

Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say.  
The oldest hath borne most : we that are young  
Shall never see so much, nor live so long.

[*Exeunt, with a dead march.*]

## CRITICAL NOTES ON KING LEAR.

### ACT I., SCENE I.

Page 59.

Now, our joy,

Although our last, not least ; to whose young love

The vines of France and milk of Burgundy

Strive to be interest'd ; &c. — So the folio, except that it

has "Although our last *and* least." White prefers this reading, on the ground that Cordelia was literally the smallest of the three daughters ; "that she was her father's little pet, while her sisters were big, bold, brazen beauties." He makes a good argument to the point, so that I find it not easy to choose ; but the phrase "though last, not least" appears to have been something of a favourite with the Poet. The quartos give the passage thus : —

Although *the* last, *not* least in our deere love,  
What can you say to *win* a third, more opulent  
Than your sisters?

P. 60. For, by the sacred radiance of the Sun,

The mysteries of Hecate and the night ; &c. — So the second folio. Instead of *mysteries*, the quartos have *mistresse* ; the first folio, *miseries*.

P. 61. Peace, Kent !

Come not between the dragon and his wrath :

I loved her most, and thought to set my rest

On her kind nursery : hence, and avoid my sight. — It is somewhat in question whether the words "hence, and avoid my sight!"

are addressed to Kent or to Cordelia. But, surely, if they were spoken to Cordelia, she would not remain in presence, as she does. Moreover, as Heath observes, "in the next words Lear sends for France and Burgundy, in order to tender them his youngest daughter, if either of them would accept her without a dowry. At such a time, therefore, to drive her out of his presence would be a contradiction to his declared intention." On the other hand, it is urged that Kent has said nothing to provoke so harsh a sentence. It is true, Kent has but started in his remonstrance; but Lear is supposed to know his bold and ardent temper; and he might well anticipate what presently comes from him.

P. 62. Reverse thy doom,

And in thy best consideration check

This hideous rashness. — So the quartos. The folio has "*reserve thy state*." The former is more in harmony with the context.

P. 63. Five days we do allot thee, for provision

To shield thee from diseases of the world;

And, on the sixth, to turn thy hated back

Upon our kingdom: if, on the tenth day following,

Thy banish'd trunk be found in our dominions,

The moment is thy death. — In the second of these lines the folio has *disasters* instead of *diseases*, which is the reading of the quartos. As Malone observes, "diseases, in old language, meant the slighter *inconveniences, troubles, and distresses* of the world. The provision that Kent could make in five days might in some measure guard him against the *diseases* of the world, but could not shield him from its *disasters*." — In the fourth line, Collier's second folio substitutes *seventh* for *tenth*. The change is plausible; but, as Mr. Crosby writes me, "the King orders Kent on the sixth day to turn his hated back, and *start*; and, as we can hardly suppose the King's palace, or Kent's, to be on the edge of the kingdom, he gives him *three days* to get out of 'our dominions': so that on the *tenth* he shall have crossed the line."

P. 64. *Lear*. Right-noble Burgundy,

When she was dear to us, we did hold her so;

But now her price is fall'n. — In the second of these lines

the little word *did* is decidedly in the way; and I suspect it ought to be got rid of by printing "*we held her so*."

P. 65. The argument of your praise, balm of your age,

The best, the dearest, &c. — So the folio. The quartos have "*Most best, most dearest*." Shakespeare, it is true, often doubles the superlatives, as in *most best*; still I think the folio reading preferable.

P. 66. It is no vicious blot, murder, or foulness,

No unchaste action, or dishonour'd step,

That hath deprived me of your grace and favour;

But even the want of that for which I'm richer, &c. — In

the first of these lines, Collier's second folio reads "no vicious blot, nor other foulness." It does indeed seem rather strange that Cordelia should use the word *murder* here: but she may well see reason for it in the harsh language that has just been used both by her father and by the King of France. So I have hardly any doubt the Poet wrote as in the text. — In the fourth line, the old copies read "But even for want"; for having probably been repeated by mistake. Corrected by Hanmer.

