. III, p. 326.

Falstaff: Pistol, I would be quiet.

Pistol: Sweet Knight, I kiss thy *NEIF.
(II, iv, 199-200.)

*neif, from nativa, i.e. a woman slave that is born in one's house.

I admit, with Mr. Pope, that this is one of the constructions of the word "neif"; and, admitting it to be the proper one here, Mr. Pope must understand that Pistol would kiss Falstaff's domestic mistress, Doll Tearsheet. But I appeal to everyone that shall but read the scene over, whether this could possibly be the poet's meaning. There is a perfect fray betwixt Doll and Pistol; she calls him a hundred the worst names she can think of. He threatens to murder her ruff, and says, he could tear her; Bardolph would have him begone; but he says, he'll see her damned first: and Doll, on the other hand, wants him to be thrust down stairs, and says, she cannot endure such a fustian rascal. I should very little expect that these parties, in such a ferment, should come to kissing: and I am persuaded Shakespeare thought of no reconciliation: for the brawl is kept on, till it rises to drawing swords; and Pistol, among them, is hustled down stairs.

I cannot think any more is intended by the poet than this: that Falstaff, weary of Pistol's wrangling, tells him he would be quiet; and that Pistol, who had no quarrel with Sir John, but a sort of dependence on him, speaks the Knight fair, and tells him

that he kisses his fist; for so, it seems, the word "neif" likewise signifies. I wonder Mr. Pope did not remember this, when the same word (with a small variation in the orthography) had passed him in the second play of our author, A Midsummer-Night's Dream, Vol. I, p. 129.

Bottom: Give me thy NEIF, Monsieur Mustardseed.
(IV, 1, 20.)

And the editor there tells us, that neif, was a Yorkshire word for "fist."

The identity of sound may easily deceive us in the sense of two English words so almost the same; as well as the different termination of any two similar words, in any other language, may, without a particular care, and application to the context. For want of this caution and guard, I believe, I can name a signal instance, in which Mr. Pope has suffered himself to be deceived in his translation of Homer.

In the eighth book of the Iliad, just as Teucer has drawn his arrow to the head, and is going to let fly, Hector discharges a large stone at him, which both prevents its flight and disables the archer:

ton d'au koruthaiolos Ektor
Aueruonta par omon, othi kleis apoergei
Auchena te stethos te, malista de kairion estin,
Te'r epi oi memaota balin litho okricenti,
REXE DE OI NEUREN narkese de chair epi karto. (324-328.)

which passage Mr. Pope has thus translated:

There, where the juncture knits the chanel-bone,
The furious chief discharged the craggy stone:
The TENDON burst beneath the pond'rous blow,
And his numb'd hand dismissed his useless bow.

Eustathius,¹⁹ and all the learned world, concurred in a different construction of the passage, viz. that Hector with the stone broke Teucer's bowstring, and numbed his hand violently into the bargain. And, indeed, when I first read Mr. Pope's translation, I imagined that by a poetical license he had called the "bowstring" the "tendon," as in another place he takes the liberty to call it the "nerve": but his note, subjoined to show that Hector struck Teucer just about the articulation of the arm with the shoulder, which cut the tendon, or wounded it so, that it lost its force, soon convinced me that the translator had mistaken the meaning of his original.

It happens very unluckily, for the discovery of this mistake, that the same accident again happens to Teucer in the fifteenth book of the Iliad: his bowstring, indeed, is not broken by the stroke of a stone; but as he is directing his shaft against Hector, Jupiter, by an invisible means, causes it to burst, and the bow to fly out of his hand.

Os oi eustrephea neuren en amumoni toxo
REXE epi to eruonti. (463-464.)

¹⁹Eustathius of Thessalonica (d. 1193?), Byzantine classical scholar. Wrote commentaries on Homer's Iliad and Odyssey.

Here again the very same words--rexe oi neuren--are repeated, but the translator has rendered them as they ought to be.

At his full stretch as the tough STRING he drew,
Struck by an arm unseen IT burst in two.

Teucer, immediately disheartened at the disaster, complains of the loss of a bowstring, with which he hoped to do so much execution, and which he had but that morning affixed for the service of the day:

en oi edesa
Proion. (469-470.)

Eustathius says something so remarkable upon this place, that Mr. Pope could not possibly have made the mistake upon the former passage, if he had attended to the commentator's words here. Teucer observing that he had new-strung his bow that morning, says he, calls to his remembrance his former misfortune of having his bowstring burst by the stroke of a stone.

It is plain in the first passage Mr. Pope understands neuren in the sense of neuron or the nerve of the body. I cannot remember that it is ever employed in that signification by any author whatsoever: but this I know well and can assure Mr. Pope, if he has not yet observed it, that, as often as Homer has used neure either in the Iliad or Odyssey, it signifies for him nothing but a bowstring.

This is a digression from the business of Shakespeare, but one that a sameness of error naturally introduced; and I hope it will be pardonable, as it sets right a passage, in which many may be misled by the authority of the translator's name.

XVIII. Bad Pointing Rectified:

I shall now proceed to give a specimen of some few passages, in which the pointing is so insufferably bad, that the poet's sense is not only maimed, but quite stifled. And yet as the editor in these has followed the pattern set for him in the old editions, the continuation of error cannot be supposed through negligence, but because he would not please either to suspect a fault, or to indulge his private sense in curing it. There are so many signal blots of this sort left, that, to point them all, would be to extend this work to ten times the compass it has already taken up: I shall therefore only cull out such a parcel, as may demonstrate how far Shakespeare wants restoring in this particular.

Troilus and Cressida, Vol. VI, p. 74.

And thou shalt hunt a lion that will fly
With his face back in human gentleness:
Welcome to Troy--Now, by Anchises life,
Welcome indeed-- (IV, 1, 19-22.)

Thus this passage has all along been read, and never understood,

as I suppose, by any of the editors. The second and fourth folio editions make a small variation of the pointing, but do not at all mend the matter. I do not know what conception the editors have had to themselves of "a lion's flying in human gentleness": to me, I confess, it seems strange stuff. If a lion fly with his face turned backward, it is fighting all the way in his retreat: and in this manner it is Aeneas professes that he shall fly, when he is hunted. But where then are the symptoms of human gentleness? Mr. Dryden, in his alteration of this play from Shakespeare, has acted with great caution upon this passage: for not giving himself the trouble to trace the author's meaning, or to rectify the mistake of his editors, he closes the sentence at "with his face backward"; and entirely leaves out, "in human gentleness." In short, the place is flat nonsense as it stands, only for want of true pointing. I think, there is no question to be made, but that Shakespeare intended it thus:

And thou shalt hunt a lion, that will fly
With his face back.--In human gentleness,
Welcome to Troy;--Now, by Anchises life,
Welcome indeed--

Aeneas, as soon as ever he has returned Diomedes's brave, stops short and corrects himself for expressing so much fury in a time of truce; from the fierce soldier there comes the courtier at once; and, remembering his enemy as a guest and an ambassador,

welcomes him as such to the Trojan camp. This correction, which I have here made, slight as it is, not only restores good sense, but admirably keeps up the character, which Aeneas had before given to Agamemnon of his Trojan nation, Vol. VI, page 27.

Courtiers as free, as debonair, unarmed,
As bending angels; that's their fame in peace:
But when they would seem soldiers, they have galls,
Good arms, strong joints, true swords, and Jove's
accord,
Nothing so full of heart. (I, 111, 235-239.)

Occasional correction: This quotation obliges me to make a short stop, to set right the latter part of this passage; whose sense is likewise bad, through a small defect in the pointing. Can the poet be supposed to mean, that the Trojans had Jove's accord, whenever they would seem soldiers? No; certainly he would intimate, that nothing was so full of heart as they, when that god did but show himself on their side. This circumstance added, brings no impeachment to their courage: valor would become presumption and impiety in them, if they trusted to it, when Jove manifestly declared himself on the other side. It ought to be pointed and understood thus:

But when they would seem soldiers, they have galls,
Good arms, strong joints, true swords; and, Jove's
accord,
Nothing so full of heart.

i.e. Jove's accord, and concurrence, seconding them, nothing so

full of heart as they.

XIX. Bad Pointing Rectified:

Troilus and Cressida, Vol. VI, p. 9.

I tell thee, I am mad
In Cressid's love. Thou answer'st, she is fair,
Pour'st in the open ulcer of my heart;
Her eyes, her hair, her cheek, her gait, her voice
Handlest in thy discourse--O that! her hand!

(I, 1, 51-55.)

Anybody with half an eye must perceive the pointing to be disturbed here; and that the semi-colon at the end of the third verse quite destroys the meaning of the passage. Restore it thus:

I tell thee, I am mad
In Cressid's love: Thou answer'st, she is fair,
Pour'st in the open ulcer of my heart
Her eyes, her hair, her cheek, her gait, her voice;
Handlest in thy discourse--O that! her hand!

i. e. "When I am already wounded to the heart with her beauties, you inflame my wound with the repetition and praise of their particulars"; or to use the poet's own words in the close of the speech:

But saying thus, instead of oil and balm,
Thou lay'st, in every gash that love has given me,
The knife that made it. (I, 1, 61-63.)

But I cannot dismiss the passage, whose pointing I have cured, without subjoining a conjecture on the last line of it.

Handlest in thy discourse--O that! her hand!

I have always (notwithstanding the whole set of printed copies support the reading;) suspected this odd interjection of rapture,-- "O that!" and cannot help thinking it is an inelegant break, as I am sure it is an ill-sounding one. Without departing very widely from the letters of the text, I must own I should like it better, if it stood thus:

Handlest in thy discourse--how white her hand!

And then, methinks, by the repetition of the term, the verse immediately following acquires a double beauty.

In whose comparison all whites are ink,
Writing their own reproach! (I. 1. 56-57.)

XX. Bad Pointing Rectified:

Cymbeline, Vol. VI, p. 170.

You good gods,
Let what is here contained relish of love,
Of my lord's health, of his content, yet not
That we two are asunder; let that grieve him;
Some griefs are medicinable, that is one of them,
For it doth physic love of his content,
All but in that. (III. 1. 29-35.)

Certainly this passage could not be understood by the editor, or he would never have pointed it thus: the foundation of the speech is this: Imogen, a young princess, receiving a letter from her banished lord whom she passionately loved, before she opens it, prays that the contents of it may show that her lord still loves

her, that he is in health, and that he tastes content: yet, says she, as it were recollecting herself, let him not taste a full and absolute content; let it give him some grief, that fate has divided him and her; for that's a grief which will exercise and support his love; but in every other circumstance let him enjoy content at heart. This, I daresay, is directly the author's meaning; and that the pointing ought to be restored thus:

You good gods,
Let what is here contained relish of love,
Of my lord's health, of his content,--(yet not,
That we two are asunder; let that grieve him;
Some griefs are medicinable; that is one of them,
For it doth physic love.)--of his content,
All but in that!

Imogen, as it is very frequent with our poet upon other occasions, breaks in upon the thread of her own address to the gods, interposes a reflection, and moralizes upon it; and then resumes the substance of her prayer at the very words where she left it off. She catches herself up in the same manner in the very next page.

Then, true Pisanio,
Who long'st like me to see thy lord; who long'st,
(Oh! let me bate)--but not like me; yet long'st,
But in a fainter kind:--Oh! not like me.

(III, 11, 54-57.)

XXI. Bad Pointing Rectified:

Timon of Athens, Vol. V, p. 52.

You fools of fortune, trencher-friends, time-flies,
Cap-and-knee slaves, vapors, and minute-jacks
Of man and beast; the infinite malady
Crust you quite o'er! (III, vi, 106-109.)

I always suspected the pointing of this passage; Mr. Shadwell, who altered this play, seems not to have understood it, and therefore has left out part. But in what sense were these ungrateful senators "minute-jacks of man and beast"? The poet just before calls them vapors, and I daresay means to enforce that image, by saying they were "jacks not of a minute's trust, or dependence." Then what does "the infinite malady" signify, without something following to give us a clearer idea of it? I am in no doubt, but the poet ought to be restored thus:

You fools²⁰ of fortune, trencher-friends, time-flies,
Cap-and-knee slaves, vapors, and minute-jacks,--
Of man and beast the infinite malady
Crust you quite o'er!

i.e. "May the whole catalogue, the infinite number of distempers that have ever invaded either man or beast, all be joined to plague you."

XXII. Bad Pointing Rectified:

Timon of Athens, Vol. V, p. 54.

Slaves and fools
Pluck the grave wrinkled senate from the bench,

²⁰Perhaps, "tools." (T)

And minister in their steads to general filths.
Convert o'th' instant, green, virginity,
Do't in your parents eyes. (IV, 1. 4-8.)

This passage is so disfurnished of all sense by the bad pointing, that I am willing to think it one of those which were never revised by the editor. 'Tis true, the old copies are faulty too in the pointing; but if Mr. Pope had cast his eye on Mr. Shadwell here, he would not have wanted direction for reforming it in part. Restore the whole thus:

Slaves and fools,
Pluck the grave wrinkled senate from the bench,
And minister in their steads.--To general filths
Convert o'th' instant, green virginity;
Do't in your parents eyes.

i.e. "You virgins, that are scarce ripe for men, turn at once such shameless prostitutes, as to commit whoredom even before your parents faces.

XXIII. Bad Pointing Rectified:

Coriolanus, Vol. V, p. 107.

All the contagion of the south light on you,
You shames of Rome; you herds; of boils and plagues
Plaster you o'er, that you may be abhorred
Farther than seen,-- (I, iv, 30-33.)

Here, again, the old copies are defective in the pointing, by which the sense is so maimed, that this too must be a passage which either was not revised by Mr. Pope, or in which he would

not indulge his private sense to make it intelligible. Mr. Dennis, who has altered this play, was obliged, by a different disposition of the fable, to leave out this passage, otherwise, I am persuaded, there would have been no room for my making a correction upon it. The meanest judge of English must be aware, that no member of any sentence can begin with a genitive case, and a preceding nominative be wanting to govern that and the verb. Where, therefore, is the nominative of "of boils and plagues plaster you o'er"? Or what sense or syntax is there in the passage, as it now stands? Restore it without the least doubt,

All the contagion of the south light on you,
You shames of Rome, you!--Herds of boils and plagues
Plaster you o'er, that you may be abhorred
Farther than seen!--

It is not infrequent with Shakespeare to redouble his pronouns, as in this place; so,

Titus Andronicus, Vol. V, p. 513.

Oh, why should wrath be mute, and fury dumb?
I am no baby, I; that with base prayers
I should repent the evil I have done: (V, 111, 184-186.)

So, Romeo and Juliet, Vol. VI, p. 290.

Men's eyes were made to look, and let them gaze;
I will not budge for no man's pleasure, I.
(III, 1, 57-58.)

And so in a number of instances more.

XXIV. Bad Pointing Rectified:

Coriolanus, Vol. V, p. 128.

This, as you say, suggested
At some time, when his soaring insolence
Shall teach the people, which (time shall not want,
If he be put upon't, and that's as easy,
As to set dogs on sheep) will be the fire
To kindle their dry stubble; and their blaze
Shall darken him forever. (II, 1, 269-275.)

As in the last instance a nominative was wanting to the verb, so, on the other hand, as this passage is pointed, we have a redundancy; for both the pronouns, "this" and "which," stand as nominatives for "will be." The whole passage ought to be rectified thus:

This, as you say, suggested
At some time, when his soaring insolence
Shall teach the people, (which time shall not want,
If he be put upon't; and that's as easy
As to set dogs on sheep;) will be the fire
To kindle their dry stubble; and their blaze
Shall darken him forever.

Occasional Conjecture: There is one word, however, still in this sentence, which, notwithstanding the concurrence of the printed copies, I suspect to have admitted a small corruption. Why should it be imputed as a crime to Coriolanus, that he was prompt to teach the people? Or how was it any soaring insolence in a Patrician to attempt this? I believe rather that the poet wrote:

When his soaring insolence
Shall reach the people

i.e. When it shall extend to impeach the conduct, or touch the character of the people.

