

souls roared, and the sea mock'd them; and how the poor gentleman roared, and the bear mock'd him, both roaring louder than the sea or weather.

Shep. Name of mercy, when was this, boy?

Clo. Now, now; I have not wink'd since I saw these sights: the men are not yet cold under water, nor the bear half dined on the gentleman; he's at it now.

Shep. Would I had been by, to have help'd the nobleman!

Clo. I would you had been by the ship-side, to have help'd her: [*Aside.*] there your charity would have lack'd footing.

Shep. Heavy matters! heavy matters! but look thee here, boy. Now bless thyself: thou mett'st with things dying, I with things new-born. Here's a sight for thee; look thee, a bearing-cloth¹¹ for a squire's child! look thee here; take up, take up, boy; open't. So, let's see: it was told me I should be rich by the fairies; this is some changeling:¹² open't. What's within, boy?

Clo. You're a made old man:¹³ if the sins of your youth are forgiven you, you're well to live. Gold! all gold!

Shep. This is fairy gold, boy, and 'twill prove so; up with't, keep it close: home, home, the next way.¹⁴ We are

flammable substances set on fire, put afloat in the liquor, and gulped down blazing.

¹¹ The mantle of fine cloth, in which a child was carried to be baptized.

¹² In the olden time the fairies had a naughty custom of stealing away fine, bright children, and leaving ugly or stupid ones in their stead. Both the child so stolen and the child so left were called *changelings*. Here the changeling is the child stolen. The old poets have many allusions to this sharp practice of the fairy nation. See *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, page 40, note 5.

¹³ To *make* a man is, in old language, to set him up in the world, or to endow him with wealth. See *The Tempest*, page 93, note 9.

¹⁴ "The *next way*" is the *nearest way*. Often so.

lucky, boy; and to be so still, requires nothing but secrecy. Let my sheep go: come, good boy, the next way home.

Clo. Go you the next way with your findings. I'll go see if the bear be gone from the gentleman, and how much he hath eaten: they are never curst,¹⁵ but when they are hungry: if there be any of him left, I'll bury it.

Shep. That's a good deed. If thou mayst discern by that which is left of him what he is, fetch me to the sight of him.

Clo. Marry, will I; and you shall help to put him i' the ground.

Shep. 'Tis a lucky day, boy, and we'll do good deeds on't. [*Exeunt.*]

 ACT IV.

Enter TIME, as Chorus.

Time. I — that please some, try all; both joy and terror
Of good and bad; that make and unfold error —
Now take upon me, in the name of Time,
To use my wings. Impute it not a crime
To me or my swift passage, that I slide
O'er sixteen years, and leave the growth untried
Of that wide gap;¹ since it is in my power

¹⁵ *Curst* here signifies *mischievous*. An old adage says, "Curst cows have short horns."

¹ Leave unexamined the progress of the time which filled up the gap in Perdita's story. The reasoning of Time is not very clear; he seems to mean, that he who overthrows every thing, and makes as well as overwhelms custom, may surely infringe the laws of his own making.

To o'erthrow law, and in one self-born hour
 To plant and o'erwhelm custom. Let me pass
 The same I am, ere ancient'st order was,
 Or what is now received: I witness'd too
 The times that brought them in; so shall I do
 To th' freshest things now reigning, and make stale
 The glistening of this present, as my tale
 Now seems to it. Your patience this allowing,
 I turn my glass, and give my scene such growing
 As you had slept between. Leontes leaving, —
 Th' effects of his fond² jealousies so grieving
 That he shuts up himself, — imagine me,³
 Gentle spectators, that I now may be
 In fair Bohemia; and remember well
 A mention'd son o' the King's, which Florizel
 I now name to you; and with speed so pace
 To speak of Perdita, now grown in grace
 Equal with wondering: ⁴ what of her ensues,
 I list not prophesy; but let Time's news
 Be known when 'tis brought forth: a shepherd's daughter,
 And what to her adheres, which follows after,
 Is th' argument of Time. Of this allow,
 If ever you have spent time worse ere now;
 If never, yet that Time himself doth say
 He wishes earnestly you never may.

[*Exit.*]

² Shakespeare continually uses *fond* in the sense of *foolish*.

³ The order, according to the sense, appears to be something thus:
 "Imagine me leaving Leontes, who so grieves th' effects of his fond jealousies that he shuts up himself," &c.

