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THE ARDEN EDITION OF THE
WORKS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

MACBETH

Edited by
KENNETH MUIR

METHUEN
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tance on different points, and particularly to Mr Harold Fisch who has checked the collations and criticized the introduction. Professor P. Alexander has generously given me advice on textual matters; Professor R. Peacock supplied me with useful information; Mr Roy Walker lent me the MS. of his valuable study, *The Time is Free*, and gave me permission to make use of it in my notes; Mr J. M. Nosworthy sent me some unpublished notes; and, above all, Professor U. Ellis-Fermor has been all that a General Editor should be. I should add that Cleanth Brooks's essay in *The Well Wrought Urn* arrived too late for me to use it, though we agree on a number of points.

KENNETH MUIR

University of Leeds
Christmas, 1950

NOTE TO TENTH EDITION

TWENTY years have elapsed since the publication of the Seventh Edition. I am greatly indebted to many colleagues, strangers, and friends for valuable suggestions, especially to the late John Dover Wilson. In the Ninth Edition passages from Buchanan and Leslie replaced those from Stewart. As the present edition has been reset, I have been able to introduce many changes. For the correction of many typographical anomalies, misprints, and minor errors my thanks are due to Miss Newland-Smith, the scholarly and indefatigable reader for the Broadwater Press.

K. M.

Liverpool 1971

The following abbreviations are used:
Paul: *The Royal Play of Macbeth* by H. N. Paul (1950).
Walker: *The Time is Free* by Roy Walker (1949).
Wilson: The New Cambridge edition (1947).

11

INTRODUCTION

I. TEXT

The Tragedie of Macbeth was first published in the Folio of 1623, following *Julius Caesar*, and preceding *Hamlet*. As the play is mentioned in the Stationers' Register as one of those 'as are not formerly entred to other men', it may be assumed that there was no Quarto. Acts and scenes, with certain exceptions mentioned in the notes, are indicated in the Folio, but not the *dramatis personae*.

Macbeth was printed from a prompt-copy, or from a transcript of one,[1] as the text contains duplicated stage directions, characteristic of such a source.[2] The text was branded by the Cambridge editors as 'one of the worst printed of the plays'; and they suggested that it was printed from a transcript of the author's MS., 'which was in great part not copied from the original but *written to dictation*'. There is little or no evidence of dictation, but there are a number of mistakes which could be explained on the assumption that the transcriber of the play for the printer was familiar with it on the stage and reproduced actors' blunders. Dr Dover Wilson, whose theory this is,[3] instances 'Gallowgrosses', 'quarry', 'tale Can', and 'Rebellious dead'.[4] The first two of these may well be actors' blunders; but I think it most unlikely that an actor would change the simple 'hail Came' into the unintelligible 'tale Can', or that he would change the straightforward 'Rebellion's head' into the obscure 'Rebellious dead'. The last example suggests that here at least the transcriber *misheard* the actor. But it is quite possible for a transcriber to make blunders which seem to be aural rather than visual.[5] The explanation is simple. I imagine that most transcribers of verse say the lines to themselves—aloud or to their inner ear—and are liable to make the same kind of mistake as someone copy-

1. Cf. Chambers, *William Shakespeare*, I. 471; Greg, *The Editorial Problem in Shakespeare*, p. 147; *Macbeth*, ed. Wilson, p. 87; Bald, *R.E.S.*, 1928, p. 429.
2. Cf. II. iii. 79 and III. v. 33.
3. *Op. cit.*, p. 89.
4. Cf. I. ii. 13; I. ii. 14; I. iii. 97–8; IV. i. 97. But I retain the last of these readings.
5. In copying Wyatt's poems from MSS. for my edition, I made one or two mistakes of this kind.

ing from dictation. Indeed, they are really dictating to themselves. Such mistakes are more likely to appear where the transcriber is not required to respect every letter and comma of the original, and where he is familiar with the handwriting.

The play is abnormally short, one of the shortest in the whole canon. Dr Greg remarks—

> Whether the multiplicity of very brief scenes is mainly due to cutting or to an unusual dramatic technique is perhaps uncertain; but there is clear evidence of cutting at some points in short abrupt lines accompanied by textual obscurities, and there are also some difficulties of construction.[1]

Professor F. P. Wilson thinks that some of the cutting may have been due to censorship.[2] R. C. Bald, referring to the stage directions for torches in the daylight scene, I. vi, argues that they must refer either to an indoor performance at the Blackfriars Theatre, or to a night performance at the Court,

> for it is only at the Court that night performances are recorded at this period.[3]

The shortness of the play, he thinks, suggests a Court performance. But the torches can be otherwise explained,[4] and though I do not doubt that the play was performed at Court, I find it difficult to believe that scenes cut for such a performance would not be preserved, as they might be needed when the play was next performed in the public theatre.

But that there have been some interpolations is generally agreed; and there may have been some cuts to balance them. The text is disfigured by mislineation, which suggests that something has been added to, or subtracted from, the text, to the confusion of the printer or of the transcriber. Dr Wilson says that this mislineation is most apparent in the second scene of the play and that it 'grows noticeably less as the play goes forward', and that the process of abridgement was partly responsible for it.[5] It must be pointed out, however, that Dr Wilson departs from the Folio lineation in only five places in I. ii; and in some of these the Folio is defensible.[6] He departs from the Folio lineation much more in I. iii and in II. iii where more than twenty lines are affected by mislineation, though he does not suspect abridgement there. Mr John

1. *Op. cit.*, p. 147. 2. Cited Greg, *op. cit.*, 147.
3. *R.E.S.*, IV. 429–31. 4. See note to I. vi. 5. *Op. cit.*, p. 90.
6. He departs from the F lineation at I. ii. 33–5, 38, 42–3, 60–1. The F may be right in all these except the last. In I. iii Wilson departs from F in the following lines: 81–3, 111–14, 131–2, 140–3, 149–53. In II. iii he departs from F at 56–8, 61–3, 66–7, 86–7, 105–7, 123–5, 139–43.

Masefield, however, does.[1] It would be dangerous to offer any theory about the mislineation. Human error, of one kind or another, must serve as an explanation, though there may well have been cuts to make room for the Hecate interpolations.

Mr Flatter stands alone in his belief that the Folio text of *Macbeth* shows no traces of editorial interference, and that Shakespeare's producing hand may be discerned in it.[2] But Mr Traversi also warns us against assuming that difficulties in the text can be explained by the fact that there have been omissions:

> The verse of *Macbeth* is often, at first reading, so abrupt and disjointed that some critics have felt themselves driven to look for gaps in the text. Yet the difficult passages do not look in the least like the result of omissions, but are rather necessary to the feeling of the play.[3]

The present text is, I believe, closer to that of the First Folio than any since the seventeenth century, especially with regard to lineation. In this I have probably been influenced by Mr Flatter, though I could not always accept his views without qualification. I agree that Shakespeare's irregularities were deliberate, but it is not always possible to distinguish between such irregularities and those for which transcriber or printer is responsible.[4] This being so, some compromise is inevitable.

I have also restored some of the Folio's capitals, where they seem to assist the meaning, in titles, personifications, and technical terms.

2. DATE

The first recorded performance of *Macbeth* is in Dr Simon Forman's manuscript, *The Bocke of Plaies and Notes therof per Formans for Common Pollicie*[5] (i.e. as affording useful lessons in the common affairs of life), which describes a performance at the Globe in the spring of 1611:

> In Mackbeth at the Glob, 16jo [*for* 1611], the 20 of Aprill [Sat.], ther was to be obserued, firste, how Mackbeth and Bancko, 2 noble men of Scotland, Ridinge thorowe a wod, the[r]

1. *Thanks Before Going*, 1947, p. 161.
2. *Shakespeare's Producing Hand*, 1948, p. 94. 3. *Approach to Shakespeare*, p. 89.
4. Compare, for example, my treatment of Macbeth's aside (I. iii. 127 ff.) with the printing of 149–55 in the same scene. Mr Flatter is most valuable in his suggestions about the metrical rules governing the entrance of characters, and the metrical relation of asides to the remainder of the dialogue. I accept the principles, though there seem to be exceptions. But Mr Flatter's book would have been even more valuable if he had applied his theories to a good Quarto, where one would expect to find Shakespeare's producing hand in greater evidence.
5. Ashmolean MS. 208.

stode before them 3 women feiries or Nimphes, And saluted Mackbeth, sayinge 3 tyms vnto him, haille Mackbeth, king of Codon; for thou shalt be a kinge, but shall beget No kinges, &c. then said Bancko, what all to mackbeth And nothing to me. Yes, said the nimphes, haille to thee Bancko, thou shalt beget kings, yet be no kinge. And so they departed & cam to the Courte of Scotland to Dunkin king of Scots, and yt was in the dais of Edward the Confessor. And Dunkin bad them both kindly wellcome. And made Macbeth forth with Prince of Northumberland, and sent him hom to his own castell, and appointed mackbeth to prouid for him, for he wold Sup with him the next dai at night, & did soe. And mackbeth Contrived to kill Dunkin, & thorowe the persuasion of his wife did that night Murder the kinge in his own Castell, beinge his gueste. And ther were many prodigies seen that night & the dai before. And when Mackbeth had murdred the kinge, the blod on his hands could not be washed of by Any means, nor from his wiues handes, which handled the bloddi daggers in hiding them, By which means they became moch amazed and Affronted. the murder being knowen, Dunkins 2 sonns fled, the on to England, the other to Walles, to saue themselues. They beinge fled, they were supposed guilty of the murder of their father, which was nothinge so. Then was Mackbeth crowned kinge, and then he for feare of Banko, his old companion, that he should beget kings but be no kinge him selfe, he contriued the death of Banko, and caused him to be Murdred on the way as he Rode. The next night, being at supper with his noble men whom he had bid to a feaste to the whiche also Banco should haue com, he began to speake of Noble Banco, and to wish that he wer there. And as he thus did, standing vp to drincke a Carouse to him, the ghoste of Banco came and sate down in his cheier be-hind him. And he turninge About to sit down Again sawe the goste of banco, which fronted him so, that he fell into a great passion of fear and fury, vtterynge many wordes about his murder, by which, when they hard that Banco was Murdred they Suspected Mackbet.

Then Mack dove fled to England to the kings sonn, And soe they Raised an Army, And cam into scotland, and at dunston Anyse ouerthrue Mackbet. In the mean tyme whille macdouee was in England, Mackbet slewe Mackdoues wife & children, and after in the battelle mackdoue slewe mackbet.

Obserue Also howe mackbets quen did Rise in the night in her slepe, & walke and talked and confessed all, & the docter noted her wordes.[1]

1. This account has been regarded as a Collier forgery because (i) Forman relies partly on Holinshed (e.g. '3 women feiries or Nimphes'); (ii) he does not mention the Cauldron scene or the prophecies of the apparitions, which might have been expected to interest a professional astrologer; (iii) he gives an impossible date (20 April did not fall on a Saturday in 1610); and (iv) the Globe, being an 'open' theatre, was rarely occupied before May. But the authenticity of *The Bocke of Plaies* was finally settled by Dr J. Dover Wilson and Dr R. W. Hunt in an article in *R.E.S.*, July 1947. Collier in his transcription of the account of the performance of *The Winter's Tale* misread 'coll pixci' as 'Coll Pipci': he would not have failed to recognize the word if he had forged the original. It is impossible to deduce very much about the characteristics of the play in 1611, as Forman probably did not write the description immediately after the performance, and his memories of the performance became mixed with his memories of Holinshed. We cannot assume, for example, that the first two scenes of the play were cut or non-existent, that Macbeth was made Prince of Northumberland, that there was an early reference in the play to Edward the Confessor, that there was a scene in which Macbeth and his wife tried in vain to wash the blood off their hands, and that there was no Cauldron scene. Cf. J. M. Nosworthy's article on 'Macbeth at the Globe' (*The Library*, 1948).

Although this performance, in 1611, is the first of which we have a definite record, we can be certain that the play was in existence four years before, because of echoes in contemporary plays. In *Lingua* (pub. 1607) there are possible echoes of II. i, and what seems to be a parody of the sleep-walking scene. There are references to Banquo's ghost in *The Puritaine*, IV. iii. 89:

> and in stead of a Iester, weele ha the ghost ith white sheete sit at vpper end a'th'Table. . .

and in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Knight of the Burning Pestle*, v. i. 26 ff.:

> When you art at thy Table with thy friends,
> Merry in heart, and fild with swelling wine,
> I'll come in midst of all thy pride and mirth,
> Invisible to all men but thy self,
> And whisper such a sad tale in thine ear
> Shall make thee let the Cup fall from thy hand,
> And stand as mute and pale as Death it self.

The Puritaine was published, and *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* probably acted, in 1607. Allowing for the necessary interval for the writing, performing, and publishing of the former play, it is fairly certain that *Macbeth* was being performed in 1606. On the other hand, the reference to the King's Evil (IV. iii) and the two-fold balls and treble sceptres of Banquo's descendants (IV. i) must have been written after the accession of James I.[1]

The play was therefore written, we may assume, between 1603 and 1606. The allusions to equivocation (II. iii. 9 ff.) and the hanging of traitors (IV. ii. 46 ff.) must have been written after the trial of Father Garnet (28 March 1606) for complicity in the

1. The play as a whole might have been written earlier, these passages being interpolations; but the 'two-fold balls and treble sceptres' does not read like an interpolation.

Gunpowder Plot. The words 'yet could not equivocate to heaven' imply that the speech was written after Garnet's death by hanging (3 May). Equivocation had been mentioned by Shakespeare in *Hamlet* (v. i), but in the spring and summer of 1606 it had become a burning topic. John Chamberlaine wrote to Winwood on 5 April:

> So that by the Cunning of his Keeper, *Garnet* being brought into a *Fool's Paradise*, had diverse Conferences with *Hall, his fellow Priest in the Tower*, which were overheard by *Spialls* set on purpose. With which being charged he stifly denyed it; but being still urged, and some Light given him that they had notice of it, he *persisted still, with Protestation upon his Soul and Salvation, that there had passed no such Interlocution:* till at last being *confronted* with *Hall*, he was driven *to confess;* And being now asked in this Audience how he could salve this *lewd Perjury*, he answered, *that so long as he thought they had no Proof he was not bound to accuse himself: but when he saw they had Proof, he stood not long in it.* And then fell into a large Discourse of defending *Equivocations*, with many weak and frivolous Distinctions.[1]

Garnet admitted that equivocation was justifiable only when used for a good object;[2] but he argued that if the law be unjust, then there is no treason.[3] He prayed 'for the good Success of the great Action, concerning the Catholick Cause in the beginning of the Parliament' and then denied that this referred to the Gunpowder Plot.[4] He claimed that he could not reveal the plot because he was told of it in Confession, though as James I pointed out:

> For first, it can neuer be accounted a thing vnder Confession, which he that reueals it doth not discouer with a remorse, accounting it a sinne whereof hee repenteth him; but by the contrary, discouers it as a good motion, and is therein not dissuaded by his Confessor, nor any penance enioyned him for the same . . . at the last hee did freely confesse, that the party reuealed it vnto him as they were walking and not in the time of Confession . . . he confessed, that two diuers persons conferred with him anent this Treason; and that when the one of them which was *Catesby*, conferred with him thereupon, it was in the other parties presence and hearing; and what a Confession can this be in the hearing of a third person?[5]

When Garnet was asked if it were well to deny on his priesthood that he had written to Greenwell, or had conference with Hall, knowing his denial to be false, he replied that in his opinion, and

1. Winwood, *Memorials*, II. 205–6.
2. *Calendar of State Papers* (*Domestic*), 1603–10, p. 306. 3. *Ibid.*, p. 308.
4. *State Trials*, I. 254.
5. James I, *A Premonition* in *Political Works* (1918), pp. 156–7.

that of all the schoolmen, equivocation may be confirmed by oath or sacrament, without perjury, 'if just necessity so require'.[1] At his trial Garnet excused a man who had perjured himself on his death-bed with the words: 'It may be, my Lord, he meant to equivocate.'[2] Finally, I may quote Dudley Carleton, who in a letter to John Chamberlaine on 2 May mentions the postponement of Garnet's execution and his surprise when told he was to die. Carleton tells his correspondent that the Jesuit shifts, falters, and equivocates, but 'will be hanged without equivocation'.[3] This grim jest, worthy of the Porter, is quoted by Mr Stunz in his article on the date of *Macbeth*.[4] He goes on to argue that the Porter's references to drunkenness and lechery are also aimed at Garnet, who comforted himself with sack to drown sorrow,[5] and was falsely accused of fornication with Mrs Vaux, a slander he repudiated in a speech he made on the scaffold. But there seems to me to be no such implication in the passages about drink and lechery. Some critics have argued that Shakespeare inserted allusions to equivocation in order to please the taste of James I or of the public; but although they doubtless did please the public, there is every reason to believe that Shakespeare with his views on Order would be horrified at the 'dire combustion' of the Gunpowder Plot and would have agreed with his royal master on the subject:

> And so the earth as it were opened, should haue sent foorth of the bottome of the *Stygian* lake such sulphured smoke, furious flames, and fearefull thunder, as should haue by their diabolicall *Domesday* destroyed and defaced, in the twinkling of an eye, not onely our present liuing Princes and people, but euen our insensible Monuments. . .[6]

Dr Leslie Hotson has shown that Shakespeare must have been personally interested in the Gunpowder Plot:

> When we consider that most of the traitors were native to his own countryside; that he had known Catesby and Grant from his childhood; that Tresham, Catesby, Grant, and the Winters were cousins and allies of the Bushells who were to be connected

1. *Calendar* . . . , p. 313 (28 April). 2. *State Trials*, I. 266.
3. *Calendar* . . . , p. 315. Garnet was not alone in his views. Father Strange argued that the accused 'can use equivocation, if he is unjustly interrogated, when it is a matter of prison, danger of death or torture' (quoted Hotson, *I, William Shakespeare*, p. 196). Cf. Strange's statement 'that Catholics do hold that they may lawfully equivocate' and said that he 'did hold it lawful also' (S.P. 14/17/No. 32, *Calendar* . . . , p. 270, 12 Dec. 1605). There is a treatise on Equivocation in the Bodleian, probably by Gerard, with corrections in Garnet's hand (printed 1851, ed. Jardine).
4. *English Literary History*, 1942. 5. *Calendar* . . . , p. 305.
6. James I, *Workes*, 1616, p. 224.

by marriage with his daughter, Judith; that in London the plotters frequented the Mermaid Tavern . . .; that . . . Ben Jonson had dined with Catesby and Winter only a few days before the explosion was to have torn to bits the Earl of Southampton and the brothers of his friends Thomas Russell and William Leveson, it seems that the peculiar horror of the dark design and its end in blood and revenge must have taken more hold on his feelings than we have suspected.[1]

Nor is there reason to doubt that Shakespeare agreed with the King, and most of his subjects, on the damnableness of equivocation. Devout Catholics like Anne Vaux were equally scandalized by Garnet's conduct: she remarked that she was sorry to hear that he was privy to the Plot, as he had made many protestations to the contrary.[2] At about the time *Macbeth* was first performed, the King, saved from death by what he regarded as a miracle, praised the wisdom of the Venetian Republic for the measures she had taken against the Jesuits:

> 'O blessed and wise Republic . . . how well she knows the way to preserve her liberty; for the Jesuits are the worst and most seditious fellows in the world. They are slaves and spies, as you know.' He then embarked on a discourse about the Society. By an able induction from all the kingdoms and provinces of the world he demonstrated that they have always been the authors and instruments of all the great disturbances which have taken place.[3]

These quotations will give some idea of the climate of opinion in which *Macbeth* was written. Lord Salisbury's *Answer to Certain Scandalous Papers*—an exposure of equivocation—was being 'greedily read' as early as 5 February 1606;[4] but equivocation became a still more burning topic at the time of Garnet's trial and execution which must have preceded the writing of the Porter's speech.

There are various other scraps of evidence about the date. The price of wheat was low in the three years 1605–7; but as the farmer who hanged himself on the expectation of plenty was an old joke, we cannot assume that the Porter's allusion refers to any particular year.[5] The reference to French hose (II. iii. 14) seems to imply that

1. Hotson, *I, William Shakespeare*, pp. 197–8. That Shakespeare had actually known Catesby and Grant is questionable. But the whole chapter, pp. 172–202, contains interesting sidelights on *Macbeth*.
2. *Calendar* . . ., p. 299. See also Garnet's letter to Anne Vaux, *op. cit.*, p. 309.
3. *Calendar of State Papers* (*Venetian*), x. 361, 14 June 1606.
4. *Calendar of State Papers* (*Domestic*), p. 286. Cited by Chambers.
5. Cf. *P.M.L.A.*, L. 712.

it was close-fitting, but the joke was an old one, and too much reliance cannot be placed on it.[1] Shakespeare was probably in Oxford in the summer of 1605 and he would then have heard that James I, on the occasion of his visit in August, approved of Matthew Gwinn's *Tres Sibyllae*, with its allusions to his ancestry, and that he disliked long plays. One such play, Samuel Daniel's *Arcadia Reformed*—later entitled *The Queenes Arcadia*—was witnessed by the Queen, but not by the King, on 30 August. Shakespeare may have been in the audience as there seem to be two echoes of the play in *Macbeth* (see notes on III. ii. 49–50 and v. iii. 39–45). Shakespeare may also have heard that one of the subjects proposed for debate before the King was 'whether the imagination can produce real effects'. On his return to London in the autumn of 1605 the poet began his play. The discovery of the Gunpowder Plot on 5 November and the subsequent trials left their mark on some scenes of Act II. The last two acts show the influence of the Profanity Statute and must therefore have been written after 27 May 1606. The play was performed at Hampton Court on 7 August 1606 before King Christian of Denmark and James I. This was either the first performance or, as J. G. McManaway thinks, 'the first performance of Shakespeare's abbreviated version'.[2]

There are, however, two difficulties about this dating. As Bradley pointed out,[3] there are a number of parallels between *Macbeth* and *Sophonisba*; and these impelled Sir Edmund Chambers to put Shakespeare's play early in 1606 and supported Dr Dover Wilson's argument that the references to Garnet were added for a Court performance. As *Sophonisba* was entered in the Stationers' Register on 17 March, one may doubt whether Marston could have got his play written and performed in the few weeks which were supposed to have elapsed between the first performance of *Macbeth* earlier in the year and the entry of *Sophonisba*. The relevant passages in Marston's play are all an integral part of the text and the most significant are in Act I, which he probably wrote first.[4]

1. Cf. note *loc. cit.* 2. Paul, *op. cit.*, *passim*; *S.S.*, II. 149.
3. *Shakespearean Tragedy*, p. 471.
4. (i) *Sophonisba*, I. ii. 5–27; *Mac.*, III. iv. 35. On the importance of ceremony. Bradley omits this.
(ii) *Sophonisba*, I. ii; *Mac.*, I. ii. 49–51. Quoted below.
(iii) *Sophonisba*, I. ii. Cf. wounded Carthalon with the bloody Sergeant in *Mac.*, I. ii.
(iv) *Sophonisba*, I. ii, 'yet doubtfull stood the fight'; *Mac.*, I. ii. 7, 'Doubtful it stood.'
(v) *Sophonisba*, I. ii, 'when loe, as oft we see'; *Ham.*, II. ii. 499, 505, 'for loe . . . But as we often see'.

(*cont. overleaf*)

But need we assume that Marston was the debtor? There is reason to believe that Shakespeare was influenced by *Antonio and Mellida*,[1] and I think it can be shown that he was influenced by *Sophonisba* also. By far the most striking parallel is the following:

> three hundred saile
> Upon whose tops the *Roman* eagles streachd
> Their large spread winges, which fan'd the evening ayre
> To us cold breath, for well we might discerne
> *Rome* swam to *Carthage*.
>
> From Fife, great King,
> Where the Norweyan banners flout the sky,
> And fan our people cold.

The Marston passage is more obvious than Shakespeare's: for whereas eagles, by a quibble, can readily be imagined as fanning cold air to the enemy, it is more difficult to see the aptness of the lines in which the inanimate Norweyan banners actively fan the Scots' army. I assume with Mr Nosworthy that the second scene of *Macbeth* is substantially authentic,[2] and that we should not, therefore, rely on a convenient interpolator to account for this and other echoes from *Sophonisba*. It is more likely that Shakespeare picked up one of Marston's best images from the second scene of *Sophonisba* than that Marston imitated several passages from one of the weakest scenes in *Macbeth*—though it may have been better in its original form, before cutting—while he remained uninfluenced by later and greater scenes.

One other parallel remains to be mentioned. In the anonymous play, *Caesar's Revenge*, are the lines:

> Why thinke you Lords that tis ambitions spur
> That pricketh *Cæsar* to these high attempts,
> Or hope of Crownes, or thought of Diademes.
> —(1468–70)

(vi) *Sophonisba*, III. ii, 'Greefe fits weake hearts, revenging virtue men'; *Mac.*, IV. iii. 214–15. And compare the ends of these scenes.

(vii) *Sophonisba*, IV. i, 'I know thy thoughts'; *Mac.*, IV. i. 69, 'He knows thy thought.' Both these are in witch scenes.

(viii) *Sophonisba*, V. iii, 'Small rivers murmur, deep gulfes silent flow'; *Mac.*, IV. iii. 209–10. But this is a favourite quotation from Seneca.

1. F. Radebrecht, *Shakespeare's Abhängigkeit von John Marston*, 1918. Cf. Thorndike, 'Relations of "Hamlet" to Contemporary Revenge Plays', *P.M.L.A.*, XVII. 200–1. Radebracht is reviewed by Charlton in *M.L.R.*, XVII. I owe these references to H. Harvey Wood's edition of Marston. See my letters in *T.L.S.*, Oct. 1948.

2. *R.E.S.*, April 1946.

The resemblance to *Macbeth*, I. vii. 25–7 (spur . . . prick . . . ambition) may not be fortuitous. *Caesar's Revenge* was entered in the Stationers' Register in June 1606; but the play is old-fashioned in style, and might well have been written in the previous reign. We must assume that Shakespeare was the borrower in this case too.

If, therefore, Shakespeare borrowed from these two plays, very little remains of the case that a *Macbeth* existed before 1606. It was suggested by Dr Dover Wilson that the passage about the hanging of traitors (IV. ii. 44–63) is an interpolation, as it is prose in the middle of a verse scene.[1] This is not impossible; but there is no means of telling whether it was interpolated five minutes or five years after the scene was originally completed. Dr Wilson suggested further that the 'milk of concord' and the 'King's Evil' passages[2] were interpolated in 1606 for a Court performance. This is also possible; but the same caveat applies as before—that there was an interpolation does not prove any great lapse of time between the composition of the original scene and its revision. Then Dr Wilson thought that the second scene of the play must have been written soon after the Hecuba speeches in *Hamlet*; but the resemblance can better be explained as a deliberate attempt on Shakespeare's part to adopt a style suitable for 'epic' narrative, on the model of Marlowe's account of the fall of Troy in *Dido* and Kyd's account of the battle in *The Spanish Tragedy*. Nothing can be deduced about the date of the scene in *Macbeth*. Lastly Dr Wilson argued that the play has been cut so expertly—apart from what he regarded as clumsy cuts for which Middleton was responsible in I. ii—that only Shakespeare could have performed the operation.[3] This is a large assumption, and is linked with the theory that there was a scene between Macbeth and his wife between I. iii and I. iv; that there was a later scene in which Lady Macbeth went with knife in hand to murder Duncan, and another dialogue between her and her husband; that Banquo in the original play made his position clear on the accession of Macbeth, and showed that he was not acquiescing in Macbeth's crimes; that the appearance of the Third Murderer was not mysterious in the original play; and that Macduff's desertion of his wife was adequately explained.[4] I find it impossible to accept any of these hypotheses, not only because there is no positive evidence for them, but because the play would greatly suffer from any one of these speculative additions. Two

1. *Op. cit.*, p. xxxi. 2. IV. iii. 91–100, 140–60. Cf. Wilson, pp. xxxi–xxxiii.

3. *Op. cit.*, p. xxxiii.

4. Lady Blakeney was not aware that her husband was the Scarlet Pimpernel! See Wilson, *op. cit.*, pp. xvi, xxxiv–xxxix, and my notes on I. ii, I. iv. 35, I. v. 68, I. vii. 48; III. i. 1–10, 129; IV. ii. 1, IV. iii. 99–100, IV. iii. 140–59.

more dialogues between Macbeth and his wife before the murder of Duncan would be dramatically disastrous—'Enough—or too much', as Blake remarked; for Macbeth to play, or even intend to play, a passive role in the murder would detract from his tragic stature; Banquo's conduct requires no explanation; and any explanation of the Third Murderer or of Macduff's 'desertion' would detract from the atmosphere of suspicion so necessary in this part of the play.

Nor can I find any real evidence that *Macbeth* was first performed in Edinburgh before the death of Queen Elizabeth, or, for that matter, that Shakespeare had ever visited Scotland. The possibility that Shakespeare derived his portrait of Lady Macbeth from Stewart's *Metrical Chronicle* is, I believe, remote; and even if it were less remote, we need not assume that he read that poem in the Scottish capital, for he might have been lent a copy in England after James's accession had brought a flood of Scotsmen to London.[1]

3. INTERPOLATIONS

It would be a fruitless task to detail all the passages in *Macbeth* which, by one critic or another, have been regarded as spurious. I have referred to many of them in the notes to individual passages. The more important ones are as follows:

(i) Act I, Scene i. Cuningham thought it was written by Middleton.