XXV. Bad Pointing Rectified:

Antony and Cleopatra, Vol. V, p. 410.

Look you, sad friends:
The gods rebuke me, but it is a tiding
To wash the eyes of kings. (V, 1, 26-28.)

This speech is made by Octavius Caesar, on Dercetas's²¹ bringing him word of Antony's death, and bringing the sword which he had drawn forth from his wounds. Is there any reason in this, why Octavius should call his friends "sad friends"? The poet's sense, methinks, is very obvious, and the cure easy. Octavius enjoins his friends to be concerned at the news; and tells them it is a calamity that ought to draw tears even from the eyes of princes. Correct therefore:

Look you sad, friends:
The gods rebuke me, but it is a tiding
To wash the eyes of kings.

XXVI. Bad Pointing Rectified:

Julius Caesar, Vol. V, p. 263.

Our reasons are so full of good regard,
That were you Antony the son of Caesar,
You should be satisfied. (III, 1, 224-226.)

²¹From Plutarch we ought to write it Dercetaeus. But this play is very faulty in the proper names. (T)

The true pointing of this place must likewise be obvious at the first view, but the neglect of it puts such a change upon our poet's sense, that it makes him suppose Caesar had a son whose name was Antony; a point of history altogether new to the world.

It must be restored:

That were you, Antony, the son of Caesar,
You should be satisfied.

XXVII. Bad Pointing Rectified:

Another negligence of this sort occurs in The Merchant of Venice, by which a civilian and pleader is turned into a lord, Vol. II, p. 68.

Duke: Came you from Padua, from Bellario?
Nerissa: From both; my Lord Bellario greets your Grace.
(IV, 1, 119-120.)

The Duke within half a page above tells us the profession of this Bellario, and that, unless he comes, he may by his own power put off the trial.

Upon my power I may dismiss this court,
Unless Bellario, a learned DOCTOR,
Whom I have sent for to determine this,
Come here today. (IV, 1, 104-105.)

The passage before us, therefore, must be restored thus:

Duke: Came you from Padua, from Bellario?
Nerissa: From both, my Lord:--Bellario greets your
Grace.

XXVIII. Bad Pointing Rectified:

As in the last passage, by the false pointing, a doctor of laws was promoted to the peerage; so in King Lear, by the same accident, a physician rises to the same honor, Vol. III, p. 93.

Cordelia: Then be it so.

 My Lord, how does the King?

Physician: Madam, sleeps still. (IV, vii, 12-14.)

Cordelia entering with the Earl of Kent and the King her father's physician, desires Kent to shift out of his disguise of servitude; who begging to go his own way a little longer, Cordelia consents it shall be as his Lordship pleases; and then addressing herself to the physician, inquires after her father's health. It ought to be restored thus:

Cordelia: Then be it so,

 My Lord.--How does the King?

Physician: Madam, sleeps still.

XXIX. Bad Pointing Rectified:

But before I dismiss the errors of false pointing, I will produce one instance of more importance; because it is plain the editor has not made common sense of it; and because, I believe, it has never yet been understood by anybody, since the first corruption of it in the old copies.

Would you in their serving,
And with what imitation you can borrow
From youth of such a season, before Lucius
Present yourself, desire his service; tell him
Wherein you're happy, which will make him KNOW,
If that his head have ear in music, doubtless
With joy he will embrace you; (III, iv, 173-179.)

It is evident, I say, that this passage is faulty both in the pointing and the text. "Which will make him know"--What?--What connection has this with the rest of the sentence? Surely, Shakespeare cannot be suspected of so bald a meaning as this; "If you'll tell him wherein you're happy, that will make him know wherein you're happy"--and yet this is the only meaning, I think, the words can carry, as they now stand. In short, I take the poet's sense to be this. Pisanio tells Imogen, if she would disguise herself in the habit of a youth, present herself before Lucius the Roman general, offer her service, and tell him wherein she was happy, i.e. what an excellent talent she had in singing, he would certainly be glad to receive her. Afterwards in pages 196-197 Bellarius and Arviragus, talking of Imogen, give this description of her.

Bellarius: This youth, howe'er distressed, appears to
have had
Good ancestors.

Arviragus: How angel-like he sings!

I doubt not therefore but, upon this foundation, the entire

passage ought to be restored thus:

Would you in their serving,
And with what imitation you can borrow
From youth of such a season, before Lucius
Present yourself, desire his service, tell him
Wherein you're happy; (which will make him SO,
If that his head have ear in music,) doubtless
With joy he will embrace you.

XXX. Transpositions:

I must now pass over to another species of errors, not infrequent in this edition, which I cannot otherwise distinguish than by the title of Transpositions; that is, either where the verses are so transposed and taken to pieces, that the numbers are unnecessarily disjointed; where wrong names have been prefixed to the parties speaking, or parts of sentences placed to one speaker, that ought to belong to the person answering; or where stage directions are either misplaced, or erroneously adopted into the text. I shall content myself with very few instances, in present, of each sort, because I am hastening to conclude; and because this work has already swelled beyond the size of a reasonable specimen.

Transposition of Numbers:

The dismounting a few verses, indeed, where the sense of them remains unbroken, is not a matter of the greatest consequence; yet, I think, ought not to have been done, where it is

altogether unnecessary, and might easily be prevented. I shall quote but two examples, and both of them out of the same play; where 'tis plain there was no occasion for breaking the numbers.

Troilus and Cressida, Vol. VI, p. 38.

Hector: Brother, she is not worth
What she doth cost the holding.
Troilus: What's ought, but as 'tis valued.
(II, 11, 51-52.)

Here are three hemistiches made out of words that, with a very slight variation, naturally fall into two complete verses.

Hector: Brother, she is not worth what she doth cost
The holding.
Troilus: What is aught, but as 'tis
valued?

So again, afterwards, p. 89.

'Tis done like Hector, but securely done,
A little proudly, and great deal misprizing
The knight opposed.
Aeneas: If not Achilles, Sir, what is your name?
Achilles: If not Achilles, nothing. (IV, v, 73-76.)

Here two hemistiches are made by a break in the versification altogether unnecessary. Restore the numbers thus:

'Tis done like Hector, but securely done,
A little proudly, and great deal misprizing
The knight opposed.
Aeneas: If not Achilles, Sir,
What is your name?
Achilles: If not Achilles, nothing.

XXXI. Transposition of Persons Names.

Timon of Athens, Vol. V, pp. 68-69.

Timon: Would thou were clean enough to spit upon.
Apemantus: A plague on thee. Thou art too bad to
curse. (IV, 111, 364-365.)

It seems clear to me that the division of these speeches is mistaken: there is such a contradiction in sense in the second line. If Timon was too bad to curse, why then does Apemantus curse him? I think, it would be more reasonable to split the speeches thus:

Timon: Would thou were clean enough to spit upon.
A plague on thee!
Apemantus: Thou art too bad to curse.

XXXII. Transposition of Persons Names:

Titus Andronicus, Vol. V, p. 497.

Aaron: Touch not the boy, he is of royal blood.
Lucius: Too like the sire for ever being good.
First hang the child, that he may see it
sprawl,
A sight to vex the father's soul withal.
Aaron: Get me a ladder, Lucius, save the child; &c.
(V, 1, 49-53.)

Why should Aaron, the Moor, here ask for a ladder, who earnestly wanted to have his child saved? Unless the poet is supposed to mean for Aaron, that if they would get him a ladder, he would resolutely hang himself out of the way, so they would spare the child. But I much rather suspect there is an old error in

prefixing the names of the persons, and that it ought to be corrected thus:

Aaron: Touch not the boy, he is of royal blood.
Lucius: Too like the sire for ever being good.
First hang the child, that he may see it sprawl.
A sight to vex the father's soul withal.
Get me a ladder.
Aaron: Lucius, save the child, &c.

XXXIII. Transposition of Persons Names.

Troilus and Cressida, Vol. VI, p. 89.

Agamemnon: Which way would Hector have it?
Aeneas: He cares not; he'll obey conditions.
AGAMEMNON: 'Tis done like Hector, but securely done,
A little proudly, and great deal misprizing
The knight opposed.
Aeneas: If not Achilles, Sir,
What is your name?
Achilles: If not Achilles, nothing.
Aeneas: Therefore, Achilles; but whate'er, know this.
In the extremity of great and little
Valor and pride excel themselves in Hector.

I must confess I could not read this passage at first without stopping, and a suspicion that the names of the characters were not all rightly prefixed to these speeches. It seemed very absurd to me, however the editor has taken it upon content, that Agamemnon should make a remark to the disparagement of Hector for pride, and that Aeneas should immediately say, "If not Achilles, Sir, what is your name?" and then desire him to take notice that Hector was as void of pride as he was full of valor. Why was

Achilles to take notice of this, if it was Agamemnon that threw this imputation of pride in Hector's teeth? I was fully satisfied that this reproach on Hector ought to be placed to Achilles; and consulting Mr. Dryden's alteration of this play, (which, I suppose, Mr. Pope did not look into, while he was publishing Shakespeare,) I was not a little pleased to find that I had but seconded the opinion of that great man in this point: Correct the passage therefore:

Agamemnon: Which way would Hector have it?
Aeneas: He cares not; he'll obey conditions.
ACHILLES: 'Tis done like Hector, but securely done;
A little proudly, &c.

XXXIV. Transposition of Person's Name:

Measure for Measure, Vol. I, p. 325.

Lucio: Behold, behold, where Madam Mitigation comes.
I have purchased as many diseases under her
roof
As come to--
2d. Gent.: To what, pray?
Lucio: Judge.
2d. Gent.: To three thousand dollars a year.
1st Gent.: Ay, and more.
Lucio: A French crown more.
1st Gent.: Thou art always figuring diseases in me; but
thou art full of error; I am sound.
(I, ii, 45-54.)

Not to dwell upon explanation here, whoever reads this passage but once over, I daresay, will be convinced from the last speech in it quoted, that all which is placed to Lucio in his first

speech could never be intended to belong to him. It must be restored, as the sense of the context requires:

Lucio: Behold, where Madam Mitigation comes.
1st. Gent.: I have purchased as many diseases under her
roof,
As come to, &c.

XXXV. Transposition of Person's Name:

The Taming of the Shrew, Vol. II, p. 317.

Hortensio: I'll watch you better yet.
In time I may believe, yet I mistrust.
Bianca: Mistrust it not: for sure Aeacides
Was Ajax, called so from his grandfather.
I must believe my master, else I promise
you, &c. (III, i, 50-54.)

Here, indeed, the names are so shuffled and displaced, that I must be obliged to explain the business of the scene, before I can convince that there has been a manifest transposition.

Bianca is courted by two gentlemen, Hortensio and Lucentio, who make way for their addresses under the disguise of masters, the one to instruct her in Latin, the other in music. Lucentio, as he is teaching her language, informs her who he is, and to what purpose he comes: she says, she'll construe the lesson herself, and, in so doing, she tells him, she does not know him, does not trust him, bids him take heed that Hortensio does not overhear them and neither to presume, nor to despair. Hortensio is jealous

that Lucentio is, like himself, a lover in disguise, and says he'll watch him. After this, Bianca and Lucentio proceed in their discourse, under color of continuing the lesson; and there is no doubt but that the speeches ought to be distinguished thus:

Hortensio: I'll watch you better yet.
BIANCA: In time I may believe; yet I mistrust.
LUCENTIO: Mistrust it not;--for sure Aeacides
Was Ajax, called so from his grandfather.
BIANCA: I must believe my master, else &c.

XXXVI. Transposition of Person's Name:

Antony and Cleopatra, Vol. V, p. 311.

Charmian: Our worser thoughts heaven mend.
ALEXIS: Come, his fortune, his fortune. O let him
marry a woman that cannot go, sweet Isis, I
beseech thee, and let her die too, and give
him a worse, &c. (I, 11, 64-68.)

This I dare pronounce to be so palpable, so signal a transposition, that I cannot but wonder it should slip the editor's observation. Alexis brings a fortune teller to Iras and Charmian, Cleopatra's women, and says himself, "We'll know all our fortunes." Well; the Soothsayer begins with the women, and some jokes pass upon the subject of husbands and chastity; after which as I apprehend, the women hoping for the satisfaction of having something to laugh at in Alexis's fortune, call to him to hold out his hand, and wish heartily he may have the prognostication

of cuckoldom upon him: restore therefore the passage:

Charmian: Our worser thoughts heaven mend! Alexas,--
come, his fortune, his fortune.

I think, there needs no stronger proof of this being a true correction, than this observation which Alexis immediately subjoins on their wishes and zeal to hear him abused.

Lo now! if it lay in their hands to make me a cuckold,
they would make themselves whores, but they'd do it!
(I, ii, 80-82.)

XXXVII. Stage Direction Crept into the Text:

The editor has complained in his Preface, page 18, that, often in the old impressions, the notes of direction to the property men for their moveables, and to the players for their entries, are inserted into the text, through the ignorance of the transcribers.²² I am afraid, he has not taken care to remove all these wrong insertions; and I believe the instance I am about to subjoin will be determined one of those which ought not to have escaped his observation.

Macbeth, Vol. V, p. 594.

I 'gin to be aweary of the sun,
And wish the state o'th'world were now undone.
Ring the alarum-bell, blow wind, come wrack,
At least we'll die with harness on our back.
(V, v, 49-52.)

²²Smith, p. 54.

Macbeth, seeing that he cannot be safe within his fortifications, resolves to issue out upon the enemy. But in a besieged town, is it ever customary to order an alarum, or sally, by the ringing of a bell? Or rather is not this business always done by beat of drum? Hieronymus Magius, I know, in an accurate and scarce tract of his upon the antiquity and various use of bells, speaks, among the rest, of a tintinnabulum castrense, or great bell used in camps. "Within the period of Christianity," says he, "and after great bells obtained in churches, the commanders of armies employed such a one slung in a wooden turret at the top of a large chariot; which chariot was always placed near the pavilion, and every day, at the rising and setting of the sun, this bell was rung out as a notice to the army to perform their devotions; instead of sounding the charge, likewise, the soldiers were called to arms by this bell; and in the battle, it was placed in the middle of the army, and defended with the same care as they are used to do a standard." The author concludes his account of this military bell, with saying, "that if any other nations, besides the Italians, made use of such a machine in their camps, it was more than he knew." We may dare assert, at least, that it never found an introduction into Scotland; and that therefore the poet could not make Macbeth employ it,

instead of the customary way of directing a charge upon the enemy.

In short, I believe these words were a stage direction crept from the margin into the text, though the last line but one being deficient without them, occasioned probably by a cut that had been made in the speech by the actors. They were a memorandum to the prompter to ring the alarum bell, i.e. the bell perhaps at that time used to warn the tragedy-drum and trumpets to be ready to sound an alarm: and what confirms me in this suspicion, is, that for the four pages immediately following, it is all along quoted in the margin, alarum; fight, and alarum; alarums continued.

It may be objected, indeed, to this observation of mine, that the same expression is to be met with before in this very play; and therefore we must examine that passage:

Macbeth, Vol. V. p. 543.

Macduff: Ring the alarum bell--murder, and treason!
Banquo and Donalbain! Malcolm! awake!
(II, iii, 79-80.)

I do not dispute these words here being a genuine part of the text; because the reason for them is very different. The scene is in Macbeth's castle at Inverness; whither the King goes to pay a visit. Macduff rises early, being so ordered, to call up

the King; and discovering him to be murdered, orders the bell to be rung out, to wake his master's sons, and the rest of the court, to apprise them of the dismal accident. The bell was entirely proper upon this occasion; as it is, to this day, employed in great houses to call together assistance in cases of thieves or fire.

XXXVIII. Stage Direction Transposed:

We come now to a stage direction very unluckily misplaced; in which the editor seems to have been misled by the small edition, formerly published by Mr. Tonson, for want of a competent knowledge of the customs of the stage.