P. 67. Ye jewels of our father, with wash'd eyes

Cordelia leaves you. — The old copies have "*The jewels*."

The same misprint occurs repeatedly, the old contractions of *ye* and *the* being very easily confounded. Here, as elsewhere, the context readily detects the error.

P. 68. Who cover faults, at last shame them derides. — So the quartos, except that they have *covers*. The folio reads "at last *with* shame derides."

ACT I., SCENE II.

P. 70.

Edmund the base

Shall top th' legitimate. — Instead of *top th'*, the quartos have *tooth'*, the folio, *to'th'*. Corrected by Capell.

## ACT I., SCENE III.

P. 77. Now, by my life,

Old fools are babes again, and must be used  
With checks, when flatteries are seen abused. — Not in the folio. The quartos read “with checkes as flatteries when they are seen abus’d.” As it is hardly possible to strain any fitting sense out of this, various changes have been made or proposed. Warburton reads “With checks, *not* flatt’ries,” and Jennens, “With checks, *by* flatteries when *they’re* seen abused.” As the lines ending with *used* and *abused* were obviously meant for a rhyming couplet, they should properly both be pentameters, whereas the old text makes the second an Alexandrine. By transposing *when*, and omitting *as* and *they*, we get both sense and metre right. Probably the Poet’s first writing and his subsequent correction got jumbled together in the printing.

P. 84. Come place him here by me,  
Or do thou for him stand. — In the second of these lines, *Or*, needful alike to sense and to metre, is wanting in the old text.

P. 84. No, faith, lords and great men will not let me; if I had a monopoly out, they would have part on’t: and ladies too, they will not let me have all fool to myself. — This passage is not in the folio, and the quartos have *loades* and *lodes* instead of *ladies*. Some very ludicrous contortions of argument have been put forth, to sustain the old reading.

P. 86. The hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo so long,  
That it had its head bit off by its young. — Instead of *its*, the old copies here have *it* in both places. Of course this is an instance of *it* used possessively. The Cambridge Editors print “had *it* head bit off by *it* young”; though in various other cases they change *it* to *its*. It may be worth the while to observe that the Bible of 1611 has one instance of *it* used in the same way; yet all modern editions, so far as I know, substitute *its*. See *Hamlet*, page 235.

P. 88. This admiration, sir, is much o’ the savour  
Of other your new pranks. — One of the quartos and the folio have *savour*; the other quarto has *favour*. Either word suits the place well enough; and modern editors differ in their readings.

P. 89. And in the most exact regard support  
The worship of their name. — The old copies have “The *worships* of their name.” According to old usage, both *worship* and *name* should be plural, or neither.

P. 92. And thereto add such reasons of your own  
As may compact it more. So get you gone,  
And hasten your return. — The old copies lack *So*, which was inserted by Pope.

P. 92. This milky course and gentleness of yours,  
Though I condemn it not, yet, under pardon, &c. — So Pope. The old copies lack *it*, which is needful alike to sense and to metre.

## ACT I., SCENE V.

P. 93. If a man’s brains were in’s heels, were’t not in danger  
of kibes? — Pope changed *brains* to *brain*, and so Walker would read. But is not *brains* sometimes used as a noun singular?

## ACT II., SCENE I.

P. 97. But that I told him the revenging gods  
’Gainst parricides did all their thunders bend. — So the quartos. The folio reads “did all *the thunder* bend”; which some editors prefer: but, surely, a very inferior reading.

P. 100. Yes, madam, he was of that consort. — Collier’s second folio reads “Yes, madam, *yes*, he was of that consort.” Dyce proposes “he was *one* of that consort.” I suspect that one of these insertions ought to be admitted.