(ii) Act I, Scene ii. The Clarendon editors and Cuningham suspected this scene was by Middleton. As I have suggested, Shakespeare was deliberately writing in an 'epic' style.[2]

1. Shakespeare's hypothetical debt to Stewart is discussed below under *Sources*, p. xxxiv. Mr Stunz argues that as James touched for the evil at about the time of Garnet's execution (cf. C.S.P. *(Venetian)*, p. 344: 'These last few days the King has been attending to his devotions, which, according to the custom of the country, occupy Holy Week. He has touched many for Scrofula, they say with hopes of good effects, remembering the earlier cases of healing conferred by his hand') and as there were bad harvests abroad which sent up the price of English wheat, the play must have been performed before August 1606. Stunz dates it May–June. But I doubt whether it is possible to tie it down so exactly, or whether we can estimate how long the play took to write. James was touching as early as 6 November 1604. Paul (p. 359) argues that IV. iii. 97–100 was interpolated, and that it was suggested to Shakespeare by Marston's entertainment before James I on 31 July, in which Concordia was to deliver a Latin oration on Concord, Peace, and Unity—three words used in the alleged interpolation.

2. Cf. Nosworthy, *R.E.S.*, 1946. He has since suggested privately that the battle descriptions might originally have formed part of a 'prologue armed'. Cf. *Troilus and Cressida*.

(iii) Act I, Scene iii, 1–37. The Clarendon editors and Cuningham thought these lines were by Middleton.

(iv) Act II, Scene iii, 1–21. Coleridge and the Clarendon editors thought these lines were interpolated by the actors, and presumably also the bawdy dialogue which follows, 26–40.

(v) Act III, Scene v. Most editors regard this scene as spurious.

(vi) Act IV, Scene i, 39–43, 125–32. Many editors regard these lines as spurious.

(vii) Act IV, Scene ii, 30–63. Cuningham thought this passage was spurious.

(viii) Act IV, Scene iii, 140–60. The Clarendon editors believed this to be an interpolation.

(ix) Act V, Scene ii. The Clarendon editors doubted the authenticity of this scene.

(x) Act V, Scene ix. The Clarendon editors thought this passage showed 'evident traces of another hand'.

Most of these do not require further discussion. Mr Nosworthy has proved the authenticity of Nos. ii and x. Professor Knights and others have defended Nos. i and iii. No one who regards Nos. vii–ix as spurious has offered any serious evidence.[1] There remain Nos. iv–vi. No. iv is worth discussing merely because it was an aberration of one of the greatest of critics; with regard to Nos. v and vi, I agree with previous editors that the passages are spurious, but I think it has been too easily assumed that the interpolator was Middleton.

The Porter Scene

I have said enough, in discussing the date of the play, to indicate some of the contemporary significance of the Porter scene. Few critics would now agree with Coleridge that the soliloquy with which the scene begins was, apart from one obviously Shakespearian phrase, interpolated by the players.[2] The scene is theatrically necessary, because the actor who plays Macbeth has to change his costume and wash his hands, and (as Capell suggested) it was necessary 'to give a rational space for the discharge of these actions'. Shakespeare himself was fully conversant with theatrical

1. Nor need we pursue that prince of disintegrators, J. M. Robertson, in his attempts to divide the authentic from the spurious in *Literary Detection*.

2. Coleridge's *Shakespearean Criticism*, ed. Raysor, I. 75–8. Coleridge had no love for low jokes; on the other hand he could not help noticing the Shakespearian ring of the phrase, 'the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire'. So, by giving the low jokes to another writer, and retaining for Shakespeare an indisputably Shakespearian phrase, Coleridge was able to safeguard the dramatist's moral, as well as his poetical, reputation.

necessities; but if these were the sole reason for the scene's existence it might have been added by another hand.

Some scene there had to be between the exit of Macbeth and the entrance of Macduff. But this does not explain why Shakespeare should choose or permit a drunken Porter, when a sober Porter, singing an aubade, as in one of the German versions, might seem to do as well. Comic relief is a convenient, but question-begging, term; for Shakespeare, we might suppose, could have used lyrical relief, if relief were needed. As Coleridge pointed out, Shakespeare never introduced the comic but when it may react on the tragedy by harmonious contrast'. A great dramatist does not laboriously create feelings of tension and intensity to dissipate them in laughter. Sometimes he may use humour as a laughter-conductor, so as to prevent the audience from laughing in the wrong place, and at the wrong things, thereby endangering the sublimity of the hero. In the present case, too, it is impossible to agree with those critics who think the function of the Porter is to take the present horror from the scene. On the contrary, the effect of the Porter's scene is almost the opposite of this. It is there—I do not say for the groundlings, but for the more judicious—in order to increase the horror of the situation. We are never allowed to forget, throughout the scene, the crime that has been committed and is about to be discovered. If we laugh, it is not the laughter of oblivion.

It is, perhaps, in accordance with the Scottish national character that a Porter in his cups should talk in true Calvinistic fashion of damnation. In his opening words he identifies himself with the traditional figure of the miracle plays, the porter of hell-gate,[1] who was expected to make jests, but who was something more than a jester. The purpose of linking the Porter with this traditional character was two-fold: first, because it transports us from Inverness to the gate of Hell, without violating the unity of place, for Shakespeare has only to tell us the name of the place we were in before. It is the gate of hell because Lady Macbeth has called on the murthering ministers, because Macbeth has called on the stars to hide their fires, and because hell is a state, and not a place, and the murderers might say with Mephostophilis—

> where we are is hell,
> And where hell is, there must we ever be.

Shakespeare's second reason for recalling the miracle plays was that it enabled him to cut the cable that moored his tragedy to a particular spot in space and time, so that it could become universalized on the one hand, or become contemporary on the other.

1. Hales, *Notes and Essays on Shakespeare*, 1884, pp. 273–90.

Macbeth's tragedy might therefore appear as a second Fall, with Lady Macbeth as a second Eve; or it could appear as terrifyingly contemporary. As Mr Bethell puts it,

> the historical element distances and objectifies what is contemporary, and the contemporary element gives current significance to an historical situation. The equivocators, for example, had conspired to kill the king, as Macbeth was doing: and Macbeth's own regicide involved him in a life of equivocation. The whole atmosphere of treason and distrust which informs *Macbeth* found a parallel in the England of the Gunpowder Plot, so that a passing reference serves to define an attitude both to the Macbeth regime and to contemporary affairs.[1]

The reference to treason in the Porter's speech looks back to the executed Thane of Cawdor, the gentleman on whom Duncan had built an absolute trust; and it looks forward to the dialogue between Lady Macduff and her son, and to the long testing of Macduff by Malcolm—which shows the distrust and suspicion which grow from equivocation and hypocrisy. Later in the play, Macbeth complains of

> th' equivocation of the fiend,
> That lies like truth:

and of those juggling fiends

> That palter with us in a double sense;
> That keep the word of promise to our ear,
> And break it to our hope.

Indeed, as Dowden pointed out,[2] Macbeth on his next appearance is compelled to equivocate. Later in the same scene there is an even more striking equivocation:

> Had I but died an hour before this chance,
> I had liv'd a blessed time; for, from this instant,
> There's nothing serious in mortality;
> All is but toys: renown, and grace, is dead;
> The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees
> Is left this vault to brag of.

The audience knows, as Macbeth himself was to know—though he here intended to deceive—that the words are a precise description

1. *Shakespeare and the Popular Dramatic Tradition*, 1944, p. 46. P. Ure points out (*N.Q.*, 28 May 1949) that the chapter added to Warner's *Albion's England* (1606) dealing with the story of Macbeth is immediately followed by one on the Gunpowder Plot.

2. *New Shakespeare Society Transactions* (1874).

of the truth about himself. Macbeth's own equivocation, by an ironical twist, becomes merely an aspect of truth. It is a brilliant counterpart to the equivocation of the fiend that lies like truth: it is the equivocation of the murderer who utters truth like lies. Equivocation therefore links up with one of the main themes of the play, and the equivocator would have earned his place in the Porter scene if Father Garnet had never lived.

Similarly, the unnaturalness of the avaricious farmer is contrasted with the images of natural growth and harvest which are scattered through the play; and he is connected with the equivocator, because Garnet went under the alias of Farmer. Even the tailor has his place in the scheme of the play, because of the clothing imagery which is so abundant in it.[1]

Nor is the style of the scene un-Shakespearian. Bradley pointed out resemblances between Pompey's soliloquy on the inhabitants of the prison in *Measure for Measure* and the Porter's soliloquy and between the dialogue of Pompey with Abhorson (IV. ii. 22 ff.) and the dialogue that follows the Porter's soliloquy.[2] We may go further and suggest that one of the Porter's speeches, often bowdlerized out of existence, provides a valuable clue to one theme of the play. He is speaking of the effects of liquor, in answer to Macduff's question: 'What three things does drink especially provoke?'

> Marry, Sir, nose-painting, sleep, and urine. Lechery, Sir, it provokes, and unprovokes: it provokes the desire, but it takes away the performance. Therefore, much drink may be said to be an equivocator with lechery: it makes him, and it mars him; it sets him on, and it takes him off; it persuades him, and disheartens him; makes him stand to, and not stand to: in conclusion, equivocates him in a sleep, and, giving him the lie, leaves him.

Drink 'provokes the desire, but it takes away the performance'; and this contrast between *desire* and *act* is repeated several times in the course of the play. Lady Macbeth, in invoking the evil spirits, begs them not to allow compunctious visitings of nature to shake her fell purpose,

> nor keep peace between
> Th' effect and it!

1. Not only the image of the ill-fitting garments pointed out by Caroline Spurgeon, *Shakespeare's Imagery*, pp. 325–7. Cf. notes on I. ii. 22; I. vii. 34, 36; II. iii. 14, 116.

2. *Shakespearean Tragedy*, p. 397.

That is, intervene between her purpose and its fulfilment. Two scenes later she asks her husband:

> Art thou afeard
> To be the same in thine own act and valour,
> As thou art in desire?

In the last scene in which the weird sisters appear (IV. i), Macbeth gives some variations on the same theme:

> The flighty purpose never is o'ertook,
> Unless the deed go with it. From this moment,
> The very firstlings of my heart shall be
> The firstlings of my hand. And even now,
> To crown my thoughts with acts, be it thought and done . . .
> This deed I'll do, before this purpose cool.

This passage is linked with one at the end of the Banquet scene, where Macbeth tells his wife:

> Strange things I have in head, that will to hand,
> Which must be acted, ere they may be scann'd.

The opposition between the hand and the other organs and senses recurs again and again. Macbeth observes the functioning of his own organs with a strange objectivity: in particular, he speaks of his hand almost as though it had an independent existence of its own. He exhorts his eye to wink at the hand; when he sees the imaginary dagger, he decides that his eyes have been made the fools of the other senses, or else worth all the rest; later in the same speech his very footsteps seem, as it were, to be divorced from himself:

> Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear
> Thy very stones prate of my where-about,

and, after the murder of Duncan, both criminals are obsessed by the thought of their bloody hands. Macbeth speaks of them as 'a sorry sight' and as 'hangman's hands'—the hangman had to draw and quarter his victim; Lady Macbeth urges him to wash the 'filthy witness' from his hand; and in the great speech that follows her exit, Macbeth asks:

> What hands are here? Ha! they pluck out mine eyes.
> Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
> Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather
> The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
> Making the green one red.

In the first line of this quotation the hand–eye opposition appears in its most striking, most hallucinated, form. Lady Macbeth persists in her illusion that a little water clears them of the deed—

an illusion she has to expiate in the Sleep-walking scene. Just before the murder of Banquo, Macbeth invokes Night:

> Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful Day,
> And, with thy bloody and invisible hand,
> Cancel, and tear to pieces, that great bond
> Which keeps me pale!

The bloody hand has now been completely detached from Macbeth and become a part of Night. Later in the play we are reminded of the same series of images when Angus declares that Macbeth feels—

> His secret murthers sticking on his hands.[1]

The Porter's words on lechery have yet another significance. They are written in an antithetical form: *provokes—unprovokes; provokes—takes away; desire—performance; makes—mars; sets on—takes off; persuades—disheartens; stand to—not stand to.* Here concentrated in half a dozen lines we find one of the predominant characteristics of the general style of the play—it consists of multitudinous antitheses. The reader has only to glance at any page of the play.[2] We may link this trick of style with the 'wrestling of destruction with creation'[3] which Mr Wilson Knight has found in the play, and with the opposition he has pointed out between night and day, life and death, grace and evil. Mgr Kolbe likewise speaks of the play as a 'picture of a special battle in a universal war'—the war, that is, between sin and grace—and he declares that

> this idea is portrayed and emphasized in words and phrases more than 400 times. . . Not a single scene in the play is without the colour. And the whole effect is enhanced by the two-fold contrast we have already observed,—Darkness and Light, as a parable, Discord and Concord as a result.[4]

But the play contains many antitheses which are not to be found under such headings as Angel and Devil, good and evil. It may even be suggested that the iterative image of ill-fitting garments is a

1. The hand–eye opposition was possibly suggested by the Biblical injunctions to pluck out the eye that offends, and to cut off the hand that offends; for these occur in chapters which are echoed elsewhere in the play. In Matt. vi there are references to the single eye and to the fowls of the air, mentioned by Macduff's son; Matt. v is echoed several times in the scenes relating to the murder of Banquo; Matt. xviii contains references to the everlasting fire and to offending 'one of these little ones' (cf. IV. ii. 68); Mark ix contains the same references; and Luke xi mentions Beelzebub three times, and also knocking. Cf. note to II. ii. 58 and R. Walker, *op. cit.*

2. E.g. in Act I: i. 4, 11; ii. 27–8, 69; iii. 38, 41–2, 45–6, 51–2, 53–4, 61, 65, 66, 124, 131, 142; v. 20–5, 48, 58; vii. 44, 53–4, 83.

3. *The Imperial Theme*, p. 153. 4. *Shakespeare's Way*, 1930, pp. 21–2.

kind of pictorial antithesis, a contrast between the man and his clothes, as in the lines—

> now does he feel his title
> Hang loose about him, like a giant's robe
> Upon a dwarfish thief.

Another recurrent image—not mentioned by Miss Spurgeon—may be regarded as a contrast between the picture and the thing depicted:

> The sleeping, and the dead,
> Are but as pictures; 'tis the eye of childhood
> That fears a painted devil.
>
> This is the very painting of your fear.
>
> Shake off this downy sleep, death's counterfeit,
> And look on death itself!—up, up, and see
> The great doom's image!

These images are linked with the equivocation, deceit, and treachery which have been noted by more than one critic as constituting one of the main themes of the play. These too are a contrast between appearance and reality.[1]

The style of the Porter's speech is not alien to that of the rest of the play. It possesses the antithetical characteristics of the verse, suitably 'transprosed' for semi-comic purposes. The whole scene is linked so closely with the rest of the play, in content as well as in style, that it is impossible to regard it as a barbarous interpolation of the actors. The antithetical style is a powerful means of suggesting the paradox and enigma of the nature of man,

> The glory, jest, and riddle of the world,

the conflict within him between sin and grace, between reason and emotion, and the shadow which falls

> Between the potency
> And the existence
> Between the essence
> And the descent.

This discussion of the authenticity of the scene has led us imperceptibly into a consideration of the play as a whole; and this in itself may serve to show that the Porter is an integral part of the play. We might almost apply Bishop Wordsworth's remark on the scene—though he meant something rather different: 'I believe it may be read with edification.'

1. Cf. Knight, *The Wheel of Fire*, 1949, pp. 140–59; Knights, *Explorations*, pp. 18 ff.; T. Spencer, *Shakespeare and the Nature of Man*, pp. 153–62.

The Hecate Scenes

Two songs were interpolated in III. v and IV. i from Middleton's *The Witch*, a play which was not printed until 1778. It has, however, come down to us in a transcript by Ralph Crane, one of the scriveners of the King's Men. He states that the play was 'long since acted by His Majesty's servants at the Blackfriars'; and, as the company did not act there before the autumn of 1609, it can be assumed that the play was written after that date. The transcript has been roughly dated 1620–7, so that 'long since' is likely to have been before 1620, and perhaps before 1615.[1] Lawrence argues that *The Witch* was written soon after Jonson's *Masque of Queenes*, and suggests that the same performers, the same dances, and the same costumes were used.[2] This is plausible enough; but we cannot tell how long the performers and costumes would be available, if indeed they were available at all. Dr Wilson thinks 1609–10 is a 'highly probable date' for *The Witch*. But it may be that Middleton did not start writing for the King's men before 1614, and that *The Witch* was not written until 1616.[3]

It is impossible to determine when the two songs were added to *Macbeth*. Forman's account in 1611 does not help us one way or the other, because he does not mention the Cauldron scene. Perhaps the astrologer thought that no profitable moral 'for common policy' could be drawn from the equivocating prophecies, which might warn spectators not to believe in the prophecies of even respectable astrologers.[4] One would like to think that Shakespeare was dead and buried, or at least living in retirement at Stratford, before his fellows spoilt his play. It is reasonable to assume that Shakespeare himself would have been called in to revise the play, if he had been available. On the whole I am inclined to think that the play was contaminated after the performance witnessed by Forman, and possibly—if the performers and costumes of Jonson's *Masque* were used—soon afterwards.

But was Middleton himself responsible? or was he equally the victim of vandalism? Mr J. M. Nosworthy points out that

> The Hecate of Middleton's *The Witch* is a very different creature from the *prima donna* and *prima ballerina* of *Macbeth*. She is coarse, brusque and colloquial, speaking mainly in blank verse . . . and never in octosyllabic couplets.

1. Cf. Greg, *Elizabethan Dramatic Documents*, pp. 358–9; F. P. Wilson's article on Crane in *The Library*, VII. 194–215; Chambers, *Elizabethan Stage*, II. 510; Dover Wilson, *op. cit.*, pp. xxvii–xxviii.
2. *Shakespeare's Workshop*, pp. 28–33. 3. Cf. Bald, *M.L.R.*, XXXII. 43.
4. Forman successfully prophesied the day of his own death, and the sceptical have therefore suspected that he took his own life.

He goes on to argue that

> There is no reason why the Hecate so rudely thrust into *Macbeth* should not have had all the properties of her namesake in *The Witch*. Close comparison of the two plays has convinced me that, of all contemporary claims to the Hecate scenes, Middleton's is, in fact, the weakest.[1]

Mr Nosworthy is surely right, and I believe that the Hecate passages (III. v; IV. i. 39–43) and IV. i. 125–32 were all written by an anonymous writer, not without poetic ability, who was instructed to explain and introduce the two songs and the dance which had been interpolated from *The Witch*. It was then found necessary to make certain other alterations in the play. Perhaps some cuts were made in I. ii, iii, and iv; and apparently there was some re-arrangement of scenes later in the play.

Fifty years ago it was conjectured by Crosse[2] that III. vi should follow IV. i and he suggested that it was shifted to its present position, on the interpolation of the Hecate scene, so as to prevent the juxtaposition of two witch scenes. Lenox and the Lord, Crosse argued, converse on matters which have not yet occurred, and of which Macbeth was ignorant until informed by Lenox at the end of IV. i. Chambers points out that Macbeth decides (III. iv. 131–2) to go on the following morning to the Weird Sisters, and IV. i presumably takes place only a few hours after the end of the Banquet scene. Macbeth at the same time declares that he will send tomorrow to Macduff; and yet in III. vi we hear that his messenger has already been repulsed by Macduff, and that the latter has fled to England. A considerable interval is therefore required between III. iv and III. vi. It might be added that Macbeth's spy at Fife must have been singularly incompetent not to discover that Macduff had fled until after the 'Lord' had told Lenox. Now Shakespeare has elsewhere deliberately departed from chronological sequence for the sake of some dramatic effect,[3] and his dramatic time is seldom realistic, but in this case the loss of dramatic surprise at Macduff's flight (IV. i. 142) is a heavy price to pay for some increase of irony (IV. i. 82). I think we must assume (1) that III. vi originally followed IV. i and (2) that Lenox's speeches in one scene or the other originally belonged to another character. This scene, III. vi, would then be an effective means of expanding the brief announcement that Macduff had fled at the end of IV. i. There is, however, a difficulty. The Banquet scene and the Cauldron scene would thereby be juxtaposed, and the furniture of the former would

1. *R.E.S.*, April 1948, p. 138. 2. *N.Q.*, 22 Oct. 1898.
3. *Troilus and Cressida*, III. iii must come chronologically before III. ii.

have to be removed. This might be done by drawing a traverse on the departure of the guests in the Banquet scene; or there might be an interval; or III. vi may consist of an amalgam of two scenes, one of which came before, and one after, the Cauldron scene.[1]

Middleton was himself influenced by *Macbeth* when he wrote *The Witch* as the following parallels will show:

(i) 'For the maid servants and the girls o' th' house,
I spic'd them lately with a drowsy posset' (IV. iii. 17)
'Francisca is watching late at night to encourage the perpetration of a murder' (Steevens). Cf. *Mac.*, II. ii. 6.

(ii) 'the innocence of sleep' (IV. iii. 47). Cf. *Mac.*, II. ii. 35.

(iii) 'There's no such thing' (IV. iii. 78).
'Francisca when she undeceives her brother, whose imagination has been equally abused' (Steevens). Cf. *Mac.* II. i. 47.

(iv) 'I'll rip thee down from neck to navel' (V. i. 16). Cf. *Mac.* I. ii. 22.

(v) 'Why shak'st thy head so,
And look'st so pale and poorly?' (III. ii. 145–6).
Cf. *Mac.*, I. vii. 37; II. ii. 64, 71.

There are also a number of parallels with the Witch scenes in *Macbeth*, which may be explained by the fact that the two dramatists drew on similar sources for their information. Some of these parallels are with the Hecate scenes.

Lamb, in a famous passage, described the differences between Middleton's witches and the Weird Sisters:

> His witches are distinguished from the witches of Middleton by essential differences. These are creatures to whom man or woman plotting some dire mischief might resort for occasional consultation. Those originate deeds of blood, and begin bad impulses to men. From the moment that their eyes first met Macbeth he is spellbound. That meeting sways his destiny. He can never break the fascination. These witches can hurt the body; those have power over the soul. Hecate, in Middleton, has a son, a low buffoon: the hags of Shakespeare have neither child of their own, nor seem descended from any parent. They are foul Anomalies, of whom we know not whence they are sprung nor whether they have beginning or ending. As they are without human passions, so they seem to be without human relations. They come with thunder and lightning, and vanish to airy music. This is all we know of them. Except Hecate, they have no names; which heightens their mysteriousness. Their names, and some of the properties, which Middleton has given to his hags, excite smiles. The Weird Sisters are serious things. Their presence cannot co-exist with mirth. But in a lesser degree, the Witches of Middleton are fine creations. Their power, too, is, in some measure, over the mind. They raise jars, jealousies, strifes, *like a thick scurf o'er life*.[1]

It may be observed, however, that the weird sisters do not plant the seeds of evil in Macbeth; that they have no power over the innocent; that hatred and the love of power are, alas, human passions; and that Lamb had no reason to suppose that the Hecate scenes were spurious—as they doubtless are.[2]

J. M. Nosworthy informs me that the *Macbeth* music attributed to Matthew Locke was an elaboration of music written for *The Witch* by Robert Johnson.

1. But see note on III. iv. 131–2 and *M.L.N.*, XV. 81. R. Walker, *The Time is Free*, Chap. 5, has a detailed defence of III. vi which brushes aside the difficulties; but J. Q. Adams in his edition, 1931, argues that the scene is spurious.

4. SOURCES

The main source of *Macbeth*, and perhaps the only one, was Holinshed's *Chronicles*; but Kempe, in his *Nine Daies Wonder* (1600), refers to what was apparently a ballad on the subject, and ballads were frequently based on plays:

> I met a proper vpright youth, onely for a little stooping in the shoulders, all hart to the heele, a penny Poet whose first making was the miserable stolne story of Macdoel or Macdobeth or Macsomewhat, for I am sure a Mac it was though I neuer had the maw to see it.

Kempe proceeds to advise its author to 'leaue writing these beastly ballets, make not good wenches prophetesses for little or no profit'

1. *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets*.

2. 'The speeches of the three weird sisters . . . are prevailingly tetrameter with a trochaic cadence, the rhythm which Shakespeare almost always, if not always, adopts in songs and in lyrical passages hardly to be told from songs. . . The fact that the speeches of Hecate and the First Witch (III. v. 4–33; IV. i. 39–43, 125–32) are in iambic measures creates, I think, a strong presumption against their Shakespearian authorship. . . What is more, the metre of these speeches of Hecate —dull, mechanical, regular, touched with favour and prettiness—is in striking and almost amusing contrast with the grotesqueness, the freedom, the bold roughness of the colloquies and incantations of the weird sisters' (D. L. Chambers, *The Metre of 'Macbeth'*; quoted Lawrence, *op. cit.*, pp. 36–7). W. Farnham, *Shakespeare's Tragic Frontier* (1950), pp. 74 ff., shows that both *hag* and *witch* could mean a demon, as well as a human being who had made a compact with the devil; and that in the three spurious passages Shakespeare's superhuman witches are changed into human witches. 'They are compared to fairies when they cease to be fairies.'

—which may well be a reference to the three Weird Sisters. As Kempe seems very vague about the details it is difficult to deduce anything definite from this reference: but he presumably would not speak of a stolen story if it were merely taken from Holinshed, and it is reasonable to assume that the ballad was based on a play —perhaps on a play with which Kempe was not personally acquainted. Shakespeare may have seen this ballad, and may have known the play on which it was based.[1]

Mrs C. C. Stopes argued[2] that Shakespeare was acquainted with William Stewart's *Buik of the Croniclis of Scotland*, an enormous poem of over 42,000 lines which remained in manuscript until 1858. It was written 1531–5 by order of Queen Margaret, for the use of her son, James V. Mrs Stopes's essay was written in 1897, but it has not found many supporters. She does not give any example of a real verbal parallel between Stewart and Shakespeare. Although 'till the warldis end' may be compared with 'the crack of doom' (IV. i. 117), it may be noted that Lancelot Andrewes, in his sermon on the coronation of James I, speaks of the King's descendants, 'who shall (wee trust, and pray they may) stretch their line to the world's end'.

It seems to me that the resemblances between Stewart and Shakespeare are accidental, and that any poet expanding the bare facts of the story would tend to develop Lady Macbeth's character in the same way. From Holinshed Shakespeare would learn that Donwald committed the murder of Duff *through setting on of his wife*, who *bare no lesse malice in hir heart towards the king* and showed Donwald *the meanes wherby he might soonest accomplish it*. Although Donwald *abhorred the act greatlie in heart, yet through instigation of his wife* he bribed the servants to do the deed. In the section of the *Chronicles* relating to Macbeth himself Shakespeare would have read that *his wife lay sore upon him to attempt the thing, as she was verie*

1. Collier professed to discover the following entry in the Stationers' Register: '27 die Augusti 1596. Tho. Millington—Thomas Millington is likewyse fyned at ijs vjd for printinge of a ballad contrarye to order, which he also presently paid. *Md. the ballad entituled the taming of a shrew. Also one other Ballad of Macdobeth.*' Unfortunately the italicized words are almost certainly a modern fabrication. See Greg's remarks, *The Library*, VIII. 418, and *M.L.N.*, 1930. Mrs Stopes mentions, *Shakespeare's Industry*, pp. 95–6, that between 14 July 1567 and the following March there was performed 'a tragedie of the King of Scottes; to ye which belonged the scenery of Scotland and a gret castle on the other side' (Harl. MS., 146, fo. 15). This might be an early play on Macbeth. A play called *Malcolm, Kyng of Scottes*, is mentioned in Henslowe's diary (April 1602), perhaps about the Malcolm of Shakespeare's play, but more probably about Duncan's grandfather and predecessor on the throne.

2. *Shakespeare's Industry*, 1916, pp. 102–3. Dover Wilson, in his 1947 edition, accepted Mrs Stopes's theory, but he has since recanted.

ambitious, burning in vnquenchable desire to beare the name of a queene. From these hints of the ambition of the wife and the moral scruples of the murderer, it would not be difficult for any dramatist to deduce that Lady Macbeth called her husband a coward, bade him play the hypocrite, and herself pretended great indignation after the murder to cover up their guilt. Even the real or feigned swoon of Lady Macbeth need not necessarily have been suggested by the pretended swoon of Donwald. Nor would it be difficult for two poets independently to have arrived at the idea of Banquo's descendants reigning till the end of the world from Holinshed's 'long order of continuall descent'. (Matthew Gwinn, indeed, made his three sibyls prophecy to Banquo's descendants *imperium sine fine*.)

It is more likely, as M. H. Liddell and H. N. Paul have argued,[1] that Shakespeare had read Buchanan's *History of Scotland* in its original Latin. His hero is, perhaps, nearer to Buchanan's portrait of Macbeth than to Holinshed's. Buchanan says he

> was a man of penetrating genius, a high spirit, unbounded ambition, and, if he had possessed moderation, was worthy of any command however great; but in punishing crimes he exercised a severity, which, exceeding the bounds of the laws, appeared oft to degenerate into cruelty.