⁴ That is, grown so beautiful, or so far in beauty, as to be a proper object of wonder or admiration.

SCENE I. — *Bohemia. A Room in the Palace of POLIXENES.*

Enter POLIXENES and CAMILLO.

Polix. I pray thee, good Camillo, be no more importunate: 'tis a sickness denying thee any thing; a death to grant this.

Cam. It is sixteen years since I saw my country: though I have, for the most part, been aired abroad, I desire to lay my bones there. Besides, the penitent King, my master, hath sent for me; to whose feeling sorrows I might be some allay, or I o'erween to think so; which is another spur to my departure.

Polix. As thou lovest me, Camillo, wipe not out the rest of thy services by leaving me now: the need I have of thee thine own goodness hath made; better not to have had thee than thus to want thee: thou, having made me businesses which none without thee can sufficiently manage, must either stay to execute them thyself, or take away with thee the very services thou hast done; which if I have not enough considered, — as too much I cannot, — to be more thankful to thee shall be my study; and my profit therein, the heaping friendships. Of that fatal country Sicilia, pr'ythee speak no more; whose very naming punishes me with the remembrance of that penitent, as thou call'st him, and reconciled King, my brother; whose loss of his most precious Queen and children are even now to be afresh lamented. Say to me, when saw'st thou the Prince Florizel, my son? Kings are no less unhappy, their issue not being gracious,¹ than they are in losing them when they have approved their virtues.

Cam. Sir, it is three days since I saw the Prince. What his happier affairs may be, are to me unknown: but I have

¹ *Gracious* here means in a state of *heavenly grace* or *favour*. So in ii. 3, of this play: "A gracious innocent soul, more free than he is jealous."

musingly noted,² he is of late much retired from Court, and is less frequent to his princely exercises than formerly he hath appeared.

Polix. I have considered so much, Camillo, and with some care; so far, that I have eyes under my service which look upon his removedness; from whom I have this intelligence, that he is seldom from the house of a most homely shepherd; a man, they say, that from very nothing, and beyond the imagination of his neighbours, is grown into an unspeakable estate.

Cam. I have heard, sir, of such a man, who hath a daughter of most rare note: the report of her is extended more than can be thought to begin from such a cottage.

Polix. That's likewise part of my intelligence; and I fear the angle³ that plucks our son thither. Thou shalt accompany us to the place; where we will, not appearing what we are, have some question⁴ with the shepherd; from whose simplicity I think it not uneasy to get the cause of my son's resort thither. Pr'ythee, be my present partner in this business, and lay aside the thoughts of Sicilia.

Cam. I willingly obey your command.

Polix. My best Camillo! We must disguise ourselves.

[*Exeunt.*]

² To *muse* is old language for to *wonder*: so that to *note musingly* is to observe with wonder or surprise.

³ *Angle* for the *bait*, or hook and line, that draws his son away, as an angler draws a fish. To *pluck* for to *pull* occurs frequently.

⁴ Here, as often, *question* is *talk* or *conversation*.

SCENE II.—*The Same.* A Road near the Shepherd's Cottage.

Enter AUTOLYCUS, singing.

*When daffodils begin to peer,—
With, hey! the doxy over the dale,—
Why, then comes in the sweet o' the year;
For the red blood reigns in the Winter's pale.¹*

*The white sheet bleaching on the hedge,—
With, hey! the sweet birds, O, how they sing!—
Doth set my pugging² tooth on edge;
For a quart of ale is a dish for a king.*

*The lark, that tirra-lirra chants,—
With, hey! with, hey! the thrush and the jay,—
Are summer songs for me and my aunts,³
While we lie tumbling in the hay.*

I have served Prince Florizel, and, in my time, wore three-pile;⁴ but now I am out of service:

[Sings.] *But shall I go mourn for that, my dear?
The pale Moon shines by night:*

¹ *Pale* is used here in a double sense, as referring to the *pale colours* of Winter, and as we still say "the *pale* of fashion," and "the *pale* of the Church." "English *pale*" and "Irish *pale*" were common expressions in the Poet's time. The meaning in the text is well explained by Heath: "For, though the Winter is not quite over, the red blood resumes its genial vigour. The first appearance of the daffodil in the fields is at the latter end of Winter, where it joins the Spring."

² A *puggard* was a cant name for some kind of thief. In *The Roaring Girl*, 1611, we have, "Cheaters, lifters, nips, foists, *puggards*." *Pugging* is used by Greene in one of his pieces.