King Henry VI, Part II, Vol. IV, p. 120.

FLOURISH. Enter Mother Jordan, Hume, Southwell, and Bolingbroke. (Beginning, I, iv.)

This is the first instance, as I take it, where conjurers and common witches are supposed to be ushered into the scene by the sound of trumpet; which is signified by the word "flourish." The truth of the case is this; whenever a King enters or goes off with his court it is the constant practice of the stage to flourish him on and off. In the scene immediately preceding this of the conjurers, King Henry VI and his court are upon the stage; and when they quit it, the second folio edition, and

other old books, we find it marked thus, as it most certainly ought to be restored:

Flourish.

Exeunt.

Enter Mother Jordan, Hume, Southwell, and Bolingbroke.

As the editor, in the above instance, committed a mistake by departing from the older copies; I believe, I can point out another place, in which he has erred with some of those copies, by prefixing the word "flourish" where it ought by no means to be admitted.

King Richard III, Vol. IV, p. 349.

The Court. FLOURISH. Enter King Edward SICK, the Queen, etc. (Beginning, II, 1.)

This is one prevailing instance of the theatrical custom, as I above hinted, of flourishing their kings on and off. But certainly this custom is most absurdly maintained in this place. The King is here brought in sick, nay, and to such a degree, that upon his very entrance, he says, he expects every day to be released from life. Can trumpets be proper under this circumstance? The stage generally takes its rules from the world, and 'tis known, whenever a king is sick, all martial sounds are forbidden at court, and even the guard are relieved without beat of drum.

XXXIX. Mistaken Division of an Act:

The editor (who tells us, that in the oldest folio edition, where the acts and scenes are first distinguished, they were divided according as they played them, often where there was no pause in the action, or where they thought fit to make a breach in it) has sometimes taken care to regulate the shuffling and transposing of the scenes, and to rectify the injudicious divisions of the acts: but this part of criticism does not display itself through the whole work. I shall subjoin one passage, for example, in which he seems to have employed none of this skill in marking the division of an act, namely the end of the second act of King John, Vol. III, page 145. 'Tis true, he errs here in following the old copies; as he did, in the last instance but one, by contradicting them. The Lady Constance, her son Arthur, and Lord Salisbury, are upon the scene; Constance bids Salisbury begone, and leave her to her woes; he tells her, he must not go without her to the two kings of England and France. She absolutely refuses to go with him; says, her sorrow shall keep its state, and the kings may come to it. Her concluding lines are these:

For my grief's so great,
That no supporter, but the huge firm earth,
Can hold it up. Here--I and sorrow sit;
Here--is my throne; bid kings come bow to it.
(III, 1, 71-74.)

It is evident, I think, beyond contradiction, that

Constance here, in her despair, seats herself upon the floor of the stage: and can she be supposed immediately to rise again, only to go off and end the act decently? And if she does not, how can the act end here? There is but one other method for it; and that is, of the foremost flat-scene²³ shutting her in from the sight of the audience, an absurdity never once practised by Shakespeare. In the very next scene which follows, and stands as the first scene of the third act, the kings are introduced, and Constance is likewise upon the stage, and speaks within eight lines of the scene's beginning. We must therefore either suppose a unity of the two scenes, and that they come in to her so soon as she sits down on the floor; or rather, (which I think has been an opinion of long standing,) that an intermediate scene or two have been lost, whereby we cannot now be certain how the act ended; and that a hiatus in the manuscript ought to be marked to signify the imperfection.

XL. Fault of Inadvertence:

The faulty passages which I have hitherto alleged, I think, are mostly such, as called for the assistance of judgment to set them right: there are other places again, which are

²³A piece of moveable scenery.

corrupted in our author, that are to be cured by a strict attention to the author himself, and by taking history along with us, wherever his subject is historical. Diligence in this respect is certainly the duty of an editor: and yet that a due care, even in this part, has been hitherto wanting, the instances I am now going to subjoin will manifestly prove.

A Midsummer-Night's Dream, Vol. I, p. 95.

Did'st thou not lead him through the glimmering night
From PEREGENIA, whom he ravished? (II, 11, 77-78.)

Mr. Pope confesses in his Preface, that "no one is more a master of the poetical story, or has more frequent allusions to the various parts of it than Shakespeare."²⁴ It must be owned; and the passage before us is a signal instance. He touches upon a minute circumstance in the story of Theseus; but, indeed, none of the old classics tell us of such a person as Peregénia, with whom that hero had an affair: restore therefore the place, from the authority of the Greek writers:

Did'st thou not lead him through the glimmering night
From PERIGUNE, whom he ravished?

Here we have the name of a famous lady, by whom Theseus had his son Melanippus. She was the daughter of Sinis, the cruel robber, and tormentor of passengers in the isthmus; and Plutarch

²⁴p. 10. (T) Smith, pp. 49-50.

and Athenaeus are both express in the circumstance of Theseus's ravishing her, which is so exactly copied by our poet. The former of them adds, (as Diodorus Siculus, Apollodorus, and Pausanias likewise tell us,) that he killed her father into the bargain.²⁵

XLI. Fault of Inadvertence:

King John, Vol. III, p. 139.

For ANGIERS, and fair Touraine, Maine, Poitiers,
And all that we upon this side the sea,
Except this city now by us besieged,
Find liable, &c. (II, 1, 487-490.)

Here we have an instance of the like carelessness in a point of English history. King John consenting to match the Lady Blanche with the Dauphin, agrees, in part of her dowry, to give up all he held in France, except the city of Angiers, which he now besieged, and laid claim to. How can it be thought then, that he should at one and the same time give up all except Angiers, and give that up too? The error is transmitted from the old copies, and must be corrected thus:

For ANJOU, and fair Touraine, &c.

²⁵Sinis, in Greek legend, was "a bandit who infested the isthmus of Corinth. He used to kill those whom he robbed by fastening the victims' arms to two fir-trees which he had bent, and then letting them spring up again. He himself was torn apart in this way by Theseus." J. Warrington, Everyman's Classical Dictionary (London: Dent, 1961), p. 473.

This was one of the provinces, as Mr. Pope might have remembered, which the English held in France, and which the French king by Chatillon claimed of King John in right of Duke Arthur, at the very opening of the play, page 116.

Poitiers, ANJOU, Touraine, Maine. (I, 1, 11.)

Occasional Emendations:

But Angiers, instead of Anjou, has been printed in more places than that already quoted; and some other errors have been transmitted down to boot. See page 129.

Austria: King LEWIS, determine what we shall do
straight.

LEWIS: Women and fools, break off your conference.
King John, this is the very sum of all:
England and Ireland, ANGIERS, Touraine,
Maine,
In right of Arthur do I claim of thee;
Wilt thou resign them, and lay down thy
arms?

King John: My life, as soon. I do defy thee,
France.

Here again, instead of Angiers, we must restore ANJOU. But who is it makes this claim upon the English king? 'Tis plain, both from the verse quoted of the Duke of Austria's speech, and from the other of King John's, that the King of France was the demandant. But the king of France's name was not Lewis. In both lines therefore where Lewis is printed, it must be restored PHILIP.

XLII. Fault of Inadvertence.

King Henry V. Vol. III, p. 476.

Will: Under what Captain serve you?
King Henry: Under Sir JOHN Erpingham.
Will: A good old commander. (IV, i, 95-97.)

Here again history and our poet's text are made to disagree; nor was there any such gentleman as Sir John Erpingham in being in King Henry V's reign: restore it, as it ought to be:

Will: Under what Captain serve you?
King Henry: Under Sir THOMAS Erpingham, &c.

This is one of the characters introduced in the play; and he entering but three pages before, the King salutes him thus:

Good morrow, old Sir THOMAS Erpingham:
A good soft pillow for that good white head
Were better than a churlish turf of France.
(IV, i, 13-15.)

That this was his name, we have the authority of our chronicles; and they, and our poet from them, in his Richard II, Vol. III, page 121 (II, i, 282), tell us, that Sir Thomas Erpingham was one of those who embarked from Bretagne to espouse the interest of Bolingbroke, the father of King Henry V.

XLIII. Fault of Inadvertence.

King Henry V. Vol. III, p. 475.

Alarum. Enter King Henry and BOURBON with Prisoners,
Lords, &c. (Following IV, vii, 57.)

This is likewise an error transmitted from the old to the modern editions; Bourbon was one of the French party, and therefore could not make a part of King Henry's train. Restore it:

Alarum. Enter King Henry and GLOUCESTER, with
Prisoners, &c.

But may it not be said, that Bourbon is brought in here amongst the French prisoners? To this, I reply, that our poet would hardly have introduced a character of that dignity, crowded him among the common prisoners, and neither made him speak to the King, nor the King to him. Besides, I have another exception yet stronger to add, why Bourbon cannot be supposed to enter here in a few pages after, (viz. page 481) the King asks the Duke of Exeter (who entered with him, and had been all along in the presence) what prisoners of rank were taken, and Exeter replies:

Charles, Duke of Orleans, Nephew to the King;
John Duke of BOURBON, and Lord Bouciqualt.
(IV, viii, 81-82.)

I submit it therefore to the most common judgments, whether 'tis probable, if Bourbon was among the prisoners introduced in the King's train, that the Duke of Exeter could have been guilty of such an absurdity, to tell the King that Bourbon was taken prisoner.

XLIV. Fault of Inadvertence:

King Henry VI. Part I. Vol. IV. p. 17.

Winchester: How now, ambitious UMPIRE, what means
this? (I, 111, 29.)

These words are spoken by the Bishop of Winchester to the Duke of Gloucester, who is forcing his way into the Tower to survey it. But why "Umpire"? Or, of what? Gloucester was Protector of the Realm in the King's minority; but not an umpire in any particular matter that we know of. I am persuaded the Duke's Christian name lurks under this corruption, and the very traces of the letters convince me that our poet wrote, as it ought certainly to be restored:

Winchester: How now, ambitious HUMPHREY, what means
this?

XLV. Fault of Inadvertence:

King Henry VI. Part II. Vol. IV. p. 127.

Simpeox: God knows of pure devotion, being called
A hundred times, and oftener, in my sleep,
By good St. Alban; who said, SIMON, come,
Come, offer at my shrine, and I will help
thee. (II, 1, 89-92.)

The editions here again are at odds with the history. Why, "Simon"? The chronicles, that take notice of the Duke of Gloucester's detecting, this pretended miracle, tell us, that the impostor, who asserted himself to be cured of blindness, was

called Saunder Simpcox. "Simon" is therefore a corruption, through the negligence of the copyists; and we must restore it:

Who said, SIMPCOX, come,
Come offer at my shrine, and I will help thee.

But we have no need of going back to the chronicles to settle this point, since our poet, in the very next page, gives us the fellow's names, which correspond to the history:

Gloucester: What's thine own name?
Simpcox: Saunder Simpcox, an if it please you,
Master.
Gloucester: Saunder, sit there, &c. (II, 1, 123-125.)

XLVI. Fault of Inadvertence.

King Henry VI, Part II, Vol. IV, p. 132.

The fifth was EDWARD Langley, Duke of York.
(II, 11, 15.)

Having an eye to history, as I hinted before, would easily have discovered an error in the copies here, and that the passage ought to be restored:

The fifth was EDMUND Langley, Duke of York.

The poet is here enumerating the issue male of King Edward III, and the whole tenor of history is express, that his fifth son was Edmund of Langley, and created Duke of York.

XLVII. Fault of Inadvertence:

Margaret: God forbid, any malice should prevail,
That faultless may condemn a nobleman:
Pray God, he may acquit him of suspicion.
King Henry: I thank thee, NELL, these words content
me much. (III, 11, 23-26.)

I remember our poet, in his King John, makes Falconbridge the Bastard, upon his first stepping into honor, say that he will study to forget his old acquaintance:

And if his name be George, I'll call him Peter;
For new-made honor doth forget men's names.
(I, 1, 186-187.)

But, surely, this is wide of King Henry's case, and it can be no reason why he should forget his own wife's name, and call her Nell instead of Margaret. Perhaps, it may be alleged, that the blunder was original in the poet; that his head was full of another character, which he introduces in this play, Eleanor, Duchess of Gloucester, whom her husband frequently calls Nell: and thence through inadvertence he might slip into this mistake. Were this to be allowed the case, is not the mistake therefore to be rectified? As the change of a single letter sets all right, there's very little reason to accuse our poet of such an inadvertence: I am much more willing to suppose it came from his pen thus:

King Henry: I thank thee.--WELL, these words content
me much.

King Henry was a prince of great piety and meekness, a great

lover of his uncle Gloucester, whom his nobles were rigidly persecuting, and to whom he suspected the Queen bore no very good will in her heart: but finding her, beyond his hopes, speak so candidly in the Duke's case, he is mightily comforted, and contented at her impartial seeming. I believe, everybody in their conversation must have observed, that the word, "well," is used to express an air of satisfaction, when any incident in life goes to our wish; or any purpose, that was dreaded, happens to be disappointed.

XLVIII. Fault of Inadvertence:

King Richard III. Vol. IV, p. 432.

And who doth lead them but a paltry fellow,
Long kept in Britain at OUR mother's cost?

(V, 111, 323-324.)

This is spoken by Richard III of Henry, Earl of Richmond; but they were far from having any common mother, but England; and the Earl of Richmond was not subsisted abroad at the nation's public charge. He fled with the Earl of Pembroke into Brittany in King Edward IV's reign: and many artifices were tried both by that king first, and King Richard afterwards, to get him delivered up by the French king, and the Duke of Brittany. But he happily escaped all the snares laid for him. But during the greatest part of his residence abroad, he was watched and

restrained almost like a captive, and subsisted by supplies conveyed from the Countess Dowager of Richmond, his mother. Restore therefore the poet thus:

And who doth lead them but a paltry fellow,
Long kept in Bretagne at HIS mother's cost?

XLIX. Fault of Inadvertence:

King Henry VIII. Vol. IV, p. 448.

Here is a warrant from
The King t'attach Lord Montacute, and the bodies
Of the Duke's confessor, John de la Car,
ONE Gilbert Peck, his COUNSELLOR. (I, 1, 216-219.)

Besides a slight corruption in the beginning of the last line, which makes the connection faulty, this passage labors with another error, which the editor might have amended either from having an eye to the real history, or to the words of the poet afterwards: correct the whole thus:

Here is a warrant from
The King t'attach Lord Montacute, and the bodies
Of the Duke's confessor, John de la Car,
AND Gilbert Peck, his CHANCELLOR.

Sir Gilbert Peck, (or Perk, as it is in some copies,) the chronicles tell us, was Chancellor to the Duke of Buckingham; and so we afterwards find him styled by our author in the play before us, page 466.

At which appeared against him his surveyor,

Sir Gilbert Peck his CHANCELLOR, and John Car,
Confessor to him, with that devil monk
Hopkins, that made this mischief. (II, 1, 19-22.)

First Occasional Emendation: The mention of this monk naturally calls upon me to correct a passage or two, in which all the copies have hitherto been faulty, with regard to his name. See page 449.

Buckingham: So, so,
These are the limbs o'th'plot: No more,
I hope.
Brandon: A monk o'th'Chartreux.
Buckingham: MICHAEL Hopkins?
Brandon: He. (I, 1, 219-221.)

Here again, from the concurrence of our historians, we are warranted to correct the poet:

Brandon: A monk o'th'Chartreux.
Buckingham: NICHOLAS Hopkins?

But what shall we then do with another passage, where the Duke's surveyor is under his examination before the King and Council?

Page 455.

Surveyor: He was brought to this
By a vain prophecy of Nicholas HENTON.
King: What was that HENTON?
Surveyor: Sir, a Chartreux friar, &c. (I, 11, 146-148.)