Holinshed speaks of him merely as a 'valiant gentleman'. The account given by Buchanan of King Kenneth's remorse is likewise closer than Holinshed's to Macbeth's:

> His soul disturbed by a consciousness of his crime, permitted him to enjoy no solid or sincere pleasure; in retirement the thoughts of his unholy deed tormented him; and, in sleep, visions full of horror drove repose from his pillow. At last, whether in truth an audible voice from heaven addressed him, as is reported, or whether it were the suggestion of his guilty mind, as often happens with the wicked, in the silent watches of the night, he seemed thus to be admonished.

Buchanan's statement that 'the command of Cumberland was always considered the next step to the crown' is nearer to Macbeth's lines (I. iv. 48–50) than the corresponding passage in Holinshed.

Mr Paul has also argued that Shakespeare knew Leslie's *De Origine, Moribus, et Rebus Gestis Scotorum* (1578), in which the Weird Sisters are devils disguised as women, as they may be in Shakespeare's play, and in which there is a genealogical tree of Banquo's descendants with roots, leaves, and fruit. This may well have

1. Ed. *Macbeth* (1903); *The Royal Play of Macbeth* (1950).

caught Shakespeare's eye and left its mark on the imagery of Acts III and IV, though he had used this imagery before.[1] Leslie, moreover, makes no mention of Macbeth's accomplices, he stresses the way in which Lady Macbeth persuaded her husband by showing him how the deed could be successfully accomplished—as Donwald's wife does in Holinshed—he speaks of the 'most holy king Duncan', and he gives a more vivid account than Holinshed of Macbeth's reign of terror.[2]

Mr B. J. Burden has pointed out (privately) a number of resemblances between *Macbeth* and *Arden of Feversham*. The conscience-stricken soliloquies of Michael before the murder of Arden (II. ii, III. i), Mosbie's soliloquy after the murder (III. v), and the knocking (v. i) may be compared with Macbeth's speeches before and after the murder of Duncan.

Sir James Fergusson of Kilkerran, Bart., *Shakespeare's Scotland* (1957), p. 6, points out that the Table of all the Kings of Scotland was reprinted in London in *Certeine Matters concerning the Realme of Scotland* (1603). He also suggests that *Macbeth* may have been influenced by some details in the career of James Stewart of Bothwellmuir, who fell from power in 1585 and met his death in 1595. He became Earl of Arran and was spurred on by the ambition of a wicked wife. The 'highland oracles' had shown her that 'Gowrie should be ruined', but she 'helped the prophecy forward as well as she could'. Stewart was slain by a kinsman of the Regent Morton,

> of whose ruin and death he had been the primary agent; he too tried to avoid the circumstances which it had been prophesied would attend his death; and his 'cursed head', like Macbeth's, was cut off by his slayer and set on a pole.

Stewart's wife was suspected of trafficking with witches and she was described as 'a meete matche for such a spouse, depending upon the response of witches, and enemie of all human societie' (Wardlaw MS., 182). Shakespeare may have been ignorant of these matters but they provide further evidence that the atmosphere of the play was not alien to Shakespeare's contemporaries.

In any case, there is no doubt that Holinshed was the main source of the play, and that Shakespeare combined the account of the murder of King Duff with the later account of Macbeth. He

1. Cf. 'root' (III. i. 5), 'stick deep' (III. i. 49), 'seed' (III. i. 69), and 'snake', 'serpent' (III. ii. 13; III. iv. 28), the last three being suggested by the fruit and the serpentine trunk of the tree in the picture.

2. See Appendices B and C. Paul believes that Shakespeare also consulted Skene's *Scots Acts*; but he did not need to read this book in order to make Duncan 'a good and modest prince' and Macbeth 'a cruel tyrant'.

may have got some hints about witchcraft from Holinshed's story of the noblemen who conspired with witches against King Duff; and he certainly took several details from the murder of Duff by Donwald and his wife, including the incitement by the wife, the fact that the King was a guest of the murderer and had just given him presents, the murder of the chamberlains whom Donwald and his wife had sent to bed drunk, the pretended indignation of Donwald, and the various portents accompanying the murder. But in Holinshed's account the murder is carried out by four of Donwald's servants who remove the body from the castle. Holinshed's marginalia read almost like a running commentary on the play and they may have given hints to Shakespeare on the dramatic treatment of the subject:

> A giltie conscience accuseth a man. . . Donwald's wife counselled him to murther the king. . . The womans cuill counsell is followed. . . Donwald a verie dissembler. . . Prophecies mooue men to vnlawfull attempts . . . women desirous of high estate. . . Mackbeth's guiltie conscience. . . Mackbeths dread. . . His crueltie caused through feare. . . Mackbeths confidence in wizzards . . . Macbeth recoileth (cf. v. ii. 23). . . Mackbeths trust in prophecies.

The voice that cried 'Sleep no more' was probably suggested by the voice heard by King Kenneth after he had murdered his nephew—as described by Holinshed or Buchanan. One or two details were derived from the account of Edward the Confessor's reign, and by a lucky chance touching for the king's evil was topical as well as historically accurate. But the main plot was taken from Holinshed's account of Macbeth, though with many alterations.[1] Shakespeare keeps close to the chronicler in his account of Macbeth's meeting with the Weird Sisters and in the scene between Macduff and Malcolm in England. In these two scenes there are a number of verbal parallels, partly because in both places Holinshed uses direct speech. Elsewhere Shakespeare occasionally uses single words which may have been suggested by the *Chronicle*, but not many.

The following are the most striking differences: (i) Duncan, as depicted by Holinshed, is younger than in the play, and he is depicted as a feeble ruler. By making the victim old and holy and by passing over his weaknesses, Shakespeare deliberately blackened the guilt of Macbeth. (ii) There are three campaigns described in Holinshed which are condensed into one in the play: the defeat of

1. R. A. Law, *University of Texas Studies in English* (1952), has a useful list of thirty-five incidents in the play which are not to be found in Holinshed. Most of these, however, are inevitable results of dramatizing the story.

Macdonwald's rebellion, the defeat of Sweno, and the defeat of Canute, who came with a new fleet to avenge his brother Sweno's overthrow. (iii) Macbeth in the *Chronicle* has a genuine grievance against Duncan, who by proclaiming his son Prince of Cumberland went against the laws of succession, and took away from Macbeth the prospect of the throne; which he had every reason to hope for, since he could claim it on behalf of his wife and her son by her first husband. Shakespeare suppresses these facts, partly because he wished for dramatic reasons to accentuate Macbeth's guilt and to minimize any excuses he might have had, and partly for accidental reasons. Macbeth was the murderer of James I's ancestor, and could not be depicted in a favourable light, and because of 'the triumph of primogeniture during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries'[1] the method of succession which existed in Macbeth's day was not fully understood in Shakespeare's, even by Holinshed. (iv) Banquo and others were accomplices in the murder of Duncan, which was carried out as an open political assassination. This was altered, partly because it was more dramatic for Macbeth and his wife to bear the whole responsibility for the murder, and partly because Banquo's reputation as James I's ancestor has to be safeguarded. James had a particular dislike of political assassination, even of manifest tyrants.[2] Shakespeare therefore took the details of the murder from Donwald's murder of Duff. (v) Shakespeare omits the ten years' good rule by Macbeth between the murder of Duncan and the murder of Banquo. It would obviously have ruined the play by breaking it into two and by interfering with Shakespeare's conception of the workings of conscience. (vi) Shakespeare invents the Banquet scene and the appearance of the ghost of Banquo. (vii) He omits the story of Macduff's refusal to

1. Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. ix.

2. Cf. James, *The Trew Law of Free Monarchies*, in *Political Works*, ed. McIlwain, pp. 60–1, 66: 'And although there was neuer a more monstrous persecutor, and tyrant nor *Achab* was: yet all the rebellion, that *Elias* euer raised against him, was to flie to the wildernes: where for fault of sustentation, he was fed with the Corbies. . . Vnder the lawe, *Ieremie* threateneth the people of God with vtter destruction for rebellion to *Nabuchadnezar* . . . who although he was an idolatrous persecutor, a forraine King; a Tyrant, a vsurper of their liberties; yet in respect they had once receiued and acknowledged him for their king, he not only commandeth them to obey him, but euen to pray for his prosperitie, adioyning the reason to it; because in his prosperitie stood their peace . . . that king whom *Paul* bids the *Romanes obey* and serue *for conscience sake*, was *Nero* that bloody tyrant, an infamie to his aage, and a monster to the world, being also an idolatrous persecutor. . . The wickednesse therefore of the King can neuer make them that are ordained to be iudged by him, to become his Iudges.' One wonders what James would have said of the assassination of Athaliah, though approved by scripture, and of Racine's glorification of it.

assist in the building of Dunsinane Castle. It would have been difficult to dramatize and was not strictly relevant to the main theme of the play. (viii) The Cauldron scene is based on the three prophecies mentioned by Holinshed, but Shakespeare substitutes the Weird Sisters for 'a certeine witch, whom hee had in great trust'. (ix) In the *Chronicle*, Macbeth surrounded Macduff's castle with a great power. It was more economical dramatically to use murderers. (x) The testing of Macduff by Malcolm is given in full in Holinshed (and it is also to be found in Boece, Bellenden, and Stewart); but Shakespeare omits—at least in the existing text—the fable of the Fox and the Flies and adds other vices to those mentioned by Holinshed. In the *Chronicle* the testing of Macduff occurs after he has heard of his wife's death. Shakespeare's alteration enabled him to motivate Malcolm's suspicions. (xi) In the *Chronicle* Macbeth flees from Dunsinane Castle and is pursued by Macduff to Lunfannaine—an incident which would have been dramatically irrelevant. (xii) Shakespeare invents the Sleep-walking scene and the presumed suicide of Lady Macbeth. Holinshed says nothing about the fate of Macbeth's wife or of Donwald's.

As there is nothing to show that Shakespeare had studied Holinshed's sources, and as there may have been a source play, there is no point in discussing the variants of the Macbeth story in Fordun, Andrew of Wintoun, Boece, or Bellenden; and there would be still less point in trying to isolate the 'historical' Macbeth; for few would agree with Sir Herbert Tree's remark that 'we must interpret Macbeth, before and at the crisis, by his just and equitable character as a king that history gives him.'[1]

1. Cited by Knights, *Explorations*, p. 15. Hales, *Essays and Notes on Shakespeare*, p. 291, mentions ironically that Macbeth, historically speaking, was a good churchman. Hooker, *Ecclesiastical Polity*, provides the evidence: 'Will any man deny that the Church doth need the rod of corporal punishment to keep her children in obedience withal? Such a law as Macabeus made among the Scots, that he which continued excommunicate two years together, and reconciled not himself to the Church, should forfeit all his goods and posessions.' Cf. Holinshed, *op. cit.*, pp. 171–2.

In Wyntoun's *Original Chronicle*, Macbeth is begotten by the Devil on a witch:

> Gottyn he was on ferly wise.
> His modyr to woddis made rapayr
> For the delyte of haylsum ayr
> Swa scho past apon a day
> Til a wode hir for to play;
> Scho met of casse withe a fayr man,
> Neuir nane sa fayr, as scho thoucht than,
> Befor than had scho seyn withe sycht. . .

This man, who is none other than the Devil, tells her

> that hir son suld be
> A man of gret state and bounte,

It has been suggested by Sir Herbert Grierson that Shakespeare derived from Holinshed's *Chronicles*

> the tone and atmosphere of the Celtic and primitive legends of violent deeds and haunting remorse. . . Story after story told him of men driven by an irresistible impulse into deeds of treachery and bloodshed but haunted when the deed was done by the spectres of conscience and superstition.[1]

This is true; but it should be added that there is little evidence of remorse in Holinshed's account of Macbeth, and it is only implied in his treatment of Donwald.

5. *MACBETH*, 1606–1948

Most of the great actors and actresses during the past three hundred years have appeared in *Macbeth*, from Burbage to John Gielgud; but between 1674 and 1744 the play was performed only in D'Avenant's adaptation.[2] Garrick restored most of Shakespeare's text[3] and Macready most of the rest.

Although the play was regularly acted, it evoked little interesting criticism until the end of the eighteenth century, presumably because there was little disagreement about it. There would be some dissentients when Johnson complained of the meanness of some of Shakespeare's language,[4] but he probably expressed

> And no man sulde be borne of wif
> Off powar to reiff hym his lif.
> (VI. xviii. 1900 ff.)

Wyntoun describes a dream of Macbeth that he is hunting with Duncan when they encounter the three weird sisters. This dream had become a reality in Boece, who also substitutes Banquo for Duncan, and adds the prophecy about his descendants. Holinshed used Bellenden's translation of Boece as well as the original. See Stopes, *op. cit.*, pp. 78–109, and Wilson, *op. cit.*, pp. viii–xi.

1. *Macbeth*, ed. Grierson, 1914, pp. xviii–xix.

2. E.g. I. v opens with a dialogue between Lady Macbeth and Lady Macduff; Act II ends with a scene in which the Macduffs encounter the witches on the blasted heath; a scene between Macbeth and his wife, expressing her remorse, is interpolated in Act IV; the testing of Macduff by Malcolm is cut; and much of the poetry appears in a debased form.

3. But Garrick inserted the following death speech of his own composition:

> 'Tis done! the scene of life will quickly close.
> Ambition's vain delusive dreams are fled,
> And now I wake to darkness, guilt, and horror;
> I cannot bear it! let me shake it off—
> It will not be; my soul is clog'd with blood—
> I cannot rise! I dare not ask for mercy—
> It is too late, hell drags me down; I sink,
> I sink,—my soul is lost for ever!—Oh!—Oh!

4. Cf. note on I. v. 51.

the general view when he summarized the play in these words:

> This play is deservedly celebrated for the propriety of its fictions, and solemnity, grandeur and variety of its action; but it has no nice discrimination of character; the events are too great to admit the influence of particular dispositions, and the course of the action necessarily determines the conduct of the agents.
>
> The danger of ambition is well described; and I know not whether it may not be said, in defence of some parts which now seem improbable, that, in Shakespeare's time, it was necessary to warn credulity against vain and delusive predictions.
>
> The passions are directed to their true end. Lady Macbeth is merely detested; and though the courage of Macbeth preserves some esteem, yet every reader rejoices at his fall.

But when these words were published in 1765 the attitude implied in them was already breaking down: the performances of Garrick and Mrs Siddons directed people's attention to the characters they played; the rise of the novel and the spread of *sensibility* put more emphasis on character than on plot; and the growth of romanticism completed what sensibility had begun. William Richardson analysed the character of Macbeth in 1774; at about the same time Whately compared Macbeth and Richard III; Cumberland followed on the same subject in *The Observer*; and J. P. Kemble answered Whately in the same year. There were a few remarks on *Macbeth* in Morgann's *Essay on the Dramatic Character of Falstaff* (1777).[1]

Coleridge's surviving remarks on *Macbeth* are mostly concerned with the first act. Some of them are valuable, but I find it difficult to agree with Mr Raysor when he says that Coleridge's 'psychological genius is most apparent in the analysis of *Mac-*

1. Richardson, *A Philosophical Analysis and Illustration of some of Shakespeare's Remarkable Characters* (1774); Whately, *Remarks on Some of the Characters of Shakespeare* (1785, but written 1770); J. P. Kemble, *Macbeth Reconsidered* (1786); and *The Observer* (1786). Whately argued: 'Macbeth has an acquired, though not a constitutional, courage, which is equal to all ordinary occasions; and if it fails him upon those which are extraordinary, it is, however, so well formed as to be easily resumed as soon as the shock is over. But his idea never rises above manliness of character.' Kemble regarded these remarks as 'vilifying' and argued 'That Shakespeare has not put into any mouth the slightest insinuation against the personal courage of Macbeth is in itself a decisive proof that he never meant his nature should be liable to so base a reproach.' But the disagreement between these two critics was really verbal. Richardson was mainly concerned with the drawing of morals. 'Thus, by considering the rise and progress of a ruling passion, and the fatal consequences of its indulgence, we have shown, how a beneficent mind may become inhuman: and how those who are naturally of an amiable temper, if they suffer themselves to be corrupted, will become more ferocious and more unhappy, than men of a constitution orginally hard and unfeeling' (*op. cit.*, ed. 1784, p. 85).

beth'.[1] Hazlitt in *Characters of Shakespeare's Plays* owed something to Coleridge and Lamb, and something, perhaps, to Whately; but his essay is the most satisfying written on the play up to this date. He shows that the play is distinguished from the other great tragedies by 'the wildness of the imagination and the rapidity of the action'.[2] Nor should it be forgotten that Hazlitt was the best of dramatic critics and that in praising Mrs Siddons he often made revealing remarks about the play itself. Mrs Siddons's own analysis of the character of Lady Macbeth, though not well written, shows that the great actress had thought deeply about the part she played so often, and the well-known account of her first experience of learning the part shows that she was moved by the play with which she moved others:

> I went on with tolerable composure, in the silence of the night (a night I can never forget), till I came to the assassination scene when the horrors of the scene rose to a degree that made it impossible for me to get farther. I snatched up my candle and hurried out of the room in a paroxysm of terror. My dress was of silk, and the rustling of it, as I ascended the stairs to go to bed, seemed to my panic-struck fancy like the movement of a spectre pursuing me. . . I clapt my candlestick down upon the table, without the power of putting the candle out, and threw myself on my bed, without daring to stay even to take off my clothes.[3]

Apart from De Quincey's great essay *On the Knocking at the Gate in Macbeth* there is little to detain us between Hazlitt and Dowden (*Shakespeare, His Mind and Art*, 1875), except G. Fletcher, whose *Studies of Shakespeare* (1847) have been lately praised. The merit of Fletcher's analysis is that he does not subordinate everything else to the character of the protagonists, and that he shows that Macduff and his Lady

> are the chief representatives in the piece, of the interests of loyalty and domestic affection, as opposed to those of the foulest treachery and the most selfish and remorseless ambition.

But our respect for Fletcher diminishes when we find him saying that Macbeth, being intensely selfish,

> is incapable of any true moral repugnance to inflicting injury upon others; it shrinks only from encountering public odium—

or that the poetry delivered by Macbeth

> springs exclusively from a morbidly irritable fancy;

1. Cf. notes on I. i; I. ii. 7–23; I. iii. 142; I. iv. 22–7; II. iii. Raysor's remark is quoted from his Introduction to his edition of Coleridge's *Shakespearean Criticism*, p. lviii.

2. Ed. 1906, p. 12. 3. Campbell, *Life of Mrs Siddons*, 1834, II. 35.

and finally expires when he characterizes Macbeth's soliloquy (v. iii. 22–8) as 'mere *poetical whining* over his own most merited situation'.[1]

R. G. Moulton wrote a fine essay on the all-pervasive irony of the play and a less satisfactory one on Macbeth and his wife. The former is partly spoiled by a moralizing strain, and the latter by his assumption that because Macbeth offers only practical objections to the murder of Duncan he has no moral ones—Lady Macbeth being regarded as an embodiment of the inner life.[2]

After this date the interpretations of *Macbeth* multiply like the villainies of the merciless Macdonwald. Kirke argues that the terrible dreams that shake Macbeth and his wife are caused by 'a remorse in which there lurks no hope of redemption. It is the remorse of the damned.'[3] J. C. Carr thinks the murder of Duncan 'had long been the subject of conjugal debate'; and Symons contrasts Macbeth's attempt to stand against the temptation with Lady Macbeth's prayer for power to carry out the deed.[4] This brings us to Bradley, whose *Shakespearean Tragedy* (1904) contains the most influential of all criticisms of the play.

Later criticism by Robert Bridges, Maeterlinck, Sir Herbert Grierson, Professor W. C. Curry, Mr John Masefield, Mr Wilson Knight, Professor L. C. Knights, Mr J. Middleton Murry, and Dr Dover Wilson is mentioned in the next section of the introduction. We need only notice here first, a reaction against elaborate character analysis and an increasing emphasis on the poetry of the play; secondly, a greater understanding of *Macbeth* as an acting play; and thirdly, an examination of the play, from the standpoint of Elizabethan demonology.

6. THE PLAY

Macbeth, as we have seen, was first performed in the year 1606; that is to say, it comes after *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Measure for Measure*, and *King Lear*, and before *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Coriolanus*. The play is linked to *Hamlet* in more ways than one:[5] Macbeth's shrinking

1. *Op. cit.*, pp. 109 ff. and 166. 2. *Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist*, 1885.
3. *Atlantic Monthly*, 1895.
4. Symons, *Studies in Two Literatures*, 1897, pp. 24 ff. A word is due to the ingenious Libby who, in *Some New Notes on Macbeth*, 1893, demonstrated to his own satisfaction that Ross is the real villain of the play, who first gets the Thane of Cawdor executed on a false charge of treachery, then murders Banquo, disguised as the Third Murderer, is Macbeth's agent in the murder of Macduff's family, and then, seeing that Macbeth's power is on the wane, deserts to Malcolm and is rewarded with an earldom.
5. Cf. Stopes, *op. cit.*, pp. 72–7, and Draper's article in *Bull. Hist. Med.*, X.

from the murder of Duncan, and the infirmity of purpose with which his wife charges him, are similar to Hamlet's inability to carry out the instructions of the Ghost—though Macbeth's act is 'evil' and Hamlet's (at least in his conscious opinion) is 'good'. Macbeth also resembles Claudius in that both are murderers and usurpers. Macbeth is (consciously) willing to jump the life to come, and we cannot imagine him on his knees; Claudius tries to repent: but both are led from crime to crime in their attempt to achieve security. Macbeth may, in a sense, be regarded as a humanization of Claudius: Shakespeare wished to get inside the skin of a murderer, and to show that the Poet for the Defence, though he extenuates nothing, can make us feel that we might have fallen in the same way, so that we may even assent to Professor Alexander's application of Donne's words:[1]

> Thou knowest this man's fall, but thou knowest not his wrastling; which perchance was such that almost his very fall is justified and accepted of God.

Though Macbeth is *a miserable, and a banished, and a damned creature, yet* he is God's *creature still and contributes something to his glory even in his damnation.*[2] We have the same feeling about his crime as we do about Angelo's—and the echoes from *Lucrece* pointed out in the Appendix show the link between lust and murder in Shakespeare's mind—because just as Angelo learns that he must not judge Claudio, so the audience learns not to judge Angelo.

Othello was 'an honourable murderer'; Macbeth is a noble and gifted man who falls into treachery and crime, not deluded into believing that he has any justification for his deeds, but knowing them precisely for what they are. In *King Lear*, the evil is concentrated in the savage quartet, Goneril, Regan, Edmund, and Cornwall, who are able to bring about the ruin of better people than themselves by making use of their weaknesses—pride, credulity, and lust.[3]

R. Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 218, says that 'if *Hamlet* is a study of moral man in an immoral society, *Macbeth* is a study of immoral man in a moral universe.' Cf. Max Plowman's *The Right to Live*.

1. *Shakespeare's Life and Art*, p. 173. 2. Donne, ed. Hayward, 1929, p. 663.
3. Charlton, *Shakespearean Tragedy*, 1948, pp. 14, 189, argues that *Macbeth* was written before *Lear* because Shakespeare's themes became progressively more primitive from *Hamlet* to *Lear*, *Hamlet* dealing with the civilized world, *Othello* with a clash of two worlds, *Macbeth* with the period when the moral sense was emerging, and *Lear* with the primitive human family, when man was near the animal level. But surely in Duncan and Edward the Confessor and in the frequent references to Christian conceptions there is evidence that Professor Charlton is wrong about the play.

In *Macbeth*, the evil is transferred from the villains to the hero and heroine.

Macbeth is Shakespeare's 'most profound and mature vision of evil';[1] 'the whole play may be writ down as a wrestling of destruction with creation';[1] it is 'a statement of evil';[2] 'it is a picture of a special battle in a universal war, and the battleground is in the souls of Macbeth and his wife';[3] and it 'contains the decisive orientation of Shakespearean good and evil'.[4] The play, we may add, is about damnation; and a modern dramatist with a taste for fancy titles might have called it *The Primrose Way*. Yet in order to show how his hero comes to be damned, in order to present a convincing image of damnation, Shakespeare had to describe and create the good which Macbeth had sacrificed; so that although there is no play in which evil is presented so forcibly, it may also be said that there is no play which puts so persuasively the contrasting good. This is done by means of the characters, certainly, though Duncan and Malcolm, the Macduffs, the messenger who comes to warn Lady Macduff, and even Banquo are little to place in the scales against the Macbeths and the Weird Sisters. It is done more effectively by means of imagery,[5] symbolism, and iteration. The image of the ill-fitting garments, pointed out by Caroline Spurgeon, I have already discussed;[6] the contrast between light and darkness is part of a general antithesis between good and evil, devils and angels, evil and grace, hell and heaven.[7] The image of the deed too terrible to look at requires no interpretation;[8] and the disease images in IV. iii and in the last act clearly reflect both the evil which is a disease, and Macbeth himself who *is* the disease from which his country suffers. Mr Wilson Knight has an essay on the 'life-themes' in the play, which he classes under the headings of Warrior-honour, Imperial magnificence, Sleep and Feasting, and Ideas of creation and nature's innocence.[9] He makes the point that Lady Macbeth 'wins largely by appealing to Macbeth's "valour" '.[10] All through the play Shakespeare continually juggles with the different meanings of 'honour'. Both the words and the wounds of the bloody sergeant are said to smack of honour; but so also do the titles bestowed by Malcolm at the end of

1. Knight, *The Wheel of Fire*, 1949, p. 140; *The Imperial Theme*, p. 153.
2. Knights, *Explorations*, p. 18. 3. Kolbe, *Shakespeare's Way*, p. 20.
4. Traversi, *Approach to Shakespeare*, p. 86.
5. See my article on the imagery of the play, *S.S.*, XIX, 45–52.
6. Cf. p. xxviii *ante*, and the note on V. ii. 21–2.
7. Kolbe, *op. cit.*, pp. 21–2. See p. xxviii *ante*, and e.g. I. iv. 41, 50; I. v. 51–3; I. iv. 7, 9; III. ii. 46, 52; IV. iii. 22; V. i. 23–4.
8. Cf. II. ii. 53; II. iii. 71; III. iv. 60; IV. i. 113.
9. *The Imperial Theme*, p. 125. 10. *Ibid.*, p. 127.

the play. 'Honour' thus means both 'worth' and the titles that reward it. An anonymous 'Lord' pines for 'free honours', and he speaks as a Chorus. Macbeth in the last act laments that he has mouth-honour instead of honour, where the word means reverence or respect; just as in the first act he wishes to wear the golden opinions he has purchased by his bravery.

The ambiguity of *honour* is best brought out in the exchange between Macbeth and Banquo just before the murder of Duncan:

> If you shall cleave to my consent, when 'tis,
> It shall make honour for you.
> So I lose none
> In seeking to augment it, but still keep
> My bosom franchis'd, and allegiance clear,
> I shall be counsell'd.

Closely connected with 'honour' are the feudal ideas of 'duties' and 'service', the repetition of which helps to create a picture of an orderly and closely-knit society, in contrast to the disorder consequent upon Macbeth's initial crime. The naturalness of that order, and the unnaturalness of its violation by Macbeth, is emphasized by the images of planting and sowing, and the images of sleep and milk contrast with the images of unnatural disorder and the reiteration of fear and blood.[1] The contrast is most apparent in the lines which express so violently Lady Macbeth's violation of her sex:

> I have given suck, and know
> How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me:
> I would, while it was smiling in my face,
> Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums,
> And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn. . .

By such means Shakespeare builds up the order of Nature and examines the nature of order; so that the violation of order in the state by the assassination of Duncan is seen to be an unnatural horror, inevitably attended by portents.[2]

1. I am indebted here to at least four critics, Knight, Knights, Traversi, and Kolbe. See also an eloquent passage in Masefield's lecture, *Shakespeare and Spiritual Life* (*Recent Prose*, 1932, pp. 270 ff.) on the significance of the portents in *Macbeth*.

2. Presumably the riding images, mentioned by Miss Spurgeon, suggest only that Macbeth is riding for a fall. She also records four reverberation images which, she thinks, suggest the 'overwhelming and unending nature of the consequences or reverberations of the evil deed'. It may be worth noting that Erasmus in the same colloquy echoed in III. i has the following passage: 'I would desire to have a certain honourable renown of my name, which may Eccho again throughout the whole world, and which may become more famous with my age, and at last may grow more renowned after my death' (trans. H.M. 1671, p. 478).