³ *Aunt* was sometimes used as a cant term for a loose woman.

⁴ *Velvet* was valued according to the *pile*, three-pile being the richest.

*And when I wander here and there,
I then do most go right.*

*If tinkers may have leave to live,
And bear the sow-skin budget,⁵
Then my account I well may give,
And in the stocks⁶ avouch it.*

My traffic is sheets; when the kite builds, look to lesser linen.⁷ My father named me Autolycus; who being, as I am, litter'd under Mercury, was likewise a snapper-up of unconsidered trifles. With die and drab I purchased this caparison; and my revenue is the silly-cheat:⁸ gallows and knock are too powerful on the highways; beating and hanging are terrors to me; for the life to come, I sleep out the thought of it. — A prize! a prize!

Enter the Clown.

Clo. Let me see: Every 'leven wether tods;⁹ every tod yields pound and odd shilling: fifteen hundred shorn, what comes the wool to?

Aut. [*Aside.*] If the springe hold, the cock's mine.¹⁰

⁵ The wallet, or bag, made of swine-skin, in which tinkers carried their tools and materials.

⁶ A common engine in which certain offenders were punished; being fastened by the ankles, and sitting with their legs in a horizontal position.

⁷ Autolycus means that his practice was to steal sheets, leaving the smaller linen to be carried away by the kites, who will sometimes carry it off to line their nests. The Autolycus of classic legend was the son of Mercury, and the maternal grandfather of Ulysses the Crafty. He lived on Mount Parnassus, and was famed for his cunning in robberies.

⁸ The *silly-cheat* is one of the slang terms belonging to *coney-catching* or *thievery*. It is supposed to have meant *picking of pockets*.

⁹ Every eleven sheep will produce a tod or twenty-eight pounds of wool. The price of a tod of wool was about 20s. or 22s. in 1581.

¹⁰ *Springe* is *snare* or *trap*. The woodcock is the bird meant; which was said to have no brains, it being a very silly bird, and easily caught.

Clo. I cannot do't without counters. Let me see: what am I to buy for our sheep-shearing feast? Three pound of sugar; five pound of currents; ¹¹ rice, — what will this sister of mine do with rice? But my father hath made her mistress of the feast, and she lays it on. She hath made me four-and-twenty nosegays for the shearers, — three-man songmen ¹² all, and very good ones; but they are most of them means ¹³ and bases; but one Puritan amongst them, and he sings psalms to hornpipes.¹⁴ I must have saffron, to colour the warden-pies; ¹⁵ mace; dates, — none, that's out of my note; ¹⁶ nutmegs, seven; a race or two of ginger, — but that I may beg; four pound of prunes, and as many of raisins o' the sun.¹⁷

Aut. [*Lying on the ground.*] O, that ever I was born!

Clo. I' the name of me, —

¹¹ This is commonly understood and printed as if the Clown were reading from a note, which he is probably too unsophisticated to be guilty of. No doubt he is speaking from memory.

¹² So called because they sang rounds or glees in three parts.

¹³ The *mean* was an intermediate part between the treble and the tenor; so named because it served as a mean, or a harmonizing medium: sometimes called counter-tenor.

¹⁴ These were probably much the same as what in our day are sometimes called "Geneva jigs." It would seem that even so early as Shakespeare's time the notion had been taken up and carried out, of turning hornpipes, jigs, &c., into sacred music by setting religious words to them.

¹⁵ *Wardens* are a large sort of pear, called in French *Poires de Garde*, because, being a late hard pear, they may be kept very long. It is said that their name is derived from the Anglo-Saxon *warden*, to preserve. They are now called *baking-pears*, and are generally coloured with *cochineal* instead of *saffron* as of old.

¹⁶ "Out of my *note*" probably does not mean his written list, but not among the things *noted* down in his memory. See page 39, note 5.

¹⁷ "*Race of ginger*" here means, apparently, *root of ginger*; though it is said to have been used sometimes for a *package*. — "*Raisins of the sun*" is the old name for what are now called raisins simply. Probably so called because they were grapes dried in the sun.

Aut. O, help me, help me ! pluck but off these rags ; and then, death, death !

Clo. Alack, poor soul ! thou hast need of more rags to lay on thee, rather than have these off.

Aut. O sir, the loathsomeness of them offends me more than the stripes I have received, which are mighty ones and millions.