Second Occasional Emendation: 'Tis evident, Brandon and the surveyor are in two stories, as the poet's text now stands; but, I am persuaded, it is corrupt: for in fact there was but one monk concerned with, or evidence against the Duke; and his name

was Nicholas Hopkins. Our poet therefore must be restored:

By a vain prophecy of Nicholas HOPKINS.
King: Who was that HOPKINS?

But how came Henton to find a place at all in the text? It will be no great difficulty to account for this, when we come to consider, that Hopkins was a monk of the convent called Henton near Bristol; and might, according to the custom of those times, be called as well Nicholas of Henton by some of the historians from the place, as Hopkins, by others, from his family. And this, as I take it, is sufficient ground for the mistake from the hands of a negligent transcriber.

L. Fault of Inadvertence:

I shall add but one more error at present (but it shall be a great one) transmitted by the editor through indiligence, and a want of due application to the meaning of the author and the sense of the passage.

Much Ado about Nothing, Vol. I, p. 503.

Borachio: Go then find me a meet hour to draw on Pedro, and the Count Claudio, alone; tell them that you know Hero loves ME; . . . Offer them instances which shall bear no less likelihood than to see me at her chamber window, hear me call Margaret. Hero: hear Margaret term me CLAUDIO; and bring them to see this the very night before the intended wedding.

(II, 11, 33-35; 41-46.)

I am obliged to give here a short account of the plot depending,

that the emendation, which I am about to make, may appear the more clear and unquestionable. The business stands thus: Claudio, a favorite of the Arragon Prince, is, by his intercessions with her father, to be married to the fair Hero; Don John, a natural²⁶ brother of the Prince, and a hater of Claudio, is in his spleen zealous to disappoint the match. Borachio, a rascally dependant on Don John, offers his assistance, and engages to break off the marriage by this stratagem. "Tell the Prince and Claudio," says he, "that Hero is in love with me; they won't believe it; offer them proofs, as that they shall see me converse with her in her chamber window: I am in the good graces of her waiting-woman Margaret; and I'll prevail with Margaret, at a dead hour of night, to personate her mistress Hero; do you then bring the Prince and Claudio to overhear our discourse, and they shall have the torment to hear me address Margaret by the name of Hero, and her say sweet things to me by the name of Claudio." This is the substance of Borachio's device to make Hero suspected of disloyalty, and to break off her match with Claudio. But, in the name of goodness, could it displease Claudio to hear his mistress making use of his name tenderly? If he saw another man with her, and heard her call him Claudio, he might reasonably think her betrayed, but not have the same

reason to accuse her of disloyalty. Besides, how could her naming Claudio, make the Prince and Claudio believe that she loved Borachio, as he desires Don John to insinuate to them that she did. The circumstances considered, I have no doubt but the passage ought to be corrected thus:

Borachio: Go then, find me a meet hour to draw on Pedro, and the Count Claudio, alone; tell them that you know Hero loves ME; . . . Offer them instances which shall bear no less likelihood than to see me at her chamber window; hear me call Margaret, Hero; hear Margaret term me BORACHIO; and bring them to see this the very night before the intended wedding.

LI. Emendations:

But it is high time now that I turn my pen to one promised part of my task, which is yet in arrears, namely an endeavor to restore sense to passages, in which, through the corruption of successive editions, no sense has hitherto been found; or to restore, to the best of my power, the poet's true text, where I suspect it to be mistaken through the error of the press or the manuscripts. The utmost liberty that I shall take in this attempt, shall generally confine itself to the minute alteration of a single letter or two: an indulgence which, I hope, I cannot fear being granted me, if it retrieves sense to such places as have either escaped observation, or never been disputed or understood by their editors. I will despatch this remaining part

of my Appendix with all the brevity that the nature of the emendations will admit; as such, they are humbly proposed: but wherever better judges are pleased to think that word too peremptory, I am very well content to soften it into conjectures.

As The Merchant of Venice happens to furnish three or four remarkable ones, they shall stand the foremost in this list.

The Merchant of Venice, Vol. II, p. 12.

Nerissa: First, there is the Neapolitan prince.

Portia: Ay, that's a COLT indeed, for he doth nothing but talk of his horse, and he makes it a great appropriation to his own good parts that he can shoe him himself: I am much afraid my Lady his mother played false with a smith.
(I, 11, 42-48.)

Portia here discoursing with her waiting-woman about her suitors, Nerissa runs over the catalogue of them, with design to sound the affections of her lady. But how does talking of horses, or knowing how to shoe them, make a man ever the more a colt? Or why, if a smith and a lady of figure were to have an affair together, should a colt be the issue of that conjunction? I make no doubt but this is simply Portia's meaning: "What do you tell me of the Neapolitan prince? He is such a stupid dunce, that instead of saying fine things to me, he does nothing but talk of his

horses." Now; this is some reason for suspecting that his mother should have played false with a smith: people generally talk most in their own professions, or in those of their family; and farriers, I presume, will always be allowed to talk more of horsemanship than any other subject. I do not question therefore to restore it:

Portia: Ay, that's a DOLT indeed; for he doth nothing but talk of his horse, and he makes it a great appropriation to his own good parts, that he can shoe him himself, &c.

A "dolt" is properly one of the most stupid and blockish of the vulgar; and in this signification it is used by our author himself.

Antony and Cleopatra, Vol. V, p. 398.

Follow his chariot, like the greatest spot
Of all thy sex; most monster-like, be shown
For poor'st diminutives, for DOLTS-- (IV, xii, 35-37.)

i.e. become the gaze of the most vile plebeians, the most sordid ignorant rabble.

Othello, Vol. VI, p. 583.

Oh, gull! oh, DOLT!
As ignorant as dirt. (V, ii, 16-17.)

LII. Emendation:

The Merchant of Venice, Vol. II, p. 24.

What a beard hast thou got! Thou hast got more hair on
thy chin, than Dobbin my PHIL-horse has on his tail.
(II, ii, 99-101.)

I should have passed this over as a literal error, occasioned by the oversight of the editor, but that I find it is copied from the old editions: and yet even there originally it is but a literal error. It must be restored:

Thou hast got more hair on thy chin, than Dobbin my THILL-horse has on his tail.

A "thill," as it is very well known, is the beam or draught-tree of a cart or wagon; and the thill-horse, consequently, is that horse which is put under the thill. Skinner, indeed, mentions the FILL-horse, i.e. the last horse in the FILE; but he confesses it, a term, which he derived from the information of a learned clergyman.

LIII. The Merchant of Venice, Vol. II, p. 21.

Morochius, a black prince, among the rest of Portia's suitors, putting in his pretensions, and preparing to decide his fate by the choice of the casket, reflects upon the conditions to which he is subjected: that he, who had slain a Sophy with his scimitar, won three battles of a Sultan, who could outstare and outbrave the sternest and most daring creatures upon earth, pluck the cubs from a she-bear, and mock the roaring of a hungry lion, might be baffled and worsted in this adventure by the caprice of blind fortune.

But, alas the while!
If Hercules and LYCHAS play at dice
Which is the better man, the greater throw
May turn by fortune from the weaker hand:
So is Alcides beaten by his RAGE,
And so may I, blind fortune leading me,
Miss that which one unworthier may attain,
And die with grieving. (II, i, 31-38.)

Though the whole set of editions concur in this reading, and it has passed wholly unsuspected by the editor, I am very well assured, and I daresay the readers will be so too anon, that it is corrupt at bottom. Let us look into the poet's sentiment, and the history of the persons represented. If Hercules (says he) and Lichas (for so is his name to be spelt, if we may take Sophocles, Ovid, &c. for our guides) were to play at dice for the decision of their superiority; Lichas, the weaker man, might have the better cast of the two. But how then is Alcides beaten by his rage? To admit this, we must suppose a gap in the poet; and that some lines are lost in which Hercules, in his passion for losing the hand, had thrown the box and dice away, and knocked his own head against the wall for mere madness. Thus, indeed, might he be said, in some sense, to be beaten by his rage. But Shakespeare had no such stuff in his head. He means no more than, if Lichas had the better throw, so might Hercules himself be beaten by Lichas. In short, Lichas was the poor unfortunate servant of Hercules, who, unknowingly brought his

master the envenomed shirt, dipped in the blood of the centaur Nessus, and was thrown headlong into the sea for his pains. The poet has alluded to some parts of this fable in another of his plays; and there indeed a reasonable intimation is made of Hercules worsting himself through his own rage. See Antony and Cleopatra, Vol. V, p. 398.

Antony:

Eros, ho,
The shirt of Nessus is upon me;--teach me,
Alcides, thou mine ancestor, thy rage:
Let me lodge Lichas on the horns o'th'moon,
And, with those hands that grasped the
heaviest club,
Subdue my worthiest self. (IV, xii, 42-47.)

But to return to the place before us: can we desire more than to know this one circumstance of Lichas's quality to set us right in the poet's meaning, and put an end to all the present absurdity of the passage? Restore it, without the least scruple, only with cutting off the tail of a single letter:

But, alas the while!
Should Hercules and Lichas play at dice
Which is the better man, the greater throw
May turn by fortune from the weaker hand:
So is Alcides beaten by his PAGE;
And so may I, blind fortune leading me,
Miss that which an unworthier may attain,
And die with grieving.

It is scarce requisite to hint here, it is a point so well known, that "page" has been always used in English to signify any boy servant; as well as what latter times have appropriated the word

to, a lady's train-bearer. And so Falstaff's boy, in our poet, is frequently called his page. So much in explanation of this newly adopted reading. The very excellent Lord Lansdowne,²⁷ in his alteration of this play, though he might not stand to make the correction upon the poet, seems at least to have understood the passage exactly as I do: and though he changes the verse, retains the sense of it in this manner:

So were a giant worsted by a dwarf!

Though I had made the emendation before I thought to look into his Lordship's performance, it is no small satisfaction to me, that I have the authority of such a genius to back my conjecture.

LIV. Emendation:

The Merchant of Venice, Vol. II, p. 71.

Portia: Is he not able to discharge the money?
Bassanio: Yes, here I tender it for him in the court,
Yea, twice the sum; if that will not suffice,
I will be bound to pay it ten times over,
On forfeit of my hands, my head, my heart.
If this will not suffice, it must appear
That malice bears down TRUTH.
(IV, 1, 208-214.)

This is a passage which has ever passed unsuspected, and yet, I daresay, does not yield us the poet's text. The case is this: Shylock, a Jew, lends Antonio, a Venetian merchant, three

²⁷George Granville, Baron Lansdowne (1667-1735), produced a revised version of the play in 1701 under the title of The Jew of Venice. Cf. A New Variorum Edition of The Merchant of Venice, ed. by H. H. Furness (Philadelphia, 1888), pp. 346-369.

thousand ducats on bond, with condition, that if he did not pay them at a day certain, the Jew might claim the forfeiture of a pound of Antonio's flesh to be cut from the parts nearest to his heart. The bond becomes forfeited; and the Jew rigidly insists upon the specific penalty, and will accept no sum whatever to remit that. But how does "malice" bear down "truth" in this process? Or what one circumstance is there in the cause, whereby truth or falsehood can come into the question? I cannot suppose that by "truth" the poet means "justice," and the equity of the thing; if that had been his thought, there is a monosyllable so much more proper and intelligible at hand to answer that sense, that he would unquestionably have said that malice bears down right. But I am persuaded that Shakespeare intended Bassanio should intimate, if the Jew would come to no terms, nor take his debt though tendered with such large advantage, it was plain, he was so bloodthirsty that his malice had got the better of his passion of interest, and extinguished all sentiments of remorse, tenderness, and human charity. The stress of the affair lies betwixt the Jew's malice, and the intercessions of the court to him to be merciful. This is the tenor of the whole scene; and consonant to this meaning, the Duke addresses himself to Shylock, so soon as he appears at the bar, in these words:

Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so too,
That thou but leadst this fashion of thy malice
To the last hour of act, and then 'tis thought
Thou'lt show thy mercy and remorse more strange
Than is thy strange apparent cruelty.

(IV, 1, 17-21.)

The Duke's speech is directly a persuasive to compassion, and this topic is so often reinforced in several passages of the scene, that I make not the least question but our poet made his Bassanio say, the Jew not complying to accept such an extravagant return for his debt,

If this will not suffice, it must appear
That malice bears down RUTH.

i.e. mercy and compassion. So this word is explained by the etymologists; and so it is used both by Chaucer and Spenser, Shakespeare's two great originals in language. I could quote instances almost without number, where our poet uses "ruthful" and "ruthless." Nor was the substantive itself so obsolete, or uncommon, but that he has frequently chosen to employ it.

King Richard II, Vol. III, p. 154.

Here did she drop a tear, here in this place
I'll set a bank of rue, sour herb of grace:
Rue, ev'n for RUTH, here shortly shall be seen,
In the remembrance of a weeping Queen.

(III, iv, 104-107.)

Troilus and Cressida

Let's leave the hermit pity with our mother;
And when we have our armors buckled on,

The venom'd vengeance ride upon our swords,
Spur them to rueful work, rein them from RUTH.
(V, 111, 45-48.)

Coriolanus, Vol. V, p. 97.

Would the nobility lay aside their RUTH,
And let me use my sword, &c. (I, 1, 201-202.)

LV. Emendation:

The Merchant of Venice, Vol. II, p. 68.

Bassanio: Why dost thou whet thy knife so earnestly?
Shylock: To cut the forfeit from that bankrupt there.
Gratiano: Not on thy SOUL! but on thy SOUL, harsh Jew,
Thou mak'st thy knife keen--
(IV, 1, 121-124.)

I do not know what ideas the editor had affixed to himself of the poet's sense here; for my own part I can find none, as the text stands now. I dare venture to restore him, from the authority of some of the folio editions; though I am obliged at the same time to restore such a sort of conceit, and jingle upon two words, alike in sound but differing in sense, as our author ought to have blushed for. But be that upon his own head. If I restore his meaning, and his words, he himself is accountable to the judges for writing them.

Bassanio: Why dost thou whet thy knife so earnestly?
Shylock: To cut the forfeit from that bankrupt
there.
Gratiano: Not on thy SOLE, but on thy SOUL, harsh Jew,
Thou mak'st thy knife keen--

i.e. "Though thou thinkest that thou art whetting thy knife on the sole of thy shoe, yet it is upon thy soul, thy immortal part, that thou dost it, mistaken, inexorable man! The bare intention of thy cruelty is so unpardonable, that it must bring thy very soul into hazard."

I dare affirm, this is the very antithesis²⁸ of our author; and I am the more confident, because it was so usual with him to play on words in this manner; and because in another of his plays he puts the very same words in opposition to one another, and that from the mouth of one of his serious characters.

Romeo and Juliet, Vol. VI, pp. 259-260.

Mercutio: Nay, gentle Romeo, we must have you dance.
Romeo: Not I, believe me; you have dancing shoes
With nimble SOLES, I have a SOUL of lead,
That stakes me to the ground, I cannot
move. (I, iv, 13-16.)

He is at it again within three lines after, upon two other words agreeing in sound; as we find the passage in the second folio, and several other editions, though Mr. Pope has not inserted it.

I am too SORE enpierced with his shaft,
To SOAR with his light feathers. (I, iv, 19-20.)

But, as I said, these jingles are perpetual with him.

²⁸An opposition or contrast of ideas, expressed by using . . . words which are strongly contrasted with each other. OED.

LVI. Emendation:

Love's Labor's Lost, Vol. II, p. 133.

Longaville: I fear, these stubborn lines lack power
to move;
O sweet Maria, empress of my love!
These numbers will I tear, and write in
prose.

Biron: Oh, rhymes are guards on wanton Cupid's
hose;
Disfigure not his SHOP. (IV, 111, 55-59.)

This is one of those passages, which, I am very willing to suppose, never passed Mr. Pope's revisal. What agreement in sense is there betwixt Cupid's "hose" and his "shop"? Or, what relation can those two terms have to one another? Or, what is "Cupid's shop"? All the editions happen to concur in the error; but that ought not to hinder us from correcting it:

Oh! rhymes are guards on wanton Cupid's hose;
Disfigure not his SLOP.