Nevertheless the presentation of the good which counterbalances the evil is done most effectively through Macbeth and his wife, who are unwilling witnesses to the good they renounce. Macbeth is aware that the deed he contemplates is evil from the very beginning. He admits that its 'horrid image' makes his hair stand on end, and his heart knock against his ribs. Although he never discusses with his wife the morality of the murder, although he hardly faces it himself, every word he speaks shows that he is struck to the soul with a realization of the horror of the deed. The half-demented language he uses immediately after the murder expresses fear, but not of detection; and although he fears Banquo for prudential reasons, he fears him also because of his own sense of guilt. Macbeth is never in doubt of the difference between good and evil; nor is Lady Macbeth, not even in the speech in which she deliberately chooses evil as a means of achieving the 'good' of the crown; nor, indeed, is the audience. Inexorably the action rams home the well-worn moral that 'Crime does not pay,' that 'all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand,' and that, to those who destroy life, life itself becomes merely 'a tale told by an idiot'.[1]

To some critics, however, the play has seemed to be lacking in inevitability and coherence. Robert Bridges complained that the Macbeth we have cause to admire could never have committed the murder of Duncan, and that Shakespeare deliberately throws dust in the eyes of the audience, not clearly telling them whether Macbeth decided to murder Duncan before the beginning of the play, or whether the idea was imposed upon him by the witches, or whether he was urged to it by his wife—[2]

> We may combine the two latter motives, and see hell and home leagued against him: the difficulty lies in the unknown quantity of the first motive, his predisposition; which, if it be allowed to be only in the exact balance required for these two agencies to carry it, is still contradictory to the picture of nobility impressed upon us by Shakespeare.

A Macbeth who feels the horror of the deed as deeply as Shakespeare's hero (thinks Bridges) would not be able to commit it. The argument is that Shakespeare sacrifices psychological consistency to theatrical effect. Professor Stoll makes a similar point, though

1. Murry, *Shakespeare*, pp. 331–6, has a good passage on the use of time in *Macbeth* to reveal the damnation of the murderers. Cf. also Spender's article (*Penguin New Writing*, No. 3) in which he discusses the same subject from a different angle; and R. Walker, *The Time is Free*, *passim*.

2. Bridges, *The Influence of the Audience on Shakespeare's Dramas*, ed. 1927, p. 14.

without regarding this characteristic of the play as necessarily a fault. As he points out—[1]

> If Macbeth had been thwarted or (to use Holinshed's word) 'defrauded', as having, at this juncture, a better title to the throne than Malcolm, or had thought himself better fitted to rule; or, again, if Duncan had not borne his faculties so meek and been so clear in his great office, as in the tragedy, but not the chronicle he is; why, then, Macbeth's conduct in killing him would have been more reasonable and more psychologically in keeping, to be sure, but less terrible, less truly tragic.

Shakespeare was not so much concerned with the creation of real human beings, but with theatrical or *poetical*, effect. He was fascinated by the very difficulty of making the psychologically improbable, by sheer virtuosity, appear possible. According to Schücking,[2] Shakespeare made

> the bold experiment of a character with a strongly marked mixture of qualities of which the one seems almost to preclude the other. . . So he creates a hero such as Macbeth, who is a moral coward and for a while a henpecked husband, who in critical moments is rebuked like a schoolboy by his wife and who, on the other hand, proves himself a lion on the battlefield.[3] Or the same character is brutal enough to murder his crowned guest, but retains notwithstanding the nobility of spirit—or superstitious fear of fate?—to feel the disgracefulness of assassinating his victim in his sleep so deeply as to become possessed of the idea of having incurred the punishment of eternal insomnia. In this case, too, the interpretation has only too often missed the meaning of the author. By unduly simplifying the complicated psychological facts it has done less than justice to the wonderful and unique results of that hazardous antithetical character-construction which was favoured by the style of the time.

It is only fair to Shakespeare to add, and Professor Stoll does not always make full allowance for this, that ideas about what is psychologically possible change from age to age, and that what Bridges thought impossible seemed perfectly possible to the readers of Timothy Bright and even, to judge from criticism of the play, right down to the end of the nineteenth century.[4] Bridges

1. *R.E.S.*, XIX. 27.
2. *The Baroque Character of the Elizabethan Tragic Hero*, 1938, pp. 21–2.
3. It should be said, however, that many lions have been tame at home.
4. I am constrained to add that conversely Shakespeare's contemporaries would have been baffled by the psychology of Margaret, the heroine of Bridges's own *Palicio*, who betrays her lover in the hope that with the failure of his conspiracy he will abandon politics, and devote himself to her happiness. We are not meant to regard her as half-witted. Bridges could not blame the Victorian audience for the faults of his plays, as he blamed Shakespeare's, as they were not really intended for the stage. There is a good reply to Bridges in J. I. M. Stewart's *Character and Motive in Shakespeare* (1949).

underestimates the potentialities for evil in the virtuous, and for virtue in the wicked; and there is reason to believe that the sheep and goats of our 'judgement here' are not necessarily the same as those of 'the life to come'. 'Our life is but a mingled yarn, good and ill together.' Besides all this, there is something artificial in Bridges's assumption that if Macbeth has enough predisposition to be driven to murder by wife and witches combined he is too ignoble to be the tragic hero envisaged by the dramatist. For it is never possible to determine the exact share of blame to be allotted after a crime to the three factors, heredity, environment, and personal weakness; and only the morally complacent could witness a good performance of *Macbeth* without an uneasy feeling that if they had been so tempted they might conceivably have so fallen. We cannot divide the world into potential murderers and those who are not. It consists of imperfect human beings, more or less ignorant of their own selves, and not knowing (though they have been told often enough) the way to be happy. If they commit evil it is because they hope thereby to avoid another evil, which seems to them for the moment to be worse, or obtain another good, which seems attractive if only because it is not in their possession. The direct cause of sin, as Thomas Aquinas explains, is the

> *adherence to a mutable good*, and every sinful act proceeds from an inordinate desire for some temporal good; and that one desires a temporal good inordinately is due to the fact that *he loves himself inordinately*.[1]

Macbeth has not a predisposition to murder; he has merely an inordinate ambition that makes murder itself seem to be a lesser evil than failure to achieve the crown.

Lady Macbeth, however, accuses her husband of having proposed the murder to her before Duncan announced his intention of visiting Inverness, before time and place cohered. This made Coleridge argue that the murder had been discussed before the opening of the play, and led Bradley to suggest ingeniously that

> If they had had ambitious conversations, in which each felt that some half-formed guilty idea was floating in the mind of the other, she might naturally take the words of the letter, as indicating much more than they said:[2]

1. Curry, *Shakespeare's Philosophical Patterns*, pp. 111–12. The italicized words are direct quotations from Thomas Aquinas.
2. Bradley, *op. cit.*, pp. 480–4. Cf. Charlton, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

Dr Dover Wilson uses this passage (I. vii. 47–52) to support his theory that in the original play there was another scene between Macbeth and his wife after he met the Weird Sisters, and before he knew that Duncan was coming to Inverness, and that this scene was afterwards cut by Shakespeare himself. He rejects Coleridge's view that the murder had been discussed earlier, because he thinks that Macbeth's aside (I. iii. 130 ff.)

> depicts the terror of Macbeth's soul when the idea of murder *first* comes to him;

and that Lady Macbeth's soliloquy at the beginning of I. v proves that 'so far he has refused to entertain any but honourable thoughts.'[1] But Macbeth's aside, by a common Shakespearian convention, does not so much express the birth of murderous thoughts as refer back to the guilty start to which Banquo calls attention earlier in the scene,[2] a start which could not be explained earlier without holding up the action of the scene.[3] It could either represent the birth of guilt, or else show that Macbeth's mind has been

> rendered temptable by a previous dalliance of fancy with ambitious thoughts.[4]

Lady Macbeth's soliloquy does not prove that her husband did not have these thoughts, or what Bradley calls 'some vaguer dishonourable dream': they prove only that she believed, and rightly, it appears, that Macbeth's conscience or conventionality was liable to prevent him from achieving the crown by foul means, even though he may have proposed the murder when the question was merely theoretical.

I do not find, therefore, the inconsistency of which Bridges speaks; nor do I think there is enough evidence to support Dr Dover Wilson's theory of a former version of the play in which all was clear.[5] Even if Lady Macbeth refers to a time between I. iii and I. iv Shakespeare might (and, in my opinion, would) have left the scene unwritten.

In the same essay, Bridges speaks of Macbeth's *poetic imagination*. In this opinion he was following Bradley, who had argued that

1. *Op. cit.*, p. xxxvi. 2. I. iii. 51.

3. Just as the soliloquy at the end of *Hamlet*, Act II, expresses the thoughts which had been passing through the hero's mind during the recitation of the Hecuba speeches.

4. Coleridge, *op. cit.*, I. 68.

5. See above, p. xxi. It is unreasonable to praise Shakespeare as the perfect artist on the strength of a hypothetical version of the play at the same time as one assumes that Shakespeare cut the play in such a way as to spoil the earlier perfection.

Macbeth's better nature—to put the matter for clearness' sake too broadly—instead of speaking to him in the overt language of moral ideas, commands and prohibitions, incorporates itself in images which alarm and horrify. His imagination is thus the best of him, something usually deeper and higher than his conscious thoughts; and if he had obeyed it he would have been safe.[1]

Sir Herbert Grierson goes even further, and paradoxically compares Macbeth to Bunyan, in that

> his own deepest thoughts and feelings come to him as objective experiences, as visions of the bodily eye, as voices that ring in the ear. . . The obscure processes of his own soul translate themselves into the voices and visions, and their significance is a better clue to the working of his moral being than are his articulate statements. He may profess contempt of moral scruples and supernatural inhibitions, and declare that if he were safe in this world he would 'jump the life to come'. The voices that he hears and the visions that he sees give him the lie.[2]

We are here on very dangerous ground. It is perfectly legitimate to disagree with Moulton who had argued that Macbeth's soliloquy in I. vii shows that he was deterred not by moral scruples but by a fear of the consequences; for the imagery of the speech shows that Macbeth is haunted by the horror of the deed, and impresses that horror on the audience.[3] But if we go further and pretend that this poetic imagery is a proof that Macbeth had a powerful imagination, that he was in fact a poet, we are confusing real life and drama. Every character in a poetic play may speak poetry: but this poetry does not necessarily reflect their poetic dispositions—it is merely a medium. The bloody sergeant utters bombastic language, not because he is himself bombastic, but because such language was considered appropriate to epic narration. The First Murderer quotes Samuel Daniel,[4] and gives us a lovely vignette of twilight,[5] not because he was of a literary turn of mind, but because Shakespeare was a poet, and in the second passage required some verbal scene-painting. So, too, with Macbeth, we may say his imagery expresses his unconscious mind (that poetry can do this is one of the greatest advantages it has over realistic drama), but we must not say he is therefore a poet.[6]

1. *Op. cit.*, p. 352. 2. Grierson, *ed. cit.*, pp. xxv–xxvi.

3. Cf. K. Muir, *Penguin New Writing*, No. 28 (Summer 1946), p. 114, and Bradley, *op. cit.*, p. 352: 'His conscious or reflective mind, that is, moves chiefly among considerations of outward success and failure, while his inner being is convulsed by conscience.'

4. III. i. 111. 5. III. iii. 5–7.

6. Hamlet, despite the sublime poetry of the soliloquies, tells Ophelia 'I am ill at these numbers', i.e. 'I am no good at writing poetry.'

Maeterlinck speaks of the way in which the 'essence of the dramatic poet's art consists in speaking through the mouth of his characters without appearing to do so', and he declares that the mode of life in which the protagonists of *Macbeth*—

> are steeped, penetrates and pervades their voices so clearly, animates and saturates their words to such a degree that we see it much better, more intimately and more immediately than if they took the trouble to describe it to us. We, like themselves, living there with them, see from within the houses and the scenery in which they live; and we do not need to have those surroundings shown to us from without any more than they do. It is the countless presence, the uninterrupted swarm of all those images that form the profound life, the secret and almost unlimited first existence of the work. Upon its surface floats the dialogue necessary to the action. It seems to be the only one that our ears seize; but, in reality, it is to the other language that our instinct listens, our unconscious sensibility, our soul, if you like; and, if the spoken words touch us more deeply than those of any other poet, it is because they are supported by a great host of hidden powers.[1]

The characters are thus subordinated to the poetry, rather than (as in much nineteenth-century criticism) the poetry to the characters. Lascelles Abercrombie in his *Idea of Great Poetry* has a brilliant discussion of why we enjoy tragedy which seems a version of 'the mere evil of life'. In answering this question he provides an eloquent analysis of *Macbeth*. In the last act of the play, the hero's world 'turns into a blank of imbecile futility'; yet he

> seizes on the appalling moment and masters even this: he masters it by knowing it absolutely and completely, and by forcing even this quintessence of all possible evil to live before him with the zest and terrible splendour of his own unquenchable mind.[2]

Abercrombie quotes Macbeth's words when he hears of his wife's death and comments:

> Tragedy can lay hold of no evil worse than the conviction that life is an affair of absolute inconsequence. . . . And precisely by laying hold of this and relishing its fearfulness to the utmost, Macbeth's personality towers into its loftiest grandeur. . . . We see not only what he feels, but the personality that feels it; and in the very act of proclaiming that life is a tale told by an idiot signifying nothing personal life announces its virtue, and superbly signifies itself.[3]

1. Tr. by Alex. Teixeira de Matos, *Fort. Rev.*, April 1910, pp. 696–9. Cf. H. Fluchère, *Shakespeare*, 1953, p. 240.
2. *Op. cit.*, p. 176. 3. *Ibid.*, p. 177.

The fallacy here is simply that Abercrombie is confusing the powers of expression possessed by Macbeth with the poetic powers of Shakespeare himself. Once again it must be emphasized that because Shakespeare makes Macbeth talk as only a great poet could talk, we are not to assume that Macbeth is a great poet: he is merely part of a great poem. His consummate expression of the meaninglessness of life signifies only that life is meaningless to him: it cannot be taken to signify that he has overcome that meaninglessness in the very act of expressing it. Nor, of course, does it mean that Shakespeare was expressing his own pessimistic ideas about the universe. What gives satisfaction to the spectator or reader is not the comprehension of experience by Macbeth, but the poet revealing experience through the mouth of his hero. Macbeth, by his own actions, has robbed life of meaning. Shakespeare restores meaning to life by showing that Macbeth's nihilism results from his crimes.[1]

For Macbeth, though a tragic hero, is a criminal; and though he arouses our sympathies more than Richard III does, he has some resemblances to him, as the earliest critics of the play pointed out.[2] The difference between the two characters is mainly the result of Shakespeare's increasing understanding of human nature. All his mature tragedies may be regarded as 'melodrama humanized'. Richard is a conscious villain, and a deliberate Machiavel; Macbeth embarks on his career of crime with anguish[3] and reluctance, 'as if it were an appalling duty'.[4] He is humanized by his fears,[5] which prove him to be a man, and not the monster his oppressed subjects believe him to be. 'Those are my best dayes,' he might have said, 'when I shake with fear.'[6] Richard, though he suffers from the same terrible dreams, is depicted from the outside, and not without appreciation of his sardonic humour;[7] but as Macbeth goes the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire, we see with his eyes. Richard is the villain as hero; Macbeth is a hero who becomes a villain.

It should be remembered that the Elizabethans, bred on Seneca, did not adhere to the Aristotelian dictum that the over-

1. On the other hand Macbeth is not just a callous criminal. Tragic heroes, as James points out in the preface to *The Princess Casamassima*, must be 'finely aware' and this '*makes* absolutely the intensity of their adventures, gives the maximum of sense to what befalls them. We care . . . comparatively little for what happens to the stupid, the coarse and the blind; care for it, and for the effects of it, at the most as helping to precipitate what happens to the more deeply wondering, to the really sentient.'
2. Cf. p. xli *ante*. 3. I am thinking of the Existential 'anguish' of choice.
4. Bradley, *op. cit.*, p. 358. 5. H. Craig, *The Enchanted Glass*, p. 232.
6. Donne, *Holy Sonnets*, xix. 7. Charlton, *op. cit.*, pp. 24 ff.

throw of a bad man is not a tragedy at all. They were content with

> the high and excellent Tragedie . . . that maketh Kings feare to be Tyrants . . . that maketh vs know,
>
> *Qui sceptra saevus duro imperio regit,*
> *Timet timentes, metus in authorem redit.*[1]

These lines from Seneca's *Œdipus*, which, as Dr Dover Wilson suggests, would be a suitable motto for *Macbeth*, are thus translated in *Tenne Tragedies*:

> Who so the cruel tyrant playes, and guiltlesse men doth smight,
> Hee dreadeth them that him doe dread, so feare doth cheifly light
> On causers chiefe. A iust reuenge for bloudy mindes at last.

There is also a passage in James I's *Basilikon Doron* which forms an interesting commentary on the play—

> For a good King (after a happie and famous reigne) dieth in peace, lamented by his subiects, and admired by his neighbours; and leauing a reuerent renowne behinde him in earth, obtaineth the Crowne of eternall felicitie in heauen. And although some of them (which falleth out very rarelie) may be cut off by the treason of some vnnaturall subiects, yet liueth their fame after them, and some notable plague faileth neuer to ouertake the committers in this life, besides their infamie to all posterities hereafter:

—the 'even-handed justice' of which Macbeth speaks—

> Where by the contrarie, a Tyrannes miserable and infamous life, armeth in end his owne Subiects to become his burreaux: and although that rebellion be euer vnlawfull on their part, yet is the world so wearied of him, that his fall is little meaned by the rest of his Subiects, and but smiled at by his neighbours. And besides the infamous memorie he leaueth behind him here, and the endlesse paine hee sustaineth hereafter, it oft falleth out, that the commiters not onely escape vnpunished, but farther, the fact will remaine as allowed by the Law in diuers aages thereafter.[2]

I have not quoted from King James in order to suggest that *Macbeth* was written as a compliment to him.[3] Even though the subject was chosen originally to gratify the King, since it combines two themes on which he was an expert—witchcraft and his own ancestry—and even though Shakespeare mentions touching for scrofula, and prenuptial chastity, two other subjects in which

1. Sidney, *The Defence of Poesie*, facs. E 4v. Read: *duro saevus . . . auctorem.*
2. *Political Works*, ed. McIlwain, p. 19.
3. Cf. Draper's article in *Eng. Stud.*, lxxii, and Wilson, *op. cit.*, pp. xliv–xlv.

James was interested,[1] he did not drag these things into the play as irrelevant flattery. Still less ought we to assume that Shakespeare's treatment of Banquo was circumscribed by royal susceptibilities, or that the dialogue between Macduff and Malcolm on the nature of Kingship was inserted to please James.[2]

Nor, to return to the Senecan conception of tragedy as applied to *Macbeth*, should we imagine that Shakespeare's imagination was cabined, cribbed, confined by this, any more than he was bound within the Senecan form and structure. His imaginative perception of the human heart made it increasingly difficult for him to regard any character as a mere villain—even Iachimo repents—and *Macbeth* is the story of a noble and valiant man who is brought to his damnation, presented in such a way as to arouse our pity and terror.[3] For though, in the last resort, Macbeth is damned by his own sin, he is sorely tempted. 'The power of divels', wrote George Giffard in 1603,

> is in the hearts of men, as to harden the heart, to blind the eyes of the mind, and from the lustes and concupiscences which are in them, to inflame them vnto wrath, malice, enuie, and cruell murthers: . . . And about these things they work continually, and with such efficacy, that without the power of the glorious passion and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, which we haue by faith, they cannot be withstood.[4]

So James himself declared that the devil allures persons,

> euen by these three passions that are within our selues: Curiositie . . . thirst of reuenge, for some tortes deepely apprehended: or greedy appetite of geare.[5]

Shakespeare could not represent devils in a tragedy because they had acquired comic associations; but witches were tragic creatures who,

> for the sake of certain abnormal powers, had sold themselves to the devil.[6]

We do not know Shakespeare's personal opinion of witchcraft—whether he accepted the tenets of James's *Dæmonologie*, or whether he adhered to the sceptical position of Reginald Scot which seems

1. McIlwain, *op. cit.*, p. 34: 'yee must keepe your bodie cleane and vnpolluted, till yee giue it to your wife, whom-to onely it belongeth. . . Be not ashamed then, to keepe cleane your body, which is the Temple of the holy Spirit.' James ascribed his success in touching for the evil to prayer. Cf. notes to IV. iii. 99–100, 140–59.
2. Cf. Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. xliv. 3. Cf. Charlton, *op. cit.*, p. 182.
4. *A Dialogue concerning Witches and Witchcrafts*, ed. 1843, pp. 22–3.
5. *Workes*, p. 98. 6. Curry, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

to us to be so much more sane. But the belief in witchcraft could be used by him for dramatic purposes at a time when almost everybody supposed that witches were

> channels through which the malignity of evil spirits might be visited upon human beings.[1]

Professor Curry has argued that the Weird Sisters are in reality demons, or devils, in the form of witches; but

> Whether one considers them as human witches in league with the powers of darkness, or as actual demons in the form of witches, or as merely inanimate symbols, the power which they wield or represent or symbolize is ultimately demonic.[2]

It should be noted, however, that the Weird Sisters tempt Macbeth only because they know his ambitious dreams; and that even so their prophecy of the crown does not dictate evil means of achieving it—it is morally neutral. Macbeth himself never thinks of blaming the Weird Sisters for tempting him to the murder of Duncan, though he blames the 'juggling fiends' who have lulled him into a false sense of security. He knows that the first step along the primrose path was taken on his own responsibility:

> And as Hell fires, not wanting heat, want light;
> So these strange witchcrafts, which like Pleasure be,
> Not wanting faire inticements, want delight,
> Inward being nothing but deformity;
> And doe at open doores let fraile powers in
> To that straight building, Little-ease of sinne.[3]

The first crime is inspired by ambition; the remainder, from the murder of the grooms to the slaughter of Macduff's family, are inspired by fear, a fear that is born of guilt. Timothy Bright distinguished between neurotic fears and those that are caused by the pangs of conscience:

> Whatsoeuer molestation riseth directly as a proper obiect of the mind, that in that respect is not melancholicke, but hath a farther ground then fancie, and riseth from conscience, condemning the guiltie soule of those ingrauen lawes of nature, which no man is voide of, be he neuer so barbarous. This is it, that hath caused the prophane poets to haue fained Hecates Eumenides, and the infernall furies; which although they be but fained persons, yet the matter which is shewed vnder their maske, is serious, true, and of wofull experience.[1]

1. Curry, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 59, 61. Curry points out that 'their control over the primary elements of nature, the *rationes seminales*, would seem to indicate that the Weird Sisters were demons disguised as witches.' It should be pointed out, however, that the Weird Sisters do not claim this power, though Macbeth assumes that they have it, and that they call up their 'masters' in IV. i. Kittredge, *Complete Works of Sh.*, p. 1114, argues, however, that the Weird Sisters are norns. 'They were great powers of destiny, great ministers of fate. They had determined the past; they governed the present; they not only foresaw the future, but decreed it.' Douglas, *Aen.* iii, translated *parcae* by 'weird sisters'.

3. Greville, *Caelica*, CII. 19–24.

These are the terrible dreams that nightly shake Macbeth and his wife; and the apocalyptic imagery that precedes and follows the murder of Duncan may be ascribed to the same cause, rather than to Macbeth's poetic temperament. Plutarch, in his *Morals*, declares that

> wickednesse ingendering within it selfe . . . displeasure and punishment, not after a sinfull act is committed, but euen at the very instant of committing, it beginneth to suffer the pain due to the offence . . . wheras mischieuous wickednesse frameth of her selfe, the engines of her owne torment . . . many terrible frights, fearfull perturbations and passions of the spirit, remorse of conscience, desperate repentance, and continuall troubles and vnquietnesse.[2]

Before the end of the play Macbeth, having 'supped full with horrors', is no longer tortured by such 'fearfull perturbations': this is the measure of his damnation. As Professor Curry says—

> in proportion as the good in him diminishes, his liberty of free choice is determined more and more by evil inclination and . . . he cannot choose the better course.[3]

Although, as we have seen, the murders after the first are all motivated by a frantic desire for security, there are differences between them. The murder of Banquo is not merely due to his knowledge of the Weird Sisters' prophecy which makes him a menace to Macbeth; nor is it due merely to the promise that Banquo's descendants would inherit the throne—powerful though

1. Bright, *A Treatise of Melancholy*, p. 193.

2. *Morals*, tr. P. Holland, pp. 545–6. Cited by Campbell, *Shakespeare's Tragic Heroes*, and by Charlton, *op. cit.*, p. 187.

3. Curry, *op. cit.*, p. 105. I dissent, therefore, from Wilson Knight's opinion, expressed in *The Wheel of Fire*, p. 155, that Macbeth 'contends for his own individual soul against the universal reality . . . and emerges at last victorious and fearless'. I dissent still more from this sentence on Macbeth in *Christ and Nietzsche*, p. 85: 'Starting with the disrupted, anxious, accents of a nervous wreck, he is, poetically, a new man after the first murder, dramatically a more violent one after the second, and philosophically a noble, though unrepentant, creature of sublime and courageous self-knowledge and superb poetry at the close when at last an honest and therefore sin-free relation to the world is established.'

both motives might be.[1] Macbeth fears Banquo's 'royalty of nature', the 'dauntless temper of his mind', and his wisdom. He fears them because they are a standing reproach to his own nature, now stained with crime—

> under him
> My Genius is rebuk'd.

He vaguely hopes that by murdering Banquo he will rid himself of this reproach; yet the act merely ensures that the reproach will be eternal. We may, perhaps, apply what M. Sartre says of murder to the killing of Banquo. He argues that the murderer perpetuates the intolerable situation for which he did the deed by the very act of murder: for he kills his victim because he hates being the other's *object*, and by the murder this relationship is rendered irremediable. The victim has taken the key of this alienation into the tomb with him:

> The death of the other constitutes me as irremediable object, exactly as my own death would do. So hatred is transformed into frustration even in its triumph.[2]

Some think that Banquo scarcely deserves the compliment of admiring hatred, in that he seems to have come to terms with evil. Before the murder, he is determined to lose no honour in seeking to augment it; and after the murder, with suspicion of Macbeth in his mind, he declares:

> In the great hand of God I stand; and thence
> Against the undivulg'd pretence I fight
> Of treasonous malice.

Yet at the beginning of the third act we find that he has done nothing to implement his vow, and Bradley argues that

> He alone of the lords knew of the prophecies, but he has said nothing of them. He has acquiesced in Macbeth's accession, and in the official theory that Duncan's sons had suborned the chamberlains to murder him.[3]

1. Without raising the vexed question of how many children Lady Macbeth had, we may observe that there is no certainty that Macbeth had any. 'Bring forth men-children only' (I. vii. 73) seems to imply that he expected children; but 'barren sceptre' (III. i. 61) may mean, though not necessarily, that he was without children. S. Freud, *Collected Papers*, IV, 1934, pp. 328 ff., suggests that 'it would be a perfect example of poetic justice in the manner of the talion if the childlessness of Macbeth and the barrenness of his Lady were the punishment for their crimes against the sanctity of geniture'.

2. Sartre, *L'Etre et le Néant*, p. 483 (paraphrased).

3. Bradley, *op. cit.*, pp. 384–5. R. Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 88, argues from the dialogue following Banquo's soliloquy that he is not 'fishing for an understanding with Macbeth' but 'is anxious to tell him nothing and get away as quickly as possible'.

Although we may well agree with Dr Dover Wilson that we should not treat Shakespeare as if he were a historian; although this interpretation of Banquo's character, that 'he has yielded to evil', seems to be contradicted by Macbeth's tribute later in the same scene; and although James I might not have approved of an unflattering portrait of his reputed ancestor: yet, nevertheless, Dr Wilson's theory of a cut at this point is too convenient to be convincing, and we may reasonably doubt whether, according to James's theories of Divine Right, Banquo ought to have behaved loyally to Macbeth until Malcolm set foot on Scottish soil. As we have seen, James condemned rebellion even against manifest tyrants. There was nothing new in this, and the Tudors would all have agreed with every word in this passage from *The Trew Law of Free Monarchies*:

> The wickednesse therefore of the King can neuer make them that are ordained to be iudged by him, to become his Iudges. . . Next, in place of relieuing the commonwealth out of distresse (which is their onely excuse and colour) they shall heape double distresse and desolation vpon it; and so their rebellion shall procure the contrary effects that they pretend it for.[1]

Even a bad king keeps order in the commonwealth, and except where his lusts or passions are involved, he will generally favour justice. If there is no king, James thought, 'nothing is vnlawfull to none.' Yet he was also careful to point out that

> the duty and alleageance, which the people sweareth to their prince, is not only bound to themselues, but likewise to their lawfull heires and posterity . . . it is alike vnlawful (the crowne euer standing full) to displace him that succeedeth thereto, as to eiect the former: For at the very moment of the expiring of the king reigning, the nearest and lawful heire entreth in his place: And so to refuse him, or intrude another, is not to holde out vncomming in, but to expell and put out their righteous King.[2]

It is surely clear that Banquo ought not to have awaited Malcolm's invasion of Scotland before taking any steps against the usurper: he should have defended the son's title to the throne on the death of Duncan.[3]

The long dialogue between Macbeth and the murderers of

1. *Political Works*, ed. McIlwain, p. 66. 2. *Ibid.*, p. 69.

3. Perhaps L. Kirschbaum was right to suggest that Banquo has a dramatic function and should not be regarded as a consistent character. See *E.C.*, VII, 1957, pp. 1–21.

