SCENE VI

With rounds of waxen tapers on their heads, 52 I say. And rattles in their hands. Upon a sudden, As Falstaff, she, and I, are newly met, Let them from forth a sawpit rush at once With some diffused song: upon their sight, 56 We two in great amazedness will fly: Then let them all encircle him about, And, fairy-like, to-pinch the unclean knight: And ask him why, that hour of fairy revel, 60 it is thine host, thine Ephesian, calls. In their so sacred paths he dares to tread In shape profane.

Mrs. Ford. And till he tell the truth, Let the supposed fairies pinch him sound And burn him with their tapers.

The truth being known, 64 Mrs. Page. We'll all present ourselves, dis-horn the spirit, And mock him home to Windsor.

The children must Be practis'd well to this, or they'll ne'er do't. Eva. I will teach the children their be-haviours; and I will be like a jack-an-apes also, to burn the knight with my taber.

Ford. That will be excellent. I'll go buy them vizards. Mrs. Page. My Nan shall be the queen of all

the fairies. Finely attired in a robe of white.

Page. That silk will I go buy:-[Aside] and in that time

Shall Master Slender steal my Nan away, 76 And marry her at Eton. Go, send to Falstaff straight.

Ford. Nav. I'll to him again in name of Brook: He'll tell me all his purpose. Sure, he'll come. Mrs. Page. Fear not you that. Go, get us properties, And tricking for our fairies.

Eva. Let us about it: it is admirable pleasures and fery honest knaveries.

Exeunt PAGE, FORD, and EVANS. Mrs. Page. Go. Mistress Ford. Send Quickly to Sir John, to know his mind.

Exit MISTRESS FORD. I'll to the doctor: he hath my good will, And none but he, to marry with Nan Page. That Slender, though well landed, is an idiot; 88 And him my husband best of all affects: The doctor is well money'd, and his friends Potent at court: he, none but he, shall have her, Though twenty thousand worthier come to crave her.

Scene V .- A Room in the Garter Inn.

Enter Host and SIMPLE.

Host. What wouldst thou have, boor? what, thick-skin? speak, breathe, discuss; brief, short, quick, snap.

Sim. Marry, sir, I come to speak with Sir John Falstaff from Master Slender.

Host. There's his chamber, his house, his castle, his standing-bed and truckle-bed: 'tis soon as I came beyond Eton, they threw me off,

Like urchins, ouphs and fairies, green and fresh and new. Go knock and call: he'll speak like an Anthropophaginian unto thee: knock,

Sim. There's an old woman, a fat woman, gone up into his chamber: I'll be so bold as stay, sir, till she come down; I come to speak with her, indeed.

Host. Ha! a fat woman! the knight may be robbed: I'll call, Bully knight! Bully Sir John! speak from thy lungs military: art thou there?

Fal. [Above.] How now, mine host! Host. Here's a Bohemian-Tartar tarries the coming down of thy fat woman. Let her descend, bully; let her descend; my chambers are honourable: fie! privacy? fie!

Enter FALSTAFF.

Fal. There was, mine host, an old fat woman even now with me, but she's gone.

Sim. Pray you, sir, was't not the wise woman of Brainford?

Fal. Ay, marry, was it, muscle-shell: what would you with her?

Sim. My Master, sir, Master Slender, sent to her, seeing her go thorough the streets, to know, sir, whether one Nym, sir, that beguiled him of a chain, had the chain or no.

Fal. I spake with the old woman about it. Sim. And what says she, I pray, sir? 36 Fal. Marry, she says that the very same man

that beguiled Master Slender of his chain cozened him of it.

Sim. I would I could have spoken with the woman herself: I had other things to have spoken with her too, from him.

Fal. What are they? let us know. Host. Ay, come; quick. Sim. I may not conceal them, sir.

Host. Conceal them, or thou diest. Sim. Why, sir, they were nothing but about Mistress Anne Page; to know if it were my master's fortune to have her or no.

Fal. 'Tis, 'tis his fortune.

Sim. What, sir? Fal. To have her, or no. Go; say the woman told me so.

Sim. May I be bold to say so, sir? Fal. Ay, Sir Tike; who more bold?