Clo. Alas, poor man ! a million of beating may come to a great matter.

Aut. I am robb'd, sir, and beaten ; my money and apparel ta'en from me, and these detestable things put upon me.

Clo. What, by a horseman or a footman ?

Aut. A footman, sweet sir, a footman.

Clo. Indeed, he should be a footman by the garments he has left with thee : if this be a horseman's coat, it hath seen very hot service.¹⁸ Lend me thy hand, I'll help thee : come, lend me thy hand.

[*Helping him up.*]

Aut. O, good sir, tenderly, O !

Clo. Alas, poor soul !

Aut. O, good sir, softly, good sir ! I fear, sir, my shoulder-blade is out.

Clo. How now ! canst stand ?

Aut. Softly, dear sir ; [*Picks his pocket.*] good sir, softly. You ha' done me a charitable office.

Clo. Dost lack any money ? I have a little money for thee.

Aut. No, good sweet sir ; no, I beseech you, sir : I have a kinsman not past three quarters of a mile hence, unto whom I was going ; I shall there have money, or any thing I want : offer me no money, I pray you ; that kills my heart.

¹⁸ The Clown quibbles on *footman* and *horseman*, using them here as military terms. A mounted soldier must have been in a hard fight, to have his coat so spoiled.

Clo. What manner of fellow was he that robb'd you ?

Aut. A fellow, sir, that I have known to go about with troll-my-dames :¹⁹ I knew him once a servant of the Prince : I cannot tell, good sir, for which of his virtues it was, but he was certainly whipp'd out of the Court.

Clo. His vices, you would say ; there's no virtue whipp'd out of the Court : they cherish it, to make it stay there ; and yet it will no more but abide.²⁰

Aut. Vices, I would say, sir. I know this man well : he hath been since an ape-bearer ; then a process-server, — a bailiff ; then he compass'd a motion²¹ of the Prodigal Son, and married a tinker's wife within a mile where my land and living lies ; and, having flown over many knavish professions, he settled only in rogue : some call him Autolycus.

Clo. Out upon him ! prig,²² for my life, prig : he haunts wakes, fairs, and bear-baitings.

Aut. Very true, sir ; he, sir, he ; that's the rogue that put me into this apparel.

Clo. Not a more cowardly rogue in all Bohemia ; if you had but look'd big and spit at him, he'd have run.

¹⁹ The old English title of this game was *pigeon-holes* ; as the arches in the board through which the balls are to be rolled resemble the cavities made for pigeons in a dove-house. In Jones's *Treatise on Buckstone Bathes* : "The ladies, &c., if the weather be not agreeable, may have in the end of a benche eleven holes made, into the which to trouble pummits: the pasime *troule in madame* is called." It is a corruption of *trou-madame*.

²⁰ Will only *sojourn*, or *put up* for short time. *But* with the force of *than*. See *Twelfth Night*, page 41, note 1.

²¹ *Motion* is the old name of a puppet-show ; so used even as late as Fielding's time. In his *Jonathan Wild*, he says the master of a puppet-show "wisely keeps out of sight ; for, should he once appear, the whole *motion* would be at an end." — *Compass'd* is *obtained*.

²² *Prig* was another cant phrase for the order of thieves. Harman, in his *Caveat for Cursetor*, 1573, calls a horse-stealer "a *prigger* of prancers ; for to *prigge* in their language is to *steale*."

Aut. I must confess to you, sir, I am no fighter; I am false of heart that way; and that he knew, I warrant him.

Clo. How do you now?

Aut. Sweet sir, much better than I was; I can stand and walk: I will even take my leave of you, and pace softly towards my kinsman's.

Clo. Shall I bring thee²³ on the way?

Aut. No, good-faced sir; no, sweet sir.

Clo. Then fare thee well: I must go buy spices for our sheep-shearing.

Aut. Prosper you, sweet sir! [*Exit Clown.*]—Your purse is not hot enough to purchase your spice. I'll be with you at your sheep-shearing too: if I make not this cheat bring out another, and the shearers prove sheep, let me be unroll'd,²⁴ and my name put in the book of virtue!

[Sings.] *Jog on, jog on, the footpath way,
And merrily hent²⁵ the stile-a:
A merry heart goes all the day,
Your sad tires in a mile-a.*

[Exit.

SCENE III. — *The Same. A Lawn before a Shepherd's Cottage.*

Enter FLORIZEL and PERDITA.