P. 100. 'Tis they have put him on the old man's death,  
To have the waste and spoil of his revenues.—So the  
quartos. The folio reads "*th' expence and wast* of his Revenues."

## ACT II., SCENE II.

P. 102. If I had thee in Finsbury pinfold, I would make thee  
care for me.—So Collier's second folio. The old text has *Lipsbury*  
instead of *Finsbury*. Jennens conjectured *Ledbury*. As there is no  
such place in England as Lipsbury, that name can hardly be right.  
*Finsbury* was the name of a place near London; and it is mentioned  
in *1 King Henry the Fourth*, iii. 1. It has been urged, however, that,  
if *lipsbury* was not a phrase well known in Shakespeare's time, to im-  
ply *gagging*, he may have coined it for that purpose; and that Kent's  
meaning may be, "where the movement of thy lips should be of no  
avail." So "Lipsbury pinfold" would mean a place where neither  
Oswald's *legs* nor his *lips* could help him,—where he could not run  
away, nor could his whining nor his yelling for help do him any good.  
But all this seems to me forced and far-fetched. Surely no theatrical  
audience would have understood the phrase.

P. 103. *Edm.* How now! What's the matter? [*Parting them.*  
*Kent.* With you, goodman boy, if you please.—The folio  
reads "What's the matter? Part." Here *Part* was no doubt meant  
as a stage-direction, but got printed as being of the text. Such errors  
are quite frequent. The quartos agree with the folio, except that they  
lack *Part*.

P. 105. Reneag, affirm, and turn their halcyon beaks  
With every gale and vary of their masters,  
As knowing nought, like dogs, but following.—So Pope.  
The old text is without *As* in the last line. Surely the Poet could not  
have intended such a halt in the metre.

P. 108. Your purposed low correction  
Is such as basest and contemned'st wretches, &c.—This  
is not in the folio; and the quartos have *temnest* instead of *contemned'st*.  
The correction is Capell's.

P. 110. I know 'tis from Cordelia,  
Who hath most fortunately been inform'd  
Of my obscurèd course; and shall find time,  
From this enormous state, seeking, to give  
Losses their remedies.—Much question has been made as  
to how this difficult passage ought to be printed; and some editors  
print the words, "and shall find time, from this enormous state, seek-  
ing, to give losses their remedies," as if Kent were reading them, dis-  
jointedly, from Cordelia's letter. But it appears that there is not light  
enough for this; and Kent longs to have the dawn come, that he may  
see to read the letter. As the text is here printed, *shall find* is in the  
same construction with *know*,—"I know, and I shall find." See foot-  
note 31.

## ACT II., SCENE IV.

P. 126. But, for true need,—  
You Heavens, give me patience,—patience I need!—The  
old text reads "You Heavens, give me *that* patience, patience I need";  
which is only an intense way of saying, "that patience which I need";  
whereas the right sense, it seems to me, is, "give me patience, that is  
what I need." The passage has caused a deal of comment, and several  
changes have been proposed. Mr. White and some others omit the  
second *patience*; which is a greater change than I make, while it seems  
to miss the right sense. Walker would read, "You Heavens, give me  
patience!—*that* I need," according to Ritson's suggestion.

## ACT III., SCENE I.

P. 128. Sir, I do know you;  
And dare, upon the warrant of my note,  
Commend a dear thing to you.—So the folio. The quartos  
read "upon the warrant of my *arte*." Some editors prefer the quarto  
reading, explaining it "my skill to *find the mind's construction in the*  
*face*." But it appears that Kent "*knows* his man," and therefore has  
no occasion to use the *skill* in question. See foot-note 3.

P. 129. Who have — as who have not, that their great stars  
Throne and set high? — servants, who seem no less,  
Which are to France the spies and speculators

**Intelligent of our State.** — Not in the quartos. The folio, in the second line, has *Thron'd* instead of *Throne*. Corrected by Theobald. Also, in the third line, the folio has *speculations*. Johnson thought it should be *speculators*, and Singer's second folio has it so. As the word evidently refers to *persons*, can there be any doubt about it?