Sim. I thank your worship: I shall make my master glad with these tidings. Host. Thou art clerkly, thou art clerkly, Sir

John. Was there a wise woman with thee? 59 Fal. Ay, that there was, mine host; one that hath taught me more wit than ever I learned before in my life: and I paid nothing for it neither, but was paid for my learning.

Enter BARDOLPH.

Bard. Out, alas, sir! cozenage, mere cozenage! Host. Where be my horses? speak well of them, varletto.

Bard. Run away, with the cozeners; for so painted about with the story of the Prodigal, from behind one of them, in a slough of mire; devils, three Doctor Faustuses.

honest men.

Enter SIR HUGH EVANS.

Eva. Where is mine host? Host. What is the matter, sir?

Eva. Have a care of your entertainments: there is a friend of mine come to town, tells me, there is three cozen-germans that has cozened all the hosts of Readins, of Maidenhead, of Colebrook, of horses and money. I tell you for good will, look you: you are wise and full of And, as I am a gentleman, I'll give thee gibes and vlouting-stogs, and 'tis not convenient A hundred pound in gold more than your loss. you should be cozened. Fare you well, [Exit.

Enter DOCTOR CAIUS.

Caius. Vere is mine host de Jarteer? Host. Here, Master doctor, in perplexity and doubtful dilemma.

Caius. I cannot tell vat is dat; but it is tell-a me dat you make grand preparation for a duke de Jamany: by my trot, dere is no duke dat de court is know to come. I tell you for good vill:

Host. Hue and cry, villain! go. Assist me. knight; I am undone. Fly, run, hue and cry, villain! I am undone!

[Exeunt Host and BARDOLPH. Fal. I would all the world might be cozened. for I have been cozened and beaten too. If it been transformed, and how my transformation hath been washed and cudgelled, they would melt me out of my fat drop by drop, and liquor Her father hath commanded her to slip would whip me with their fine wits till I were Immediately to marry; she hath consented: as crest-fallen as a dried pear. I never prospered since I forswore myself at primero. Well, Her mother, even strong against that match if my wind were but long enough to say my prayers, I would repent.

Enter MISTRESS QUICKLY.

Now, whence come you?

Quick. From the two parties, forsooth, the other! and so they shall be both bestowed. I have suffered more for their sakes, more than Her father means she shall be all in white. is able to bear.

warrant; speciously one of them: Mistress Ford. good heart, is beaten black and blue, that you cannot see a white spot about her.

Fal. What tellest thou me of black and blue? of an old woman, delivered me, the knave constable had set me i' the stocks, i' the common mother? stocks, for a witch.

Quick. Sir, let me speak with you in your chamber; you shall hear how things go, and, I And here it rests, that you'll procure the vicar

and set spurs and away, like three German warrant, to your content. Here is a letter will 71 say somewhat. Good hearts! what ado here is Host. They are gone but to meet the duke, to bring you together! Sure, one of you does villain. Do not say they be fled: Germans are not serve heaven well, that you are so crossed. Fal. Come up into my chamber. [Exeunt.

> SCENE VI.—Another Room in the Garter Inn. Enter FENTON and Host.

Host. Master Fenton, talk not to me: my mind is heavy; I will give over all. Fent. Yet hear me speak. Assist me in my

Host. I will hear you, Master Fenton; and I will, at the least, keep your counsel.

Fent. From time to time I have acquainted

With the dear love I bear to fair Anne Page; Who mutually hath answer'd my affection, So far forth as herself might be her chooser. Even to my wish. I have a letter from her 12 Of such contents as you will wonder at: The mirth whereof so larded with my matter, That neither singly can be manifested. Without the show of both: wherein fat Falstaff Hath a great scare: the image of the jest 17

I'll show you here at large [Pointing to the Letter]. Hark, good mine host: To-night at Herne's oak, just 'twixt twelve and

should come to the ear of the court how I have Must my sweet Nan present the Fairy Queen; The purpose why, is here: in which disguise, 21 While other jests are something rank on foot, fishermen's boots with me: I warrant they Away with Slender, and with him at Eton 24 Now, sir,

And firm for Doctor Caius, hath appointed 28 That he shall likewise shuffle her away, While other sports are tasking of their minds; And at the deanery, where a priest attends, Straight marry her: to this her mother's plot She, seemingly obedient, likewise hath Fal. The devil take one party and his dam Made promise to the doctor, Now, thus it rests:

the villanous inconstancy of man's disposition And in that habit, when Slender sees his time To take her by the hand and bid her go, 37 Quick. And have not they suffered? Yes, I She shall go with him: her mother hath intended.