SLOPS are, as Skinner and others rightly inform us, large and wide-kneed breeches, now only worn by rustics and sea-faring men; and we have at this day dealers, whose sole business it is to furnish the sailors with shirts, jackets &c. who are called "slop-men"; and their shops, "slop-shops." Shakespeare knew the term, and has made use of it in more than one place:

King Henry IV, Part II, Vol. III, p. 299.

What said Mr. Dombledon about the satin for my short
cloak and SLOPS? (I, 11, 33-34.)

Romeo and Juliet, Vol. VI, p. 280.

Signior Romeo, bonjour;--there's a French salutation
to your French SLOP. (II, iv, 46-47.)

'Tis true, Mr. Pope has printed it here "your French STOP." But it must be corrected as I have restored it from the second folio edition, and the other better copies, or we come at no sense. Those wide-kneed breeches were the garb in fashion in our author's days, (as we may observe from old family pictures,) as well off, as upon the stage; and that they were the mode in France too, is plainly hinted in another of our author's plays.

King Henry V, Vol. III, p. 448.

Oh, then belike she was old and gentle, and you rode
like a kern of Ireland, your French HOSE off, and in
your straight strossers. (III, vii, 55-57.)

"Hose" and "slops" were synonymous terms, and used to signify the selfsame accoutrement. I will throw in one instance more of our author's being acquainted with the word "slops," because the passage is not to be found in the common editions; but I will restore it from an old one in quarto, (published for Andrew Wise and William Aspley, in 1600) an edition which Mr. Pope never saw, or at least never collated.

Much Ado About Nothing, Vol. I, p. 516.

There is no appearance of fancy in him, unless it be a fancy that he hath to strange disguises, as to be a Dutchman today, a Frenchman tomorrow; or in the shape of

two countries at once, as a German from the waist downward, all SLOPS; and a Spaniard from the hip upward, no doublet, &c. (III, ii, 31-36.)

LVIII. Emendation:

The Merry Wives of Windsor, Vol. I, p. 244.

Sometimes the beam of her eye GUIDED my foot, sometimes my portly belly. (I, iii, 68-69.)

Falstaff is here talking of how Mrs. Page looked upon him, and surveyed him all over, and examined his parts with very good liking. But how did her eye "guide" his foot? Certainly, this can never mean, "guided itself toward his foot." Falstaff seems to me here to speak as a man in love, with much complaisance; and as comparing his mistress' eye to the sun for brightness, and for a power of brightening the object which it darted on: I therefore question not but it should be corrected thus:

Sometimes the beam of her eye GUILDED my foot, sometimes my portly belly.

It is a poetical expression to say that her eye, like the sun, "gilded" (or, "gilded," as of old they wrote it) what part it shone upon; and I am rather persuaded that my correction is right, from the immediate reply of Pistol, which keeps the metaphor:

Then did the sun on dunghill shine. (I, iii, 70.)

LVIII. Emendation:

The Merry Wives of Windsor, Vol. I, p. 311.

Mrs. Ford: Mrs. Page is come with me, Sweetheart.

Falstaff: Divide me like a BRIBED buck, each a haunch.
(V, v, 26-27.)

I must confess, I do not understand the meaning of a "bribed buck." If I conceive the author's sense at all, it ought to be restored:

Divide me like a BRIBE-buck, each a haunch.

i.e. "as a buck sent for a bribe betwixt you." So it becomes a term of art, and a very proper one; and it brings to my mind what is recorded in print concerning my Lord Chief Justice Hale;²⁹ that when he went the circuit, if any gentleman, who had a cause to come before him, sent him venison, he constantly refused it, saying, "It is a BRIBE-buck, and I'll have none of it."

LIX. Emendation:

King Lear, Vol. III, p. 9.

Peace be with Burgundy,
Since that respect AND fortunes are his love,
I shall not be his wife. (I, 1, 250-252.)

The Duke of Burgundy had made his addresses to Cordelia, and was to have her to wife with a third part of her father's kingdom in

²⁹Sir Matthew Hale (1609-1676), English jurist, Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench (1671).

dowry: but her father falling out with, and disinheriting her, asks Burgundy if he will take her in that condition, and dowerless: Burgundy excusing himself, and that he cannot take her without the proposed portion, Cordelia thus replies to his refusal. But what does the poet mean by "respect and fortunes"? What respect? If Lear would have bestowed the third part of his dominions, as he had contracted, that was all the respect which Burgundy would have stood upon with her. I would willingly restore it with my quarto edition, published in 1655, which I presume never came to the editor's view.

Peace be with Burgundy!
Since that respects OF fortune are his love,
I shall not be his wife.

i.e. "since his professed love and addresses to me, were only on account of the dowry which he hoped to have with me.

LX. Emendation.

King Lear, Vol. III, p. 10.

Time shall unfold what PLIGHTED cunning hides.
(I, 1, 283.)

There is no good sense in this epithet "plighted" here, and therefore there is reason to suspect it a corruption. The meaning of the poet certainly is, that time shall discover what intricate, perplexed, involved cunning labors to conceal. It must

be restored therefore either thus:

Time shall unfold what PLEACHED³⁰ cunning hides.

Or, rather,

Time shall unfold what PLAITED cunning hides.

Each of the terms answers the idea required in this place; but I prefer the latter, because it signifies "wrapped in folds," and is more directly opposite in sense to "unfolding." The word might possibly, according to the old spelling, be written thus, "plaighted"; and so the mistake arose by an easy corruption of it into "plighted."

LXI. Emendation:

King Lear, Vol. III, p. 73.

World, world, O world!
But that thy strange mutations make us HATE thee,
Life would not yield to age. (IV, 1, 10-12.)

This, I think, is as remarkable a passage, as has at all fallen under my consideration. It has neither been suspected, nor attempted; though, 'tis evident, it carries a flat contradiction to the sentiment which the poet would infer. If the vicissitudes in the world make us hate the world, is that a reason why we should submit to live to be old? I should rather have

³⁰ Twisted, entangled, &c. See Much Ado About Nothing, Vol. I, p. 512 (III, 1, 7); Antony and Cleopatra, Vol. V, p. 402 (IV, xiv, 73); and Henry V, Vol. III, p. 489 (V, II, 42). (T)

thought it an argument for the putting an end to a miserable life. There is so flagrant a paradox in sense, as the text now stands, that, though all the editions unhappily countenance it, I conceive, Mr. Pope might very safely have indulged his private sense here. I communicated my objections upon this place (as I have upon many others) to my late ingenious friend Dr. Sewell, (whom death has since robbed me of, though his merit will long outlive these poor sheets) who gave me this conjecture upon it.

O world! world! world!
But that thy strange mutations make us BATE thee,
Life would not yield to age.

i.e. "if the many changes in life did not induce us to abate from, and make allowances for, some of the bad casualties, we should never endure to live to old age."

This is excellent good sense and reasoning, and certainly comes very near to our author's meaning. I have since ventured to try my own strength upon the passage; and the Doctor was so complaisant to think my conjecture less strained, and the more probable one. I suspect, the poet wrote it thus:

O world! world! world!
But that thy strange mutations make us WAIT thee,
Life would not yield to age.

i.e. "if the number of changes and vicissitudes, which happen in life, did not make us wait, and hope for some turn of fortune for the better, we could never support the thought of living to

to be old, on any other terms."

LXII. Emendation:

King Henry IV, Part I, Vol. III, p. 223.

Didst thou never see Titan kiss a dish of butter? Piti-ful-hearted TITAN, that melted at the sweet tale of the sun? If thou didst, then behold that compound.

(II, iv, 133-136.)

This absurd reading possesses all the copies that have ever fallen in my way; and though it has passed through such a number of impressions, is nonsense which we may pronounce to have arisen at first, from the inadvertence and blunder of the compositors to the press. 'Tis well known, Titan is one of the poetical names of the sun; but we have no authority from fable for Titan's melting away at his own sweet tale, as Narcissus did at the reflection of his own sweet form. The poet's meaning was certainly this: Sir John Falstaff enters in a great heat, after having been robbed by the Prince and Poins in disguise: and the Prince, seeing him in such a sweat, makes the following simile upon him: "Do but look upon that compound of grease;--his fat drips away with the violence of his motion, just as butter does with the heat of the sunbeams darting full upon it." Correct, therefore, as common sense requires:

Didst thou never see Titan kiss a dish of butter? Piti-ful-hearted BUTTER, that melted at the sweet tale of the sun? If thou didst, then behold that compound.

LXIII. Emendation:

Love's Labor's Lost. Vol. II, p. 117.

These are complements, these are humors, these betray nice wenches that would be betrayed without these, and make THEM men of note: do you note men that most affected are to these? (III, 1, 23-26.)

The speech here is a description of the odd attitudes and affectations which men in love assume, and thereby seduce young girls into that passion. But do these affectations make wenches men of note too? This is a transformation, which, I daresay, the poet never thought of. His meaning is, as I conceive, that they not only inveigle the young girls, but make the men taken notice of, who affect them. Correct therefore:

. . . and make THE MEN³¹ men of note: do you note men, that most affected are to these?

This is not the only passage of our author, where, in the printed copies, I have observed "them" through error to have usurped the place of "men."

The Comedy of Errors. Vol. I, p. 432.

Antipholus: Why is time such a niggard of hair, being, as it is, so plentiful an excrement?

Dromio: Because it is a blessing that he bestows on beasts; and what he hath scanted THEM in hair, he hath given them in wit.

Antipholus: Why, but there's many a man hath more hair than wit. (II, 11, 78-84.)

³¹Or, the men of note. (T)

Sure, this is an evident paradox, and contradiction in sense. Can hair be supposed a blessing that time bestows on beasts peculiarly, and yet that he hath scanted them of it too? Correct, as the context plainly requires:

Dromio: Because it is a blessing that he bestows on
 beasts; and what he hath scanted MEN in
 hair, he hath given them in wit.
Antipholus: Why, but there's many a man hath more hair
 than wit.

So there is a passage in Hamlet, (though I have passed it over in my examination of that play,) where I have always suspected, on the other hand, that "men" usurps the place of "them."

Hamlet, Vol. VI, p. 405.

Oh, there be players, that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly, (not to speak it profanely,) that neither having the accent of Christian, pagan, or man, have so strutted and bellowed, that I have thought some of Nature's journeymen had made MEN, and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably. (III, ii, 31-38.)

What? Is Hamlet supposed to reason here, that, because he had seen a few very preposterous players, therefore he should think Nature's journeymen had made all mankind? for so "men" in this place, without "some" or "those" prefixed, must imply. No, those players were so far from appearing human creatures, that he could scarce imagine them the handiwork of Nature, but of some of her clumsy journeymen. If this be his sense, might not the poet more probably have written?

. . . that I have thought some of Nature's journeymen had made THEM, and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

LXIV. Emendation:

Love's Labor's Lost, Vol. II, p. 173.

A heavy heart bears NOT a humble tongue. (V, ii, 747.)

From the whole tenor of this speech of the Princess, who is fresh in sorrow on account of her father's death, and who is making apologies for anything that she may have said too freely to the King, 'tis plain, this sentiment is the direct opposite to the poet's meaning. Besides, it is true in nature, that heaviness of heart, and any oppression, always make us humble and submissive. Correct, without scruple:

A heavy heart bears BUT a humble tongue.

The mistake is easy upon these monosyllables, and may be found to have happened in several other passages of our author. I will subjoin two or three instances, in which I believe everybody will agree with me, that the same error possesses the printed copies.

First Occasional Emendation:

All's Well that Ends Well, Vol. II, p. 439.

Men are to mell³² with, boys are NOT to kiss.
(IV, iii, 257.)

Here is a new maxim obtruded upon us, that boys are not to kiss.

³²Mell, from meler, to mingle. (T)

The poet's thought, I am persuaded, goes further, namely, that boys are fit only to kiss; men to mingle with, and give more substantial pleasures. Correct it:

Men are to mell with, boys are BUT to kiss.

Second Occasional Emendation:

The Comedy of Errors, Vol. I, p. 440.

Alas, poor women, make us NOT believe
(Being compace of credit) that you love us;
Though others have the arm, show us the sleeve,
We in your motion turn, and you may move us.
(III, 11, 21-24.)

Nothing can be more plain than the poet's sense in this passage. Women, says he, are so easy of faith, that only make them believe you love them, and they will take the bare profession for the substance. Correct it:

Alas, poor women, make us BUT believe, &c.

Third Occasional Emendation:

Cymbeline, Volume VI, p. 217.

Nay, do NOT wonder at it; you are made
Rather to wonder at the things you hear,
Than to work any.
(V, 111, 53-55.)

Surely, this is such a mock-reasoning that it cannot be Shakespeare's, but in its corruption. What? Because he was made fitter to wonder at great actions, than to perform any, is he therefore forbidden to wonder? I think it is evident, to demonstration, that common sense demands this reading from the poet:

Nay, do BUT wonder at it; you are made
Rather to wonder, &c.

LXV. Emendation.

The Comedy of Errors, Vol. I, p. 451.

A fiend, a FAIRY, pitiless and rough,
A wolf, nay, worse, &c. (IV, 11, 35-36.)

Dromio here bringing word in haste that his master is arrested, describes the bailiff by names proper to raise horror and detestation of such a creature, such as, a devil, a fiend, a wolf, &c. But how does "fairy" come up to these ideas? Or with what propriety can it be used here? Does he mean, that a bailiff is like a fairy in stealing away his master? The truest believers in those little phantoms never pretended to think that they stole anything other than children. Certainly, it will sort better in sense with the other names annexed, as well as with the character of a catch-pole, to conclude that the poet wrote:

A fiend, a FURY, pitiless and rough,
A wolf, &c.

LXVI. Emendation:

Much Ado About Nothing, Vol. I, p. 480.

He set up his bills here in Messina, and challenged Cupid at the flight; and my uncle's fool reading the challenge, subscribed for Cupid, and challenged him at the BURBOLT. (I, 1, 39-42.)

Thus the copies, from the quarto, published in 1600, downwards,

exhibit this passage. The editor certainly ought to have given us the gloss of "burbolt," if there be any such word; but I apprehend it to be a corruption. I take the author's meaning to be no more than this: Benedick challenged Cupid to fly with him, and the fool made Cupid challenge Benedick to shoot the arrow with him. It must therefore be restored,

and challenged him at the BIRD-BOLT; [or, BUT-BOLT.] Arrows, being employed either to let fly at a bird, or a mark, were by our author's predecessors called both bird-bolts, and but-shafts, or bolts; and he himself employs the words in other passages of his plays.

Love's Labor's Lost, Vol. II, p. 132.

King: Ay me!

Biron: Shot, by heaven.--Proceed, sweet Cupid; thou hast thumped him with thy BIRD-BOLT under the left pap. (IV, 111, 22-25.)

Twelfth Night, Vol. II, p. 479.

To be generous, guiltless, and of free disposition, is to take those things for BIRD-BOLTS that you deem cannon bullets. (I, v, 98-101.)

Romeo and Juliet, Vol. VI, p. 279.

Alas, poor Romeo, he is already dead!--Stabbed with a white wench's black eye, run through the ear with a love song, the very pin of his heart cleft with the blind bow-boy's BUT-SHAFT. (II, iv, 13-16.)

LXVII. Emendation.

Much Ado About Nothing, Vol. I, p. 494.

Pedro: My visor is Philemon's roof; within the house
is LOVE.

Hero: Why then your visor should be thatched.
(II, 1, 99-101.)

