



SCENE

ACT II

SCENE I.—The old stage-direction says nothing about “a servant with a torch,” as in many modern eds.; though “a Torch” sometimes means a *torch-bearer*, as “a Trumpet” means a *trumpeter*.

4. *Husbandry*. Thrift, economy. Cf. *Ham.* i. 3. 77: “borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.” S. several times uses *heaven* as plural (= heavenly beings). Cf. *Rich. II.* i. 2. 7:—

“Put we our quarrel to the will of heaven:
Who, when they see the hours ripe on earth,
Will rain hot vengeance on offenders’ heads;”

For the metaphor, cf. *M. of V.* v. 1. 220: “these blessed candles of the night;” *R. and J.* iii. 5. 9: “Night’s candles are burnt out;” and *Sonn.* 21. 12: “those gold candles fix’d in heaven’s air.”

5. *Take thee that too*. Probably his shield or targe.

6. *Heavy*. Drowsy, sleepy; as often. Cf. *R. of L.* 121, 163, 1574, *Temp.* i. 2. 189, 194, 198, *M. N. D.* v. 1. 380, etc.

9. *Give me my sword*. He does not recognize Macbeth at first, and does not know whether the late-comer is friend or foe.

14. *Offices*. The servants’ quarters. Cf. *Rich. II.* i. 2. 69, etc.

15. *This diamond*, etc. Grant White says that this “shows the result of hasty writing,” because Banquo “had been charged to deliver a diamond to Lady Macbeth” and had not done it; but the preceding dialogue shows that he had just received it, and that he supposed Macbeth and his wife had retired for the night.

16. *Shut up*. The expression has been much discussed. It is commonly explained as = “concluded”; but I am inclined to think it means that the king is now shut up in his chamber, having retired with *measureless content*, or satisfaction.

18. *Our will*, etc. Our will had to submit to our deficient means instead of being free to carry out our wishes.

22. *When*, etc. When we can ask you to put an hour at our service.

24. *Kind’st*. Cf. “stern’st” (ii. 2. 4), “near’st” (iii. 1. 117), and “secret’st” (iii. 4. 126) below; all harsh contractions.

25. *If you*, etc. If you adhere to my party whenever it is established.

In Davenant’s version of *Macbeth*, this passage reads:—

“If when the Prophesie begins to look like truth
You will adhere to me, it shall make honour for you.”

28. *Franchis’d*. Free, unstained.

31. *My drink*. This night-cup or posset was a common indulgence of the time. Cf. ii. 2. 6: “I have drugg’d their possets.”

33. *Is this a dagger*, etc. “A delusion appearing after the manner of the Highland second sight; more substantial than the ‘image of murder’ which shakes his soul in i. 4, but not accepted

and believed by him like the apparition of Banquo afterwards" (Moberly).

34. *Toward*. S. used *toward* and *towards* (see line 55 below) interchangeably, or as either suited his ear; at least, both are found in the early eds. Cf. i. 3. 152, i. 4. 27, i. 6. 30, v. 4. 21, etc.

36. *Sensible*. Perceptible, tangible. Cf. *M. of V.* ii. 9. 89: "sensible regreets," etc.

44, 45. *Mine eyes*, etc. Either my eyes are deceived while the other senses are not, or they are more trustworthy than the latter.

46. *Dudgeon*. This undoubtedly means here the handle of a dagger, but its derivation is doubtful. It was some kind of wood used by turners; boxwood, according to several old authorities. Gerard, in his *Herball*, under the article *Box-tree*, says: "The root is likewise yellow, and harder than the timber, but of greater beauty, and more fit for dagger-hafts, boxes, and such like uses. . . . Turners and cutlers, if I mistake not the matter, doe call this wood *dudgeon*, wherewith they make *dudgeon-hafted* daggers."

Gouts. Drops (Fr. *goutte*). S. uses the word (in this sense) only here.

48. *Inform*s. Creates forms; or, perhaps, takes form, shapes itself.