## ACT III., SCENE II.

P. 132. That keep this dreadful pother o'er our heads. — So one of the quartos, spelling the word *powther*; the other has *Thundring*. The folio has *pudder*.

P. 132. Thou perjured, and thou simular of virtue  
That art incestuous. — So the folio. The quartos have "thou simular *man* of virtue." See foot-note 8.

P. 134. This is a brave night. I'll speak a prophesy ere I go. — This, and what follows down to the end of the scene, is not in the quartos. Mr. Grant White regards the whole as an interpolation. "This loving, faithful creature," says he, "would not let his old master go off half-crazed into that storm, that he might stop, and utter such pointless and uncalled-for imitation of Chaucer." In this opinion I fully concur. For the whole passage, besides being a stark impertinence dramatically, is as unlike Shakespeare as it is unlike the Fool; unlike Shakespeare, I mean, in poetical texture and grain.

## ACT III., SCENE IV.

P. 139. Take heed o' the foul fiend: obey thy parents; keep thy word justly. — The quartos read "keepe thy *words* justly"; the folio, "keep thy words *Justice*." The second folio changes *words* to *word*.

P. 141. Saint Withold footed thrice the 'old, &c. — So Theobald, and so the metre evidently requires. Instead of *Saint Withold*, the old

text has *swithold* and *Swithold*. *S.* is the old abbreviation for *saint*, and the Poet probably wrote *S. Withold*.

## ACT III., SCENE VI.

P. 146. He's mad that trusts in the tameness of a wolf, a horse's health, a boy's love, &c. — So all the old editions. Several commentators are very positive it should be "a horse's *heels*"; there being an old proverb in Ray's *Collection*, "Trust not in a horse's heels, nor a dog's tooth." But men that way skilled know it is about as unsafe to trust in the soundness of a horse as in the other things mentioned by the Fool.

P. 146. Come, sit thou here, most learned justicer. — The quartos have *justice* instead of *justicer*. Further on, however, they have *justicer*. — This part of the scene, beginning with "The foul fiend bites my back," down to "Bless thy five wits," is wanting in the folio.

P. 146. Come o'er the bourn, Bessy, to me. — The quartos have *broome* instead of *boorn*. Not in the folio.

P. 149. Hound or spaniel, brach or lym. — The old copies have *Him* and *Hym* instead of *lym*. Corrected by Hanmer.

P. 150. This rest might yet have balm'd thy broken senses,  
Which, if convenience will not allow,  
Stand in hard cure. — So Theobald. The speech is not in the folio; and the quartos have *sineus* instead of *senses*. White, Dyce, and the Cambridge Editors retain *sineus*. But, surely, *senses* is right. And the same speaker has said, a little before, "All the power of his *wits* have given way to his impatience." And again, — "his *wits* are gone." Can there be any doubt that he means the same thing here? Moreover, Lear has no broken *sineus*; he is out of his senses; that is, his *wits* are broken. Besides, sleep does not heal broken *sineus*; but it has great healing efficacy upon such "perturbations of the brain" as the poor old King is racked with. So in *Macbeth*, ii. 1: "Innocent sleep, balm of hurt minds."

P. 151. When false opinion, whose wrong thought defiles thee,  
In thy just proof repeals and reconciles thee. — So Theobald. This speech is not in the folio; and the quartos have *thoughts defile*. But a rhyme was probably intended. — It may be well to add Heath's explanation of the passage: "Observe the event of those disturbances that are now on foot, and discover thyself when the present false opinion entertained of thee, which stains thy reputation with a crime of which thou art innocent, being convicted by thy full proof, repeals thy present banishment from society, and reconciles thee to thy father." Of the whole speech I can but say that I do not believe Shakespeare wrote a word of it. The workmanship, in all points, smacks of a very different hand. The Cambridge Editors note upon it, "internal evidence is conclusive against the supposition that the lines were written by Shakespeare."