I must own, this passage has appeared very obscure to me, and given me much trouble in attempting to understand it. This is a scene in which the actors are masqueraders; and Pedro, the Prince of Arragon, fixing his discourse on Hero, asks her whether she will walk away with him? Yes, says she, when I like your figure better; for, God forbid, the lute should be like the case: i.e. that your face should be as homely and as coarse as your mask. Upon this, Pedro compares his visor to Philemon's roof. 'Tis plain, the poet alludes to the story of Baucis and Philemon, from Ovid: and this old couple, as that Roman poet describes it, lived in a thatched cottage. But why, "within the house is love"? Baucis and Philemon, 'tis true, had lived to old-age together, in a comfortable state of agreement: but piety and hospitality are the top parts of their character. Our poet, if I am not mistaken, goes a little deeper into the story. Though this old pair lived in a cottage, this cottage received two stragglng gods³³ under its roof.³⁴ So, Pedro is a prince; and though his visor is but ordinary, he would insinuate to Hero,

³³Jupiter and Mercury. (T)

³⁴Ovid, Metamorphoses, Book VIII.

that he has something godlike within: alluding either to his dignity, or to the qualities of his person and mind. By these circumstances, I am sure, the thought is mended: and I have no doubt, but the poet's text ought to be so too. Read, therefore, with only cutting off the tail of a single letter:

Pedro: My visor is Philemon's roof, within the house
is JOVE.

LXVIII. Emendation:

All's Well that Ends Well, Vol. II, p. 422.

He says, he has a stratagem for't; when your Lordship sees the bottom of his success in it, and to what metal this counterfeit lump of OURS will be melted, if you give him not, &c. (III, vi, 37-40.)

Why, "counterfeit lump of OURS"? 'Tis true, Parolles, of whom they are speaking, was of the same side in the wars as they; but yet those two monosyllables are of no use, nor add a grain of elegance to the sentence; so far from it, they rather clog than are necessary. I do not therefore think, they are to be blotted out: But let us see whether by a slight change, they may not bear a consonancy with the other terms accompanying them, (viz. metal, lump, and melted;) and help the propriety of the poet's thought. I am persuaded the poet wrote, as it ought to be corrected:

and to what metal this counterfeit lump of ORE will
be melted, etc.

For so one metaphor is kept up, and all the words are proper and suitable to it.

LXIX. Emendation:

The Tempest, Vol. I, p. 68.

On the bat's back I do fly
After SUMMER merrily.

(V, 1, 91-92.)

Why, after summer? I have always suspected this word, though the editions concur in the reading. But is it true in fact, that the bat flies after summer? The hoopoe sleeps during the winter, say the naturalists, and so does the bat too. Again, flies and gnats are the favorite food of the BAT, which he procures by flying about in the night. But this is a diet, which, I presume, he can only come at in the summer season. When BATS fly either earlier, or in greater number than usual, it is a sign that the next day will be hot and serene. This prognostic likewise only suits with summer. In short, I am very apt to think the passage is corrupt, and was not designed to have any allusion to the season of the year, but rather to the hour at which bats are accustomed to fly. The bat was called vespertilio, say the etymologists, by the Latins; (as it was nukteris by the Greeks;) because this bird is not visible by day, but appears first about the twilight of the evening, and so continues to fly about during the dark hours. From the custom and nature of this bird therefore,

it seems to me that it ought to be corrected:

On the bat's back I do fly
After SUNSET merrily.

LXX. Emendation:

The Taming of the Shrew, Vol. II, p. 275.

Hostess: I know my remedy; I must go fetch the HEAD-
BOROUGH.

Sly: Third, or fourth, or fifth borough, I'll
answer him by law; I'll not budge an inch,
boy; &c. (Induction, I, 11-14.)

I think, I may with modesty affirm, either that Mr. Pope never revised this passage; or, if he did, that he did not understand it. The corruption has passed down through all the copies; and none of the editors have pretended to guess at the poet's conceit. What a strange, insipid, unmeaning reply does Sly make to his Hostess! How do "third," or "fourth," or "fifth borough" relate to "headborough"? The author intended but a poor witticism; and even that is lost. The Hostess would say, that she will fetch a constable: but that headborough was not Shakespeare's expression, I dare warrant; and doubt not but the readers will be of my mind too. I am assured, the passage came from our poet's pen thus:

Hostess: I know my remedy; I must go fetch the THIRD-
BOROUGH.

Sly: Third, or fourth, or fifth borough, I'll
answer him by law, &c.

Who does not perceive, at a single glance, some conceit started

by this certain correction? There is an attempt at wit, tolerable enough for a tinker, and one drunk too. But what is "third-borough"? The glossaries tell us, that it was an old Saxon term for "constable"; and that "head-borough" was also called "borough-head," "bursholder," "third-borough," "tything-man," &c. To this, if we look into our own statute books, no farther back than the twenty-eighth year of King Henry VIII (1537) and not quite thirty years before the birth of Shakespeare, we shall there find "third-borough" used for a "constable."³⁵

I have no doubt but the use of the word continued currently in people's mouths in our author's time; and I have this reason for thinking so, because he uses it himself in another of his plays, which he would hardly have chosen to do, if it had been altogether antiquated and laid aside.

Love's Labor's Lost, Vol. II, p. 99.

Dull: I myself reprehend his own person, for I
am his Grace's THARBOROUGH. (I, i, 184-185.)

We know very well that Dull, in this play, represents the character of a constable: and there is no question but "thirdborough" is the very word intended here. 'Tis probable, indeed, that the

³⁵Third-borough, thrid-borough, thrith-borough, thri-borough, or, more corruptedly, thra-borough, is a constable or such like officer in the third part of any county, or shire, so divided, or cantoned. (T)

author humorously makes Dull knock the word out of joint, and purposely say "tharborough" for "thirdborough," as he likewise makes him say "reprehend" for "represent." Our poet very frequently plays with this custom of the vulgar, of frightening English out of its wits, as he calls it in his Merry Wives of Windsor (II, 1, 142).

LXXI. Emendation:

King Lear, Vol. III, p. 12.

Well, my legitimate, if this letter speed,
And my invention thrive, Edmund the base
Shall TO the legitimate. (I, ii, 19-21.)

I see no reason in the world for the break here, and leaving the sense imperfect. I rather think the poet wrote it:

Shall BE the legitimate.

i.e. shall quite supplant his brother out of his father's affections, and stand himself in the degree of his lawful heir.

LXXII. Emendation:

King Lear, Vol. III, p. 73.

Full oft 'tis seen
Our MEAN SECURES us, and our mere defects
Prove our commodities. (IV, 1, 21-23.)

I have already, in page 283, quoted this passage as one authority of the poet's making use of adjectives substantively: but, I

must own, I suspect the reading not genuine. 'Tis certain, 'tis good sense to say that our mean fortunes may be a security to us, and our wants an advantage; but, I am sure, the contrast both in sense and terms will be much stronger, and the variation not so great to startle us, if we may suppose, that our author's sentiment was this:

Full oft 'tis seen,
Our MEANS ENSNARE us, and our mere defects
Prove our commodities.

LXXIII. Emendation:

King Richard II, Vol. III, p. 128.

And yet OUR fair discourse has been as sugar,
Making the hard way sweet and delectable.
(II, 111, 6-7.)

By the whole tenor of Northumberland's speech here, 'tis plain, that he is in no part paying any compliment to his own discourse, but to the pleasures and advantages which he derived from the society and conversation of Bolingbroke, which sweetened and made short the fatigue of a very rough road. I daresay therefore the poet wrote:

And yet YOUR fair discourse hath been as sugar,
Making, &c.

LXXIV. Emendation:

King Henry IV, Part I, Vol. III, p. 266.

suffered his kinsman March
(Who is, if every owner were right placed,

Indeed, his king;) to be ENGAGED in Wales,
There, without ransom, to lie forfeited.

(IV, 111, 93-96.)

I think the term "engaged" is very much to be suspected here; for as it cannot signify "impawned," it has no consonancy, nor agreement in sense, with "lying fortified without ransom." The truth of the history was this, Mortimer Earl of March was taken prisoner, and closely confined in Wales by Owen Glendower: many solicitations were made to King Henry for redeeming him, but he would never listen to them, suspecting Mortimer of treason; and so he continued to be a close prisoner, till he found his release by the means of the Percies and the rebellion. Correct, therefore, to correspond both with sense and history,

to be ENCAGED in Wales,
There without ransom to lie forfeited.

LXXV. Emendation:

King Henry V, Vol. III, p. 440.

High dukes, great princes, barons, lords and KINGS.
(III, v, 46.)

The French king is speaking here to the great lords of his court, and army, in all these pompous titles. But why "kings"? There was not one king among them besides the speaker. Though this error runs through all the copies, correct it,

High dukes, great princes, barons, lords and KNIGHTS.

When the battle is over, and we come to have an account of the loss on the French side, we find that they had five hundred knights dubbed but the day before the battle: and that in the ten thousand men, which they lost, there were but sixteen hundred who fought for pay. The rest, as the poet tells us, page 481, were

Princes, barons, lords, KNIGHTS, squires,
And gentlemen of blood and quality. (IV, viii, 94-95.)

LXXVI. Emendation:

King Henry VI, Part I, Vol. IV, p. 66.

I dare presume, sweet Prince, he thought no
harm.

York: And if I WISH he did-- (IV, i, 179-180.)

Here again a break is made without occasion, and the text is likewise slightly corrupted. Correct it,

And if I WIS, he did.

i.e. "if I think right, or know anything of the matter, he did think harm." To "wis," and "wist," (from the Saxon, wistan, cognoscere) is a word frequent both with Chaucer and Spenser.

LXXVII. Emendation:

King Henry VI, Part II, Vol. IV, p. 123.

Come, come, my Lords,
These oracles are HARDLY attained,
And hardly understood. (I, iv, 73-75.)

This is part of a degraded passage, which Mr. Pope thinks to be

an unnecessary repetition. I am very free to own, as it is here, and in all the preceding editions, exhibited, it seems to have so little meaning, that it is very unworthy of our author. But if by a very slight, yet certain, alteration, I can both give it a meaning, and a fine sentiment; it may be worth while to restore the poet his own text. The case is this: Eleanor, Duchess of Gloucester, resorting to conjurers and wizards to be resolved of the fate of the King and several of the court, is caught in the fact by the Dukes of York and Buckingham; the parties being apprehended, and their papers seized, York says he will see the Devil's writ; and reading over the answers which the wizards had given, and finding them intricate and ambiguous, he makes this general comment upon such sort of intelligence. But how are these oracles hardly attained? 'Tis plain, they were actually attained, and taken down in writing; or the discoverers could never have come to the knowledge of them. Not only the sense, but the verse, labors with the corruption of this passage: and I have not the least doubt but they are both to be restored thus with the greatest certainty.

Come, come, my Lords,
These oracles are HARDILY attained,
And hardly understood.

i.e. a great risk and hazard is run to obtain them, namely going to the devil for them, as 'twas pretended and supposed: and like-

wise the incurring severe penalties by the statute law against such practices: and yet after these "hardy" steps taken, the information is so perplexed that it is "hardly" to be understood.

LXXVIII. Emendation:

King Henry VI. Part III. Vol. IV, pp. 229-230.

That face of his,
The hungry cannibals would not have touched,
Would not have stained the roses JUST with blood, &c.
(I, iv, 152-153.)

I cannot but suspect this to be a corruption. What can the word "just" import here? Does the poet mean, that the cannibals would not have "just" stained the roses in his cheeks with blood, i.e. would not so much as have fetched blood of him? Besides, that the position of the words is forced, I believe, Shakespeare had another thought, and that we ought to read the passage:

Would not have stained the roses JUICED with blood.
i.e. would not have spilt that blood, whose juices shone through his young cheeks, bright as the vermilion dye in roses.

LXXIX. Emendation:

King Richard III. Vol. IV, p. 366.

Death makes no conquest of HIS conqueror;
For now he lives in fame, though not in life.
(III, i, 87-88.)

The poet is here speaking of Julius Caesar, of immortal memory.

But, methinks, it is no very notable sentiment, that death does not conquer that which conquers him: it would be very extraordinary indeed, if he did. I can scarce think so exceptionable an expression dropped from our poet, but rather that he wrote it thus:

Death makes no conquest of THIS conqueror;
For now he lives in fame, though not in life.

LXXX. Emendation:

King Henry VIII. Vol. IV, p. 458.

They've all new legs, and lame ones; one would take it,
(That never saw 'em pace before,) the spavin
And SPRING-HALT reigned among 'em. (I, 111, 11-13.)

The editor has taken this word upon content from the preceding editions, but it must be corrected:

And STRING-HALT reigned among 'em. the spavin

The "string-halt" is a distemper among horses, which by a sudden twitching up of the hinder leg, makes them go lame.

LXXXI. Emendation:

Timon of Athens. Vol. V, p. 8.

Yet you do well
To show Lord Timon, that MEAN eyes have seen
The foot above the head. (I, 1, 92-94.)

Why, "mean" eyes, more than the eyes of persons of figure? The Painter, I presume, here, had no design of affronting the poet by

calling him either one of mean rank, or mean observation. It will, certainly, be more intelligible to write it thus:

Yet you do well
To show Lord Timon, that MEN'S eyes have seen
The foot above the head.

LXXXII. Emendation:

Coriolanus, Vol. V, p. 148.

Shall!
O GOD!--but most unwise Patricians; why,
You grave, but wreakless senators, have you thus
Given Hydra here to choose an officer, &c.
(III, 1, 90-93.)

After this exclamation, methinks, 'tis very odd to continue the sentence with such a disjunctive but: besides, as the text now stands, there seems that contrast of terms wanting, and broken off, which appears intended in this passage by the next immediate line. As the addition of a single letter restores us this beauty, I make no doubt but the passage ought to be restored:

Shall!
O GOOD, but most unwise, Patricians, why,
You grave, but wreakless, senators, have you thus, &c.

LXXXIII. Emendation:

Coriolanus, Vol. V, p. 165.

Consider further,
That when he speaks not like a citizen,
You find him like a soldier; do not take
His rougher ACTIONS for malicious sounds;
But, as I say, such as become a soldier. (III, 111, 52-56.)

I have no manner of apprehension how a man's actions can be mistaken for words. If I were to do a saucy thing to someone, I should think it very extraordinary, if he told me, "Sir, you give me very impudent language." There seems to me a manifest corruption in the text, through all the copies; and that, for the sake of common sense, it ought to be corrected thus:

Do not take
His rougher ACCENTS for malicious sounds, &c.

LXXIV. Emendation:

Coriolanus, Vol. V, p. 200.

You gods I PRAY,
And the most noble mother of the world
Leave unsaluted. (V, 111, 48-50.)

I daresay, an old corruption has possessed this passage, for two reasons. In the first place, whoever consults this speech, will find, that he is talking fondly to his wife, and not praying to the gods at all. Secondly, if he were employed in his devotions, no apology would be wanting for leaving his mother unsaluted. The poet's intention was certainly this: Coriolanus, having been lavish in his tendernesses and raptures to his wife, bethinks himself on the sudden, that his fondness to her had made him guilty of ill manners in the neglect of his mother. Restore, as it certainly ought to be:

You gods! I PRATE,
And the most noble mother of the world
Leave unsaluted.

Mr. Dennis, (than whom, in my opinion, no man in England better understands Shakespeare) in his alteration of this play, whether he made the same correction which I now do, certainly understood the passage exactly with me: an undeniable proof of this, is an appeal to the change in expression which he has put upon it:

But Oh! ye gods, while fondly thus I talk,
See, the most noble mother of the world
Stands unsaluted.

I question not, but his reason for varying the expression, was, because "prate" is a term ill-sounding in itself, and mean in its acceptation. Our language was not so refined, though more masculine, in Shakespeare's days; and therefore (notwithstanding the kakophonia³⁶) when he is most serious, he frequently makes use of the word. But four pages afterwards in this very play we again meet with it.

yet here he lets me prate
Like one i'th' stocks. (V, 11, 159-160.)

King John, Vol. III, p. 166.

If I talk to him, with his innocent prate
He will awake my mercy. (IV, 1, 25-26.)