49. *The one-half world*. Cf. *1 Hen. IV.* iv. 1. 136: "this one half year."

50. *Abuse*. Deceive; as often. Cf. *Temp.* v. 1. 112: "some enchanted trifle to abuse me;" *Much Ado*, v. 2. 100: "the prince and Claudio mightily abused," etc. In iii. 4. 142, "self-abuse" means self-deception.

52. *Hecate's*. A dissyllable. Cf. *Lear*, i. 1. 112: "The mysteries of Hecate and of night;" *Ham.* iii. 2. 269: "With Hecate's lan thrice blasted, thrice infected." See also iii. 2. 41 and iii. 5. 1 below.

53. *Alarun'd*. The same word as *alarmed*. The derivation (Ital. *all' arme*) may be illustrated by Holland's *Livy*, p. 331: "This sayd, he runs downe with as great a noyse and showing as

he could, crying, *al' arme*, help help citizens, the castle is taken by the enemie, come away to defense."

54. *Whose howl's his watch*. Who marks the nightwatches by howling.

55. *Strides*. The folios have "sides," which a few editors retain, making it a verb = matches. Cf. *Rich. II.* i. 3. 268: "Every tedious stride I make;" and Harrington's *Ariosto*, 1591: "He takes a long and leisurable stride." The word as then used was not inconsistent with "stealthy pace."

59. *And take*, etc. That is, break the silence that added such a horror to the night as suited well with the deed he was about to perform.

60. *Whiles*. See on i. 5. 5 above.

62. *The bell invites me*. See 32 above.

63. *Knell*. Alluding to the "passing bell" which was formerly tolled when a person was dying.

SCENE II.—The folio has "Scena Secunda" here, but some editors make no change of scene. I adhere to the old division of scenes solely to avoid confusion in referring to this part of the play.

1. *That which hath made them drunk*, etc. Some critics have supposed that the Lady had taken wine to support her courage. But in saying "That which hath made *them* drunk," she implies that she herself was *not* drunk. Is anything more meant than that she had taken her regular night-cup (see on ii. 1. 31 above), and that she felt the slightly stimulating effect of the "posset"? The grooms would not have been "drunk," or stupefied, if their possets had not been drugged.

3. *The fatal bellman*, etc. Cf. Webster's *Duchess of Malfi*, iv. 2:—

"I am the common bellman,
That usually is sent to condemn'd persons
The night before they suffer."

See also *R. of L.* 165: "No noise but owls' and wolves' death-boding cries;" *Rich. III.* iv. 4. 509: "Out on you, owls! nothing but songs of death," etc.

5. *Grooms.* Originally, servants of any kind.

6. *Possets.* See on ii. 1. 31 above. Randle Holmes (*Academy of Armourie*, 1688) says: "Posset is hot milk poured on ale or sack, having sugar, grated bisket, and eggs, with other ingredients, boiled in it, which goes all to a curd." This explains why the posset is often spoken of as "eaten." Cf. *M. W.* v. 5. 180: "Thou shalt eat a posset to-night at my house." S. uses *posset* as a verb in *Ham.* i. 5. 68:—

"And with a sudden vigour it doth posset
And curd, like eager droppings into milk,
The thin and wholesome blood."

7. *That.* So that. See on i. 3. 57 above, and cf. line 23 below.

8. *Who's there? what, ho!* Macbeth fancies that he hears some noise (see line 14), and in his nervous excitement he rushes to the balcony, and calls beneath, "Who's there?" In his agony, however, he waits for no answer, but hurries back into the chamber to execute the murder.

11. *Confounds.* Ruins, destroys; the most common meaning of the word in S. Cf. iv. 1. 54 and iv. 3. 99 below. See also *M. of V.* iii. 2. 78, *Rich. II.* iii. 4. 60, etc.

20. *Sorry.* Sad. Cf. Spenser, *F. Q.* v. 1, 14:—

"To whom as they approched, they espide
A sorie sight as ever seene with eye,
An headlesse Ladie lying him beside
In her own blood all wallow'd woefully."