Banquo looks back to John's temptation of Hubert and Claudius's temptation of Laertes. It shows us a Macbeth we have only glimpsed before, a smooth-tongued 'politician', well able to 'beguile the time'. If it be said that the two murderers would have been content to do the deed without all this persuasion—that they only wanted the cash—it may be answered that Macbeth

> wanted to subdue their wills. One sees him pacing the floor and weaving words like spells round the two wretches, stopping every now and then to eye them hard and close.[1]

He wants them to do the deed out of hatred of Banquo, and not out of the need of money, so that he himself shall be relieved of some part of the guilt—so that he can cry, 'Thou canst not say I did it'. His speech about dogs, regarded by some as the least necessary speech in the play, meet for the cutter's pencil, serves to present one aspect of the *order*, which he himself is destroying.[2] There is one significance of this scene which up till now has not been fully appreciated—the echoes from the Sermon on the Mount by which Macbeth, all unconsciously, bears witness to the ethic he has violated.[3]

The later murder of Macduff's family, also executed by underlings, is a pointless massacre which proves to be Macbeth's own death-warrant. It is not calculated to achieve a particular end: destruction, though originating in fear, has come to be an end in itself.

According to Coleridge the other protagonist, the accomplice as well as the temptress of Macbeth, is not the monster, the fiend-like queen, that most eighteenth-century critics assumed her to be:

> on the contrary, her constant effort throughout the play was to *bully* conscience. She was a woman of a visionary and day-dreaming turn of mind; her eye fixed on the shadows of her solitary ambition; and her feelings abstracted, through the deep musings of her absorbing passion, from the common-life sympathies of flesh and blood. But her conscience, so far from being seared, was continually smarting within her; and she endeavours to stifle its voice, and keep down its struggles, by inflated and soaring fancies, and appeals to spiritual agency.[4]

It is true that Lady Macbeth is not naturally depraved or con-

1. Granville-Barker, *op. cit.*, p. xl. 2. Knights, *op. cit.*, p. 24.
3. Cf. note on III. i. 87–8.
4. *Op. cit.*, II. 270–1. Probably the reporter of the *Bristol Gazette* was not quite accurate in his account of what Coleridge said. Macbeth and his Lady together, Freud declared, *Collected Papers*, IV, 1934, p. 333, 'exhaust the possibilities of reaction to the crime, like the two disunited parts of the mind of a single individuality'.

scienceless (any more than Satan was): but she deliberately chooses evil, her choice being more deliberate than her husband's. Macbeth speaks of ambition being his only spur; but he would never have overcome his reluctance to commit murder without the chastisement of his wife's tongue. She, not metaphorically or symbolically, but in deadly earnest, invokes the powers of darkness to take possession of her; and, as Professor Curry has cogently argued,

> Her prayer is apparently answered; with the coming of night her castle is . . . shrouded in just such a blackness as she desires. She knows also that these spiritual substances study eagerly the effects of mental activities upon the human body, waiting patiently for evidences of evil thought which will permit them entrance past the barriers of the human will into the body to possess it. They tend on mortal thoughts. For, says Cassian: 'It is clear that unclean spirits cannot make their way into those bodies they are going to seize upon, in any other way than by first taking possession of their minds and thoughts.' Thus, instead of guarding the workings of her mind against the assaults of wicked angels, Lady Macbeth deliberately wills that they subtly invade her body and so control it that the natural inclinations of the spirit toward goodness and compassion may be completely extirpated. . . . And without doubt these ministers of evil do actually take possession of her body even in accordance with her desire.[1]

Mrs Siddons was right when she said that Lady Macbeth,

> having impiously delivered herself up to the excitements of hell . . . is abandoned to the guidance of the demons she has invoked.[2]

The great actress's realization of this fact is one of the reasons why her performance of the part was more effective than that of any other actress, and why naturalistic interpretations are foredoomed to failure. We need not necessarily assume that Shakespeare himself believed in demoniacal possession, any more than we need decide whether he followed Reginald Scot in his views on witchcraft, or King James in his views on Divine Right: but that he intended Lady Macbeth to be literally possessed it is difficult to doubt. Such an interpretation explains the unnatural darkness, and the equally unnatural portents on the night of the murder,[3] as it explains what Professor Curry calls the 'demoniacal somnambulism' of the sleep-walking scene.[4]

1. Curry, *op. cit.*, pp. 86–7.
2. Quoted in *New Variorum*, pp. 472–3. See the article by W. Moelwyn Merchant, *S.S.*, XIX, pp. 75–81, on Lady Macbeth's demoniacal possession.
3. Cf. Masefield, *Recent Prose*, pp. 270–2. 4. *Op. cit.*, p. 90.

Some critics have sentimentalized the character of Lady Macbeth and have argued that her cry,

> The Thane of Fife had a wife . . .

shows that 'as a woman she can still feel for a murdered woman'. On the other hand, Bradley agreed with Campbell when he insisted 'that in Lady Macbeth's misery there is no trace of contrition'.[1] But this, surely, is to take the Sleep-walking scene too literally. Although Lady Macbeth's obsession with the blood-stains on her hand, and particularly with the *smell* of the blood, might be interpreted as evidence that she fears detection, it also symbolizes, as plainly as if she had cried it from the house-tops, her consciousness of guilt and the outrage she has committed on her own soul. It must be admitted, however, that a second personality which speaks through the patient's mouth, confessing sins and sometimes relating memories, was thought to be a characteristic of demoniacal somnambulism.[2] It may be said that the night without stars, the prodigies accompanying the murder, and the sleep-walking of Lady Macbeth can all be explained without bringing in the supernatural at all—and this fact may well reflect an ambiguity in Shakespeare's mind. The audience could take them either way, though the supernatural way was to Shakespeare's original audience the more natural. On the other hand it must be admitted that the miraculous scene in the third act where we see that the crime has not brought the criminals closer together, but has set an impassable barrier between them—this picture 'of the haunted desert of their souls' which shows that Lady Macbeth now realizes (what her husband knew at the time of the murder) what it is they have done—does not require, and may even be thought to exclude, that Lady Macbeth should still be actively possessed: and the Banquet scene itself, in which she recovers for a while and for the last time some semblance of her will, is not easy to reconcile with the demoniac theory; for in that case Satan would seem to be divided against himself, on the one hand driving Macbeth to exhibit his guilt, and on the other enabling Lady Macbeth to shield him.[3] So in the Sleep-walking scene, whether

1. Bradley, *op. cit.*, p. 378. 2. Curry, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

3. The ghost of Banquo has been regarded as an hallucination, like the air-drawn dagger, but clearly it was something more than a projection of guilt. The ghost of Hamlet's father was invisible to Gertrude, though few would question its objective existence. Banquo's ghost appeared to Macbeth only because he alone was guilty; and the manifestation would have been the same whether the ghost was indeed Banquo's and had come to demand vengeance or whether, as Professor Curry thinks (*op. cit.*, pp. 73, 75), it is an infernal illusion created by devils to bring Macbeth to his material ruin. Devils 'are able to assume bodies of air, condensing it by virtue of their angelic natures insofar as is necessary for the forming of assumed bodies. . . Demons are enabled to induce in the imaginations of men, either waking or asleep, whatever visions and hallucinations they please.'

1. *Op. cit.*, p. 400.

2. Plutarch, *Morals*, tr. Holland, p. 260. Cited by Campbell, *Shakespeare's Tragic Heroes*, p. 212. A. A. Smirnov, *Shakespeare*, 1937, p. 72, even argues that 'the conversations of Macbeth with the witches and phantoms, like the famous dialogue of Ivan Karamazov with the devil, are but the inner dialectical struggle of Macbeth with himself. This struggle is projected on the supernatural plane, just as the socio-historical events arising from Macbeth's concrete actions are projected on the spiritual plane.'

3. See pp. xxi–xxii *ante*.

her involuntary confessions (so poignant that, as Bradley remarked,[1] for the moment

> all the language of poetry . . . seems to be touched with unreality, and these brief toneless sentences seem the only voice of truth)

are the outpourings of her repressed conscience, or the treacherous words of the demon within her, we need not deny her (what Shakespeare must have given her) pity—as well as the terror she has never failed to arouse. There is pity even in Dante's *Inferno*.

The fact that we no longer believe in demons, and that Shakespeare's audience mostly did, does not diminish the dramatic effect for us; for with the fading of belief in the objective existence of devils, they and their operations can yet symbolize the workings of evil in the hearts of men. It is not only the superstitious, but the guilty, to whom sleep is 'a verie hell and a place of damned persons', for it presents unto them

> terrible visions and monstrous fancies; it raiseth diuels, fiends and furies, which torment the poore and miserable soule; it driueth her out of her quiet repose by her owne fearfull dreames, wherewith she whippeth, scourgeth and punisheth herselfe (as it were) by some other, whose cruell and vnseasonable commandements she doth obey.[2]

The changes in custom and belief do not seriously detract from the universality of the tragedy.

Nor need we suppose that cuts and alterations have greatly damaged the unity and power of the play.[3] Some critics, indeed, have complained that most of the characters in the play are 'flat' and lacking in individuality, and that certain scenes are undramatic and even dull. The levelling of the characters is, however, a legitimate dramatic device, which has the effect of focusing attention on the main characters. Rosse, Angus, the Old Man, the other Lord, Lenox, the two Doctors, and the Waiting Gentle-

woman have scarcely any recognizable traits, and the characteristics of Rosse and Lenox seem to be self-contradictory: but together these characters form a chorus which comments on the action of the play.

The other complaint, that certain scenes are undramatic, I have, perhaps, already answered, at least by implication. It is not altogether accidental that some of the scenes which earlier critics regarded as of doubtful authenticity, or as irrelevant compliments to King James, or as concessions to the taste of the groundlings, or even as pieces of relaxed writing, have now come to be regarded as essential to the understanding of the play. The Porter scene,[1] the passage about dogs,[2] the speech on the King's Evil,[3] the first two scenes of the play,[4] and the dialogue between Macduff and Malcolm[5] in Act IV, Scene iii, have been discussed elsewhere: but it may be worth while to add a note on the last of these passages which has been condemned as long-drawn-out and absurd. Harley Granville-Barker, who thinks there is a lack of spontaneity in the writing of the scene, points out its importance in the scheme of the play. It is the starting-point of the play's counter-action, the audience need a breathing-space, and

> That Malcolm might be what his self-accusation would make him, that Macduff might be Macbeth's spy, that each then should turn from the other in loathing, and that Macduff should not be too easily convinced of the truth—all this is necessary as a solid foundation for the moral dominance of the rest of the play by these two. And the whole matter must be given space and weight to the measure of its importance.[6]

The scene can also be defended as a 'mirror for magistrates'—a discussion on the contrast between true royalty and tyranny that is very germane to the matter.[7] It can demonstrate effectively how Macbeth's misrule has made even the good suspect the good of treachery. Perhaps, too, as Professor Knights has suggested,[8] the scene acts as a choric commentary:

> We see the relevance of Malcolm's self-accusation. He has ceased to be a person. His lines repeat and magnify the evils that have already been attributed to Macbeth, acting as a mirror wherein the ills of Scotland are reflected. And the statement of evil is strengthened by contrast with the opposite virtues.

1. Cf. notes on the scene and pp. xxiii ff. 2. Cf. p. lx.
3. Cf. note on IV. iii. 140–59. 4. Cf. notes on I. i, I. ii, and I. ii. 7–23.
5. Cf. p. xxxix and note on IV. iii. 6. *Op. cit.*, p. xlviii.
7. Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. xliv. 8. *Op. cit.*, p. 28.

Professor Charlton complains[1] of critics who treat Shakespeare's characters 'as plastic symbols in an arabesque of esoteric imagery' or as 'rhythmic ripples intoned in a chromatic ritual'; and though we may doubt whether these phrases aptly describe the practice of post-Bradleian critics, we may agree that the poetic dramas of Shakespeare are plays to be performed, and not merely poems to read. On the other hand the distinction between art and life must be preserved, as it is not always preserved in the psychological critics of the past century and a half. Shakespeare wrote plays which happen to be poems, as well as poems which happen to be plays—and it is not always easy to preserve a nice balance between the two parts of this statement. Then, again, in the process of analysing one of the tragedies, we are only too apt to fossilize the living substance of the original, and to impose a modern, or an Elizabethan, meaning on its stranger and less formulable significance. For what the groundlings or even the 'judicious' thought in Shakespeare's day may be as far from a complete, a Shakespearian, understanding of *Macbeth* as the speculations of an Andrew Bradley. The plays are so vast and so complex that we can make statements about them which seem contradictory, and yet both express some aspect of the truth. We may, indeed, call *Macbeth* the greatest of morality plays, at the same time as we are aware that Shakespeare transcends the sublime story of a human soul on the road to damnation and that he shows us also indomitable energy burning *in the forests of the night*, cherubim *horsed upon the sightless couriers of the air*, *Pity, like a naked new-born babe, striding the blast*, the very *frame of things disjoint*, and human life, a brief candle quenched in the dust of death, in all its splendours and miseries, and even in its crimes, not

> a tale
> Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
> Signifying nothing.

We may not agree with Campbell when he spoke of *Macbeth* 'as the greatest treasure of our dramatic literature' or with Mr Masefield, who called it 'the most glorious' of Shakespeare's plays; but glory it certainly has, of a peculiar richness and intensity, which the poet seldom equalled and 'the achieve of, the mastery of the thing' which he surpassed, perhaps, only in *King Lear*.

1. *Op. cit.*, p. 1.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

DUNCAN, *King of Scotland.*
DONALBAIN, MALCOLM, *His Sons.*
MACBETH, BANQUO, *Generals of the King's Army.*
MACDUFF, LENOX, ROSSE, MENTETH, ANGUS, CATHNESS, *Noblemen of Scotland.*
FLEANCE, *Son to Banquo.*
SIWARD, *Earl of Northumberland, General of the English Forces.*
YOUNG SIWARD, *his Son.*
SEYTON, *an Officer attending on Macbeth.*
BOY, *Son to Macduff.*
AN ENGLISH DOCTOR.
A SCOTTISH DOCTOR.
A SOLDIER.
A PORTER.
AN OLD MAN.
LADY MACBETH.
LADY MACDUFF.
GENTLEWOMAN *attending on Lady Macbeth.*
[HECATE].
THREE WITCHES.

Lords, Gentlemen, Officers, Soldiers, Murderers, Attendants, and Messengers.

The Ghost of Banquo, and other Apparitions.

SCENE: *In the end of the Fourth Act, in England; through the rest of the play, in Scotland.*

THE TRAGEDY OF MACBETH

ACT I

SCENE I.—[*An open place.*]

Thunder and lightning. Enter three WITCHES.

1 *Witch.* When shall we three meet again?
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?
2 *Witch.* When the hurlyburly's done,
When the battle's lost and won.

ACT I
Scene 1

1. again?] again *Hanmer.* 2. or] and *Hanmer, Capell.*

Scene 1] Cuningham thought that this scene was spurious, because no dramatic object was gained by its introduction. Granville-Barker (*Preface*, xxvi) concurred: 'Apart from such an opening being un-Shakespearean, the lines themselves are as little like Shakespeare as Hecate is, and have indeed all the tang of the Hecate lines... The scene ... is a poor scene and a pointless scene.' But, as Coleridge remarked (*Shakespearean Criticism*, ed. Raysor, I. 68), 'the true reason for the first appearance of the Weird Sisters, [is to strike] the keynote ... of the whole play. ..' Coleridge likewise suggests that the opening of the play should be contrasted with that of *Hamlet*: 'In the latter the gradual ascent from the simplest forms of conversation to the language of impassioned intellect, yet still the intellect remaining the *seat* of passion; in the *Macbeth* the invocation is made at once to the imagination, and the emotions connected therewith' (*op. cit.*, I. 67). So Knights, *Explorations*, p. 18, declares that each theme of the play 'is stated in the first act. The first scene, every word of which will bear the closest scrutiny, strikes one dominant chord.'

1.] Hanmer's emendation, though generally accepted, is superfluous.

3. *hurlyburly*] uproar, tumult, confusion, esp. the tumult of sedition or insurrection. See Halle, *Chronicle* (1548), *Hen. VIII*, 231 *a*: 'In this tyme of insurrection, and in the rage of horley borley'. The word occurs in Golding's *Ovid*, ix. 510, and in Marlowe, *Dido*, IV. I. 10, and there is a close parallel in Seneca, *Agam.* (tr. Studley), 1, Chor., 'One hurly burly done'. Cf. note v. iii. 45 *post*. Knights (*op. cit.*, p. 18) suggests that the word 'implies more than the tumult of insurrection. Both it and "When the Battaile's lost, and wonne" suggest the kind of metaphysical pitch-and-toss which is about to be played with good and evil.'

3 *Witch.* That will be ere the set of sun.
1 *Witch.* Where the place?
2 *Witch.* Upon the heath.
3 *Witch.* There to meet with Macbeth.
1 *Witch.* I come, Graymalkin!
2 *Witch.* Paddock calls.
3 *Witch.* Anon!
All. Fair is foul, and foul is fair:
Hover through the fog and filthy air. [*Exeunt*

9–11. Paddock . . . fair] *so Singer (1856), Hunter, Globe, Kittredge, Wilson, one line spoken by All* Padock calls anon: faire is foule, and foule is faire *F; two lines, the first ending* anon! *Pope;* Paddock calls.—Anon! *Rowe and Capell, subst.*

8. *Graymalkin*] or Grimalkin, a grey cat; with the toad, a common witches' familiar. Cf. 'brinded cat' (IV. i. 1 *post*). 'Malkin' is a diminutive of Mary. Upton observes that 'to understand this passage we should suppose one familiar calling with the voice of a cat, and another with the croaking of a toad.' Cf. James I, *Dæmonologie* (*Workes*, 1616), p. 103: 'either in likenes of a Dog, a Cat, an Ape, or such-like other beast; or else to answere by a voice onely'. Cf. Scot, *Discouerie of Witchcraft*, ed. 1930, p. 6: 'Some say they can keepe divels and spirits in the likenesse of todes and cats.'

9–11. *Paddock . . . fair*] printed as one line in the Folios. Most editors retain the speech-prefix, *All*, and divide into two lines. Hunter's rearrangement, which I have adopted, allows the witches to speak in turn. It is obviously improbable that Shakespeare intended all the witches to address the paddock, the familiar of one.

9. *Paddock*] a toad. The word is still found in provincial English. But Cotgrave seems to regard the word as equivalent to *grenouille*, a frog, and not to *crapaud*, a toad. Topsell, *History of Serpents*, 1608, p. 187, refers to the 'Padock or crooked back Frog'—'It is not altogether mute, for in time of perrill . . . they have a crying voyce, which I have often times prooved by experience' (quoted by Furness, Jr.).

11. *Fair . . . fair*] Farmer pointed out the proverbial character of this phrase, and quoted Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, IV. viii. 32: 'Then faire grew foule, and foule grew faire in sight.' R. Walker, *The Time is Free*, p. 9, points out that the picture of Sclaunder in stanza 26 may have contributed to Shakespeare's picture of the witches. Furness, Jr., quotes Nashe, *Terrors of the Night* (1594, ed. McKerrow, I. p. 361): 'euery thing must bee interpreted backward as Witches say their Pater-noster, good being the character of bad, and bad of good.' The line is the first statement of one of the main themes of the play, of 'the reversal of values' (Knights).

SCENE II.—[*A camp.*]

Alarum within. Enter KING DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, LENOX, *with Attendants, meeting a bleeding Captain.*

Dun. What bloody man is that? He can report,
As seemeth by his plight, of the revolt
The newest state.
Mal. This is the Sergeant,
Who, like a good and hardy soldier, fought
'Gainst my captivity.—Hail, brave friend!

Scene II

S.D. *Duncan*] *Capell;* King *F1. Captain*] *F;* Sergeant *Old Camb.* 5. Hail, brave friend] Haile: haile brave friend *F2–4.*

The authenticity of this scene has been questioned by Cuningham, following Clark and Wright; but it has been successfully defended by modern critics, inc. Knights, Nosworthy, *R.E.S.*, April 1946, and Flatter, *Shakespeare's Producing Hand* (1948). It may, however, have been badly cut. See Introduction, p. xx.

Theobald and Capell, followed by most modern editors, deduced from I. iii. 39 and from Holinshed that Sc. ii was laid at Forres. But Macbeth—assuming he is Bellona's bridegroom—was fighting in Fife (l. 49) which, as Wilson points out, is 100 miles from Forres, and could not be in two places at once. The two battles have been run together in place as well as in time. Cf. note on I. iii. 91. The Captain begins to tell the story of the second phase of the battle (ll. 29–43), i.e. with the Norweyan lord; and Rosse completes the tale (ll. 51–9). But not even an audience of Scotsmen would notice the geographical difficulties.

R. Walker, *op. cit.*, pp. 19–30, argues for the authenticity of this scene by showing that in Sc. iii 'Shakespeare means us to give most of our attention to Macbeth's reception of the news, not to the news and its bearers. He achieves this by a measure of repetition.'

1. *bloody*] Kolbe points out, *Shakespeare's Way*, p. 3, that 'blood' is mentioned over 100 times in the course of the play. Dowden makes a similar observation.

3. *Sergeant*] Steevens suggests that Shakespeare borrowed the term from Holinshed, who mentions that Duncan sent a Sergeant at Arms to bring up the chief rebels to answer the charges preferred against them, but they slew him. Cf. Appendix, p. 168.

3, 5, 7.] The various attempts which have been made to regularize the metre are superfluous. The gap in 5 may indicate a pause for a gesture, and there might be a pause in 7 while the wounded captain collects himself to speak. Flatter (*op. cit.*) defends many of the irregularities in the metre in a similar way.

5. *my captivity*] This may have been suggested by Holinshed's mention of a Captain Malcolme, who was beheaded by Makdowald in an earlier phase of the revolt. But Case thinks that Malcolm merely means that the Captain had resisted an attempt to take him prisoner.

Say to the King the knowledge of the broil,
As thou didst leave it.
Cap. Doubtful it stood;
As two spent swimmers, that do cling together
And choke their art. The merciless Macdonwald
(Worthy to be a rebel, for to that
The multiplying villainies of nature
Do swarm upon him) from the western isles
Of Kernes and Gallowglasses is supplied;
And Fortune, on his damned quarrel smiling,
Show'd like a rebel's whore: but all's too weak;

6. the knowledge] thy knowledge *Walker.* 9. Macdonwald] Macdonnell *F2–4.* 10. for to that] for, to that, *Capell.* 11. villainies] villaines *F2–3.* 13. Gallowglasses] *F2;* Gallowgrosses *F1.* 14. quarrel] *Hanmer;* quarry *F.*

6. *broil*] Cf. *1H4*, i. i. 3, and *Oth.*, I. iii. 87.

7–23.] According to Cuningham this is 'a corrupt piece of bombast'. It may be corrupt; but, as Nosworthy has argued (*op. cit.*), its style may be compared with the 'epic' style of the Pyrrhus speeches in *Hamlet* and the corresponding passage in Marlowe's *Dido*. Coleridge, *Shakespearean Criticism* (p. 67), makes the same comparison: 'the epic is substituted for the tragic, in order to make the latter be felt as the *real-life* diction.' Cf. Bradley, *Shakespearean Tragedy*, pp. 389–90.

9. *Macdonwald*] Holinshed's form is Makdowald. Knights, *Explorations*, p. 20, suggests that Shakespeare 'consciously provided a parallel with the Macbeth of the later acts'.

10. *to that*] i.e. to that end.

11–12. *The . . . him*] i.e. like lice.

13. *Kernes and Gallowglasses*] See Holinshed, Appendix, p. 168. The 'kern' was a light-armed foot-soldier; one of the poorer class among the 'wild Irish', from whom such soldiers were drawn. Stanihurst in his Introduction to Holinshed's *Irish Historie* (p. 45*a*) says that 'Kerne signifieth . . . a shower of hell, because they are taken for no better than for rakehels, or the diuels black gard, by reason of the stinking sturre they keepe, wheresoeuer they be.' The 'gallowglass' was a horseman armed with a sharp axe, defined by *O.E.D.* as 'one of a particular class of soldiers or retainers formerly retained by Irish chiefs'. According to Stanihurst (*op. cit.*) the gallowglass uses 'a kind of pollax for his weapon. These men are commonlie weieward rather by profession than by nature, firm of countenance, tall of stature, big of lim, burlie of body, well and stronglie timbered, cheeflie feeding on beefe, porke and butter.' Both words occur in *2H6*, IV. ix. 26–7: 'A puissant and a mighty power of gallowglasses and stout kerns'.

14. *quarrel*] This, the emendation of Hanmer, inasmuch as it occurs in the corresponding passage in Holinshed, may be regarded as certain. The Clar. Edd. point out that Fairfax in *Godfrey of Bulloigne* uses 'quarry' (xi. 28) as well as 'quarrel' (vii. 103) for the square-headed bolt of a cross-bow. The Folio printers, therefore, may readily have printed *quarrel* as *quarry*.

15. *rebel's whore*] Nosworthy compares *Ham.*, II. ii. 515: 'strumpet fortune'.

For brave Macbeth (well he deserves that name),
Disdaining Fortune, with his brandish'd steel,
Which smok'd with bloody execution,
Like Valour's minion, carv'd out his passage,
Till he fac'd the slave;
Which ne'er shook hands, nor bade farewell to him,
Till he unseam'd him from the nave to th'chops,
And fix'd his head upon our battlements.
Dun. O valiant cousin! worthy gentleman!
Cap. As whence the sun 'gins his reflection,
Shipwracking storms and direful thunders break,
So from that spring, whence comfort seem'd to come,
Discomfort swells. Mark, King of Scotland, mark:
No sooner justice had, with valour arm'd,
Compell'd these skipping Kernes to trust their heels,

19. carv'd] *F;* carved *Rowe.* 21. Which] *F;* Who *Pope;* And *Capell.* ne'er] never *F4.* bade] bid *F4.* 22. nave] nape *Hanmer, Warburton.* th'chops] *F;* the chaps *Reed (1803).* 26. thunders break] *Pope;* Thunders: *F;* thunders breaking *F2–4.* 28. Discomfort swells] Discomforts well'd *Johnson (conj. Thirlby);* Discomfort wells *Capell.* 29. had,] *F1–3;* had *F4, Globe.*

17–20. *Disdaining . . . slave*] Paul suggests that 'Like Valour's minion' should be substituted for 'Disdaining Fortune'.

20.] Half a line, and probably more, seems to be missing here, perhaps deliberately cut. The *Which* of the following line may refer either to Macbeth, or to Macdonwald, or to Fortune (whose slave he is). If it refers to Macbeth, the polite expression contrasts with the impolite action.

21. *shook hands*] i.e. bade farewell. Cf. Lyly, *Euphues* (ed. Arber, p. 75): 'you would inueigle me to shake hands with chastitie.'

22. *unseam'd*] Note the tailoring metaphor, of which there are many in the course of the play.

nave] i.e. navel, but not so used elsewhere. The words were perhaps confused in Elizabethan English. Cf. Massinger, *Parliament of Love*, II. iii: 'His body be the navel to the wheel'. Steevens quoted Marlowe, *Dido*, II. i. 256: 'Then from the navell to the throat at once / He ript old *Priam*.'

chops] i.e. jaws.

24. *cousin*] Macbeth and Duncan were both grandsons of King Malcolm.

25–8. *As . . . swells*] Nosworthy compares *Ham.*, II. ii. 506–11. R. Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 31, suggests that 'the storms and thunders at once recall the witches, and inform us from what source the danger threatens; and we remember that the Witches go to meet Macbeth. "Shipwracking" storms is the very subject of the Witches' next consultation. Macbeth is the source whence comfort seemed to come. From just that quarter danger threatens. . . Let the King of Scotland mark the omen! . . The Sergeant . . . is of course unconscious of the undertone of meaning.'

25. *reflection*] turning back at the vernal equinox (Paul).

27. *spring*] i.e. source, but possibly suggested by day-spring with its comforting associations.

But the Norweyan Lord, surveying vantage,
With furbish'd arms, and new supplies of men,
Began a fresh assault.
Dun. Dismay'd not this
Our captains, Macbeth and Banquo?
Cap. Yes;
As sparrows eagles, or the hare the lion.
If I say sooth, I must report they were
As cannons overcharg'd with double cracks;
So they
Doubly redoubled strokes upon the foe:
Except they meant to bathe in reeking wounds,
Or memorize another Golgotha,
I cannot tell—
But I am faint, my gashes cry for help.
Dun. So well thy words become thee, as thy wounds:
They smack of honour both.—Go, get him surgeons.
[*Exit Captain, attended.*

32. furbish'd] (furbisht) *Rowe;* furbusht *F.* 33–4. Dismay'd . . . Banquo?] *verse Pope; prose F.* 34–5. Yes; . . . lion] *so Pope; lines end* Eagles; / Lyon: *F.* 37. overcharg'd with] overcharg'd; with *Theobald.* 38. So they] *Steevens; begins 39 F; ends 37 Globe (1878), Kittredge;* They so *conj. Keightley.* 39. upon] on *F2–4.* 40. reeking] recking *F2–3.* 42–3. I cannot . . . help] *Rowe; lines end* faint, / help *F.*

31. *Norweyan*] Shakespeare, in deference to King Christian, omits mention of the Danes (Paul).

surveying vantage] i.e. seeing his opportunity (Wilson). Cf. *R3*, v. iii. 15: 'Let us survey the vantage of the ground.'

33–4.] Duncan's speech is printed as prose in the Folio, and though the Clar. Edd., following Douce, assumed that 'captains' should be pronounced 'capitains' to make the line regular (cf. *3H6*, iv. vii. 30: 'A wise stout captain, and soon persuaded'), the word is nearly always dissyllabic in Shakespeare, and it might be better to print the speech as prose. In which case the Captain's 'Yes' would be printed with 35.