Flo. These your unusual weeds¹ to each part of you

²³ "Shall I attend or escort thee?" So *bring* was often used.

²⁴ *Unroll'd* is struck off the roll, or expelled the fraternity of rogues.

²⁵ To *hent* is to take; from the Anglo-Saxon *hentan*. — These lines are part of a catch printed in "An Antidote against Melancholy, made up in Pills, compounded of witty Ballads, jovial Songs, and merry Catches."

¹ *Weeds* is an old word for *clothes* or *dress*. The Prince alludes to the floral trimmings, which make Perdita seem a kind of multitudinous flower;

Do give a life: no shepherdess; but Flora Peering in April's front. This your sheep-shearing Is as a meeting of the petty gods, And you the queen on't.

Per. Sir, my gracious lord, To chide at your extremes,² it not becomes me; O, pardon that I name them! your high self, The gracious mark o' the land,³ you have obscured With a swain's wearing; and me, poor lowly maid, Most goddess-like prank'd up: but that our feasts In every mess have folly, and the feeders Digest it with a custom,⁴ I should blush To see you so attirèd; more, I think, To see myself i' the glass.

Flo. I bless the time When my good falcon made her flight across Thy father's ground.

Per. Now Jove afford you cause! To me the difference⁵ forges dread; your greatness Hath not been used to fear. Even now I tremble To think your father, by some accident, Should pass this way, as you did: O, the Fates! How would he look, to see his work, so noble, Vilely bound up? What would he say? Or how

all the adornings taking fresh life from her, and only diffusing the grace which they strive to eclipse, as if they were the proper outgrowth of her being.

² She means his extravagance in disguising himself in shepherd's clothes, while he pranked her up most goddess-like.

³ The object of all men's notice and expectation.

⁴ "Digest it with a custom" means, take it as natural, or think nothing of it, because they are used to it.

⁵ Meaning the difference between his rank and hers.

Should I, in these my borrow'd flaunts, behold
The sternness of his presence?

Flo. Apprehend
Nothing but jollity. The gods themselves,
Humbling their deities to love, have taken
The shapes of beasts upon them: Jupiter
Became a bull, and bellow'd; the green Neptune
A ram, and bleated; and the fire-robed god,
Golden Apollo, a poor humble swain,
As I seem now. Their transformations
Were never for a piece of beauty rarer;
Nor in a way so chaste, since my desires
Run not before mine honour.

Per. O, but, sir,
Your resolution cannot hold, when 'tis
Opposed, as it must be, by th' power o' the King:
One of these two must be necessities,
Which then will speak, that you must change this purpose,
Or I my life.

Flo. Thou dearest Perdita,
With these forced thoughts, I pr'ythee, darken not
The mirth o' the feast: or I'll be thine, my fair,
Or not my father's; for I cannot be
Mine own, nor any thing to any, if
I be not thine: to this I am most constant,
Though destiny say no. Be merry, gentle;
Strangle such thoughts as these with any thing
That you behold the while. Your guests are coming:
Lift up your countenance, as it were the day
Of celebration of that nuptial which
We two have sworn shall come.

Per. O Lady Fortune,

Stand you auspicious!

Flo. See, your guests approach:
Address yourself to entertain them sprightly,
And let's be red with mirth.

*Enter the Shepherd, with POLIXENES and CAMILLO disguised;
the Clown, MOPSA, DORCAS, and other Shepherds and
Shepherdesses.*

Shep. Fie, daughter! when my old wife lived, upon
This day she was both pantler, butler, cook;
Both dame and servant; welcomed all, served all;
Would sing her song and dance her turn; now here,
At upper end o' the table, now i' the middle;
On his shoulder, and his; her face o' fire
With labour, and the thing she took to quench it,
She would to each one sip. You are retired,
As if you were a feasted one, and not
The hostess of the meeting: pray you, bid
These unknown friends to's welcome;⁶ for it is
A way to make us better friends, more known.
Come, quench your blushes, and present yourself
That which you are, mistress o' the feast: come on,
And bid us welcome to your sheep-shearing,
As your good flock shall prosper.

Per. [To POLIX.] Welcome, sir:
It is my father's will I should take on me
The hostess-ship o' the day. — [To CAM.] You're welcome,
sir. —

Give me those flowers there, Dorcas. — Reverend sirs,
For you there's rosemary and rue; these keep
Seeming and savour all the Winter long:

⁶ "These friends unknown to us," is the meaning.