24. *Address'd them.* "Made themselves ready" (Schmidt). Cf. *M. W.* iii. 5. 135, *M. of V.* ii. 9. 19, etc.

27. *As they had seen me,* etc. See on i. 4. 11 above.

Hangman. Executioner. Cf. *M. of V.* iv. 1. 125: "the hang-

man's axe." It is applied jocosely to Cupid in *Much Ado*, iii. 2. 11: "the little hangman dare not shoot at him."

28. *Listening.* Used transitively, as in *Much Ado*, iii. 1. 12, *J. C.* iv. 1. 41, and *Rich. II.* ii. 1. 9.

33. *Thought.* That is, thought of.

34. *So.* If we so think of them.

35-40. We follow Johnson and most of the recent editors in limiting what the "voice" says to "Sleep no more! Macbeth does murther sleep!" The earlier editors generally, except Johnson, make the "voice" continue to "feast"; but all from "the innocent sleep" is evidently his own conscience-stricken reflections on the imaginary utterances.

37. *Sleave.* Coarse, soft, unwrought silk. Cf. Florio, *Ital. Dict.*, 1598: "*Sfilazza.* Any kind of ravelled stuffe, or sleave silk;" also "*Capitone*, a kind of coarse silk, called sleave silke." Cf. *T. and C.* v. 1. 35: "Thou idle immaterial skein of sleave-silk." See also Drayton, *Quest of Cynthia*:—

"The bank, with daffidillies dight,
With grass, like sleave, was matted."

40. *Nourisher.* Cf. Chaucer, *C. T.* 10661: "The norice of digestion, the sleep." Rushton (quoted by Furness) cites Ovid, *Met.* xi. 623:—

"Somne, quies rerum, placidissime Somne deorum,
Pax animi, quem cura fugit, qui corda diurnis
Fessa ministeriis mulces, reparasque labori."

Cf. Golding's quaint translation (1587):—

"O sleepe, quoth she, the rest of things, O gentlest of the goddes
Sweet sleepe, the peace of mind, with whom crookt care is aye at odds;
Which cherishest men's weary limbs appall'd with toying sore,
And makest them as fresh to worke, and lustie as before."

46. *Brainsickly.* Madly; the only instance of the adverb in S. The adjective *brainsick* occurs six times. On *get some water*, etc., cf. v. 1. 66.

55. *A painted devil*. Cf. Webster, *White Devil*: "Terrify babes, my lord, with painted devils."

56. *I'll gild*, etc. Though there is no real resemblance between the colour of blood and that of gold, to *gild with blood* was an expression not uncommon in the 16th century. Gold was popularly and very generally styled *red*, as it still is in poetry sometimes. So we have "golden blood," ii. 3. 97 below. Cf. *K. John*, ii. 1. 316: "all gilt with Frenchmen's blood." For the quibble on *gilt* and *guilt*, cf. 2 *Hen. IV.* iv. 5. 129 and *Hen. V.* ii. chorus, 26. See also Middleton, *A Mad World*: "Though guilt condemns, 't is gilt must make us glad;" Marlowe, *Hero and Leander*:—

"That, this word gilt including double sense,
The double guilt of his incontinence
Might be express'd," etc.

57. *That knocking*. Macduff and Lennox are knocking at the south gate, as the next scene shows.

On the dramatic purpose of this knocking, De Quincey remarks: "The murderers, and the murder, must be insulated—cut off by an immeasurable gulf from the ordinary tide and succession of human affairs—locked up and sequestered in some deep recess; we must be made sensible that the world of ordinary life is suddenly arrested—laid asleep—tranced—racked into a dread armistice; time must be annihilated; relation to things without abolished; and all must pass self-withdrawn into a deep syncope and suspension of earthly passion. Hence it is that when the deed is done, when the work of darkness is perfect, then the world of darkness passes away like a pageantry in the clouds: the knocking at the gate is heard; and it makes known audibly that the reaction has commenced; the human has made its reflux upon the fiendish; the pulses of life are beginning to beat again; and the re-establishment of the goings-on of the world in which we live first makes us profoundly sensible of the awful parenthesis that had suspended them."