38. *So they*] Abbott suggests that this short line should be detached from the beginning of 39 (as it is in the Folio) and added to 37—reading *o'ercharg'd* for the sake of the scansion. But I suspect that a line or more is missing between 36 and 37, 37 beginning a new sentence.

39. *Doubly redoubled*] Cf. *R2*, i. iii. 80.

42–3. *I . . . help.*] Flatter, *op. cit.*, p. 101, defends the F arrangement of these lines on the grounds that the broken line ('I . . . faint') allows the captain to exhibit faintness, and that the short line at the end marks the place where attendants go to his assistance. Wilson thinks the whole speech is the ruin of a longer one. Perhaps a wounded soldier may be forgiven some slight incoherence.

Enter ROSSE *and* ANGUS.

Who comes here?
Mal. The worthy Thane of Rosse.
Len. What a haste looks through his eyes! So should he look
That seems to speak things strange.
Rosse. God save the King!
Dun. Whence cam'st thou, worthy Thane?
Rosse. From Fife, great King,
Where the Norweyan banners flout the sky,
And fan our people cold. Norway himself,
With terrible numbers,
Assisted by that most disloyal traitor,
The Thane of Cawdor, began a dismal conflict;
Till that Bellona's bridegroom, lapp'd in proof,

45. *Enter Rosse and Angus*] *F; Enter Ross, Steevens; Enter Ross and Angus, after* strange (*48*) *Dyce; after* here? (*46*) *Old Camb., Wilson.* 47–8. What . . . King!] *so Hanmer; lines end* eyes? / strange. / King. *F.* 47. a haste] hast *F2–4.* 48. seems] teems *conj. Johnson;* comes *Collier (ed. 2).* 51–2. And . . . numbers,] *so Singer, Globe, Chambers, Grierson, Kittredge, etc.; lines end* cold. / numbers, *F, Arden (ed. 1), Wilson, etc.* 54. began] 'gan *Pope.*

45. Enter . . . Angus] Steevens says that 'as Ross alone is addressed, or is mentioned in this scene, and as Duncan expresses himself in the singular number as in line 49, Angus may be considered a superfluous character. Had his present appearance been designed, the King would naturally have taken some notice of him.' But cf. I. iii. 100 which makes it certain that his presence in this scene was intended.

47–9. *What . . . King*] Hanmer's arrangement of these lines is probably correct.

47. *a haste*] The line would be better without the article.

look] perhaps copied in error from 'looks', which in F is in the previous line. Cf. *Ant.*, v. i. 50: 'The business of this man looks out of him.'

48. *seems*] i.e. 'whose appearance corresponds with the strangeness of his message'. Cf. I. v. 29 *post*, and *1H4*, III. ii. 162: 'thy looks are full of speed.'

50. *flout*] Elwin, quoted in the New Variorum, suggests that Rosse 'describes the previous advantages of the rebels in the present tense, in order to set the royal victory in the strongest light of achievement'. Keightley rearranges the lines and inserts 'did' before 'flout'. The meaning must be that the Norweyan banners made the Scots cold with fear, and not, as Malone supposed, that the captured banners serve to cool the conquerors. Cf. Marston, *Sophonisba*, I. ii: 'Upon whose tops the *Roman* eagles stretch'd / Their large spread winges, which fanned the evening ayre / To us cold breath'. See Introduction, p. xx. Cf. also *John*, v. i. 72.

53. *traitor*] Holinshed says the Thane of Cawdor was condemned at Forres for treason; but makes no mention of his having assisted the invaders.

55. *Bellona's bridegroom*] i.e. Macbeth. Chapman, *Iliad*, v. 590, cited by Wilson (from P. Simpson), speaks of 'great Mars himselfe, matcht with his

Confronted him with self-comparisons,
Point against point, rebellious arm 'gainst arm,
Curbing his lavish spirit: and, to conclude,
The victory fell on us;—
Dun. Great happiness!
Rosse. That now
Sweno, the Norways' King, craves composition;
Nor would we deign him burial of his men
Till he disbursed at Saint Colme's Inch
Ten thousand dollars to our general use.
Dun. No more that Thane of Cawdor shall deceive

57. point, rebellious arm] *F;* point rebellious, arm *Theobald, Globe, Chambers.* 60–1.] *so Johnson, Steevens (1778); lines end* King, / composition: *F; one line (omitting* That) *Pope.* 63. Inch] ynch, *F1;* hill *F2–4.*

femall mate, / The drad Bellona'. Douce remarks that 'Shakespeare has not called Macbeth . . . the *God of War*, and there seems to be no great impropriety in *poetically* supposing that a warlike hero might be *newly married* to the Goddess of War'. Shakespeare knew that 'the fire-eyed *maid* of smoky war' (*1H4*, IV. i. 114) was not a bride.

Granville-Barker suggests that Bellona's bridegroom may not be Macbeth. But though Shakespeare was condensing three campaigns into one, there would have been no point in making some other general responsible for the victory over Sweno, in defiance of his source. Nosworthy compares *Ham.*, II. ii. 512.

lapp'd in proof] i.e. clad in armour of proof—approved or tested. Cf. *R3*, II. i. 115.

56. *Confronted . . . self-comparisons*] i.e. faced him with equal courage and skill; 'gave him a Roland for his Oliver', as Craig says. But R. Walker, *op. cit.*, chap. 2, points out that Macbeth is to match the Thane of Cawdor in treachery as well as in valour.

57.] Theobald's punctuation, wisely rejected by Cuningham, the New Clar. Edd., Kittredge, and Wilson, 'obliterated a characteristic feature of Shakespeare's style' (Simpson, quoted Wilson). Nosworthy compares *Ham.*, II. ii. 492.

58. *lavish*] i.e. insolent. Cf. *2H4*, IV. iv. 63: 'When rage and hot blood are his counsellors, / When means and lavish manners meet together'.

to conclude] To Wilson 'this sudden conclusion suggests abridgement'; but if one were not looking for evidence of abridgement, one would not suspect it here.

60. *That now*] For the construction cf. II. ii. 7, 23, *post.*

61. *Sweno*] Steevens thought, from the irregularity of the metre, that *Sweno* was only a marginal reference, thrust into the text, and that the line originally read 'That now the Norways' king craves composition'.

63. *Saint Colme's Inch*] Steevens says that 'Colmes' is here a dissyllable. *Colmes'-ynch*, now called Inchcomb, is a small island lying in the 'Frith of Edinburgh' (i.e. the Firth of Forth). Saint Colmes'-kill Isle (Pope's emendation) is Iona, in the Hebrides, a totally different place. Cf. Appendix, p. 171.

64. *dollars*] first coined *c.* 1518, some five hundred years later.

King Christian gave 10,000 dollars to 'the officers above the stairs', of whom Shakespeare was one (Paul).

Our bosom interest.—Go pronounce his present death,
And with his former title greet Macbeth.
Rosse. I'll see it done.
Dun. What he hath lost, noble Macbeth hath won. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—[*A heath.*]

Thunder. Enter the three Witches.

1 *Witch.* Where hast thou been, Sister?
2 *Witch.* Killing swine.
3 *Witch.* Sister, where thou?
1 *Witch.* A sailor's wife had chestnuts in her lap,
And mounch'd, and mounch'd, and mounch'd: 'Give me,' quoth I:—
'Aroynt thee, witch!' the rump-fed ronyon cries.

66. interest.—Go] trust. *conj. Capell.* 67. greet] great *F2–4.*

Scene III

5. And . . . I] *so Pope; two lines, the first ending* mouncht *F.* 6. Aroynt] Anoynt *F3.*

67. *former title*] R. Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 35, points out that the last title applied to the Thane of Cawdor was 'that most disloyal traitor'.

Scene III

2. *Killing swine*] Steevens quotes from *A Detection of Damnable Driftes*, etc., 1579: 'She came on a tyme to the house of one Robert Lathburie . . . who, dislyking her dealying sent her home emptie; but presently after her departure, his hogges fell sicke and died, to the number of twentie.'

6. *Aroynt thee*] Cf. *Lr.*, III. iv. 129: 'And aroint thee, witch, aroint thee'; the only other passage where the word seems to occur. The origin of the word is unknown, though it has been the subject of numerous conjectures. Ray, in his *North Country Words*, 1691, thus explains: 'Ryntye, by your leave, stand handsomly'; as ' "Rynt you, witch," quoth Bessie Locket to her mother; Proverb: Cheshire.' Halliwell, *Dict. of Archaic and Provincial Words*, says that, according to Wilbraham, 'rynt thee' is an expression used by milkmaids to a cow when she has been milked, to bid her get out of the way. Cuningham suggests the word may have some relation to the north-country and Scottish word *runt*, a term applied in contempt to an old woman. In any case, the word seems to mean 'begone'. 'A term of exorcism' (Grierson).

rump-fed] This is variously explained. (i) 'fed on offals' (Steevens). Cf. Jonson, *Staple of News*, II. iii. 78: 'And then remember, meat for my two dogs; / Fat flaps of mutton, kidneyes, rumps of veale, / Good plentious scraps.' (ii) 'fat-bottomed; fed or fattened in the rump' (Nares). (iii) 'Nut-fed' (Dyce. Cf. Killan's Dictionary: '*Rompe.* Nux myristica vilior, cassa, inanis.' The sailor's wife was eating chestnuts. (iv) 'fed on the best joints, pampered' (Clarendon). Though

Her husband's to Aleppo gone, master o'th' *Tiger*:
But in a sieve I'll thither sail,
And like a rat without a tail;
I'll do, I'll do, and I'll do.
2 *Witch.* I'll give thee a wind.

Cuningham points out that this explanation does not go well with 'ronyon', the first does not suggest the wife of a master of the *Tiger*. I incline to (iv).

ronyon] a mangy, scabby creature, and hence a term of abuse. Cf. *Wiv.*, IV. ii. 195: 'You witch, you hag, you baggage, you polecat, you ronyon!'

7. *th'*Tiger] a favourite name for ships in Shakespeare's day. Cf. *Tw.N.*, V. i. 65.

8.] Several quotations are given by Steevens in the 1821 Variorum as to the powers of witches in this respect. The New Variorum quotes from Pitcairn, *Criminal Trials*, I. ii. 217, about Agnis Tompson (Sampson), who confessed that, accompanied by 200 other witches, 'all they together went to Sea, each one in a riddle or cive, and went into the same very substantially, with flaggons of wine, making merry and drinking by the way in the same riddles or cives, to the Kirke of North Barrick in Lowthian.' Cf. *Newes from Scotland*, 1924, p. 13.

9. *tail*] Steevens mentions it as a belief of the times, that though a witch could assume the form of any animal she pleased, the tail would still be wanting, and that the reason given by some old writers for such a deficiency was, that though the hands and feet by an easy change might be converted into the four paws of a beast, there was still no part about a woman which corresponded with the length of tail common to almost all our four-footed creatures.

10. *I'll do*] Kittredge, *Witchcraft in Old and New England*, p. 13, explains: 'she will take the shape of a rat in order to slip on board the *Tiger* unnoticed. This, and not to use her teeth, is the object of the transformation. Then she will bewitch the craft and lay a spell upon the captain. There is no question of scuttling the ship.' This is doubtless correct, though some editors have supposed that the witch in the shape of a rat would gnaw through the hull and make the ship spring a leak (Clarendon) or through the rudder and make the ship drift helplessly (Grierson, prob. from Paton, *Few Notes on Macbeth*).

11. *a wind*] Witches were supposed to sell winds. See Nashe, *Terrors of the Night*, 1594 (ed. McKerrow, I. 359): 'Farre cheaper maye you buy a winde amongst them than you can buy wind or faire words in the Court. Three knots in a thred, or an odde (? olde) grandams blessing in the corner of a napkin, will carrie you all the world ouer.' Also his *Will Summers Last Will and Testament*, 1600 (ed. McKerrow, III, ll. 1219–22): 'For, as in *Ireland* and in *Denmarke* both / Witches for gold will sell a man a winde, / Which, in the corner of a napkin wrapt, / Shall blow him safe unto what coast he will'. Hunter quotes G. Fletcher, *The Russe Commonwealth*, 1591 (inc. in Hakluyt's *Voyages*, Everyman ed., II. 326–7) on the Laplanders: 'Though for enchanting of ships that saile along their coast . . . and their giving of winds good to their friends, and contrary to other, whom they meane to hurt by tying of certaine knots upon a rope (somewhat like to the tale of Æolus his windbag) is a very fable, devised (as may seeme) by themselves, to terrifie sailers for comming neere their coast.' See also Drayton, *The Moon Calfe*, 865 ff. (ed. Hebel, III. 188): 'She could sell windes to any one that would, / Buy them for money, forcing them to hold / What time she listed, tye them in a thrid, / Which ever as the Sea-farer undid / They rose or scantled, as his Sayles would drive, / To the same Port whereas he would arive.'

1 *Witch.* Th'art kind.
3 *Witch.* And I another.
1 *Witch.* I myself have all the other;
And the very ports they blow,
All the quarters that they know
I'th'shipman's card.
I'll drain him dry as hay:
Sleep shall neither night nor day
Hang upon his penthouse lid;
He shall live a man forbid.
Weary sev'n-nights nine times nine,
Shall he dwindle, peak, and pine:
Though his bark cannot be lost,

15. very] various *conj. Johnson.* ports] points *Pope.* 18. I'll] (Ile) *F;* I will *Pope, etc.* 22. sev'n-nights] *Theobald;* Seu'nights *F;* se'nnights *Globe, etc.*

14. *other*] i.e. others. Cf. Philip., ii. 3.

15. *very . . . blow*] 'the exact ports the winds blow upon' (Cuningham); but the meaning is rather that contrary winds keep the ship out of every port, and we must assume either that 'from' is understood (Abbott), or else that 'ports' is the subject (Wilson).

17. *shipman's card*] The circular piece of stiff paper on which the 32 points of the compass are marked, and hence the compass itself. But as Hunter (*New Illustrations of Shakespeare*, II. 167) points out, the word also meant *chart*; and Dyce likewise quotes Sylvester, *Du Bartas, The Triumph of Faith*, 1641, where 'my Card and Compasse' translates 'Mon Quadrant et ma Carte marine'. Cf. *Ham.*, V. i. 149: 'we must speak by the card.'

18. *I'll*] Most editors unnecessarily accept Pope's sophistication.

19–20. *Sleep . . . lid*] Cf. Macbeth's later insomnia.

20. *penthouse lid*] The eyelid slopes like the roof of a penthouse. Malone quotes Dekker, *Gul's Horne Booke* (ed. McKerrow, p. 33): 'The two eyes are the glasse windowes at which light disperses itselfe into every roome, having goodly penthouses of haire to overshadow them'; and Drayton, *David and Goliath*, 373: 'His brows like two steep penthouses hung down / Over his eyelids.'

21. *forbid*] 'as under a curse, an interdiction' (Theobald).

23. *dwindle*] The passage may have been suggested by the account in Holinshed of the bewitchment of King Duff (Appendix, p. 164). Scot, *Discouerie of Witchcraft*, XII. 16, has '*A charme teaching how to hurt whom you list with images of wax, etc.*' Waxen figures were stuck with needles or melted before a slow fire; and as the figure wasted, so wasted the person intended to be harmed. Cf. Webster, *Duchess of Malfi*, IV. i. 73: 'It wastes me more, / Than were't my picture, fashion'd out of wax, / Stucke with a magical needle, and then buried', etc.

peak] i.e. become emaciated. Cf. *Ham.*, II. ii. 594.

24–5.] Knight, *The Wheel of Fire* (1949), p. 157, applies this couplet to Macbeth; but surely *his* bark is lost.

Yet it shall be tempest-tost.
Look what I have.
2 *Witch.* Show me, show me.
1 *Witch.* Here I have a pilot's thumb,
Wrack'd, as homeward he did come. [*Drum within.*
3 *Witch.* A drum! a drum!
Macbeth doth come.
All. The Weïrd Sisters, hand in hand,
Posters of the sea and land,
Thus do go about, about:
Thrice to thine, and thrice to mine,
And thrice again, to make up nine.
Peace!—the charm's wound up.

Enter MACBETH *and* BANQUO.

Macb. So foul and fair a day I have not seen.

29. Wrack'd] (wrackt) *F;* wreckt *Theobald (ed. 2), Globe, Chambers.* 32. Weïrd] *Theobald, Wilson;* weyward *F;* weyard *Keightley;* weird *modern Edd. generally.*

30. *drum*] It is curious that though Banquo and Macbeth are alone, their arrival is announced by a drum.

32. *Weïrd*] I have adopted Theobald's spelling. The Folio spelling of *wayward* is repeated at I. v. 8 and II. i. 20. It is also to be found in Heywood, *The Late Witches of Lancashire* (1633): 'one of the Scottish wayward sisters'. He may have been influenced by the Folio spelling. Elsewhere in the Folio, however, the word is spelt *weyard*, which probably indicates how it was pronounced. The word comes from O.E. *wyrd*, M.E. *werd* (i.e. fate). Cf. Holinshed, Appendix, p. 171, 'the weird sisters, that is (as ye would say) the goddesses of destinie'.

33. *Posters*] i.e. persons who travel post, swiftly.

35–6. *Thrice . . . nine*] Odd numbers, and especially multiples of three and nine, were affected by witches. Cf. IV. i. 2 *post*. The Clar. Edd. cite Ovid, *Metam.*, xiv. 58 and vii. 189–91. Golding translates the latter: 'The starres alonly faire and bright did in the welken shine. / To which she lifting up her handes did thrise hir selfe encline: / And thrise with water of the brooke hir haire besprincled shee: / And gasping thrise she opte her mouth.'

37. *wound up*] i.e. 'set in readiness for action' (*O.E.D.*).

38. *So . . . seen*] Cf. I. i. 11. Dowden (p. 249) comments on this parallel that Shakespeare intimated by it 'that although Macbeth has not yet set eyes upon these hags, the connection is already established between his soul and them. Their spells have already wrought upon his blood.' Elwin, *Shakespeare Restored*, 1853, thinks it means '*Foul* with regard to the *weather*, and *fair* with reference to his *victory*'. But Wilson quotes James I, *Dæmonologie*, 1924, p. 39, to the effect that the Devil can 'thicken and obscure so the aire, that is next about them [witches] by contracting it strait together, that the beames of any other mans eyes cannot pearce thorow the same, to see them' [*Workes*, 1616, p. 114].

Ban. How far is't call'd to Forres?—What are these,
So wither'd and so wild in their attire,
That look not like th'inhabitants o'th'earth,
And yet are on't? Live you? or are you aught
That man may question? You seem to understand me,
By each at once her choppy finger laying
Upon her skinny lips: you should be women,
And yet your beards forbid me to interpret
That you are so.
Macb. Speak, if you can:—what are you?
1 *Witch.* All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, Thane of Glamis!
2 *Witch.* All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, Thane of Cawdor!
3 *Witch.* All hail, Macbeth! that shalt be King hereafter.
Ban. Good Sir, why do you start, and seem to fear
Things that do sound so fair?—I'th'name of truth,
Are ye fantastical, or that indeed
Which outwardly ye show? My noble partner
You greet with present grace, and great prediction
Of noble having, and of royal hope,

39. Forres] (Foris) *Pope;* Soris *F.* 44. Choppy] (choppie) *F;* chappy *Collier.*

39. *How . . . call'd*] Stopes, *Shakespeare's Industry*, p. 98, says this is a 'peculiarly Scottish idiom'. Mr David D. Murison, however, editor of *The Scottish National Dictionary*, informs me privately that though 'an old speaker in N.E. Scotland might use those very words' it might also have been used in England. Brougham, quoted in Webster's *New International Dictionary* for a similar use of the word 'call', '*might* have picked it up in Edinburgh'. Murison concludes that it is 'most highly improbable that Shakespeare meant it for a Scotticism'.

43. *question?*] 'Are ye any beings with which man is permitted to hold converse, or of whom it is lawful to ask questions?' Wilson refers to *Ham.*, I. i. 45 and I. iv. 43, and points out that 'Spirits might not speak unless first addressed.'

44. *choppy*] i.e. chapped. Cotgrave, *Dictionary*, 1611, has 'Fendu: *gaping, chappie.*' Wilson, following Bradley, suggests that the gesture means that the witches refuse to speak to Banquo; they reply directly to Macbeth.

46. *beards*] Cf. *Wiv.*, IV. ii. 202: 'By yea and no, I think the 'oman is a witch indeed. I like not when a 'oman has a great peard.'

48. *Glamis*] To Shakespeare the word was dissyllabic. Cf. I. v. 15, 54; II. ii. 41, etc.

51. *start*] a sign of guilty thoughts (Coleridge).

53. *fantastical*] imaginary. The word is used by Holinshed in the context ('some vaine fantasticall illusion') and Craig quotes Scot, *Discouerie of Witchcraft*, 'these prestigious things which are wrought by witches are fantasticall.'

55–6. *present . . . hope*] 'There is here a skilful reference to the thrice repeated "Hail" of the witches' (Hunter).

56. *having*] estate, possession, fortune. Cf. *Tw.N.*, III. iv. 379.

That he seems rapt withal: to me you speak not.
If you can look into the seeds of time,
And say which grain will grow, and which will not,
Speak then to me, who neither beg, nor fear,
Your favours nor your hate.

1 *Witch.* Hail!

2 *Witch.* Hail!

3 *Witch.* Hail!

1 *Witch.* Lesser than Macbeth, and greater.

2 *Witch.* Not so happy, yet much happier.

3 *Witch.* Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none:
So all hail, Macbeth and Banquo!

1 *Witch.* Banquo and Macbeth, all hail!

Macb. Stay, you imperfect speakers, tell me more.
By Sinel's death I know I am Thane of Glamis;
But how of Cawdor? the Thane of Cawdor lives,
A prosperous gentleman; and to be King
Stands not within the prospect of belief,
No more than to be Cawdor. Say from whence
You owe this strange intelligence? or why

57. rapt] *Pope;* wrapt *F.* 59. not] rot *conj. Porson MS.* 68–9.] *given to all three witches, Lettsom apud Dyce ed. 1866, Hudson, and conj. Cuningham.*

57. *rapt*] i.e. *extra se raptus* (Steevens). Cf. 143 *post*. The Folio was inconsistent in the spelling of this word (Clarendon).

58. *seeds of time*] 'Demons', says Curry, *Shakespeare's Philosophical Patterns*, p. 48, 'know the future development of events conjecturally though not absolutely... If time is the measure of movement of corporeal things and if corporeal things move and develop according to the impulses latent in that treasury of forces called *rationes seminales*, then these seeds of matter may literally be called the seeds of time and demons have the power of predicting which grain will grow and which will not.'

68, 69.] I am inclined to agree with Cuningham that both these lines should be assigned to *all* the weird sisters.

71. *Sinel's*] Shakespeare got the name from Holinshed (cf. Appendix, p. 171). The word 'Finele' was mistranscribed 'Synele' by Boece, and so the name reached Holinshed (Wilson).

73. *prosperous*] Cawdor's aid to the invader was secret and not discovered until after Macbeth had left the battlefield. This would seem to be the only way of explaining this epithet and Macbeth's surprise. But the point is not made clear, and there may have been a bad cut. An audience would not notice that anything was wrong.

74. *prospect*] range of vision. Cf. *Tw.N.*, III. iv. 90: 'the full prospect of my hopes'.

75–6. *whence ... intelligence*] rhyme, presumably accidental. Cf. II. iii. 128–9 *post*.

76. *owe*] own.

Upon this blasted heath you stop our way
With such prophetic greeting?—Speak, I charge you.
[*Witches vanish.*

Ban. The earth hath bubbles, as the water has,
And these are of them.—Whither are they vanish'd?

Macb. Into the air; and what seem'd corporal,
Melted as breath into the wind. Would they had stay'd!

Ban. Were such things here, as we do speak about,
Or have we eaten on the insane root,
That takes the reason prisoner?

Macb. Your children shall be kings.

Ban. You shall be King.

Macb. And Thane of Cawdor too; went it not so?

Ban. To th'selfsame tune, and words. Who's here?

78. With ... you] *so Pope; two lines, the first ending* greeting? *F.* 81–2. Into ... stay'd] *three lines, ending* corporall, / Winde. / stay'd *F.; two lines, ending* melted / stay'd; *Capell and most modern Edd.* 84. on] of *F4.*

78.] The Folio line-division leaves room for a necessary pause after 'greeting!'

79. *bubbles*] Wilson interprets this to mean 'illusions' and refers to *O.E.D.*, which, however, quotes this line as an illustration of the ordinary meaning of the word. Banquo simply means that the witches have vanished like a bubble.

81–2. *Into ... stay'd*] The lines are easier to speak if 'melted' is placed at the beginning of the line as in F. The second of these lines is printed as two by F to indicate the significant pause after *wind*.

81. *corporal*] i.e. corporeal, a form which Shakespeare never uses. Cf. *Ham.*, III. iv. 118: 'incorporal air'.

82. *as ... wind*] Coleridge, *Shakespearean Criticism*, I. 69, notes the appropriateness of the simile to a cold climate; and Wilson adds that it is also apt to a Scotch mist.

84. *on*] For this common usage, cf. V. i. 60 *post* and *MND.*, II. i. 266.

the insane root] i.e. which produces insanity. This may be hemlock, henbane, or deadly nightshade. Steevens quotes Greene, *Never Too Late* (ed. Grosart, p. 195): 'you haue eaten of the rootes of Hemlock, that makes men's eyes conceipt vnseene obiects.' Cf. IV. i. 25 *post*. Malone quotes Plutarch, *Life of Antonius* (Temple ed., p. 63). The Roman soldiers in the Parthian War were driven by hunger 'to tast of rootes that were never eaten before; among the which there was one that killed them, and made them out of thir wits. For he that had once eaten of it, his memorye went from him, and he knew no manner of thing.' Douce quotes Batman, *Uppon Bartholome de propriet. rerum*, XVIII. 87: 'Henbane ... is called *Insana*, mad, for the use thereof is perillous, for if it be eate or dronke, it breedeth madness ... is called commonly *Mirilidium*, for it taketh away wit and reason.' The Clar. Edd. suggest that Shakespeare was thinking of the Mekilwort berries, mentioned by Holinshed (Appendix, p. 170). Boece speaks of them as deadly nightshade, which 'troubleth the minde, bringeth madnes if a fewe of the berries be inwardly taken' (Gerard, *Herball*).

88. *To ... words*] Banquo quibbles on 'went' (Wilson). J. M. Nosworthy

Enter ROSSE *and* ANGUS.

Rosse. The King hath happily receiv'd, Macbeth,
The news of thy success; and when he reads
Thy personal venture in the rebels' fight,
His wonders and his praises do contend,
Which should be thine, or his: silenc'd with that,
In viewing o'er the rest o'th'selfsame day,
He finds thee in the stout Norweyan ranks,
Nothing afeard of what thyself didst make,
Strange images of death. As thick as hail,
Came post with post; and every one did bear
Thy praises in his kingdom's great defence,
And pour'd them down before him.
Ang. We are sent,
To give thee from our royal master thanks;
Only to herald thee into his sight,
Not pay thee.
Rosse. And, for an earnest of a greater honour,
He bade me, from him, call thee Thane of Cawdor:

91. rebels'] *Theobald;* Rebels *F;* rebel's *Johnson.* 96. afeard] afraid *F4.* 97–8. hail, Came] *Rowe;* tale Can *F;* tale, Came *Malone* (*conj. Johnson*). 102–3. Only . . . pay thee] *one line, Singer.*

points out that in all accounts of the episode Macbeth and Banquo joked about the 'prophesies'.

91, 95.] referring to the two phases of the fight, against Macdonwald, and against Norway.

92–3. *His wonders . . . his*] There is a conflict in Duncan's mind between his astonishment at the achievement and his admiration for Macbeth.

93. *Which . . . his*] R. Walker, *op. cit.*, comments that 'in Macbeth's rebel heart that is the very question.'

that] 'the mental conflict just described' (Clarendon).

97. *images of death*] Cf. Virgil, *Aen.*, II. 369: 'plurima mortis imago' (Sprague). See Empson, *Seven Types of Ambiguity*, 1930, pp. 58–9.

thick as hail] Rowe's emendation is generally accepted. Though Johnson retained the Folio reading, and explained, 'posts arrived as fast as they could be counted', Dyce showed that whereas 'thick as tale' is unknown 'thick as hail' is common. He instances, e.g., Harington, *Orlando Furioso*, xvi. 51 (1591). It is twice used by Holinshed, not far from *Macbeth* sources.

100. *pour'd*] continues image of 'hail' (Wilson).

104. *for . . . honour*] R. Walker, *op. cit.*, suggests that as Rosse has been given no message from Duncan which would justify this phrase, he 'has become an oracle, repeating the greatest promise of the Witches'. At least Macbeth may take it as such.

earnest] 'mony giuen for the conclusion, or striking vp, of a bargaine' (Cotgrave).