## ACT III., SCENE VII.

P. 155. My lord, you have one eye left

To see some mischief on them. — The old copies have *him* instead of *them*. But, as Dyce says, "the Servant is evidently speaking of Cornwall and Regan." The pronouns *him* and *them* or *'em* are often confounded.

## ACT IV., SCENE I.

P. 157. Yet better thus, unknown, to be contemn'd,

Than still contemn'd and flatter'd. — So Collier's second folio; as Johnson had conjectured, and Tyrwhitt and Malone approved. The old copies read "Yet better thus, and *knowne* to be contemn'd."

P. 158. Full oft 'tis seen,

Our maims secure us, and our mere defects

Prove our commodities. — Instead of *maims*, the old copies have *means*; which may possibly be explained somewhat thus: "The having what we desire makes us reckless, while privation or adversity sobers us." This takes *secure* in the sense of the Latin *securus*, *negligent* or *presumptuous*. But this, to say the least, seems a harsh and strained interpretation. Pope reads "Our *mean* secures us." Collier's

second folio substitutes *wants* for *means*, and Singer proposes *needs*. Walker says, "There can be no doubt that Johnson's *mains* is the right reading." See foot-note 6.

P. 160. Five fiends have been in poor Tom at once; as Obdicut, of lust; Hobbidance, prince of dumbness; &c. — So Walker. The old text has an awkward inversion, — *of lust, as Obdicut*. The passage is not in the folio.

## ACT IV., SCENE II.

P. 164. If that the Heavens do not their visible spirits

Send quickly down to tame these vile offences,

It will come, &c. — This speech is not in the folio; and the quartos have *the* and *this* instead of *these*. The limiting force of the demonstrative is clearly required by the context.

P. 164. France spreads his banners in our noiseless land,

With plumèd helm thy state begins to threaten; &c. —

The old copies have "thy *slayer* begin *threats*," "thy *slaièr* begins *threats*," and "thy *state* begins *thereat*." The reading in the text was proposed by Eccles, and adopted by Staunton and the Cambridge Editors.

P. 165. Thou changèd and sex-cover'd thing, for shame,

Be-monster not thy feature! — The old text has "*self-cover'd* thing," out of which it is hardly possible to extract any fitting sense. Theobald reads "Thou *chang'd* and *self-converted* thing"; which does not really better the passage at all. Other readings have been proposed, as "*chang'd* and *self-discover'd*," and "*chang'd* and *self-uncover'd*." The emendation here adopted (and I deem it of the first class) was proposed to me by Mr. Joseph Crosby. See foot-note 13.

P. 165. Marry, your manhood mew. — So corrected copies of the second quarto, and the Cambridge edition. The other old copies have *now* instead of *mew*. See foot-note 16.

## ACT IV., SCENE III.

This scene is wanting altogether in the folio. As it is, both poetically and physiognomically, one of the best in the play, the purpose of the omission could hardly have been other than to shorten the time of representation; which would infer the folio to have been printed from a stage copy.

P. 167. **Ay, sir; she took them, read them in my presence;** &c. — So Theobald. The old copies have "*I say she.*" The affirmative *ay* was very often printed *I*.

P. 167. **You have seen  
Sunshine and rain at once; her smiles and tears**

**Were like: a better way, — those happy smilets, &c.** — Such, literally, is the reading of all the quartos; which has been unnecessarily and dangerously tampered with and tinkered in most of modern editions; some reading "like a better *May*"; some, "like a *wetter May*"; and some, "like a better *day*." But the old reading is assuredly right. The sense is clearly completed at *like*, and should there be cut off from what follows, as it is in the text: "You have seen sunshine and rain at once; her smiles and tears were like"; that is, were like "sunshine and rain at once." Then begins another thought, or another mode of illustration: "To speak it in a better way, those happy smilets," &c. And I insist upon it that the passage so read is better poetry, as well as better sense and better logic, than with *way* turned into *day* or *May*, and made an adjunct or tag to *like*. The pointing here given was suggested by Boaden.