The better to denote her to the doctor, For they must all be mask'd and vizarded- 40 That quaint in green she shall be loose enrob'd, I was beaten myself into all the colours of the With ribands pendent, flaring 'bout her head; rainbow; and I was like to be apprehended for And when the doctor spies his vantage ripe, the witch of Brainford: but that my admirable To pinch her by the hand; and on that token 44 dexterity of wit, my counterfeiting the action The maid hath given consent to go with him. Host. Which means she to deceive, father or

Fent. Both, my good host, to go along with

me:

And, in the lawful name of marrying, To give our hearts united ceremony.

Host. Well, husband your device: I'll to the Bring you the maid, you shall not lack a

priest. Fent. So shall I evermore be bound to thee; Besides. I'll make a present recompense. 56 [Exeunt.

ACT V

Scene I.—A Room in the Garter Inn. Enter FALSTAFF and MISTRESS QUICKLY.

Fal. Prithee, no more prattling; go: I'll hold. This is the third time; I hope good luck lies in odd numbers. Away! go. They say there My husband will not rejoice so much at the is divinity in odd numbers, either in nativity, chance or death. Away!

Quick. I'll provide you a chain, and I'll do what I can to get you a pair of horns.

Fal. Away, I say; time wears: hold up your Exit MISTRESS QUICKLY. head, and mince.

Enter FORD.

How now, Master Brook! Master Brook, the matter will be known to-night, or never. Be you in the Park about midnight, at Herne's oak, and him. you shall see wonders.

Ford. Went you not to her yesterday, sir, as you told me you had appointed?

Fal. I went to her, Master Brook, as you see, like a poor old man; but I came from her, Master Brook, like a poor old woman. That same knave Ford, her husband, hath the finest mad devil of jealousy in him, Master Brook, that ever governed frenzy. I will tell you: he beat me grievously, in the shape of a woman; for in the shape of a man, Master Brook, I fear not Goliath with a weaver's beam, because I know also life is a shuttle. I am in haste: go along with me; I'll tell you all, Master Brook. Since I plucked geese, played truant, and whipped top, I knew not what it was to be beaten till lately. Follow me: I'll tell you strange things of this knave Ford, on whom to-night I will be revenged, and I will deliver his wife into your hand. Follow. Strange things in hand, Master Brook! Follow.

SCENE II. - Windsor Park.

Enter PAGE, SHALLOW, and SLENDER.

Page. Come, come; we'll couch i' the castleditch till we see the light of our fairies. Remember, son Slender, my daughter.

and we have a nayword how to know one an- were also, Jupiter, a swan for the love of Leda; other. I come to her in white, and cry, 'mum;' she cries, 'budget;' and by that we know one the complexion of a goose! A fault done first in another.

To stay for me at church 'twixt twelve and decipher her well enough. It hath struck ten o'clock.

Page. The night is dark; light and spirits will become it well. Heaven prosper our sport! No man means evil but the devil, and we shall know him by his horns. Let's away; follow me. Exeunt.

SCENE III .- The Street in Windsor. Enter MISTRESS PAGE, MISTRESS FORD, and DR. CAIUS.

Mrs. Page. Master Doctor, my daughter is in green; when you see your time, take her by the hand, away with her to the deanery, and dispatch it quickly. Go before into the Park: we two must go together.

Caius. I know vat I have to do. Adieu. Mrs. Page. Fare you well, sir. [Exit CAIUS.] abuse of Falstaff, as he will chafe at the doctor's marrying my daughter: but 'tis no matter; better a little chiding than a great deal of heart break. Mrs. Ford. Where is Nan now and her troop

of fairies, and the Welsh devil, Hugh? Mrs. Page. They are all couched in a pit hard by Herne's oak, with obscured lights; which, at the very instant of Falstaff's and our meeting, they will at once display to the night.

Mrs. Ford. That cannot choose but amaze

Mrs. Page. If he be not amazed, he will be mocked; if he be amazed, he will every way be mocked.