In which addition, hail, most worthy Thane,
For it is thine.
Ban. What! can the Devil speak true?
Macb. The Thane of Cawdor lives: why do you dress me
In borrow'd robes?
Ang. Who was the Thane, lives yet;
But under heavy judgment bears that life
Which he deserves to lose. Whether he was combin'd
With those of Norway, or did line the rebel
With hidden help and vantage, or that with both
He labour'd in his country's wrack, I know not;
But treasons capital, confess'd and prov'd,
Have overthrown him.
Macb. [*Aside.*] Glamis, and Thane of Cawdor:
The greatest is behind. [*To Rosse and Angus*] Thanks
for your pains.—
[*To Banquo*] Do you not hope your children shall be
kings,
When those that gave the Thane of Cawdor to me
Promis'd no less to them?

108–9. The Thane . . . yet;] *so Capell; three lines, ending* liues: / Robes? / yet. *F.* 109. borrow'd] his borrowed *F2–4.* 111–14. Which . . . know not;] *so Malone; five lines, ending* loose, / Norway, / helpe, / labour'd / not: *F; four lines, ending* was / Rebell / both / not; *Pope.* 112. did] else did *F2–4.* 114. wrack] wreck *Theobald.* 116. S.D.] *Rowe.* 117. S.D.] *White.*

106. *addition*] 'a Title given to a Man over and above his Christian and Sir-name, shewing his Estate, Degree, Mystery, Trade, Place of dwelling, etc.' (Blount, Law Dict. (1670)).

108–9. *dress . . . robes*] This image recurs throughout the play. Cf. Spurgeon, *Shakespeare's Imagery*, pp. 325–7.

111–14.] Wilson remarks that the mislineation in the Folio suggests adaptation. But there is a good deal of mislineation in F where adaptation is not suspected. Granville-Barker (*Preface*, p. xxvii) remarks that it is strange that Angus should say these words of Cawdor. 'Shakespeare was not apt to leave things in such a muddle at the beginning of a play.' But perhaps the muddle helps to create the atmosphere of 'deceitful appearance, and consequent doubt, uncertainty, and confusion' (Knights, *op. cit.*, p. 18).

R. Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 23, explains: 'The poet is shifting the emphasis from the former thane of Cawdor's particular faults which are past to a statement in general terms which ostensibly describes those faults but actually foreshadows also the faults, the "treasons capital" that will "overthrow" the new thane of Cawdor. He achieves his purpose by casting this slight haze of doubt over the particular faults and speaking in the most positive and arresting terms of the general sins that are common to both cases.'

112. *line*] strengthen, reinforce. Cf. *H5*, II. iv. 7: 'To line and new repair our towns of war'.

Ban. That, trusted home,
Might yet enkindle you unto the crown,
Besides the Thane of Cawdor. But 'tis strange:
And oftentimes, to win us to our harm,
The instruments of Darkness tell us truths;
Win us with honest trifles, to betray's
In deepest consequence.—
Cousins, a word, I pray you.
Macb. [*Aside.*] Two truths are told,
As happy prologues to the swelling act
Of the imperial theme.—I thank you, gentlemen.—
[*Aside.*] This supernatural soliciting
Cannot be ill; cannot be good:—
If ill, why hath it given me earnest of success,
Commencing in a truth? I am Thane of Cawdor:
If good, why do I yield to that suggestion
Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair,
And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,
Against the use of nature? Present fears
Are less than horrible imaginings.
My thought, whose murther yet is but fantastical,

120. trusted] thrusted *conj. Malone.* 125. betray's] betray us *Rowe.* 126–7. In . . . you] *one line, Capell.* 127. S.D.] *Rowe.* 131–2. good . . . success,] *so F; lines end* ill, / success, *Rowe, etc.* 135. hair] *Rowe;* Heire *F.* 139. murther] murder *Steevens (1778).*

120. *home*] thoroughly, fully, largely (Cotgrave). Cf. *Cym.*, III. v. 92.

121. *enkindle you*] 'excites you to hope for' (Bradley). Banquo does not think of foul play.

122–6. *But . . . consequence*] The application to Macbeth is obvious.

123. *to win . . . harm*] Cf. James I, *Dæmonologie*, in *Workes*, 1616, p. 98: 'for that old and craftie serpent being a Spirit, he easily spies our affections, and so conformes himself thereto to deceiue vs to our wracke'.

128. *the swelling act*] Cf. *H5*, Prol., 3–4: 'A kingdom for a stage, princes to act, / And monarchs to behold the swelling scene'.

130–1.] The 'sickening sea-saw rhythm completes the impression of "a phantasma, or a hideous dream" ' (Knights, *op. cit.*, p. 20). Flatter also supports the F lineation. Knight, *The Wheel of Fire*, 1949, p. 153, comments: 'This is the moment of the birth of evil in Macbeth—he may indeed have had ambitious thoughts before, may even have intended the murder, but now for the first time he feels its oncoming reality.'

135. *horrid image*] i.e. of himself murdering Duncan.

137. *Against . . . nature*] contrary to my natural habit (Kittredge).

fears] objects of fear. Cf. *MND.*, v. i. 21: 'Or in the night, imagining some fear'.

139–41. *My . . . surmise*] Kenneth Muir, *N.Q.*, June 1956, suggested that these lines and II. i. 36–47 were both influenced by Cassandra's prophecy in Studley's translation of Seneca's *Agamemnon*, Act V.

Shakes so my single state of man,
That function is smother'd in surmise,
And nothing is, but what is not.
Ban. Look, how our partner's rapt.
Macb. [*Aside.*] If Chance will have me King, why, Chance
may crown me,
Without my stir.
Ban. New honours come upon him,
Like our strange garments, cleave not to their mould,
But with the aid of use.
Macb. [*Aside.*] Come what come may,
Time and the hour runs through the roughest day.

140–3. Shakes . . . rapt.] *so F; lines end* function / is / rapt. *Pope and most modern Edd.* 144. If . . . crown me,] *so Rowe; two lines, the first ending* King *F.*

139. *fantastical*] imaginary. Cf. I. iii. 53 *ante*.

140–2.] I have restored the F arrangement of these lines, as nearly every actor speaks them thus and, I think, correctly.

140. *single . . . man*] Steevens observes that '*double* and *single* anciently signified *strong* and *weak*'. Cf. *Oth.*, I. ii. 14: 'As double as the Duke's', and *2H4*, I. ii. 207: 'Is not . . . your wit single?' and cf. I. vi. 16 *post*. But Grierson—I think rightly—says that *single* here means 'indivisible' and the phrase as a whole 'my composite nature—body, spirits, etc., made one by the soul'. Though Wilson regards a reference to the microcosm pointless in this context, I believe that such a reference is made. Cf. *Caes.*, II. i. 63–9, where the same phrase, 'state of man' occurs, and where the reference to the microcosm is explicit.

141. *function*] The intellectual activity which is revealed in outward conduct: but the word is applied to action in general, whether physical or mental. 'All powers of action are oppressed and crushed by one overwhelming image in the mind, and nothing is present to me but that which is really future. Of things now about me I have no perception, being intent wholly on that which has no existence' (Johnson).

142. *nothing . . . not*] Knight, *The Wheel of Fire*, 1949, p. 153, says this is 'the text of the play. Reality and unreality change places.' Coleridge, *op. cit.*, I. 69–70, says: 'So truly is the guilt in its germ anterior to the supposed cause and immediate temptation . . . a confirmation of the remark on the early birth-date of guilt'.

143. *rapt*] Cf. line 57 *ante*. According to Flatter's rules, Banquo should not be made to complete Macbeth's line; but it is difficult to regard Banquo's speeches as linked together metrically.

145. *come*] probably the participle, not the finite verb.

146. *Like . . . mould*] another image taken from clothes.

148. *Time . . . hour*] Grant White, *Words and their Uses*, 1871, p. 237, says: 'Time and the hour in this passage is merely an equivalent of time and tide—the time and tide that wait for no man.' Shakespeare may use 'runs' intransitively; but Cuningham thinks it is used transitively, meaning, 'runs the roughest day through'. Dyce, *Few Notes*, etc., 1853, p. 119, remarks that 'this expression is not infrequent in

Ban. Worthy Macbeth, we stay upon your leisure.
Macb. Give me your favour: my dull brain was wrought
With things forgotten. Kind gentlemen, your pains
Are register'd where every day I turn
The leaf to read them.—Let us toward the King.—
[*To Banquo*] Think upon what hath chanc'd; and
at more time,
The Interim having weigh'd it, let us speak
Our free hearts each to other.
Ban. Very gladly.
Macb. Till then, enough.—Come, friends. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—[*Forres. A room in the palace.*]

Flourish. Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, LENOX, *and Attendants.*

Dun. Is execution done on Cawdor? Or not
Those in commission yet return'd?

150–4. Give . . . time,] *so Pope; seven lines, ending* fauour / forgotten / registred, / leafe, / them / vpon / time, *F; six lines, ending* favour: / forgotten. / register'd / them / King / time *Knight.* 154. S.D.] *Rowe.* 155. The] I' th' *conj. Steevens;* In the *Keightley.* 157. Till . . . friends] *so Pope; two lines, the first ending* enough.—*F.*

Scene IV

S.D. *Forres . . . palace.*] *Capell; not in F.* 1–2. Is . . . return'd?] *so Capell; two lines, the first ending* Cawdor? *F.* 1. Or] *F1;* Are *F2–4.*

Italian'—e.g. '*il tempo e così l'ora*' (Pulci).

150. *favour*] pardon.

wrought] agitated. Cf. *Oth.*, v. ii. 345.

151. *things forgotten*] i.e. which he is trying to recall. He is lying.

152–3. *register'd . . . them*] i.e. in his brain.

155. *The Interim*] Steevens says, 'Thus the intervening portion of time is personified; it is represented as a cool impartial judge; as the *pauser Reason.*' Malone, however, believes it is used adverbially. The word is here printed in the Folio with a capital letter and in italics, as in *Caes.*, II. i. 64, but not elsewhere in the Folio.

Scene IV

This scene, says Knights, *Explorations,* p. 21, 'suggests the natural order which is shortly to be violated. It stresses natural relationships . . . honourable bonds and the political order . . . and the human "love" is linked to the more purely natural by images of husbandry.' Cf. Knight, *The Imperial Theme,* p. 126, and Traversi, *Approach to Shakespeare,* 1938, p. 88.

1. *Or*] Cuningham suggests that the reading of the First Folio may be correct, the verb being understood.

2. *in commission*] charged with the duty.

Mal. My Liege,
They are not yet come back; but I have spoke
With one that saw him die: who did report,
That very frankly he confess'd his treasons,
Implor'd your Highness' pardon, and set forth
A deep repentance. Nothing in his life
Became him like the leaving it: he died
As one that had been studied in his death,
To throw away the dearest thing he ow'd,
As 'twere a careless trifle.
Dun. There's no art
To find the mind's construction in the face:
He was a gentleman on whom I built
An absolute trust—

Enter MACBETH, BANQUO, ROSSE, *and* ANGUS.

O worthiest cousin!
The sin of my ingratitude even now
Was heavy on me. Thou art so far before,
That swiftest wing of recompense is slow
To overtake thee: would thou hadst less deserv'd,
That the proportion both of thanks and payment
Might have been mine! only I have left to say,
More is thy due than more than all can pay.
Macb. The service and the loyalty I owe,

2–8. My . . . died] *so Pope; seven lines, ending* back. / die: / hee / Pardon, / Repentance: / him, / dy'de, *F.* 9–10. studied . . . To] studied, . . . death, To *Keightley;* studied . . . death To *Dyce (ed. 2).* 17. That] The *Jennens.* wing] *F1;* wine *F2–4;* wind *Rowe.*

9. *studied*] a theatrical term, meaning 'learnt by heart'.

10–11. *To . . . trifle*] R. Walker compares III. i. 67–8 *post.*

11–12. *There's . . . face*] 'We cannot construe or discover the disposition of the mind by the lineaments of the face' (Johnson). Baldwin compares Juvenal, *Satires,* ii. 8 ff., '*Frontis nulla fides*'. The irony of the speech is pointed by the immediate entrance of Macbeth, as critics have observed.

19–20. *That . . . mine*] i.e. that I might have been able to give you thanks and reward in proportion to your merits. *O.E.D.* quotes this passage and defines 'proportion' as 'the action of making proportionate'.

22–7.] Coleridge, *Shakespearean Criticism,* I. 70, declares that 'Macbeth has nothing but the commonplaces of loyalty, in which he hides himself. . . *Reasoning* instead of joy . . . the same language of *effort* . . . at the moment that a new difficulty suggests a new crime.'

In doing it, pays itself. Your Highness' part
Is to receive our duties: and our duties
Are to your throne and state, children and servants;
Which do but what they should, by doing everything
Safe toward your love and honour.

Dun. Welcome hither:
I have begun to plant thee, and will labour
To make thee full of growing.—Noble Banquo,
That hast no less deserv'd, nor must be known
No less to have done so, let me infold thee,
And hold thee to my heart.

Ban. There if I grow,
The harvest is your own.

Dun. My plenteous joys,
Wanton in fulness, seek to hide themselves
In drops of sorrow.—Sons, kinsmen, Thanes,
And you whose places are the nearest, know,
We will establish our estate upon

23–7. In . . . honour] *so Pope; six lines, ending* selfe. / Duties: / State, / should, / Loue / Honor. *F.* 27. Safe] Shap'd *Hanmer;* Fief'd *Warburton;* Fiefs *conj. idem;* Serves *conj. Heath;* saf'd *conj. Malone;* Slaves *conj. Kinnear;* Sole *conj. Orson.* your] you *conj. Blackstone.* love] Life *Warburton.* 30. That] Thou *Pope.* nor] and *Rowe.* 35. Sons] Sons and *conj. Cuningham.*

27. *Safe . . . honour*] 'with a sure regard to your love and honour' (Clarendon) or 'to confer security on you whom we love and honour'.

28. *plant*] Cf. *All's W.*, II. iii. 163: 'It is in us to plant thine honour where we please to have it grow.'

33–5. *My . . . sorrow*] Cf. *Rom.*, III. ii. 102–14; *Ado*, I. i. 26–9; and *Wint.*, v. ii. 49–50. Malone quotes Lucan, *Phars.* ix. 1038: '—lacrymas non sponte cadentes / Effudit, gemitusque expressit pectore laeto / Non aliter manifesta potens abscondere mentis / Gaudia, quam lacrymis.'

34. *Wanton*] unrestrained, perverse.

35. *Sons, kinsmen*] Cuningham wanted to mend the metre by inserting 'and' between these two words. But there must be a pause while Duncan masters his emotion. Adams thinks that two scenes have been run together or at least that portions of the text are lost because (i) we lose a day while Macbeth makes enquiries about the weird sisters; (ii) the weak Duncan suddenly exhibits strength by arranging for his son to succeed him; and (iii) announces in an unexpected and brief clause—almost unintelligible—that he proposes to visit Macbeth at Inverness. Bradley and Wilson also suspect a cut. But see Thaler, *Shakespeare and Democracy*, pp. 88–105, for a refutation of Adams. (i) Shakespeare was not realistic in his treatment of time; (ii) Duncan was not weak, and even if he were, a sudden announcement is not incompatible with weakness; (iii) the clause is intelligible enough—though I too suspect there may have been a cut here.

37. *establish our estate*] settle the succession.

Our eldest, Malcolm; whom we name hereafter
The Prince of Cumberland: which honour must
Not unaccompanied invest him only,
But signs of nobleness, like stars, shall shine
On all deservers.—From hence to Inverness,
And bind us further to you.

Macb. The rest is labour, which is not us'd for you:
I'll be myself the harbinger, and make joyful
The hearing of my wife with your approach;
So, humbly take my leave.

Dun. My worthy Cawdor!

Macb. [*Aside.*] The Prince of Cumberland!—That is a step
On which I must fall down, or else o'erleap,
For in my way it lies. Stars, hide your fires!
Let not light see my black and deep desires;
The eye wink at the hand; yet let that be,
Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see. [*Exit.*

Dun. True, worthy Banquo: he is full so valiant,
And in his commendations I am fed;
It is a banquet to me. Let's after him,

48. S.D.] *Rowe.* 51. not] *F;* no *Hanmer.* light] Night *Warburton.* 56. Let's] *F;* Let us *Pope, etc.*

39. *The . . . Cumberland*] 'The crown of Scotland was originally not hereditary. When a successor was declared in the life-time of a king, as was often the case, the title of *Prince of Cumberland* was immediately bestowed on him as the mark of his designation. Cumberland was at that time held by Scotland of the crown of England as a fief' (Steevens).

45. *harbinger*] an officer of the household whose duty it was to provide lodgings for the king, hence 'forerunner'.

48–53.] Granville-Barker, *Preface*, p. xxvii, remarks that 'the disclosure of Macbeth's mind, not in a soliloquy, but in two rather ineptly contrived asides, is surely, in such a play and with such a character, un-Shakespearean.' Fleay suspected this passage was written by Middleton. But the imagery is Shakespearian. Compare 49 with I. vii. 27; 50 with I. v. 50 and II. i. 5; and 52 with several passages in which eye and hand are opposed. See Introduction, p. xxvii, and cf. Spurgeon, *Shakespeare's Imagery*, pp. 329.

50. *Stars*] 'Macbeth apparently appeals to the stars because he is contemplating night as the time for the perpetration of the deed. There is nothing to indicate that this scene took place at night' (Clarendon). Cf. Lady Macbeth's speech I. v. 50–4. R. Walker *op. cit.*, compares 41 *ante* and comments: 'it is the signs of nobleness in his own nature that he would obscure.'

52. *wink at*] seem not to see, connive. Cf. Introduction, p. xxvii.

be] i.e. be done.

56. *banquet*] Cuningham suggests that this is what we now call dessert—a slight refection, consisting of cakes, sweetmeats, and fruit, and generally served in a room to which the guests removed after dinner; but as the

Whose care is gone before to bid us welcome:
It is a peerless kinsman. [*Flourish. Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—[*Inverness. A room in* MACBETH's *castle.*]

Enter LADY MACBETH, *reading a letter.*

Lady M. 'They met me in the day of success; and I have learn'd by the perfect'st report, they have more in them than mortal knowledge. When I burn'd in desire to question them further, they made themselves air, into which they vanish'd. Whiles I stood rapt in the wonder of it, came missives from the King, who all-hail'd me, "Thane of Cawdor"; by which title, before, these Weïrd Sisters saluted me, and referr'd me to the coming on of time, with "Hail, King that shalt be!" This have I thought good to deliver thee (my dearest partner of greatness) that thou might'st not lose the dues of rejoicing, by being ignorant of what greatness is promis'd thee. Lay it to thy heart, and farewell.'

Scene v

S.D. *Inverness . . . castle.*] *Capell.* 8. Weïrd] *Cf. I. iii. 32.* 10. be!] be hereafter *conj. Upton.* 12. the] thy *conj. Capell.*

ordinary sense of the word is common in Shakespeare and as several critics have stressed the importance of banquets in the play, as a visible sign of the concord violated by Macbeth's crimes—see, e.g., Knight, *The Imperial Theme*—it is unlikely that Shakespeare here intended the restricted sense of the word.

58. *kinsman*] Macbeth was Duncan's first-cousin.

Scene v

1. *success*] Although the common sense of this word in Shakespeare's day was 'issue', 'sequel', or 'consequence' of a thing, it is used here and at I. iii. 90 *ante* in the modern sense. Cf. note to I. vii. 4 *post*.

2. *the perfect'st report*] 'the best intelligence' (Johnson); 'my own experience' (Clarendon); Rosse's report of the King's intention to invest Macbeth with the thaneship of Cawdor (Leighton). Johnson's explanation, implying that Macbeth had made enquiries about the weird sisters, is clearly right.

6. *missives*] messengers. Cf. *Ant.*, II. ii. 74: 'Did gibe my missive out of audience'.

7. *all-hail'd*] Florio, *Worlde of Wordes*, 1598, gives as meanings of *salutare*, 'to greet, to salute, to recommend, to all-haile'.

14. *farewell*] R. Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 43, comments that Macbeth does not mention Banquo. 'He has suppressed

Glamis thou art, and Cawdor; and shalt be
What thou art promis'd.—Yet do I fear thy nature:
It is too full o'th'milk of human kindness,
To catch the nearest way. Thou wouldst be great;
Art not without ambition, but without
The illness should attend it: what thou wouldst highly,

15. be] be— *Kittredge.* 17. human] *Rowe;* humane *F.* human kindness] humankindness *conj. Moulton.*

the one piece of news that would show the flaw in the plot against Duncan, and deliberately made his wife believe that the prophecy . . . is a secret of which he was the sole possessor.' But we only hear the second half of the letter.

15–30. *Glamis . . . withal*] Stewart, *M.L.R.*, 1945, p. 173, points out that 'the speech will be satisfactory if we only admit that the portrayal of Lady Macbeth, and of her relations with her husband, are factors in it; and that a certain distortion of Macbeth's character is entailed in this. On Macbeth himself the speech does indeed throw new and useful light, such as is desirable in an exposition, for we chiefly gather from it that he is not likely to be immediately wholehearted in villainy and that some spiritual struggle is to be expected of him. But the speech is also charged with certain feelings of Lady Macbeth's which lead her to exaggerate what she pervertedly regards as her husband's insufficiencies, and this renders more striking and terrible our first impression of her.' Lady Macbeth suddenly realizes 'forces in his nature that may militate against her designs. These she does not review "objectively" but magnifies in passion and scorn. And this should be clear to us. For we already know that Macbeth has murder in his thoughts.'

15. *shalt be*] Lady Macbeth, in repeating the words of the Third Sister, instinctively checks herself at the word *King*, and substitutes a reticent phrase (Kittredge).

17. *th'milk . . . kindness*] Cuningham points out that it is essential to remember the radical signification of the words *kind, kindness*, as meaning *natural* and *nature*. Moulton, *Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist*, p. 149, therefore suggests that we should read *humankind* as meaning *human nature*; 'and that the sense of the whole passage would be more obvious if the whole phrase were printed as one word, not "human kindness" but "humankind-ness" '—that shrinking from the unnatural which is a marked feature of the practical man. 'The other part of the clause, *milk* of humankindness, no doubt suggests absence of hardness: but it equally connotes natural inherited traditional feelings imbibed at the mother's breast.' But cf. *Lr.*, I. iv. 364: 'This milky gentleness and course of yours', and line 48 *post* ('take my milk for gall') which certainly suggest that *milk* implies an absence of hardness; and *humane* was the only spelling down to the end of the eighteenth century, when *human* was substituted in certain senses, leaving *humane* as a distinct word, with distinctive meanings. There is therefore no reason for altering the text. Lady Macbeth implies that her husband is squeamish and sentimental. She may also imply that he is bound by traditional feelings. See headnote to Sc. iv *ante* and the reference to 'the milk of concord' (IV. iii. 98). Cf. Appendix A, p. 181.

One of the subjects debated at Oxford in August 1605 was the nurse's influence on a baby's character (Paul).

20. *illness*] evilness, wickedness. The word was not used for 'sickness' in Shakespeare's day.

That wouldst thou holily; wouldst not play false,
And yet wouldst wrongly win; thou'dst have, great
Glamis,
That which cries, 'Thus thou must do,' if thou have it;
And that which rather thou dost fear to do,
Than wishest should be undone. Hie thee hither,
That I may pour my spirits in thine ear,
And chastise with the valour of my tongue
All that impedes thee from the golden round,
Which fate and metaphysical aid doth seem
To have thee crown'd withal.

Enter a Messenger.

What is your tidings?

Mess. The King comes here to-night.

Lady M. Thou'rt mad to say it.
Is not thy master with him? who, were't so,

22–3. And . . . it;] *so Pope; three lines, ending* winne. / cryes, / it; *F.* 23. 'Thus . . . do'] *so Hunter; final inverted comma placed after* undone, *Pope; placed after* have it; *Hanmer, Capell.* 25. Hie] *F4;* High *F1–3.* 28. impedes thee] thee hinders *F2–3.*

22–5. *thou'dst . . . undone*] The chief difficulty here is the extent of the quotation. Pope put the whole passage in inverted commas, and he has been followed by most editors (i.e. 'Thus . . . undone'). Hanmer, Capell, Verity, Wilson, and others end the quotation at the end of line 23. Hunter (*Illustrations*, II. 172) only marks 'Thus thou must do' as such. I think he is right, because that which cries is the crown, and if 'it' were part of the quotation, one would expect 'me' instead. As Verity explains, 'thou'ldst have' has two objects, the crown (23) and the murder by which the crown may be obtained (24–5). Cuningham wished to follow Keightley and emend the second 'thou' in 23 to 'thou'ldst'. But Shakespeare wisely avoided the more logical form because he already had a plethora of *wouldsts* and there could be no doubt of the meaning.

27. *chastise*] The accent is on the first syllable. Cf. *R2*, II. iii. 104.

28. *golden round*] Cf. IV. i. 88.

29. *metaphysical*] supernatural.

seem] Cf. I. ii. 48 *ante*.

30. *tidings*] singular or plural, like 'news'. Cf. *AYL.*, V. iv. 159: 'these tidings'; *Ant.*, IV. xiv. 112: 'this tidings'. Flatter suggests that Lady Macbeth's question should form a line with the messenger's speech which follows, so as to allow for a dramatic pause after *say it*.

31. *The King . . . to-night*] R. Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 46, makes the ingenious suggestion that as Lady Macbeth has been thinking of her husband as King, she thinks for a moment that the messenger refers to him and not to Duncan.

31–3. *Thou'rt . . . preparation*] Lady Macbeth, in replying to the messenger, discloses what has been passing in her own mind, and then, observing the man's surprise, she adds a not very convincing explanation.

Would have inform'd for preparation.

Mess. So please you, it is true: our Thane is coming;
One of my fellows had the speed of him,
Who, almost dead for breath, had scarcely more
Than would make up his message.

Lady M. Give him tending:
He brings great news. [*Exit Messenger.*] The raven
himself is hoarse,
That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
Under my battlements. Come, you Spirits

38. He . . . hoarse] *so Rowe; two lines, the first ending* news. *F.*

33. *inform'd*] absolute or intransitive.

35. *had the speed of*] Cf. *Ado.*, I. i. 142: 'I would my horse had the speed of your tongue.' But the phrase in *Macbeth* means 'out-distanced', in *Ado*, 'went as fast as'.

37. *tending*] Shakespeare does not elsewhere use this word as a substantive.

38–9. *The raven . . . croaks*] Some think that the reference is to the breathless messenger, but lack of breath does not cause hoarseness. As Hunter says, the phrase means 'even the raven . . . has more than its usual harshness'; or perhaps, as Manly suggests, the implication is that 'the approach of an ordinary guest might be announced by a magpie, but for such a visit as Duncan's the hoarse croaking of a raven would alone be appropriate.' Collier cites Drayton, *Barons' Wars*, v. 42: 'The ominous raven with a dismal cheer, / Through his hoarse beak of following horror tells. / The lines, however, were altered by Drayton (ed. Hebel, II. 95): 'The ominous Raven, often he doth heare, / Whose croking, him of following Horror tells.' Cf. also *Oth.*, IV. i. 21: 'As doth the raven o'er the infected house, / Boding to all'; and Nashe, *Terrors of the Night* (ed. McKerrow, I. 346) on the raven also: 'A continuall messenger hee is of dole and misfortune.'

39. *entrance*] This word is a trisyllable. The retention of *e* is frequently required *metri gratia*, when a mute is followed by a liquid. Cf. III. vi. 8 and *Tw.N.*, I. i. 32, 'remembrance'.

40–54. *Come . . . hold!*] Inga-Stina Ewbank has suggested (*S.S.*, XIX. 82 ff.) that Shakespeare in these lines, and also in I. vii. 54–8, was influenced by Studley's translation of Seneca's *Medea*.

40. *Come, you Spirits*] Wilson comments: 'All critics have noticed the effect of the metrical pause before "Come" and the tremendous lines that follow.' But to judge from the fact that editors have followed Davenant in reading 'Come, all you spirits,' the statement is an exaggeration. Darmesteter supports this emendation by comparing Hughes, *Misfortunes of Arthur*, I. ii (an echo of the opening lines of Seneca's *Medea*): 'Come, spiteful fiends, come heaps of furies fell, / Not one by one, but all at once!' Steevens suggested a repetition of 'Come'; and Cuningham argued for 'Come, you ill spirits.' Nevertheless these emendations spoil the effectiveness of the passage and deprive the actress of the chance of taking the long breath she obviously needs. Malone quotes Nashe, *Pierce Penilesse*, ed. McKerrow, I. 230, where he thinks 'Shakespeare might have found a particular description of these spirits and of their office': 'The Second kind of Diuels, which he most imployeth, are those Northerne *Marcij*, called the

That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,
And fill me, from the crown to the toe, top-full
Of direst cruelty! make thick my blood,
Stop up th'access and passage to remorse;
That no compunctious visitings of Nature
Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between
Th'effect and it! Come to my woman's breasts,
And take my milk for gall, you murth'ring ministers,
Wherever in your sightless substances
You wait on Nature's mischief! Come, thick Night,

46. peace] pace *Travers (conj. Johnson)*; space *conj. Bailey*. 47. it] *F3–4*; hit *F1–2*.

spirits of reuenge, & the authors of massacres, & seedesmen of mischiefe; for they haue commission to incense men to rapines, sacriledge, theft, murther, wrath, furie, and all manner of cruelties, & they commaund certaine of the Southern spirits (as slaues) to wayt vpon them, as also *Arioch*, that is tearmed the spirite of reuenge.'