P. 168. **In brief, sir, sorrow  
Would be a rarity most beloved, if all, &c.** — So Capell and Walker. The old text is without *sir*.

P. 168. **There she shook  
The holy water from her heavenly eyes,  
And, clamour-moisten'd, then away she started  
To deal with grief alone.** — So White. The old copies read

"And clamour moistened *her*"; *her* having probably been repeated by mistake from the line above. Theobald reads "And, clamour-motion'd, then away she started." The more common reading is "And clamour moisten'd: then away," &c.

## ACT IV., SCENE IV.

P. 169. **Crown'd with rank fumiter and furrow-weeds,  
With burdocks, hemlock, nettles, cuckoo-flowers, &c.** — In the first of these lines, the quartos have *femiter*, the folio *Femitar*, instead of *fumiter*. In the second line, the quartos have, instead of *burdocks*, *hoar-docks*, and *hor-docks*; the folio, *Hardokes*. The correction is Hanmer's. Heath says, "I believe we should read *burdocks*, which frequently grow among corn."

P. 170. **'Tis known before; our preparation stands  
In expectation of them. — O dear father,  
It is thy business that I go about;  
Therefore great France  
My mourning and important tears have pitied.  
No blown ambition doth our arms incite,  
But love, dear love, and our aged father's right:  
Soon may I hear and see him! —** In this speech, again, all after "expectation of them" is, I am sure, an interpolation by some other hand. It has not the flavour either of Shakespeare or of Cordelia.

## ACT IV., SCENE VI.

P. 173. **The murmuring surge,  
That on th' unnumber'd idle pebbles chafes,  
Cannot be heard so high. I'll look no more;  
Lest my brain turn, and the deficient sight  
Topple down headlong.** — So Pope. The quartos have "idle pebbles *chafe*"; the folio, "idle *pebble* chafes." — In the fourth line, Mr. Daniel Jefferson, of Boston, suggests to me that we ought to read "and *through* deficient sight." As the Poet may well have written

*thro*, and as this might easily be mistaken for *the*, I suspect Mr. Jefferson is right.

P. 175. Ten masts at each make not the altitude, &c. — The phrase *at each* has troubled the editors, and various changes have been made or proposed, most of them not worth specifying. Pope reads "Ten masts *attacht*"; which seems to me the best of them, except, perhaps, *a-stretcht*, proposed by Jennens. See foot-note 7.

P. 178. To say ay and no to every thing that I said ay and no to was no good divinity. — The old copies differ in the pointing of this passage; but such is the literal reading, except that they have *toe* and *too* instead of the last *to*. But we have many instances of *too* and *to* confounded. The passage is commonly printed thus: "To say *ay* and *no* to every thing that I said! — *Ay* and *no* too was no good divinity." This may have a meaning, but I have tried in vain to understand it. See foot-note 15.

P. 179. Were all the letters suns, I could not see. — So the folio, except that it has "*thy* Letters." The quartos read "I could not see *one*"; which I cannot well understand how anybody should prefer. The quartos have "*the* letters."

P. 180. Through tatter'd clothes small vices do appear. — The quartos read "through tattered *ragges* small vices"; the folio, "thorough tatter'd cloathes *great* vices."

P. 180. Plate sin with gold,  
And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks. — This is not in the quartos; and the folio has *Place sinnes*. Corrected by Pope.

P. 180. When we are born, we cry that we are come  
To this great stage of fools. — 'Tis a good block: &c. — So Ritson. The old copies have "*This* a good blocke." See foot-note 24.

P. 181. Let me have a surgeon;  
I'm cut to th' brains. — The quartos read "Let me have a *chirurgion*"; such being the old form of *surgeon*; the folio, "Let me have *Surgeons*."