Mrs. Ford. We'll betray him finely. Mrs. Page. Against such lewdsters and their lechery,

Those that betray them do no treachery. Mrs. Ford. The hour draws on: to the oak,

Scene IV .- Windsor Park. Enter SIR HUGH EVANS, disguised, and others as Fairies.

Eva. Trib, trib, fairies: come; and remember your parts. Be pold, I pray you; follow me into the pit, and when I give the watch-ords, do as I pid you. Come, come; trib, trib.

Scene V.—Another part of the Park. Enter FALSTAFF disguised as Herne, with a buck's head on.

Fal. The Windsor bell hath struck twelve; the minute draws on. Now, the hot-blooded gods assist me! Remember, Jove, thou wast a bull for thy Europa; love set on thy horns. O powerful love! that, in some respects, makes a Slen. Av. forsooth: I have spoke with her beast a man; in some other, a man a beast. You O omnipotent love! how near the god drew to the form of a beast; O Jove, a beastly fault! Shal. That's good too: but what needs either and then another fault in the semblance of a your 'mum,' or her 'budget?' the white will fowl; think on't, Jove; a foul fault! When gods have hot backs, what shall poor men do? For That it may stand till the perpetual doom, 64 me, I am here a Windsor stag; and the fattest. I think, i' the forest: send me a cool rut-time, Jove, or who can blame me to piss my tallow? Who comes here? my doe?

Enter MISTRESS FORD and MISTRESS PAGE.

Mrs. Ford. Sir John! art thou there, my deer?

my male deer?

SCENE VI

Fal. My doe with the black scut! Let the sky rain potatoes; let it thunder to the tune of 'Green Sleeves;' hail kissing-comfits and snow eringoes; let there come a tempest of provocation, I will shelter me here. [Embracing her. Mrs. Ford. Mistress Page is come with me,

Fal. Divide me like a brib'd duck, each a haunch: I will keep my sides to myself, my shoulders for the fellow of this walk, and my horns I bequeath your husbands. Am I a woodman, ha? Speak I like Herne the hunter? Why, now is Cupid a child of conscience; he makes restitution. As I am a true spirit, wel-Noise within.

Mrs. Page. Alas! what noise?
Mrs. Ford. Heaven forgive our sins! Fal. What should this be?

Mrs. Ford. Away, away! [They run off. Fal. I think the devil will not have me damned, lest the oil that is in me should set hell on fire; he would never else cross me thus.

Enter SIR HUGH EVANS, like a Satyr; PISTOL as Hobgoblin; ANNE PAGE, as the Fairy Queen, attended by her Brother and Others, as Fairies, with waxen tapers on their heads.

Anne. Fairies, black, grey, green, and white, You moonshine revellers, and shades of night, You orphan heirs of fixed destiny, Attend your office and your quality. Crier Hobgoblin, make the fairy oyes. Pist. Elves, list your names: silence, you

airy toys! 48
Cricket, to Windsor chimneys shalt thou leap: Where fires thou find'st unrak'd and hearths unswept,

There pinch the maids as blue as bilberry: Our radiant queen hates sluts and sluttery, 52 Fal. They are fairies; he that speaks to them shall die:

I'll wink and couch: no man their works must [Lies down upon his face. Eva. Where's Bede? Go you, and where you find a maid

That, ere she sleep, has thrice her prayers said, Rein up the organs of her fantasy. Sleep she as sound as careless infancy: But those that sleep and think not on their sins, Pinch them, arms, legs, backs, shoulders, sides,

and shins. Anne. About, about! Search Windsor castle, elves, within and out: Strew good luck, ouphs, on every sacred room,

In state as wholesome as in state 'tis fit, Worthy the owner, and the owner it. The several chairs of order look you scour 17 With juice of balm and every precious flower: 68 Each fair instalment, coat, and several crest, With loyal blazon, ever more be blest! And nightly, meadow-fairies, look you sing, Like to the Garter's compass, in a ring: The expressure that it bears, green let it be. More fertile-fresh than all the field to see: And, Honi soit qui mal y pense write In emerald tufts, flowers purple, blue, and white; Like sapphire, pearl, and rich embroidery, 77 Buckled below fair knighthood's bending knee: Fairies use flowers for their charactery. Away! disperse! But, till 'tis one o'clock, 80 Our dance of custom round about the oak Of Herne the hunter, let us not forget.

MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR

Eva. Pray you, lock hand in hand; yourselves in order set; And twenty glow-worms shall our lanthorns be, To guide our measure round about the tree. 85

But, stay: I smell a man of middle-earth. Fal. Heavens defend me from that Welsh fairy, lest he transform me to a piece of cheese! Pist. Vile worm, thou wast o'erlook'd even

in thy birth. Anne. With trial-fire touch me his finger-end: If he be chaste, the flame will back descend And turn him to no pain; but if he start, It is the flesh of a corrupted heart.

Pist. A trial! come. Come, will this wood take fire? Eva. They burn him with their tapers.

Fal. Oh. oh. oh! Anne. Corrupt, corrupt, and tainted in desire!

About him, fairies, sing a scornful rime; And, as you trip, still pinch him to your time.

Fie on sinful fantasy! Fie on lust and luxury! 100 Lust is but a bloody fire, Kindled with unchaste desire, Fed in heart, whose flames aspire, As thoughts do blow them higher and higher. Pinch him, fairies, mutually; Pinch him for his villany; Pinch him, and burn him, and turn him about, Till candles and star-light and moonshine be out. 108

During this song, the Fairies pinch FALSTAFF. DOCTOR CAIUS comes one way, and steals away a Fairy in green; SLENDER another way, and takes off a Fairy in white; and FENTON comes, and steals away ANNE PAGE. A noise of hunting is heard within, The Fairies run away. FALSTAFF pulls off his buck's head, and rises.

Enter PAGE, FORD, MISTRESS PAGE and MIS-TRESS FORD. They lay hold on FALSTAFF.

Page. Nay, do not fly: I think we have watch'd you now: Will none but Herne the hunter serve your turn?

71

From whichew would not have you want Xoll

From whiches have would not have you want Xoll

A saybid come believes A medic.

A saybid come believes A medic.

A saybid come believes A medic.

What figure of withink you be will bent you.

For you must know, we have with special soul.

For you must know, we have with special soul.

For you must know, we have with special soul.

For you must know, we have with special soul.

For you must know, we have with special soul.

And given his deputation all the organ, you if not his with us a soul of the control of th

jest no higher.

Now, good Sir John, how like you Windsor wives? See you these, husband? do not these fair yokes Become the forest better than the town?

Ford. Now sir, who's a cuckold now? Master Brook, Falstaff's a knave, a cuckoldly knave; to repay that money will be a biting affliction. here are his horns, Master Brook: and, Master

Mrs. Ford. Nay, husband, let that go to make Brook, he hath enjoyed nothing of Ford's but his buck-basket, his cudgel, and twenty pounds Forgive that sum, and so we'll all be friends. ofmoney, which must be paid too, Master Brook; his horses are arrested for it, Master Brook. 121

Mrs. Ford. Sir John, we have had ill luck; my love again, but I will always count you my deer.

Fal. I do begin to perceive that I am made her daughter. an ass.

Ford. Ay, and an ox too; both the proofs are extant.

Fal. And these are not fairies? I was three or four times in the thought they were not fairies; and yet the guiltiness of my mind, the sudden surprise of my powers, drove the grossness of the foppery into a received belief, in despite of the teeth of all rime and reason, that they were fairies. See now how wit may be made a Jack-a-lent, when 'tis upon ill employment!

Eva. Sir John Falstaff, serve Got, and leave your desires, and fairies will not pinse you. 140 Ford. Well said, fairy Hugh.

Eva. And leave you your jealousies too, I

Ford. I will never mistrust my wife again, till thou art able to woo her in good English. 145 Fal. Have I laid my brain in the sun and

o'er-reaching as this? Am I ridden with a Welsh goat too? shall I have a coxcomb of frize? 'Tis time I were choked with a piece of toasted chasses. toasted cheese.

Eva. Seese is not goot to give putter: your pelly is all putter.

Fal. 'Seese' and 'putter!' have I lived to stand at the taunt of one that makes fritters of English? This is enough to be the decay of lust and

late-walking through the realm. 157
Mrs. Page. Why, Sir John, do you think, though we would have thrust virtue out of our hearts by the head and shoulders, and have I do? given ourselves without scruple to hell, that ever the devil could have made you our delight?