Grace and remembrance be to you both,⁷
And welcome to our shearing!

Polix. Shepherdess, —
A fair one are you, — well you fit our ages
With flowers of Winter.

Per. Sir, the year growing ancient, —
Not yet on Summer's death, nor on the birth
Of trembling Winter, — the fair'st flowers o' the season
Are our carnations, and streak'd gillyvors,⁸
Which some call nature's bastards: of that kind
Our rustic garden's barren; and I care not
To get slips of them.

Polix. Wherefore, gentle maiden,
Do you neglect them?

Per. For⁹ I have heard it said,
There is an art which, in their piedness, shares
With great creating Nature.¹⁰

Polix. Say there be;
Yet Nature is made better by no mean,
But Nature makes that mean: so, even that art

⁷ These plants were probably held as emblematic of grace and remembrance, because they keep their beauty and fragrance "all the winter long."

⁸ Spelt *gillyvors* in the original, and probably so pronounced at the time. Dyce thinks it should be retained as "an old form of the word." Douce says, "*Gelofer*, or *gillofer* was the old name for the whole class of carnations, pinks, and sweetwilliams; from the French *girofle*."

⁹ *For* was often used where we should use *because*.

¹⁰ It would seem that variegated gilliflowers were produced by cross-breeding of two or more varieties; as variegated ears of corn often grow from several sorts of corn being planted together. The gardener's art whereby this was done might properly be said to share with creating Nature. Douce says that "Perdita connects the gardener's art of varying the colours of these flowers with the art of painting the face, a fashion very prevalent in Shakespeare's time."

Which you say adds to Nature, is an art
That Nature makes. You see, sweet maid, we marry
A gentler scion to the wildest stock,
And make conceive a bark of baser kind
By bud of nobler race: this is an art
Which does mend Nature, — change it rather; but
The art itself is Nature.¹¹

Per. So it is.

Polix. Then make your garden rich in gillyvors,
And do not call them bastards.

Per. I'll not put
The dibble in earth to set one slip of them;¹²
No more than, were I painted, I would wish
This youth should say, 'twere well. — Here's flowers for you;
Hot lavender, mints, savory, marjoram;
The marigold, that goes to bed wi' th' Sun,
And with him rises weeping:¹³ these are flowers
Of middle Summer, and, I think, they're given
To men of middle age. Ye're very welcome.

Cam. I should leave grazing, were I of your flock,

¹¹ This identity of Nature and Art is thus affirmed by Sir Thomas Browne: "Nature is not at variance with art, nor art with nature; they both being the servants of the Providence of God. Art is the perfection of nature: were the world now as it was the sixth day, there were yet a chaos. Nature hath made one world and art another. In brief, all things are artificial; for nature is the art of God."

¹² Perdita is too guileless to take the force of Polixenes' reasoning; she therefore assents to it, yet goes on to act as though there were nothing in it: her assent, indeed, is merely to get rid of the perplexity it causes her; for it clashes with and disturbs her moral feelings and associations. — *Dibble* was the name of an instrument for making holes in the ground to plant seeds or to set plants in.

¹³ The marigold here meant is the *sun-flower*. Thus spoken of in Lupton's *Notable Things*: "Some call it *Sponsus Solis*, the Spowse of the Sunne, because it sleeps and is awakened with him."

And only live by gazing.

Per.

Out, alas !

You'd be so lean, that blasts of January
Would blow you through and through. — Now, my fair'st
friend,

I would I had some flowers o' the Spring that might
Become your time of day ; — and yours, and yours,
That wear upon your virgin branches yet
Your maidenhoods growing : — O Proserpina,
For th' flowers now, that, frighted, thou lett'st fall
From Dis's wagon !¹⁴ golden daffodils,
That come before the swallow dares, and take¹⁵
The winds of March with beauty ; violets dim,
But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes
Or Cytherea's breath ;¹⁶ pale primroses,

¹⁴ "From Dis's wagon" means *at the coming of Dis's wagon*. — In Shakespeare's time *wagon* was often used where we should use *chariot*; its application not being confined to the coarse common vehicle now called by that name. So in Mercutio's description of Queen Mab: "Her *wagoner*, a small gray-coated gnat"; where later usage would require *charioteer*. — The story how, at the approach of Dis in his chariot, Proserpine, affrighted, let fall from her lap the flowers she had gathered, is told in the fifth book of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*; familiar to the Poet, no doubt, in Golding's translation, 1587.