62. *The multitudinous seas*. As admirably descriptive as

Homer's *πολυφλοισβοιο θαλάσσης*. One can almost hear in it the sound of the sea with its numberless waves.

Incarnadine. Used as adjective and noun before the time of S., but as a verb first by him. Carew uses the verb in his *Obsequies to the Lady Anne Hay*, 1639 ("Incarnadine Thy rosy cheek"), but he probably borrowed it from S.

63. *Making*, etc. The folio has "Making the Greene one, Red," and some of the earlier editors follow that pointing; but of course Macbeth dwells upon the conversion of the *universal green* into one *pervading red*. Cf. *Ham.* ii. 2. 479: "Now is he total gules;" and Milton, *Comus*, 133: "And makes one blot of all the air."

65. *A heart so white*. Cf. Marlowe, *Lust's Dominion* (written before 1593): "Your cheeks are black, let not your soul look white."

68. *Your constancy*, etc. Your firmness has forsaken you. Cf. *A. W.* ii. 1. 87, *J. C.* ii. 1. 299, etc.

70. *Nightgown*. A dressing-gown. Cf. v. i. 6 below. See also *Much Ado*, iii. 4. 18, *Oth.* iv. 3. 34, and stage-direction in *J. C.* ii. 2. In Macbeth's time, and for centuries later, it was customary for both sexes to sleep without any other covering than that belonging to the bed.

72. *Poorly*. Without spirit, dejectedly. Cf. *Rich. II.* iii. 3. 128: "To look so poorly and to speak so fair." Cf. *poor* in *R. of L.* 710.

74. *Wake Duncan with thy knocking!* An apostrophe to the person knocking; not to Duncan, as some would make it.

SCENE III.—The Porter's part in this scene has been the subject of much discussion. Coleridge says of it: "This low soliloquy of the Porter and his few speeches afterwards I believe to have been written for the mob by some other hand, perhaps with Shakespeare's consent; and that finding it take, he with the remaining ink of a pen otherwise employed just interpolated the words:—

"'I'll devil-porter it no further: I had thought to have let in some of all professions, that go the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire."

Of the rest not one syllable has the ever-present being of Shakespeare."

Mr. J. W. Hales, in a paper read before the New Shakspeare Society, May 22, 1874 (see the *Transactions*, 1874, p. 255 fol.), takes the ground:—

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

After the reading of this paper Mr. Tom Taylor remarked: "The reasons set forth by Mr. Hales appear to me so consonant with what we know of Shakespeare, the general character of his plays, his language, and the relation of serious and comic in his treatment of dramatic subjects, that to me they carry absolute conviction that the Porter's speech is an integral part of the play."

Dr. Furnivall says that he asked Dr. George Macdonald what he thought of the Porter's speech, and the reply was: "Look at the grim humour of it. I believe it 's genuine." He put the same question to the poet Browning, who answered: "Certainly the speech is full of humour; and as certainly the humour and the words are Shakespeare's. I cannot understand Coleridge's objection to it. As to Lamb, I've no doubt that he held the speech genuine, for he said that, on his pointing out to his friend Munden the quality of the Porter's speech, Munden was duly struck by it, and expressed his regret at never having played the part." At the meeting of the New Shakspeare Society, June 26, 1874, Dr. Furnivall stated that Mr. Hales's conclusions had been accepted by every critic in England whose opinion he had asked; among them Mr. Tennyson, Mr. J. Spedding, Mr. A. J. Ellis, Professor Dowden, and Professor H. Morley.

2. *Porter of hell-gate.* Cf. *Oth.* iv. 2. 90:—

"You, mistress,
That have the office opposite to St. Peter,
And keep the gate of hell."