Hamlet, Vol. VI, p. 458.

And if thou prate of mountains, let them throw
Millions of acres on us. (V, 1, 303-304.)

Nor is it infrequent with him to employ the diminutive of this

³⁶Unpleasant or discordant sound.

term:

The Tempest, Vol. I, p. 43.

But I prattle
Something too wildly, and my father's precepts
I do forget. (III, 1, 57-59.)

Measure for Measure, Vol. I, p. 401.

Silence that fellow;--I would he had some cause
to prattle for himself. (V, 1, 181-182.)

Othello, Vol. VI, p. 506.

O my sweet,
I prattle out of fashion, and I dote
In mine own comfort. (II, 1, 207-209.)

LXXXV. Emendation:

Coriolanus, Vol. V, p. 210.

Served his designments
In my own person; HOPED to reap the fame
Which he did make all his; and took some pride
To do myself this wrong. (V, v, 35-38.)

How could Aufidius hope to reap that fame, which Coriolanus made all his own, if he took a pride in doing himself that wrong? This was never the poet's meaning. Aufidius is angry that Coriolanus over-topped him so far, as to bear away the whole glory, which the other reasonably expected to share in, having contributed all the assistances in his power towards acquiring it in partnership. Suitable to the complaint of Aufidius, notwithstanding all the copies concur in the error, I have no doubt but the text ought to be restored:

Served his designments
In my own person; HOLP³⁷ to reap the fame, &c.

LXXXVI. Emendation:

Julius Caesar, Vol. V, p. 249.

Caesar should be a beast without a heart,
If he should stay at home today for fear.*
No, Caesar shall not; danger knows full well,
That Caesar is more dangerous than he.
WE HEARD two lions littered in one day,
And I, the elder, and more terrible;
And Caesar shall go forth.-- (II, 11, 42-48.)

All the lines from the asterisk are degraded by Mr. Pope; partly, I suppose, for the reason which he gives in his Preface for these degradations; but chiefly, I believe, because he did not understand them. The copies, indeed, are all corrupt; and the passage, of course, nonsense and unintelligible, till we look nearer, and see through the disguise of the bad text. But a slight alteration will restore sense to the whole; and then the sentiment will neither be unworthy of Shakespeare, nor the boast too absurd for Caesar in a vein of vanity to utter. I dare warrant, this was the genuine reading of our author:

Danger knows full well
That Caesar is more dangerous than he.
WE WERE two lions littered in one day,
And I the elder and more terrible, &c.

i. e. Caesar and Danger were twin whelps of a lion, and Caesar

³⁷Or, helped. (T)

the elder, and more terrible of the two.

LXXXVII. Emendation:

Antony and Cleopatra, Vol. V, p. 318.

My more particular,
And that which most with you should SAVE my
going,
Is Fulvia's death. (I, 111, 54-56.)

Antony is giving several reasons to Cleopatra, which make his departure from Egypt absolutely necessary; most of them reasons of state; but the death of Fulvia, his wife, was a particular and private call, which demanded his presence in Italy. But the poet's text, I find, in all the printed copies, would rather make us believe that Fulvia's death should prevent, or save him the trouble of going. The text in this respect, I dare engage, runs counter to its master's meaning. Cleopatra is jealous of Antony's absence, and suspicious that he is seeking colors for going: Antony replies to her doubts, with the reasons that obliged him to be gone for a time; and tells her that, as his wife Fulvia is dead, and so she has no rival to be jealous of, that circumstance should be his best plea and excuse, and have the greatest weight with her for his

going. Who does not see now, that it ought to be read?³⁸

My more particular,
And that which most with you should SALVE my going,
Is Fulvia's death.

LXXXVIII. Emendation:

Antony and Cleopatra, Vol. V, p. 321.

This common body,
Like to a vagabond flag upon the stream,
Goes to, and back, LASHING the varying tide,
To rot itself with motion. (I, iv, 44-47.)

How can a flag, or rush, floating upon a stream, and that has no motion but what the fluctuation of the water gives it, be said to "lash" the tide? This is making a scourge of a weak ineffective flag, and giving it an active violence in its own power. I do not know whether the editor has adopted this reading from any authorities, or it be one of his own conjecture; the generality of the editions have it LACKING: 'Tis true, there is no sense in that reading; and yet the addition of a single letter will not only give us good sense, but, I dare

³⁸On page 223 of Volume VII of his edition, Theobald expands this note somewhat. He adds an opening sentence: "Thus all the more modern editions; the first and second folios read, safe; all corruptedly." At the end of the note he adds this passage from Coriolanus:

Come, go with us; speak fair; you may salve so
Not what is dangerous present, but the loss
Of what is past. (III, ii, 70-72.)

promise, the genuine word of our author into the bargain. Correct:

Goes to and back, LACKYING the varying tide,
To rot itself with motion.

i.e. floating backwards and forwards with the variation of the tide, like a page, or "lackey" at his master's heels. The edition which I have above made mention of (in page 413) with marginal corrections in manuscript, concurs with me in this reading: as I have had the pleasure to find several more of my emendations authorized by the conjectures there inserted.

LXXXIX. Emendation:

Antony and Cleopatra, Vol. V, p. 327.

But let us rear
The higher our opinion, that our stirring
Can from the lap of Egypt's widow pluck
The NEAR lust-wearied Antony. (II, 1, 35-38.)

Sextus Pompeius, upon hearing that Antony is every hour expected in Rome, does not much relish the news: he is twice the soldier (says he) that Octavius and Lepidus are; and he did not think the petty war which he was raising would rouse Antony from his amours in Egypt. But why should Pompey hold a higher opinion of his own expedition, because it awaked Antony to arms, who was almost weary and surfeited of lascivious pleasures? The copies are all defective, and the editor follows them implicitly.

Correct it,

but let us rear
The higher our opinion, that our stirring
Can from the lap of Egypt's widow pluck
The NE'ER lust-wearied Antony.

i.e. if Antony, though never tired of luxury, yet moved from that charm upon Pompey's stirring, it was reason for Pompey to pride himself upon being of such consequence.

XC. Emendation:

Antony and Cleopatra, Vol. V, p. 394.

Behold this man,
Commend unto his lips thy SAVOURING hand;
Kiss it, my warrior: he hath fought today,
As if a god in hate of mankind had
Destroyed in such a shape. (IV, viii, 22-26.)

Antony here recommends one of his Captains, who had fought valiantly, to Cleopatra; and desires he may have the grace of kissing her hand. But why, "savouring hand"? Antony did not want his Captain to grow in love with his mistress, on account of the flavor and lusciousness of her hand; but only to have a reward of honor from the Queen for his good service. Though all the copies join in this reading, I much rather believe the poet's word was,

Commend unto his lips thy FAVORING hand.

XCI. Emendation:

Titus Andronicus, Vol. V, p. 496.

How if that fly had a father, and mother?
How would he hang his slender gilded wings,
And buzz lamenting DOINGS in the air?

(III, 11, 60-62.)

To "buzz lamenting doings" can certainly neither be English, nor an expression of Shakespeare; nor does it convey any satisfactory image. It is one of the manuscript conjectures, (in the margin of that edition which I but a little above took notice of,) that we ought to read here, as I think there is no dispute but we ought.

And buzz lamenting DRONINGS in the air.

This word representing that heavy, sleepy noise, made by the fly, chaser, bee, &c.

XCII. Emendation:

Titus Andronicus, Vol. V, p. 485.

Ye white-LIMBED walls, ye ale-house painted signs.
(IV, 11, 98.)

Thus the old quarto in 1611, the second folio edition, and all the subsequent copies that I have seen, read with Mr. Pope; but the poet's epithet is slightly corrupted. Restore it,

Ye white-LIMED walls--

It carries a reproach to a man, who makes a fine appearance outward, and has no virtues, or bravery, within to set him off;

Introrsum turpem, speciosum pelle decora,³⁹

as Horace calls it. The term in our author comes up exactly to the Greek, one used by St. Paul against Ananias in Acts, 23:3, τοίχη κηκονιαμένη, δε αλβате παριε; which our translation has rendered, "Thou whited wall."

XCIII. Emendation:

Macbeth, Vol. V, p. 554.

We have SCORCHED the snake, not killed it.
She'll close, and be herself-- (III, ii, 13-14.)

This is a passage which has all along passed current through the editions, and likewise upon the stage; and yet, I dare affirm, it is not our author's reading. What has a snake, closing again, to do with its being "scorched"? Scorching would never either separate, or dilate, its parts; but rather make them instantly contract and shrivel. Shakespeare, I am very well persuaded, had this notion in his head, (which how true in fact, I will not pretend to determine,) that if you cut a serpent, or worm, asunder in several pieces, there is such an unctious quality in their blood, that the dismembered parts, being only placed near enough to touch one another, will cement and become as whole as before the injury received. The application of this

³⁹Ugly beneath the beautiful and decorous skin. Horace, Epistulae, XVI, 45.

thought is to Duncan, the murdered king, and his surviving sons: Macbeth considers them so much as members of the father, that though he has cut off the old man, he would say, he has not entirely killed him; but he will cement and close again in the lives of his sons, to the danger of Macbeth. If I am not deceived therefore, our poet certainly wrote thus:

We have SCOTCHED the snake, not killed it.
She'll close, and be herself.

To scotch, however our dictionaries happen to omit the word, signifies to notch, slash, cut with twigs, sword, &c., and so Shakespeare more than once has used it in his works.

Coriolanus, Vol. V, p. 182.

He was too hard for him directly, to say the troth on't:
Before Corioli, he SCOTCHED him, and notched him, like
a carbonado. (IV, v, 197-199.)

Antony and Cleopatra, Vol. V, p. 393.

We'll beat them into bench holes, I have yet
Room for six SCOTCHES more. (IV, vii, 9-10.)

To show how little we ought to trust implicitly to dictionaries for etymologies, we need no better proof than from Bailey in his explication of the term, SCOTCH-collops; he tells us, that it means slices of veal fried after the Scotch manner: but, besides that that nation are not over famous for the elegance of their cookery, it is more natural, and I daresay more true, to

allow that it ought to be written SCOTCHT-collops, i.e. collops, or slices slashed cross and cross, before they are put on the coals. Sed haec obiter.⁴⁰

XCIV. Emendation:

Macbeth, Vol. V, p. 561.

Be alive again,
And dare me to the desert with thy sword;
If trembling I INHIBIT, then protest me
The baby of a girl. (III, iv, 103-106.)

All the editions before Mr. Pope's, that I have seen, read, "If trembling I inhabit," which is insufferable nonsense. I do not know whether the editor's reading be from any authority, or his own conjecture; but I am afraid it is not English. There cannot be brought a passage to show that inhibeo is ever used by the Latins as a neuter or deponent verb, but always actively: and so with us, to "inhibit," always signifies, to "restrain," "stop," and some things else; never, to "desist," "renege," &c. If therefore "inhibit" be the poet's word here, (which I am not absolutely satisfied about,) we must correct his text thus:

If trembling ME inhibit, then protest me--
i.e. "If the passion of trembling, the influence of fear upon my nerves, prevents me from following thee, &c."

⁴⁰But this is only in passing.

XCV. Emendation:

Macbeth, Vol. V, p. 562.

There is not ONE of them, but in his house
I keep a servant fee'd. (III, iv, 131-132.)

One of whom? Macbeth has just said, that he heard Macduff meant to disobey his summons, and not come to court; and he would immediately subjoin, that there is not a man of Macduff's quality in the kingdom, but he has a spy under his roof. This is understood, not expressed, as the text now stands. For this reason, and because there is a various reading in the second folio edition, I am apt to think there is a slight corruption in this passage. That copy exhibits it to us thus:

There's not A ONE of them.

Here we again meet with a depraved reading; but it is such a one as will help us to the poet's true words. Correct, as it certainly ought to be restored:

There's not A THANE of them--

i.e. a nobleman. And so the peers of Scotland were all called, till earls were created by Malcolm, the son of Duncan.

XCVI. Emendation:

Macbeth, Vol. V, p. 570.

Who can impress the forest, bid the tree
Unfix his earth-bound root?--Sweet bodements! Good!
Rebellious DEAD rise never, till the wood
Of Birnam rise-- (IV, 1, 95-98.)

Thus all the impressions, from the very beginning, exhibit this passage; but I cannot imagine what notion the editors could have of the dead being rebellious. It looks to me, as if they were content to believe the poet genuine, wherever he was mysterious beyond being understood. The emendation of one letter will give us clear sense, and the very thing which Macbeth should be supposed to say here. Restore it:

Rebellious HEAD⁴¹ rise never, till the wood
Of Birnam rise.

i.e. "Let rebellion never make head against me, till a forest move, and I shall reign long enough in safety." Shakespeare very frequently uses the word "head" in this manner, of which I will subjoin an example or two.

King Henry IV. Part I. Vol. III, p. 249.

Douglas, and the English REBELS men
Th'eleventh of this month, at Shrewsbury.
A mighty and a fearful HEAD thy are, &c.
(III, ii, 165-167.)

King Henry IV. Part II. Vol. III, p. 307.

For his divisions, as the times do brawl,
Are in three HEADS; one power against the French, &c.
(I, iii, 70-71.)

Coriolanus. Vol. V, p. 132.

When Tarquin made a HEAD for Rome, he fought
Beyond the mark of others. (II, ii, 92-93.)

⁴¹Or, rebellion's head. (T)

XCVII. Emendation:

Troilus and Cressida, Vol. VI, p. 7.

Priam's six-gated city,
Dardan, and Timbria, Helias, Chetas, Troien,
And Antenoridas, with massy staples,
And corresponsive and fulfilling bolts,
STIR up the sons of Troy. (Prologue, 15-19.)

I have no notion, in what sense a city, having six strong gates, and those well barred and bolted, can be said to stir up its inhabitants: unless that they may be supposed to derive some spirit from the strength of their fortifications. But I do not take this to be the poet's thought. The second folio edition reads it thus:

STIRRE up the sons of Troy.

This odd manner of spelling the word both gave me a suspicion of the place being corrupt, and administered to my conjecture for restoring it. The author, I take it, means no more than this; that the Greeks have pitched their tents upon the plains before Troy; and that the Trojans are securely barricaded within the walls of their city. I have no doubt therefore but we ought to read:

SPERRE up the sons of Troy.

For, to "sperre," or "spar," (from the old Teutonic word, SPERREN,) signifies to "shut up," "defend by bars," &c. And in this very sense I remember Chaucer uses the term in his Troilus

and Criseyde:

For when he saw her doores sperred all,
Well nigh for sorrow adown he gan to fall.
(V, 531-532.)

Occasional Emendation: I little suspected, when I first quoted the above passage, that it would have afforded matter for further correction: but I find that even in the names of Troy's gates we meet with some of them, that are no where else to be met with. I do not remember, indeed, that either Didymus, Eustathius, Spondanus, or any of the more modern commentaries upon Homer, furnish us with a list of their names: if they had, I doubt not but the editor would have set them right from those authorities; not even the laborious commentator upon Lycophron, where we might have expected it, has touched this matter. I am aware, that in Homer the Scaean and Dardanian gates are said to be one and the same; and so the six gates would be reduced to five. But notwithstanding this, they are enumerated as our poet meant to set them out: the late learned Sir Edward Sherburn in his notes upon the Troades of Seneca, tells us that Troy had six gates, namely, the Antenorian, the Dardanian, the Ilian, the Catumbrian, the Trojan, and the Scaean. He quotes us no authority for this, but I believe I can trace him in the account. For Cerda, upon the six hundred and twelfth verse of the second Aeneid of Virgil,

informs us from Dares Phrygius;⁴²--Trojanae urbis portas sex enumerat Dares: Antenoriden, Dardanium, Iliam, Scaeam, Catumbriam, Trojanam.⁴³ Here again, if I am not mistaken, we meet with fresh corruption. Catumbria is a very odd word; and, I am well satisfied, a depraved one. We are to know, there was near Old Troy, a plain called Thymbra; a river that ran through it called Thymbrius, and a temple to Apollo Thymbraeus. The gate, that we are speaking of, was probably described in the Greek author to be kata Thumbrion, the gate that faced the aforesaid plain and river. And from thence, as I suspect, by the negligence or ignorance of the transcriber, the words were joined and corrupted into Catumbria. The correcter editions of Dares Phrygius, I know, read thus: Ilio portas fecit (scilicet Priamus) quarum nomina haec sunt, Antenoridae, Dardaniae, Iliae, Scaeeae, Thymbraeae, Trojanae.⁴⁴ I doubt not but the author ought to be corrected by

⁴²"Legendary priest of Hephaestus at Troy, mentioned by Homer (Iliad, V, 9). To him was attributed an account of the destruction of Troy earlier than the Homeric poems. This work--if indeed it ever existed--is lost; but there is an extant Latin prose work . . . purporting to be a translation. . . . The Latin work, however, is of much later date (?5th century A.D.)." Warrington, p. 182.