¹⁵ To *take* here means to *captive*, to *entrance*, or ravish with delight. We have a similar thought in *Antony and Cleopatra*, ii. 2: "Purple the sails, and so perfumed that the *winds were love-sick* with them."

¹⁶ "The beauties of Greece and some Asiatic nations tinged their eyelids of an obscure violet colour by means of some unguent, which was doubtless perfumed like those for the hair, &c., mentioned by Athenæus. Of the beauty and propriety of the epithet violets *dim*, and the transition at once to the lids of Juno's eyes and Cytherea's breath, no reader of taste and feeling need be reminded." Such is the common explanation of the passage. But I suspect the sweetness of Juno's eyelids, as Shakespeare conceived them, was in the look, not in the odour. Much the same sweetness is ascribed to the sleeping Imogen's eyelids, in *Cymbeline*, ii. 2: "These

That die unmarried, ere they can behold
Bright Phœbus in his strength, — a malady
Most incident to maids ; bold oxlips¹⁷ and
The crown-imperial ; lilies of all kinds,
The flower-de-luce being one ! O, these I lack,
To make you garlands of ; and my sweet friend,
To strew him o'er and o'er !

Flo.

What, like a corse ?

Per. No, like a bank for love to lie and play on ;

Not like a corse ; or if, — not to be buried,
But quick,¹⁸ and in mine arms. — Come, take your flowers :
Methinks I play as I have seen them do
In Whitsun pastorals : sure, this robe of mine
Does change my disposition.

Flo.

What you do

Still betters what is done.¹⁹ When you speak, sweet,
I'd have you do it ever : when you sing,
I'd have you buy and sell so ; so give alms ;
Pray so ; and, for the ordering your affairs,
To sing them too : when you do dance, I wish you
A wave o' the sea, that you might ever do
Nothing but that ; move still, still so, and own

windows — white and azure — laced with blue of heaven's own tinct." — Probably violets are called *dim*, because their colour is soft and tender, not bold and striking. Or the epithet may have reference to the *shyness* of that flower ; as in Wordsworth's well-known lines, "A violet by a mossy stone, half hidden from the eye."

¹⁷ The epithet *bold* in this place is justified by Steevens, on the ground that "the *oxlip* has not a weak flexible stalk like the *cowslip*, but erects itself *boldly* in the face of the Sun. Wallis, in his *History of Northumberland*, says that the *great oxlip* grows a foot and a half high."

¹⁸ *Quick* in its original sense of *living* or *alive*, as in the Nicene Creed : "To judge both the *quick* and dead."

¹⁹ *Surpasses* what is done. So the Poet often uses to *better*.

No other function. Each your doing is
So singular in each particular,
Crowning what you have done i' the present deed,
That all your acts are queens.²⁰

Per. O Doricles,
Your praises are too large : but that your youth,
And the true blood which peeps so fairly through't,
Do plainly give you out an unstain'd shepherd,
With wisdom I might fear, my Doricles,
You woo'd me the false way.

Flo. I think you have
As little skill²¹ to fear as I have purpose
To put you to't.²² But, come ; our dance, I pray :
Your hand, my Perdita : so turtles pair,
That never mean to part.

Per. I'll swear for 'em.
Polix. This is the prettiest 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.

Cam. He tells her something
That makes her blood look out :²³ good sooth, she is

²⁰ The idea pervading this exquisite speech evidently is, that Perdita does every thing so charmingly, that her latest doing always seems the best. Thus each later deed of hers is aptly said to *crown* what went before ; and all her acts are made queens in virtue of this coronation.

²¹ *Skill* was often used in the sense of *cunning* or *knowledge* ; here it means *reason*, apparently, as Warburton explained it. So in Warner's *Albions England*, 1606 :

Our queen deceas'd conceal'd her heir,
I wot not for what *skill*.

²² "To put you to't" is to give you cause or occasion for it.

²³ Donne gives the sense of this very choicely in his *Elegy on Mrs. Elizabeth Drury* :

The queen of curds and cream.

Clo. Come on, strike up !
Dor. Mopsa must be your mistress : marry, garlic,
To mend her kissing with !

Mop. Now, in good time !
Clo. Not a word, a word ; we stand upon our manners. —
Come, strike up !

[*Music.* A dance of Shepherds and Shepherdesses.