P. 181. To use his eyes for garden water-pots,  
Ay, and for laying Autumn's dust. — So the quartos, except that they lack *for* in the second line. The folio here gives a somewhat different text, thus: —

To use his eyes for Garden water-pots. I will die bravely,  
Like a smugge Bridegroom. What? I will be Joviall:  
Come, come, I am a King, Masters, know you that?

P. 183. A most poor man, made tame to fortune's blows. — So the folio. The quartos read "made *lame* by fortunes blowes."

P. 184. Seek him out  
Upon the English party: — O, untimely death! — The old editions repeat *death*.

P. 185. O undistinguish'd space of woman's will! — The quartos have *wit* instead of *will*, the folio reading; while the folio has *indistinguish'd*. See foot-note 39.

## ACT IV., SCENE VII.

P. 186. Yet to be known shortens my made intent. — This sounds to us rather odd, and indeed hardly English, though it may be justified by the usage of the Poet's time, so far as regards the language, on the ground of its meaning "the intention which I have *formed*." But such, it seems to me, is not the right sense. Kent's thought appears to be, that the being now known will cause him to fall short, not of his whole purpose, but of what he regards as the more important part of it, namely, a full restoration of things to the state they were in at the opening of the play; and he might naturally think that he could work better to this end by keeping up his disguise awhile longer. So that I am all but satisfied we ought to read "*my main* intent," as in Collier's second folio.

P. 187. Gent. Ay, madam; in the heaviness of his sleep  
We put fresh garments on him.  
Doct. Be by, good madam, when we do awake him:  
I doubt not of his temperance. — Such is the usual assign-



ment of these speeches, and it is clearly right. To the first of them one quarto prefixes "*Doct.*," and to the second "*Kent.*" The other quarto prefixes "*Doct.*" to the first, and "*Gent.*" to the second. The folio runs both speeches into one, and prefixes "*Gent.*"

P. 187. O my dear father, restoration hang

Thy medicine on my lips!—Such is the reading of all the old copies; and I like it the better that it makes *Thy* refer to *father*. Modern editions generally print "O my dear father! Restoration, hang," &c.; which makes *Thy* refer to *Restoration*. See foot-note 6.

P. 189. I am a very foolish fond old man,

Fourscore and upward, not an hour more nor less; &c.—The words "not an hour more nor less" are found only in the folio. Some editors have rejected them as a probable interpolation, because of their being nonsensical. The nonsense of them, indicating, as it does, some remains of Lear's disorder, is the very reason why they should be retained.

P. 190. Be comforted, good madam: the great rage,

You see, is cured in him.—So the quartos. Instead of *cured*, the folio has *kill'd*, which some editors prefer,—rather strangely, I think. Collier conjectured *quell'd*. But what need of any thing better than *cured*?

ACT V., SCENE III.

P. 195. For thee, oppressèd King, am I cast down;

Myself could else out-frown false Fortune's frown.—Another interpolation, I have scarce any doubt. It is not rightly in character for Cordelia to be prating thus of the self-sacrifices she is making. The rhyme too is out of place. Read the speech without the couplet, and see how much better and truer it is.

P. 199. Dispose of them, of me; yea, all is thine.—This is not in the quartos; and the first folio reads "*the walls* is thine." Hammer prints "*they all are* thine." The reading in the text is Lettsom's. The common reading is, "the walls *are* thine"; and the common explana-

tion tells us it is a metaphor taken from the camp, and means "to surrender at discretion."

P. 201. Yet am I noble as the adversary

I come to cope.—So the folio. The quartos have "I come to cope *withal*." The addition is needless, to say the least, as the Poet elsewhere uses *cope* as a transitive verb.