Old. A "colloquial intensive" used several times by S.; as in *M. of V.* iv. 2. 16, 2 *Hen. IV.* ii. 4. 21, *M. W.* i. 4. 5, *Much Ado*, v. 2. 98. Mr. J. R. Wise (*Shakespeare: His Birthplace*, etc.) says: "Whenever there has been an unusual disturbance or ado . . . the lower orders round Stratford-on-Avon invariably characterize it by the phrase, 'There has been *old* work to-day.'" Cf. the modern slang expression, "a high old time."

4. *A farmer*, etc. Malone quotes Hall, *Satires*, iv. 6:—

"Ech Muck-worme will be rich with lawlesse gaine,
Altho he smother vp mowes of seuen yeares graine,
And hang'd himself when corne grows cheap again."

This helps to fix the date of the play in 1606; for the price of wheat in that year was lower than it was for thirteen years afterwards, and barley and malt were considerably cheaper than in the next two years.

6. *Come in time.* That is, you've come in time; probably alluding to his suicide. *Napkins* = handkerchiefs. Cf. *L. C.* 15: "Oft did she heave her napkin to her eyne;" also *Oth.* iii. 3. 287, 290, 321, etc. *Enow* is the plural of *enough*. Cf. *M. of V.* iii. 5. 24: "Christians enow." See also *Id.* iv. 1. 29, *Hen. V.* iv. 1. 240, etc.

15. *A French hose.* Cf. *The Black Year*, by Anthony Nixon, 1606: "Gentlemen this year shall be much wronged by their taylor, for their consciences are now much larger than ever they were, for where [whereas] they were wont to steale but half a yeard of brood cloth in making up a payre of breeches, now they do largely nicke their customers in the lace too," etc. In *M. of V.* i. 2. 80 there is another reference to the large "round hose" borrowed from France. Cf. also *Hen. V.* iii. 7. 56.

16. *Roast your goose.* Playing upon the two meanings of *goose*.

17. *At quiet.* Dr. Furnivall remarks that, "as S. uses both 'in

rest' and 'at rest,' there is nothing strange in his using both 'in quiet' and 'at quiet.'" Cf. *Judges*, xviii. 27.

20. *The primrose way*, etc. Cf. *Ham.* i. 3. 50: "the primrose path of dalliance;" and *A. W.* iv. 5. 56: "the flowery way that leads to the broad gate and the great fire."

25. *The second cock*. The time meant is shown by *R. and J.* iv. 4. 3: "The second cock hath crow'd, . . . 't is three o'clock." Cf. *Lear*, iii. 4. 121 and *M. N. D.* ii. i. 267.

30. *Timely*. S. often uses adjectives ending in *-ly* as adverbs. Cf. *unmannerly* in 101 below, etc. We have *timely* as an adjective in iii. 3. 7.

34. *Physics*. Cures. Cf. *Cymb.* iii. 2. 34: "For it doth physic love." See also *W. T.* i. i. 43 and *Temp.* iii. i. 1.

35. *So bold to call*. Cf. *M. of V.* iii. 3. 10: "So fond to come abroad," etc.

36. *Limited*. Appointed. Cf. *M. for M.* iv. 2. 176: "having the hour limited;" *K. John*, v. 2. 123: "warrant limited," etc.

42. *Combustion*. Used by S. only here and in *Hen. VIII.* v. 4. 51; in both instances figuratively. *Combustious* occurs in *V. and A.* 1162: "As dry combustious matter is to fire."

43. *Obscure*. Accent on the first syllable, as in *Rich. II.* iii. 3. 154, etc. Dissyllabic adjectives and participles are often thus accented when coming before a noun, but on the final syllable when in the predicate. The *obscure bird* is "the nightly owl" (*T. A.* ii. 3. 97). See on ii. 2. 3 above.

45. Cf. *Cor.* i. 4. 61:—

"Thou madest thine enemies shake, as if the world
Were feverous and did tremble."

The reference is to an ague, or "shaking fever," as it is called in *K. John*, ii. i. 228.