Ford. What, a hodge-pudding? a bag of flax? Mrs. Page. A puffed man?

Page. Old, cold, withered, and of intolerable entrails?

Ford. And one that is as slanderous as Satan? Page. And as poor as Job?

Ford. And as wicked as his wife?

Eva. And given to fornications, and to taverns, and sack and wine and metheglins, and to gar, I am cozened. drinkings and swearings and starings, pribbles and prabbles?

Mrs. Page. I pray you, come, hold up the start of me; I am dejected; I am not able to answer the Welsh flannel. Ignorance itself is a plummet o'er me; use me as you will. 177

70

Ford. Marry, sir, we'll bring you to Windsor, to one Master Brook, that you have cozened of money, to whom you should have been a pander; over and above that you have suffered, I think,

amends: Ford. Well, here's my hand: all is forgiven

at last. Page. Yet be cheerful, knight: thou shalt we could never meet. I will never take you for eat a posset to-night at my house; where I will desire thee to laugh at my wife, that now laughs at thee. Tell her, Master Slender hath married

Mrs. Page. [Aside.] Doctors doubt that: if Anne Page be my daughter, she is, by this Doctor Caius' wife.

Enter SLENDER.

Slen. Whoa, ho! ho! father Page! Page. Son, how now! how now, son! have

you dispatched? Slen. Dispatched! I'll make the best in Gloster-shire know on't: would I were hanged, la else!

Page. Of what, son? Slen. I came yonder at Eton to marry Mistress Anne Page, and she's a great lubberly boy: if it had not been i' the church, I would have swinged him, or he should have swinged me. If I did not think it had been Anne Page, would I might never stir! and 'tis a postmaster's boy. 206

Page. Upon my life, then, you took the wrong. Slen. What need you tell me that? I think

Page. Why, this is your own folly. Did not I tell you how you should know my daughter by her garments?

Slen. I went to her in white, and cried, 'mum,' and she cried 'budget,' as Anne and I had appointed; and yet it was not Anne, but a postmaster's boy.

Eva. Jeshu! Master Slender, cannot you see put marry poys? Page. O I am vexed at heart: what shall

Mrs. Page. Good George, be not angry: I knew of your purpose; turned my daughter into green; and, indeed, she is now with the doctor at the deanery, and there married.

Enter DOCTOR CAIUS.

Caius. Vere is Mistress Page? By gar, I am cozened: I ha' married un garçon, a boy; un paysan, by gar, a boy; it is not Anne Page: by

Mrs. Page. Why, did you not take her in green? Caius. Ay, by gar, and 'tis a boy: by gar, I'll Fal. Well, I am your theme: you have the raise all Windsor.

right Anne? 235

Page. My heart misgives me: here comes Master Fenton.

Enter FENTON and ANNE PAGE.

How now, Master Fenton!

Anne. Pardon, good father! good my mother, hath glanced. pardon!

Page. Now, mistress, how chance you went not with Master Slender?

Mrs. Page. Why went you not with Master

doctor, maid? Fent. You do amaze her: hear the truth of it. You would have married her most shamefully, Where there was no proportion held in love. The truth is, she and I, long since contracted, 248 Good husband, let us every one go home, Are now so sure that nothing can dissolve us. The offence is holy that she hath committed, And this deceit loses the name of craft, Of disobedience, or unduteous title, Since therein she doth evitate and shun A thousand irreligious cursed hours,

Ford. This is strange. Who hath got the Which forced marriage would have brought upon her.

Ford. Stand not amaz'd: here is no remedy: In love the heavens themselves do guide the state:

Money buys lands, and wives are sold by fate. Fal. I am glad, though you have ta'en a special stand to strike at me, that your arrow

Page. Well, what remedy?—Fenton, heaven give thee joy!

What cannot be eschew'd must be embrac'd. Fal. When night dogs run all sorts of deer are chas'd. Mrs. Page. Well, I will muse no further.

Master Fenton. Heaven give you many, many merry days!

And laugh this sport o'er by a country fire: 268 Sir John and all. Let it be so. Sir John, Ford.

252 To Master Brook you yet shall hold your word; For he to-night shall lie with Mistress Ford. 272 A thousand irreligious cursed hours, and the second in the