⁴³Dares numbers six gates at Troy: the Antenorian, the Dardanian, the Ilian, the Scaean, the Catumbrian, and the Trojan.

⁴⁴He (evidently Priam) built the gates at Ilium, whose names are, Antenorian, Dardanian, Ilian, Scaean, Thymbrian, and Trojan.

this authority:

Priam's six gates i'th'city,
Dardania, Thymbria, Ilia, Scaea, Troien,
And Antenorides, with massy staples
And corresponsive and fulfilling bolts,
Sperre up the sons of Troy.

XCVIII. Emendation:

Troilus and Cressida, Vol. VI, p. 11.

And like as there were husbandry in war
Before the sun rose, he was harnessed LIGHT,
And to the field goes he-- (I, ii, 7-9.)

Why, harnessed "light"? Does the poet mean that Hector had put on light armor? Or that he was sprightly in his arms, even before sunrise? Or is a conundrum aimed at in "sun rose" and "harnessed light"? A very slight alteration makes all these constructions unnecessary; and gives us the poet's meaning in the properest terms imaginable. I am inclined to think he wrote:

Before the sun rose, he was harness-DIGHT, &c.

i.e. completely dressed, accoutred in arms. It is frequent with our poet, from his masters, Chaucer and Spenser, to say "dight" for "decked," "pight" for "pitched," &c.

XCIX. Emendation:

Troilus and Cressida, Vol. VI, p. 42.

Paris and Troilus, you have both said well,
AND on the cause and question now in hand

Have glossed but superficially.⁴⁵ (II, ii, 163-165.)

I can never think that the poet expressed himself thus: 'Tis absurd to say, that people have talked well, and yet but superficially at the same time. I am persuaded (as above in page 316) the copulative is here mistakenly put for the disjunctive; and that we ought to restore it

Paris and Troilus, you have both said well,
But on the cause and question now in hand
Have glossed but superficially.

i.e. "You have argued very well in the general, but have glossed too superficially upon the particular question in debate."

C. Emendation:

Cymbeline, Vol. VI, p. 178.

and I grieve myself
To think, when thou shalt be DIS-EDGED by her
Whom now thou tirest on, &c. (III, iv, 95-97.)

Notwithstanding the antithesis that there is betwixt "dis-edged" and "tirest on," yet, methinks, too gross an image is conveyed for so reserved and modest a princess as Imogen. I would suppose that our poet wrote, with a very small variation:

and I grieve myself
To think, when thou shalt be DIS-SIEGED by her, &c.

i.e. displaced, put out of her favor. SIEGE, it is well known,

⁴⁵See above, p. 391. (T)

was the old word used for seat, place, as also rank, dignity, &c.
So the King, in Hamlet, Vol. VI, p. 445.

Your sum of parts
Did not together pluck such envy from him,
As did that one, and that, in my regard,
Of the unworthiest SIEGE. (IV, vii, 74-77.)

Othello, Vol. VI, p. 482.

I fetch my life and being
From men of royal SIEGE. (I, ii, 21-22.)

Measure for Measure, Vol. I, p. 382.

Besides, upon the very SIEGE of justice
Lord Angelo hath to the public ear
Professed the contrary. (IV, ii, 101-103.)

'Tis certain, supposing my conjecture to be right upon the passage now in question, Shakespeare might as well have said "displaced," as "dissieged," by her; but I appeal to all the nicer and more critical readers of our poet, whether it is not his custom, to love an unusual term where a common one might serve his turn. As I presume he has here chosen "dissiege" to answer "displace," so in his Coriolanus he has industriously adopted another word to express the same meaning, Vol. V, p. 132.

Sir, I hope my words
DIS-BENCHED you not. (II, ii, 74-75.)

CI. Cymbeline, Vol. VI, p. 162.

THIS IS HER HONOR:
Let it be granted you have seen all this,
Praise be to your remembrance, the description

Of what is in her chamber nothing saves
The wager you have laid. (II, 1v, 91-95.)

To be as brief as possible in my reasons for suspecting this passage: Iachimo, a libertine in his thoughts of women, wagers with Posthumus that he will debauch his wife, so that he can once get access to her. Posthumus takes the bet, and makes way by letters to his wife for Iachimo's introduction. Iachimo impudently pretends to have carried his point; and, in confirmation, is very minute in describing to the husband all the furniture and adornments of his wife's bedchamber. But how is fine furniture in any way a princess' honor? It is an apparatus suitable to her dignity, but certainly makes no part of her character. I am persuaded the poet intended his Posthumus should say, "This particular description, that you make, can't convince me that I've lost my wager; your memory is good; and some of these things you may have learned from a third hand; I therefore expect proofs more direct and authentic." If I do not deceive myself therefore, there is little question but we ought to restore the place thus:

WHAT'S THIS T'HER HONOR?
Let it be granted you have seen all this,
Praise be, &c.

CII. Emendation:

Cymbeline, Vol. VI, p. 216.

Our Britain's HEARTS die flying, not our men;
To darkness fleet souls that fly backwards!
(V, 111, 24-25.)

I should have looked upon this in the rank of a mere literal error, but that I find it is so faithfully copied from the old editions; which makes me believe the editor did not attend to the poet's sense in it. Correct, with the greatest certainty:

Our Britain's HARTS die flying, not our men; &c.

i.e. our harts, or stags, receive their death as they fly; our men stand boldly to it, and die fighting.

CIII. Emendation:

Romeo and Juliet, Vol. VI, p. 250.

As is the bud bit with an envious worm,
Ere he can spread his sweet leaves to the air,
Or dedicate his beauty to the SAME. (I, 1, 157-159.)

Sure all the lovers of Shakespeare and poetry will agree with me that "to the same" is here a very idle, dragging parapleromatic, as the grammarians style it. I do not think the author was any ways necessitated to it, since he might by an additional epithet in the foregoing verse have avoided the fault objected, and expressed his thought with more elegance: as thus,

Ere he can spread his sweet and infant leaves,
Or dedicate his beauty to the air.

This would have been the natural way of conveying his idea, without those unpleasing expletives: but Shakespeare generally in his similes is accurate in the clothing of them; and therefore, I believe, would not have over-charged this so insipidly.

When we come to consider that there is some power else besides balmy air, that brings forth, and makes the tender buds spread themselves, I do not think it improbable that the poet wrote thus:

Ere he can spread his sweet leaves to the air,
Or dedicate his beauty to the SUN⁴⁶

CIV. Emendation:

Romeo and Juliet, Vol. VI, p. 259.

We'll have no cupid hoodwinked with a scarf,
Bearing a Tartar's painted bow of lath,
Scaring the ladies like a CROW-KEEPER.
(I, iv, 4-6.)

If there ever was such a thing as a "crowkeeper" in nature, I must own it is an employment quite out of my acquaintance. And surely, the poet cannot be supposed to intend by it, a man armed to keep off the crows? I would read it, cashiering only a single letter:

Scaring the ladies like a COW-KEEPER.

The herdsmen of old were used to watch in the field, with bows and arrows, to defend their cattle either from dogs, or any other injuries: objects very likely to scare the ladies, both from the size of their bows, and their awkward method of managing them. What gives me the foundation for this suspicion and

⁴⁶Or "sunne," according to the old spelling, which brings it nearer to the traces of the corrupted text. (T)

emendation is the following passage in King Lear, Vol. III, page 86.

Lear: There's your press-money.--That fellow handles his bow like a COW-KEEPER. (IV, vi, 86-87.)

For so Mr. Pope has very rightly restored it; though the second folio edition, (as does also my quarto, published in 1655) reads it here too absurdly--"crowkeeper."

CV. Emendation:

Hamlet, Vol. VI, p. 382.

Meantime, we thank you for your well-TOOK labor.
(II, ii, 83.)

I have nothing to object to the sense of this passage, which I forgot to take notice of in my examination of this play. The second folio edition however has a various reading, which gives some room for suspecting the text as it now stands. It is there,

Meantime, we thank you for your well-LOOKED labor.

It is probable the poet might, therefore, have written,

Meantime, we thank you for your well-LUCKED labor.

To say, that their labor had been "well-took," is saying, methinks, only that they had not labored in vain: but to say it was "well-lucked," is passing a sort of compliment on the address, skill, and good fortune, of the persons employed in it.

This conjecture is of no great moment, but I embraced the mention of it the more readily, because it lends me an opportunity

of correcting myself upon another passage of the same play. I should reckon it very disingenuous, as well as ridiculous, in a work which I have professed to have undertaken for the restoration of Shakespeare, if I should be ashamed to own myself mistaken, and retract the error. In my eighty-ninth remark upon Hamlet,⁴⁷ I have called in question the text upon two passages, where the poet has made use of the word UNBAITED. To avoid repetition and prolixity, I shall beg leave to refer the readers back to that note. Since my beginning this Appendix, I have changed my opinion, and begin to think the text may rather be explained, than disturbed or altered. The poet is speaking of swords and foils, and by a sword UNBATED, perhaps, he may mean a sword "unabated," or not robbed of its point, to distinguish it from a foil, which is blunted and charged at the end with a button. If we are to suppose the poet wrote "imbaited," or daubed over with an ointment, (as I there conjectured,) it is absurd for Laertes to reply to the King, who tells him he might easily choose a sword ready "baited," that he would "anoint" his sword for the purpose: nor can there be any occasion in the second passage for the epithet ENVENOMED, as "imbaited" signifies the same thing. But I submit both opinions to judgment.

⁴⁷Pages 379-381, above. (T)

CVI. Emendation:

Othello, Vol. VI, p. 484.

Judge me the world, if 'tis not gross in sense,
That thou hast practised on her with foul charms,
Abused her delicate youth with drugs, or minerals,
That weaken MOTION. (I, 11, 72-75.)

Desdemona having fallen in love and married with Othello, Brabantio, her father, accuses Othello of having used some foul play, and intoxicated her by drugs and potions to win her over to the match. But why, "drugs" to weaken "motion"? How then could she have run away with him voluntarily from her father's own house? Had she been averse to choosing Othello, though he had given her medicines that took away the use of her limbs, might she not still have retained her senses, and opposed the marriage? Her father, 'tis evident from several of his speeches, is positive that she must have been abused in her rational faculties, or she could not have made so preposterous a choice as to wed with a Moor, a black, and refuse the finest young gentlemen in Venice. What then have we to do with her "motion" being weakened? If I understand anything of the poet's meaning here, I cannot but think he must have written:

Abused her delicate youth with drugs, or minerals,
That weaken NOTION.

i.e. her apprehension, right conception, and idea of things, understanding, judgment, &c. 'Tis frequent with us to say, we

have no notion of such a thing, when we would mean, we do not clearly understand it.

CVII. Emendation:

Othello, Vol. VI, p. 555.

What if I said, I'd seen him do you wrong?
Or heard him say, as knaves be such abroad,
Who having by their own importunate suit,
Or voluntary dotage of some mistriss,
Convinced, or SUPPLIED them, cannot choose
But they must blab. (IV, 1, 24-29.)

I could not have wished to conclude with a more remarkable instance of corruption; or one that fell more closely within the method which I proposed to myself of emending. All the editions concur in the reading, and yet I'll be bold to say, 'tis neither sense, nor intelligible, nor conveys our author's sentiment as it stands: so that it may fairly be looked upon to have been one of his loci desperati.⁴⁸ His meaning is undoubtedly this: that there are some such long-tongued knaves in the world, who, if they through the force of importunity obtain a favor from their mistress, or if through her own fondness they make her pliant to their desires, cannot help boasting of their success. Restore it, without the least scruple, thus:

Who having by their own importunate suit,

⁴⁸Desperate places.

Or voluntary dotage of some mistress,
Convinced, or SUPPLIED them, they cannot choose
But they must blab.

I have already observed, in the course of these sheets, that it is usual with Shakespeare, through negligence or licentiousness, to change his numbers, as he does here: so no more need be said on that head. To "supple," 'tis well known, is to "make pliant and flexible"; and is particularly a term in surgery, when any part, swollen and stiff, is by fomentations, &c., reduced, and made soft and pliable. To "convince," here, is peculiar in its sense; it is not, as in the common acceptation, to make sensible of the truth of anything by reasons and arguments; but to "overcome, get the better of, &c." As the usage of the term in this sort is one of the author's singularities, I will produce two or three passages, in support of this before us, where it bears the same sense.

Macbeth, Vol. V, p. 580.

Ay, sir, there are a crew of wretched souls
That stay his cure; their malady convinces
The great assay of art. (IV, 111, 141-143.)

Love's Labor's Lost, Vol. II, p. 173.

And though the mourning brow of progeny
Forbid the smiling courtesy of love,
The holy suit which fain it would convince, &c.
(V, 11, 754-756.)

And so in Cymbeline, Vol. VI, p. 136, more aptly to the place

for which I bring these authorities:

Your Italy contains none so accomplished a courtier
to convince the honor of my mistress. (I, v, 104-106.)

At tandem manum de tabula.⁴⁹ I have endeavored to acquit myself of the promises made in my Introduction, and produced, and corrected, errors throughout the poet, numerous, when we consider this as a specimen only; of no number, when compared with that unequal quantity, which remain behind in store to make our author perfect. I may, indeed, say with Mr. Pope, that I have gone through this work with more labor than I can expect thanks;⁵⁰ I have run a risk, and must wait the sentence of the public, whether I have gone upon a mistaken view of reputation, or whether I have done anything to set Shakespeare in a clearer light than his editors have hitherto done. It is upon this issue I shall be determined, whether I have already written too much on the subject; or, whether I may promise myself encouragement in prosecuting a design, that savors more of public spirit than private interest.

I ought to be in some pain for the figure that these sheets may make, this being the first essay of literal criticism

⁴⁹But at last we have had enough.

⁵⁰See Pope's Preface, Smith, p. 57.

upon any author in the English tongue. The alteration of a letter, when it restores sense to a corrupted passage, in a learned language, is an achievement that brings honor to the critic who advances it: and Dr. Bentley will be remembered to posterity for his performances of this sort, as long as the world shall have any esteem for the remains of Menander and Philemon. But I no more pretend to do justice to that great man's character, than I would be thought to set my own poor merit, or the nature of this work, in competition with his.

I must expect some attacks of wit, upon being engaged in an undertaking of so much novelty: the assaults that are merely idle, or merely splenetic, I shall have the resolution to despise. And, I hope, I need be under no great concern for those, which can proceed from a generous antagonist. Wherever I am mistaken, it will be a pleasure to me to be corrected, since the public will at the same time be undeceived: and wherever I have the luck to be right in any observation, I flatter myself, Mr. Pope himself will be pleased, that Shakespeare receives some benefit.

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APPROVAL SHEET

The dissertation submitted by Anthony Lala has been read and approved by members of the Department of English.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the dissertation is now given final approval with reference to content, form, and mechanical accuracy.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

August 22, 1969
Date

Paul A. Hammett
Signature of Adviser