Polix. Pray you, good shepherd, what fair swain is this
Which dances with your daughter ?

Shep. They call him Doricles ; and boasts himself
To have a worthy feeding :²⁴ I but have it
Upon his own report, and I believe it ;
He looks like sooth. He says he loves my daughter :
I think so too ; for never gazed the Moon
Upon the water, as he'll stand, and read,
As 'twere, my daughter's eyes : and, to be plain,
I think there is not half a kiss to choose
Who loves another best.

Polix. She dances featly.
Shep. So she does any thing ; though I report it,
That should be silent : if young Doricles
Do light upon her, she shall bring him that
Which he not dreams of.

We understood
Her by her sight : her pure and eloquent blood
Spoke in her cheeks, and so distinctly wrought,
That one might almost say, her body thought.

²⁴ *Worthy feeding* has been rightly explained "a valuable tract of pasture ; such as might be a *worthy* offset to Perdita's dower." So in Drayton's *Mooncalf* :

Finding the *feeding*, for which he had toil'd
To have kept safe, by these vile cattle spoil'd.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. O master, if you did but hear the pedler at the door, you would never dance again after a tabor and pipe; no, the bagpipe could not move you: he sings several tunes faster than you'll tell money; he utters them as he had eaten ballads, and all men's ears grow to his tunes.

Clo. He could never come better; he shall come in: I love a ballad but even too well, if it be doleful matter merrily set down, or a very pleasant thing indeed, and sung lamentably.

Serv. He hath songs for man or woman, of all sizes; no milliner can so fit his customers with gloves: he has the prettiest love-songs for maids; with such delicate burdens of *dildos* and *fadings*;²⁵ *jump her and thump her*: and where some stretch-mouth'd rascal would, as it were, mean mischief, and break a foul jape²⁶ into the matter, he makes the maid to answer, *Whoop, do me no harm, good man*; puts him off, slights him, with *Whoop, do me no harm, good man*.²⁷

Polix. This is a brave fellow.

Clo. Believe me, thou talkest of an admirable-conceited fellow. Has he any embroidered²⁸ wares?

²⁵ "With a hie *dildo* dill, and a *dildo* dee" is the burden of an old ballad or two. *Fading* is also another burden to a ballad found in Shirley's *Bird in a Cage*. It is also the name given to an Irish dance, probably from *fedan*, I whistle, as it was danced to the pipes.

²⁶ *Jape* is *jest*. The word does not occur again in Shakespeare, but is met with in several old writers. So in Coriat's *Verses prefixed*:

The pilfering pastime of a crue of apes,
Sporting themselves with their conceited *japes*.

²⁷ A ballad to the tune of "Oh! do me no harm, good man," is given in *The Famous History of Friar Bacon*.

²⁸ *Embroidered* is a shortened form of *embroidered*; here used, apparently, in the general sense of *ornamented* or *ornamental*.

Serv. He hath ribands of all the colours i' the rainbow; points²⁹ more than all the lawyers in Bohemia can learnedly handle, though they come to him by the gross; inks, caddisses,³⁰ cambrics, lawns: why, he sings 'em over, as they were gods or goddesses; you would think a smock were a she-angel, he so chants to the sleeve-hand, and the work about the square on't.³¹

Clo. Pr'ythee, bring him in; and let him approach singing.

Per. Forewarn him that he use no scurrilous words in's tunes. [Exit Servant.]

Clo. You have of these pedlers, that have more in them than you'd think, sister.

Per. Ay, good brother, or go about to think.³²

Enter AUTOLYCUS, singing.

*Lawn as white as driven snow;
Cyprus black as e'er was crow;
Gloves as sweet as damask roses;
Masks for faces and for noses;
Bugle-bracelet, necklace-amber,
Perfume for a lady's chamber;
Golden quoifs and stomachers,
For my lads to give their dears;*

²⁹ A rather witty pun upon *points*, which was a term for the tags used to fasten or hold up the dress. So in *1 Henry IV.*, also with a pun: "Their *points* being broken, down fell their hose." See *Twelfth Night*, p. 44, note 3.

³⁰ *Inkle* was a kind of *tape*. — *Caddis* is explained by Malone "a narrow worsted galloon."

³¹ *Sleeve-hand*, the cuffs or wristband; the *square*, the work about the bosom. The bosom-part of the chemise, as appears from old pictures and engravings, was often ornamented with embroidery.

³² *Wish* or *care* to think is the meaning.