48. *Tongue nor heart*, etc. Cf. i. 3. 60 above. On the use of the negatives, cf. *Sonn.* 86. 9: "He *nor* that affable familiar ghost . . . cannot boast."

50. *Confusion*. Destruction. Cf. iii. 5. 29 below; also *K. John*, iv. 3. 153.

51. *Hath broke ope*, etc. This has been called "a confusion of metaphors," but it is not really such. The *temple* is the body (cf. *2 Corinthians*, vi. 16), and *the life of the building* has been stolen from it by the murderer.

56. *Gorgon*. For the allusion to the Gorgon's head, cf. *T. and C.* v. 10. 18:—

"Go into Troy and say there Hector's dead;
There is a word will Priam turn to stone."

60. *Death's counterfeit*. Cf. *R. of L.* 402: "the map of death" (that is, sleep); and *M. N. D.* iii. 2. 364: "death-counterfeiting sleep."

62. *The great doom's image*. An image of the Last Judgment. Cf. *Lear*, v. 3. 264.

64. *Countenance*. Be in keeping with.

66. *Parley*. Cf. *parle* in *Rich. II.* i. i. 192 and *3 Hen. VI.* v. i. 16.

75. *Had I but died*, etc. Cf. *W. T.* iv. 4. 472:—

"If I might die within this hour, I have liv'd
To die when I desire."

77. *Mortality*. Human life. Cf. *R. of L.* 403: "life's mortality;" *K. John*, v. 7. 5: "the ending of mortality;" *M. for M.* iii. 2. 196: "No might nor greatness in mortality," etc.

78. *Is dead*. The singular verb with two singular nominatives is not rare in S. *Lees* in the next line seems to be treated as virtually singular.

86. *Badg'd*. Not elsewhere used as a verb by S. Cf. the noun in *2 Hen. VI.* iii. 2. 200: "Murder's crimson badge."

95. *Expedition*. Haste. Cf. *T. G. of V.* i. 3. 37: "the speediest expedition," etc.

96. *Outrun*. These past indicative forms in *u* are common in S.

97. *Lac'd*. To *lace* was "to adorn with a texture sewed on."

S. uses it literally in *Much Ado*, iii. 4. 20: "cloth o' gold, and cuts, and laced with silver;" and figuratively, as here, in *R. and J.* iii. 5. 8:—

"What envious streaks
Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east!"

and *Cymb.* ii. 2. 22:—

"White and azure lac'd
With blue of heaven's own tinct."

See also *Sonn.* 67. 4. For *golden blood*, see on ii. 2. 56 above.

98. *A breach in nature*. Steevens cites Sidney, *Arcadia*: "battering down the wals of their armour, making breaches almost in every place, for troupes of wounds to enter;" and *A Herring's Tayle*, 1598: "A batter'd breach where troopes of wounds may enter in."

101. *Breech'd with gore*. Covered with blood as with a garment. Corruption of the text has been suspected, and various emendations have been proposed.

103. *Make's*. The abbreviation 's for *his* (also for *us*) was common even in serious style.

104. T. Whately (*Remarks on Characters of S.*) says: "On Lady Macbeth's seeming to faint while Banquo and Macduff are solicitous about her, Macbeth, by his unconcern, betrays a consciousness that the fainting is feigned." Fletcher (*Studies of S.*), referring to this theory that the fainting is feigned, remarks: "We believe, however, that the reader will bear in mind the burst of anguish which had been forced from her by Macbeth's very first ruminations upon his act: 'These deeds must not be thought After these ways; so, it will make us mad.' Remembering this, he will see what a dreadful accumulation of suffering is inflicted upon her by her husband's own lips [ii. 3. 93-98], painting in stronger, blacker colours than ever the guilty horror of their common deed."

105. *Argument*. Theme, subject. Cf. *Sonn.* 76. 10: "And you and love are still my argument," etc. See also Milton, *P. L.* i. 24: "the highth of this great argument."

107. *Hid in an auger-hole*. Concealed in obscure places. Cf. *Cor.* iv. 6. 87: "Confin'd Into an auger's bore."