P. 201. Behold, it is the privilege of mine honours,

My oath, and my profession: &c.—The quartos read "it is the privilege of *my tongue*"; the folio, "it is *my privilege*, The privilege of mine honours," &c. The latter reading probably arose from an error and the correction of it being printed together.

P. 202. *Gon.* O, save him, save him!—This is practice, Gloucester: &c.—So Theobald. The old copies are without *O*, and assign "Save him, save him!" to Albany. Theobald notes, "'Tis absurd that Albany, who knows of Edmund's treason, and of his own wife's passion for him, should be solicitous to have his life saved." I may add that Albany has most evidently been wishing that Edmund might fall in the combat. Walker says, "Theobald was right in giving the words 'O, save him, save him,' (as he properly read) to Goneril."

P. 203. *Alb.* Shut your mouth, dame,

Or with this paper shall I stop it.—[*To* EDGAR.] Hold, sir.—

[*To* GON.] Thou worse than any name, read thine own evil:

No tearing, lady; I perceive you know it.

*Gon.* Say, if I do; the laws are mine, not thine:

Who can arraign me for't? [*Exit.*

*Alb.* Most monstrous!—O,

Know'st thou this paper? [*Offers the letter to* EDMUND.

*Edm.* Ask me not what I know.

*Alb.* Go after her: she's desperate; govern her.

[*To an Officer, who goes out.*

*Edm.* [*To* EDGAR.] What you have charged me with, &c.—I here follow the order and distribution of the speeches as given

in the folio. The quartos keep Goneril on the stage till after the speech, "Ask me not what I know," which they assign to her. According to this arrangement, the words, "Thou worse than any name," &c., are addressed to Edmund: but I hardly think Albany would say to him "read thine own evil," when that evil was properly Goneril's. Moreover, this arrangement supposes the words, "Know'st thou this paper?" to be addressed to Goneril. But it does not seem likely that Albany would ask her such a question; for he knows the letter to be her writing: besides, he has just said to her, "I perceive you know it." Of course I take the words "Hold, sir," as a request or an order to Edgar to abstain from further action against Edmund; and such, I think, is the natural sense of them. See foot-note 24.

P. 203. *Edg.*

Let's exchange charity.

I am no less in blood than thou art, Edmund;

If more, the more thou'st wrongèd me.—The old text prints the last of these lines thus: "If more, the more *th' hast wrong'd* me." Here *th' hast* is the old contraction of *thou hast*. The line is commonly printed "If more, the more *thou hast wrong'd* me." Here the line, besides being short by one foot, is utterly unrhymical, inasmuch that it cannot be pronounced as metre at all. In the text, the line is made rhythmical, though still one foot short. Perhaps it should be "If more, the more, *then*, thou *hast* wrongèd me." Or, possibly, "the *worser* thou hast wrongèd me."

P. 204.

O, our lives' sweetness!

That with the pain of death we'd hourly die

Rather than die at once!—The quartos read "That with the pain of death *would* hourly die"; the folio, "That *we* the pain of death *ould* hourly dye." The reading in the text is Malone's.

P. 206. Whilst I was big in clamour, came there a man

Who, having seen me in my worst estate, &c.—This speech is not in the folio; and the quartos read "came there *in* a man"; *in* being probably repeated by mistake.

P. 206. He fasten'd on my neck, and bellow'd out

As he'd burst heaven; threw him on my father.—The

quartos have "threw *me* on my father." An obvious error, corrected by Theobald.

P. 208. Howl, howl, howl, howl!—O, you are men of stone: &c.—The old editions have "men of *stones*." Pope's correction.

P. 209. 'Tis a dull light. Are you not Kent?—The folio reads "*This is* a dull *sight*." The words are not in the quartos. It does not well appear what *sight* can refer to here. And the question, "are you not Kent?" naturally infers that Lear thinks the *light* is growing *dim*. The long *s* and *l* were apt to be confounded. The change is from Collier's second folio.—Both sense and metre are against the reading *This is*.—See foot-note 35.