109. *Nor our strong sorrow*, etc. Cf. iv. 3. 209, and 3 *Hen.* VI. iii. 3. 22: "And give my tongue-tied sorrows leave to speak."

111. *When we have*, etc. When we have clothed ourselves and no longer suffer with cold. The Porter had observed that the place was "too cold for hell."

116. *Pretence*. Intention, purpose. Cf. *W. T.* iii. 2. 18, *Cor.* i. 2. 20, etc. In ii. 4. 24 below we have *pretend* = intend, design.

118. *Put on manly readiness*. That is, dress ourselves. So *ready* = dressed. Cf. *Cymb.* ii. 3. 86:—

"Cloten. Your lady's person; is she ready?
Lady. Ay,
To keep her chamber;"

and the stage-direction in 1 *Hen.* VI. ii. 1. 38: "The French leap ever the walls in their shirts. Enter, several ways, the Bastard of Orleans, Alençon, and Reignier, half ready and half unready."

122. *Easy*. Easily; the adjective used adverbially, as often.

125. *There's*. The singular verb is often used before a plural subject. Cf. *Cymb.* iv. 2. 371: "There is no more such masters," etc. *Near* = *nearer*; as in *Rich. II.* iii. 2. 64: "Nor near nor farther off," etc.

127. *Hath not yet lighted*. Has not yet spent its force.

129. *Dainty of*. Particular about. Cf. *T. and C.* i. 3. 145: "grows dainty of his worth."

130. *There's warrant*, etc. Cf. *A. W.* ii. 1. 33:—

"Bertram. I'll steal away.
First Lord. There's honour in that theft."

SCENE IV.—4. *Trifled*. Made trivial. In Elizabethan writers intransitive verbs are often made transitive.

Knowings. Experiences. Cf. *Cymb.* i. 4. 30 and ii. 3. 102; but the plural is used by S. only here.

6. *Threaten his bloody stage*. "Frown upon the earth where such horrors are enacted" (Moberly).

7. *Strangles the travelling lamp*. Cf. the description of the sun in I *Hen. IV.* i. 2. 226:—

—"breaking through the foul and ugly mists
Of vapours, that did seem to strangle him."

The folio has here "the trauailing Lampe." In the time of S. the present distinction between *travel* and *travail* was not recognized, the forms being used indiscriminately without regard to the meaning.

8. *Is 't night's predominance*, etc. "Is it that night is aggressive, or that the day is ashamed to appear?" *Predominant* and *predominance* were astrological terms. Cf. *Lear*, i. 2. 134: "Knaves, thieves, and treachers by spherical predominance;" *A. W.* i. 1. 211:—

"*Helena*. The wars have so kept you under that you must needs have been born under Mars.

Parolles. When he was predominant?"

See also *W. T.* i. 2. 202.

10. On the description of prodigies that follows, cf. extract from Holinshed, p. 163 above.

12. *Towering* and *place* are terms of falconry. Donne in one of his poems says of a hawk: "Which when herself she lessens in the aire, You then first say that high enough she towers." *Place* = pitch, the highest flight of the hawk. For *pitch*, cf. *Rich. II.* i. 1. 109: "How high a pitch his resolution soars!" See also I *Hen. VI.* ii. 4. 11 and *J. C.* i. 1. 78.

13. *Mousing*. "A very effective epithet, as contrasting the falcon, in her pride of place, with a bird that is accustomed to seek its prey on the ground" (Talbot).

14. *Horses*. A monosyllable here. Cf. *sense* in v. 1. 27 below,

and in *Sonn.* 112. 10. In *A. and C.* iii. 7. 7 we have "horse" = "horses"; and in *K. John*, ii. 1. 289, "horse back" for "horse's back."

15. *Minions*. Darlings. See on i. 2. 19 above.

17. *As*. As if. See on i. 4. 11 and ii. 2. 27.

18. *Eat*. Changed by many critics to *ate*, which is nowhere found in the early copies. The present is there more frequently printed "eate." For the participle S. uses both *eat* (as in *L. L. L.* iv. 2. 26, *Rich. II.* v. 5. 85, etc.) and *eaten* (see i. 3. 84 and iv. 1. 64 in the present play).

24. *Pretend*. See on ii. 3. 116 above.

28. *Ravin up*. Devour ravenously. Cf. *M. for M.* i. 2. 133: "Like rats that ravin down their proper bane." In iv. 1. 24 below we have "ravin'd" = ravenous. Cf. *A. W.* iii. 2. 120: "the ravin lion."

29. *Like*. Likely; as often in S. Cf. *M. of V.* ii. 7. 49: "Is 't like that lead contains her?"

31. *Scone*. Of this ancient town, which was situated about two miles and a half from Perth, few memorials now remain. Of Scone Abbey, founded by Alexander I. in 1107, in which the Scottish kings from that date down to the time of James II. were crowned, nothing is left but part of an aisle now used as a mausoleum by the Earl of Mansfield, on whose estate it stands. The old market-cross of Scone also remains in the pleasure-grounds of Scone Palace, as the seat of the earl is called. At the north side of the mansion is a tumulus, known as the Moat Hill, said to have been composed of earth from the estates of those who here attended on the kings.

The famous "stone of Scone," which served for many ages as the seat on which the kings were crowned, now forms part of the English coronation-chair (see cut on p. 271). The connection that the stone is supposed to have with the destinies of the Scots is commemorated in ancient verse,¹ which has been thus rendered:—

¹ "Ni fallat fatum, Scoti quocumque locatum
Invenient lapidem regnare tenentur ibidem."

"Unless the Fates are faithless grown,
And prophet's voice be vain,
Where'er is found this sacred stone,
The Scottish race shall reign."

According to national tradition, this stone was the pillow of Jacob at Bethel, and long served for the coronation-seat of the kings of Ireland. It is said to have been brought from Ireland to Iona by Fergus, the son of Erc, then to have been deposited in Dunstaffnage Castle (still standing near Oban), and to have been transported thence to Scone by Kenneth II. in the year 842. Its history from that date is well authenticated, but the rest is of course more or less mythical.

33. *Colme-kill*. "The cell (or chapel) of Columba," now known as Icolmkill, or Iona, a barren islet, about eight miles south of Staffa. Here St. Columba, an Irish Christian preacher, founded a monastery in A.D. 563, and here he died about A.D. 597, or at the time when Augustine landed in Kent to convert the English. From this monastery in Iona Christianity and civilization spread, not only through Scotland, but even to the Orkneys and Iceland. Hence the island came to be considered holy ground, and there was a traditionary belief that it was to be specially favoured at the dissolution of the world. According to the ancient prophecy,

"Seven years before that awful day
When time shall be no more,
A watery deluge shall o'ersweep
Hibernia's mossy shore;
The green-clad Isla, too, shall sink,
While with the great and good,
Columba's happier isle shall rear
Her towers above the flood."

It is not to be wondered at that monarchs desired to be buried in this sacred spot, and that thus it became the cemetery where, as Collins has sung,

"The mighty kings of three fair realms are laid"—

Scotland, Ireland, and Norway. No trace of their tombs now remains, the oldest monuments left on the island being those of Irish ecclesiastics of the 12th century. Besides these there are the ruins of a chapel (of the 11th century), of a nunnery (founded about 1180), and of the cathedral church of St. Mary, built early in the 13th century. Of the three hundred and fifty sculptured stone crosses which formerly adorned the island, only two are still standing. All the others were thrown into the sea, about the year 1560, by order of the anti-Popish Synod of Argyll.

36. *Thither*. That is, to Scone.

40. *Benison*. Cf. *Lear*, i. 1. 268: "our grace, our love, our benison;" *Id.* iv. 6. 229: "The bounty and the benison of heaven."



ST. COLME'S INCH

ACT III

SCENE I. — 7. *Shine*. "Appear with all the *lustre of conspicuous truth*" (Johnson).