Burton, *Anatomy of Melancholy*, I. ii. 1, 2 mentions nine kinds of bad spirits. See Introduction, p. lxi, for a comment on this invocation.

41. *mortal thoughts*] 'murderous, deadly, or destructive designs' (Johnson). Cf. III. iv. 80 and IV. iii. 3.

42. *crown . . . toe*] Baret's *Alvearie* has: 'From the top to the toe, *a capite ad calcem usque*'.

top-full] Cf. *John*, III. iv. 180.

43. *make . . . blood*] Wilson compares *Wint.*, I. ii. 171, and *John*, III. iii. 42–7. She means 'so that pity cannot flow along her veins' and reach her heart (Bradley).

44. *remorse*] compassion, tenderness. Cf. *Mer.V.*, IV. i. 20. 'Used anciently to signify repentance not only for a deed done but for a thought conceived' (Clarendon).

45. *compunctious*] not used elsewhere by Shakespeare.

46–7. *nor . . . it*] 'use the restraining power of a peacemaker . . . between my purpose and the achievement of it' (New Clarendon). Steevens quotes Brooke, *Romeus and Juliet* (1562), 1781 ff.: 'the lady no way could / Kepe trewse betweene her greefes and her.'

48. *take . . . gall*] 'Take away my milk, and put gall into the place' (Johnson); 'Nourish yourselves with my milk which . . . has turned to gall' (Delius); take = infect (Keightley). The last explanation is the best. Cuningham compares *1H6*, v. iv. 27: 'I would the milk / Thy mother gave thee when thou suck'dst her breast, / Had been a little ratsbane for thy sake!'

ministers] attendant spirits (Wilson).

49. *sightless*] invisible. Cf. I. vii. 23.

50. *Nature's mischief*] According to Johnson this means 'mischief done to nature, violation of nature's order committed by wickedness'; Elwin thinks it means 'both injury engendered in human nature and done to it'; and Cuningham thinks it may mean 'mischief wrought by any natural phenomenon, such as storm, tempest, earthquake, etc.' Curry's explanation of the whole clause, *Shakespeare's Philosophical Patterns*, p. 86, is 'objective, substantial forms, invisible bad angels, to whose activities may be attributed all the unnatural occurrences of nature'.

50–4. *Come . . . hold*] Cf. Munday, *The Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntington*, 1601: 'Muffle the eye of day, / Ye gloomie clouds (the darker than my

And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of Hell,
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,
Nor Heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,
To cry, 'Hold, hold!'

Enter MACBETH.

Great Glamis! worthy Cawdor!
Greater than both, by the all-hail hereafter!
Thy letters have transported me beyond
This ignorant present, and I feel now
The future in the instant.

53. blanket] blank height *conj. Coleridge*.

deedes, / That darker be than pitchie sable night) / Muster together on these high topt trees, / That not a sparke of light thorough their sprayes / May hinder what I meane to execute.' See *M.L.N.*, 1931, and cf. III. ii. 46–7 *post*.

51. *dunnest*] an epithet criticized by Johnson (*Rambler*, no. 168) as 'mean'; but the criticism was apparently recanted in his *Dictionary*.

52. *my*] Wilson and Adams assume that Lady Macbeth originally intended to do the deed herself. Cf. 68, 73 *post* and note on II. ii. 12–13. See Introduction, p. xxi.

53. *blanket*] Johnson also objected to the meanness of this word, and so did Coleridge (*Shakes. Crit.*, I. 73); but many parallels have been quoted including: 'The sullen night in mistie rugge is wrapp'd' (Drayton, *Mortimeriados*, l. 694, ed. Hebel, I. 329); 'Spread thy close curtain, love-performing night', *Rom.*, III. ii. 5); *1H6*, II. ii. 2; and *Lucr.*, 788. Whiter, in his *Specimen of a Commentary*, 1794, pp. 153–84, quotes so many passages which link *pall*, *hell*, *knife*, and *dark* with the stage that it is impossible not to believe that they were associated in Shakespeare's mind. 'The peculiar and appropriate dress of *Tragedy* is a *pall* and a *knife*. When Tragedies were represented, the stage was hung with black . . . on the same occasions, the *Heavens*, or the Roof of the Stage, underwent likewise some gloomy transformation.' But although the passage as a whole was suggested by the stage, the metaphor of the blanket is quite simple, and can only refer to the blanket spread by the dark over the earth. It implies a 'sleeping world' (Clarendon).

55. *all-hail hereafter*] Lady Macbeth 'speaks as if she had heard the words as spoken by the witch, and not merely read them as reported in her husband's letter' (Clarendon). Yet the audience would not notice the discrepancy, and it may be noted that the letter does use the phrase 'all-hail'd' (7) and that Lady Macbeth reads only the second half of the letter. Wilson interprets 'hereafter' to mean 'that followed': and the New Clar. Edd. assume that 'All-hail' is an adjective. But surely hereafter = in the future. Mrs Siddons accepted this reading; so, I imagine, do most actresses.

57. *This . . . present*] i.e. this present which is ignorant of the future (ignorant = unknowing). Cf. *Wint.*, I. ii. 397.

57–8. *I . . . instant*] 'I feel by anticipation those future honours, of which, according to the process of nature, the *present time* would be *ignorant*' (Johnson). Several critics have supposed that a word is missing between 'feel' and

Macb. My dearest love,
Duncan comes here to-night.
Lady M. And when goes hence?
Macb. To-morrow, as he purposes.
Lady M. O! never
Shall sun that morrow see!
Your face, my Thane, is as a book, where men
May read strange matters. To beguile the time,
Look like the time; bear welcome in your eye,
Your hand, your tongue: look like th'innocent flower,
But be the serpent under't. He that's coming
Must be provided for; and you shall put
This night's great business into my dispatch;
Which shall to all our nights and days to come
Give solely sovereign sway and masterdom.

62. a] *not in F2.* 63. matters. To . . . time,] *Theobald;* matters, to . . . time. *F1–2;* matters to . . . time. *F3–4.*

'now'. Cuningham suggested 'even' and quoted v. ii. 10 *post*. This is possible, but not necessary; and it would slow up the line, where impetuosity is required.

62. *face*] Mrs Siddons here looked at Macbeth's face for the first time in this scene.

63. *strange*] Cf. I. ii. 48 *ante*.

beguile the time] i.e. deceive the world, delude all observers. 'The time' often means 'the present age, i.e. men and things generally'. Cf. I. vii. 82 *post*. Steevens cites Daniel, *Civil Wars*, VIII. 709: 'He drawes a trauerse 'twixt his greeuances: / Lookes like the time: his eye made not report / Of what he felt within.' In *Tw.N.*, III. iii. 41, Shakespeare uses the phrase to mean 'while away the time'.

65–6. *look . . . under't*] Cf. Chaucer, *Squire's Tale*, 512; *2H6*, III. i. 228; *Rom.*, III. ii. 73, and *R2*, III. ii. 19. The idea is ultimately derived from Virgil, *Ecl.*, iii. 93: 'latet anguis in herba.' This quotation appears in Whitney, *Choice of Emblemes*, 1586, p. 24, with a picture of a serpent and a strawberry plant and the following explanation: 'Of flattringe speeche, with sugred wordes beware, / Suspect the harte, whose face doth fawn and smile, / With trusting theise, the worlde is clog'de with care, / And fewe there bee can scape these vipers vile: / With pleasinge speche they promise, and protest, / When hatefull heartes lie hidd within their brest.' Wilson thinks the image shows that Lady Macbeth intended her husband to play a passive role (p. l). But the serpent does more than hide behind the flower—he also stings. The medal commemorating the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot depicts a serpent lurking amid flowers (Paul).

67. *provided for*] Cf. *1H6*, v. ii. 15.

68. *my dispatch*] This does not necessarily mean that Lady Macbeth intended to do the actual deed, but merely that she intends to manage the whole affair. Cf. Introduction, p. xxi. Wilson points out that there is a pun on the word 'dispatch'.

70. *solely*] 'for us alone' (New Clarendon); 'absolutely' (Wilson).

Macb. We will speak further.
Lady M. Only look up clear;
To alter favour ever is to fear.
Leave all the rest to me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.—[*The same. Before the castle.*]

Hautboys and torches. Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, BANQUO, LENOX, MACDUFF, ROSSE, ANGUS, *and Attendants.*

Dun. This castle hath a pleasant seat; the air
Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself
Unto our gentle senses.
Ban. This guest of summer,

72. to fear] and fear *Theobald (ed. 2)*.

Scene VI

S.D. *The . . . castle.*] *Theobald, subst.* 1–2. the air . . . itself] *so Rowe; lines end* seat, / itself *F.* 3. senses] sense *Capell (conj. Johnson)*.

71. *speak further*] The old formula for refusing the royal assent to a bill in Parliament was 'le roi s'avisera' (Clarendon).

72. *To alter . . . fear*] 'When a person shows a disturbed countenance, it is always inferred he has something on his mind—and that may rouse suspicion' (Kittredge).

favour] countenance. 'Lady Macbeth detects more than irresolution in her husband's last speech' (Clarendon).

73. *Leave . . . me*] Cf. notes to 65–6, 68 *ante*.

Scene VI

Knights, *op. cit.*, p. 22, remarks that 'the key words of the scene are . . . all images of love and procreation, supernaturally sanctioned, for the associations of "temple-haunting" colour the whole of the speeches of Banquo and Duncan.' Cf. Knight, *The Imperial Theme*, p. 142, and Leavis, *Education and the University*, appendix.

S.D. Hautboys and torches] used for the *player* of the instrument and the *bearer* of the torch, as well as for the instrument and the torch. Cf. II. i. *init.* Wilson omits the torches, on the ground that they are inappropriate to one of the few sunlit scenes in the play. But at sundown, torches would be needed inside the castle, even though it was still light outside.

1. *seat*] Reid compares Bacon, *Essays*, Of Building: 'Hee that builds a faire *House*, upon an *ill Seat*, Committeth himself to Prison. Neither doe I reckon it an *ill Seat* only where the Aire is unwholesome, but likewise where the Aire is unequal; as you shall see many fine Seats set upon a Knap of Ground environed with higher Hills round about it.'

3. *gentle senses*] probably a proleptic construction, in which the epithet of the object is the result of the previous action (cf. III. iv. 75 *post*); but Duncan may mean that his senses have become gentle through age.

The temple-haunting martlet, does approve,
By his loved mansionry, that the heaven's breath
Smells wooingly here: no jutty, frieze,
Buttress, nor coign of vantage, but this bird
Hath made his pendent bed, and procreant cradle:
Where they most breed and haunt, I have observ'd
The air is delicate.

Enter LADY MACBETH.

4. martlet] *Rowe;* Barlet *F;* Marlet *Collier (MS.).* 5. mansionry] *Theobald;* Mansonry *F;* masonry *Pope.* 6–10. Smells . . . delicate] *five lines, ending* buttress, / made / they / air / delicate. *Steevens (1793).* 6. wooingly here: no] wooingly: here is no *Travers (conj. Johnson);* wooingly: there is no *conj. Cuningham.* jutty, frieze] *Steevens (1793);* Iutty frieze *F;* jutting frieze *Pope.* 8. his] this *F4.* 8–9. cradle: . . . haunt,] *Rowe;* Cradle, . . . haunt: *F.* 9. most] *Rowe;* must *F;* much *Collier (ed. 2).*

4. *martlet*] This is now the swift, but seems to have been the house-martin in Shakespeare's day. According to *O.E.D.* the bird was 'formerly often confused with the swallow and the house-martin'; but even Gilbert White thought that the martlet was another name for house-martin, though he would not confuse the swift with the martin. B. K. Harris points out (*T.L.S.*, 16/3/51) that there were martlets on Edward the Confessor's shield. Braithwaite, *Survey of History* (1638), says that 'the martin will not build but in fair houses.' Cf. 'temple-haunting'. Spurgeon, *Shakespeare's Imagery*, pp. 187–90, compares *Mer.V.*, II. ix. 28: 'like the martlet / Builds in the weather on the outward wall'. She points out that in both contexts a guest arrives who is to be fooled or deceived, the hidden connection in Shakespeare's mind being that 'martin' was a slang term for 'dupe', the word being so used by Greene and Fletcher. This supports the view that martlet = martin.

approve] prove. Cf. *Mer.V.*, III. ii. 80: 'Will bless it and approve it with a text'.

5. *By . . . mansionry*] 'by making it his favourite abode' (New Clarendon). Staunton's conj. 'love-mansionry' was supported by Cuningham and is not unattractive.

6. *Smells . . . frieze*] Some think that one or two words have dropped out of this line; but there are five stresses as it stands.

jutty] 'iuttie, or part of a building that iuttieth beyond, or leaneth ouer, the rest' (Cotgrave, *Dict.*, 1611); 'An outnooke or corner standing out of a house; a iettie' (Florio, *Worlde of Wordes*, 1598); '*Sporto*, a porch, a portall, a baie window, or outbutting, or iettie of a house that ietties out further than anie other part of the house, a iettie or butte. Also the eaues or penteis of a house' (*ibid.*). Cf. *H5*, III. i. 13: 'jutty'.

7. *coign of vantage*] 'a position (properly a projecting corner) affording facility for observation or action' (*O.E.D.*). Old French *coing* or *coin* is the corner-stone at the exterior angle of a building; and perhaps, as Johnson explained, the phrase means merely 'convenient corner'. Hunter mentions that in *Porta Linguarum Trilinguis* an advantage is described as 'a something added to a building, as a jutting'.

10. *delicate*] soft. Cf. *Wint.*, III. i. 1.

Dun. See, see! our honour'd hostess.— 10
The love that follows us sometime is our trouble,
Which still we thank as love. Herein I teach you,
How you shall bid God 'ild us for your pains,
And thank us for your trouble.

Lady M. All our service,
In every point twice done, and then done double, 15
Were poor and single business, to contend
Against those honours deep and broad, wherewith
Your Majesty loads our house: for those of old,
And the late dignities heap'd up to them,
We rest your hermits.

Dun. Where's the Thane of Cawdor? 20
We cours'd him at the heels, and had a purpose
To be his purveyor: but he rides well;
And his great love, sharp as his spur, hath holp him
To his home before us. Fair and noble hostess,
We are your guest to-night.

Lady M. Your servants ever 25
Have theirs, themselves, and what is theirs, in compt,
To make their audit at your Highness' pleasure,
Still to return your own.

Dun. Give me your hand;

10. See, see!] See! *Hanmer.* 11. sometime] sometimes *Theobald.* 13. God 'ild] *Globe;* God yield *Steevens;* God ild *Dyce;* God-ild *Capell;* God-eyld *F;* Godild *Hanmer;* God-yield *Johnson;* God shield *conj. Johnson.* 17–20. Against . . . hermits] *so Pope; lines end* broad, / House: / Dignities, / Ermites. *F.* 23. as] at *F2.* 26. theirs, in compt,] *Hanmer;* theirs in compt, *F;* theirs, in compt: *Capell.*

11–14. *The love . . . trouble*] a difficult speech, but not corrupt. It means: 'Love sometimes occasions me trouble, but I thank it as love notwithstanding; this should teach you to pray God to reward me for the trouble you yourself are taking.'

13. *God 'ild us*] i.e. God reward us. Hunter refers to a passage in Palsgrave's *Lesclarcissement*, 1530, p. 441*b*: 'We use "God yelde you" by manner of thanking a person.' Cf, *AYL.*, v. iv. 36, and *Ant.*, IV. ii. 33.

16. *single*] simple, weak. Cf. I. iii. 140.

20. *We . . . hermits*] 'We as *hermits* or *beadsmen* shall always pray for you' (Steevens). Cf. *Tit.*, III. ii. 41, and *Gent.*, I. i. 17.

22. *purveyor*] provider (Cotgrave). His office was to travel before the King in his progresses to different parts of the realm, and to see that everything was duly provided, and generally, to make provision for the royal household. The office was restrained by 12 Chas. II, c. 24.

26. *in compt*] subject to account (Steevens).

Conduct me to mine host: we love him highly,
And shall continue our graces towards him.
By your leave, hostess.

[*Exeunt*

SCENE VII.—[*The same. A room in the castle.*]

Hautboys and torches. Enter, and pass over the stage, a Sewer, and divers Servants with dishes and service. Then enter MACBETH.

Macb. If it were done, when 'tis done, then 'twere well
It were done quickly: if th'assassination
Could trammel up the consequence, and catch

29. host:] Host *F1–2*. 30. continue] continue, *F;* continue in *conj. Cuningham*

Scene VII

1–2. well It . . . quickly: if] well, It . . . quickly: If *F;* well. It . . . quickly, if *Travers*.

30.] This line scans awkwardly and it is probable, as Cuningham urges, that it should read 'continue in'. Cf. *Tp.*, II. i. 184; *Meas.*, II. i. 276, 196; and V. i. 28 *post*.

31. *By your leave*] 'As the custom was, he kisses Lady Macbeth's cheek. What better climax and ending could the scene have?' (Granville-Barker).

Scene VII

S.D. Enter . . . a Sewer] from the French *essayeur*, and meant originally one who tasted of each dish to prove that there was no poison in it. Afterwards it was applied to the chief servant, who directed the placing of the dishes on the table.

1–28.] Macbeth's soliloquy has been taken as the supreme expression of his 'visual imagination' (Wilson) and as a proof that he was worried only by practical considerations (Moulton). See Introduction, p. xliii, and Empson, *Seven Types of Ambiguity*, 1930, pp. 64–5.

1–2. *If it . . . if*] The notion of placing a full stop at the end of the first line and taking 'It were done quickly' as part of the next sentence is ingenuity misplaced, though Kemble, Macready and Irving adopted it.

1–7. *If it . . . come*] This passage must be considered as a unit. 'If the assassination were ended once for all as soon as accomplished, then it were well to do it quickly: if it could prevent any consequences and obtain success by his death, in such a way that this blow might kill Duncan and not lead to any reprisals, here, only here, in this world, we would risk what might happen in the next world.' Or, as Bethell puts it more briefly: 'If there were no ill-consequences in this life I should be quite satisfied, for I should ignore the question of a future state.'

2. *It . . . quickly*] R. Walker compares John, xiii. 27: 'And after the soppe Satan entered into him. Then said Iesus vnto him, That thou doest, doe quickly.' Both Duncan and Jesus have 'almost supped', when the betrayer leaves the chamber. The allusion to the Last Supper may have suggested to Shakespeare the chalice, 11 *post*.

3. *trammel up*] i.e. entangle as in a net. A trammell (Fr. *tramail*) was a net for

With his surcease success; that but this blow
Might be the be-all and the end-all—here,
But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,

4. surcease success] success, surcease *conj. Johnson*. 5. end-all—here,] end all. Heere, *F;* end-all here, *Hanmer;* end all—Here, *Rowe (ed. 1);* end-all—Here. *Warburton;* end-all . . . here, *Wilson*. 6. shoal] *Theobald;* Schoole *F1–2*.

partridges (Cotgrave) or for catching fish. But *trammel* also meant to fasten the legs of horses together, so that they could not stray, or to teach them to amble; and Cuningham thought that Shakespeare may have been thinking of an iron device for suspending pots over a fire, the meaning being 'hang up' the consequences.

catch] metaphor suggested by 'trammel'.

4. *his surcease*] Cuningham, following Clarendon, thought that 'his' must refer to consequence rather than to 'Duncan'. *Surcease* (O.Fr. *sursis*, from *surseoir*), a legal term, meaning the stop or stay of proceedings, is not elsewhere in Shakespeare used as a substantive. But in *Lucr.*, l. 1766 ('If they surcease to be that should survive') it is used in a phrase meaning 'die', and I believe the word here is a euphemism for death—one of several in the play—and that 'his' refers to Duncan.

success] Cuningham suggests that the word is not used here in the more modern sense of 'prosperous issue', but rather meaning simply the issue, sequel, or consequence of an action, whether good or bad. This would make 'trammel up the consequence' and 'catch . . . success' almost identical in meaning, as indeed Staunton takes them to be. It seems to me better to take *success* in its usual modern sense. Cuningham further suggests that the word may have the sense of 'succession' as in *Wint.*, I. ii. 394: 'Our parents' noble names, / In whose success we are gentle'. Perhaps, like *surcease*, an Empsonian ambiguity.

5. *end-all—here*] Rowe's punctuation. The Folio full-stop after 'end-all' cannot be retained in a modern text; but most editors have debased Shakespeare's intentions. As Simpson points out, *Shakespeare's Punctuation*, pp. 82–3, 'The meaning as well as the movement of the verse suggest the close connection of the words "Heere, But heere." The pause is the most powerful of which blank verse is capable. At that final monosyllable the rhythm gathers like a wave, plunges over to the line beyond, and falls in all its weight and force on the repeated word. The check given to the line fits in admirably with the brooding, hesitating mood of the speaker.'

6. *bank and shoal*] Theobald's brilliant emendation for 'Schoole' is now generally accepted, especially as 'schoole' is a possible seventeenth century spelling of 'shoal'. Theobald explained, 'This *Shallow*, this *narrow Ford*, of humane Life, opposed to the *great Abyss* of Eternity'. Heath, however, *Revisal of Shakespeare's Text* (1765) argued for bank (= bench) and school. So also did Elwin, *Shakespeare Restored* (1853): 'If here only, upon this bench of instruction, in this school of eternity, I could do this without bringing these, my pupil days, under suffering, I would hazard its effect on the endless life to come.' Bethell, *The Winter's Tale* (1947), pp. 126–7, is one of the few modern critics to defend 'school'. He adopts the suggestion of the Rev. G. Shaw that 'bank' is the judicial bench, probably from O.F. *banc*. The word was certainly current in this sense in Shakespeare's time. Bethell says: 'Time is thus seen as the period of judgement, testing, or "crisis", and as a school; corresponding to these meanings we have later in

We'd jump the life to come.—But in these cases,
We still have judgment here; that we but teach
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
To plague th'inventor: this even-handed Justice
Commends th'ingredience of our poison'd chalice
To our own lips. He's here in double trust:

10–11. th'inventor . . . Commends] *not in F2–4, Rowe.* 10. this] thus *conj. Mason.* 11. ingredience] *F, Kittredge, Wilson;* ingredients *Pope.*

the speech, "judgment here" and "teach Bloody instructions".' If we reject this interpretation, it should not be because it is less *poetic* in the stock sense—cf. Keats's parable of the world as a school (*Letters*, 1935, p. 336)—but because Shakespeare often couples words together like 'bank and shoal' (though Bethell denies this) and the preposition 'upon' fits 'bank' but not 'school'. It seems to me probable that Shakespeare intended 'shoal'; but that, by an unconscious pun, 'bank' suggested 'judgment' and 'schoole' suggested 'teach . . . instructions . . . taught' a few lines below.

7. *jump*] i.e. risk. Cf. *Cym.*, v. iv. 188: 'Jump the after-enquiry at your own peril'. But it might perhaps mean 'skip over' or 'evade' (the thought of the life to come).

life to come] i.e. the future life, though Keightley thought it meant the remaining years of Macbeth's own life on earth and compared *Troil.*, III. ii. 180: 'True swains in love shall in the world to come / Approve their truths by Troilus.' But this means the world generations hence, not during the lifetime of Troilus. Some think that in *Wint.*, IV. iii. 31 ('For the life to come I sleep out the thought of it'), Autolycus was speaking of his future life on earth. But surely Shakespeare was echoing the prayer-book phrase ('the life of the world to come') both here and in *Macbeth*.

8. *have judgment*] i.e. receive sentence. See Hall, *Chronicles*, 244: 'He confessed the inditement and had judgment to be hanged.'

here] referring back to 'here' (5, 6).

that] i.e. 'so that', or 'in that'.

10. *plague th'inventor*] Wilson compares Seneca, *Hercules Furens*, 735–6: 'Quod quisque fecit, patitur: auctorem scelus / Repetit suoque premitur exemplo nocens.' Heywood translates: 'What eche man once hath done, he feeles: and guilt to th'author theare / Returnes, and th'hurtfull with their owne example punisht bee.'

Grierson suggests that the adjacent description of the good king (739–41) may have been echoed in Macbeth's description of Duncan (16 ff.). Heywood translates: 'what man of might with fauour leades his lande, / And of his own lyfe lorde reserues his hurtlesse handes to good, / And gently doth his empyre guide without the thyrst of blood, / And spares his soule . . .'

Malone quotes (from a different text), Bellenden's translation of Boece (1941, II, p. 154): 'Schort tyme eftir Makbeth returnit to his innative cruelte, and became furious, as the nature of all tyrannis is quhilkis conquessis realmes be wrangwis menis, traisting all pepill to doo siclike cruelteis to him as he did afoir to vtheris.' This passage introduces the murder of Banquo. The corresponding passage in Holinshed contains the phrase 'least he should be serued of the same cup'. Cf. 11 *post.* See Appendix, p. 173.

even-handed] impartial.

11. *Commends*] offers.

ingredience] for the spelling cf. IV. i. 34. Originally a misspelling of the plural, it was subsequently confused with the singular, *ingredient*.

First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,
Strong both against the deed; then, as his host,
Who should against his murtherer shut the door,
Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan
Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been
So clear in his great office, that his virtues
Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongu'd, against
The deep damnation of his taking-off;
And Pity, like a naked new-born babe,
Striding the blast, or heaven's Cherubins, hors'd
Upon the sightless couriers of the air,
Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,

16. bear] bare *conj. Daniel.* 17. his] this *F2–3.* faculties] Faculty *F3.* 22. Cherubins] Cherubin *F, Grierson, Kittredge;* cherubim *D'Avenant.* 23. couriers] *Pope* (Curriors *F*); coursers *Theobald* (*Warburton*).

17. *faculties*] powers, prerogatives of the crown. Still used in this sense in ecclesiastical law.

18. *clear*] free from guilt or stain.

19. *Will . . . trumpet-tongu'd*] 'suggests the Last Judgment' (Wilson). Garrick used to make a long pause after 'Angels' to indicate that the epithet agreed with 'virtues'. But this is unlikely; 'trumpet-tongu'd' means either 'using their trumpets for speech' or, more likely, 'with voices as clear, penetrating, and musical, as trumpets'.

20. *taking-off*] Cf. III. i. 104 *post*, and *Lr.*, v. i. 65.

21. *Pity*] R. Walker, *op. cit.*, chap. 3, notes that 'the babe whose brains the fire-devil would dash out is pity, striding the blast of the storm of evil.'

22. *Striding*] i.e. bestriding.

blast] Wilson comments: 'i.e. (*a*) of the trumpet, (*b*) the tempest of horror and indignation aroused by the deed'. But I do not understand how Pity—and still less how a naked new-born babe—can stride the blast, i.e. the sound, of a trumpet. But 'blast', by a hidden pun, was doubtless suggested by '*trumpet*-tongu'd'—and perhaps Wilson meant this.

Cherubins] Cf. 'He rode vpon the Cherubyns and did flye; he came flyenge with the winges of the wynde' (Ps. xviii. 10—Coverdale). The Psalter of Shakespeare's day had 'Cherubims . . . flying vpon the wings'; the Metrical Psalter read 'On Cherubes and on Cherubins'; but Shakespeare always uses the form *cherubins*. Cf. Spenser, *Hymne on Heavenly Beautie*, 92–4. Although 'from the beginning of the seventeenth century *cherubim* began to be preferred by scholars to *cherubims*' (*O.E.D.*), Shakespeare is unlikely to have known that *cherubim* was a plural; and a knowledge of Hebrew could not have been called into being by a desire to avoid an excess of sibilants. *Cherubins* involves less change in the text than *cherubims*, besides being Shakespeare's invariable form of the plural. But see *N.Q.* (25/12/1886) where it is pointed out that Batman in 1582 speaks of the 'order of Cherubin' and says that 'Cherubin are the highest companies of Angelles.'

23. *sightless couriers*] invisible runners, i.e. the winds. Cf. I. v. 49 *ante*. Steevens cites Warner, *Albion's England*, 1602, II. xi: 'The scouring winds that sightless in the sounding air do fly'. Elwin interprets 'blind and invisible'; and the horses in Blake's painting 'Pity' are blind.

24–5. *blow . . . wind*] 'Alluding to the remission of the wind in a shower'

That tears shall drown the wind.—I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself
And falls on th'other—

Enter LADY MACBETH.

How now! what news?

Lady M. He has almost supp'd. Why have you left the chamber?

Macb. Hath he ask'd for me?

Lady M. Know you not, he has?

Macb. We will proceed no further in this business:
He hath honour'd me of late; and I have bought
Golden opinions from all sorts of people,
Which would be worn now in their newest gloss,
Not cast aside so soon.

Lady M. Was the hope drunk,
Wherein you dress'd yourself? Hath it slept since?

27. itself] its sell *conj. Landor.* 28. th'other—] *Rowe;* th' other. *F;* th' other side *Hanmer, Kittredge (subst.);* the other. *Globe.* 30. not, he has?] not? He has. *conj. Capell.* 33. sorts] sort *Theobald.*

(Johnson) and 'also to an object blown into the eye, causing it to fill with tears' (Elwin). Cf. *Lucr.*, 1788–90; *Troil.*, IV. iv. 55.

25–8. *I have . . . other—*] 'I have no spur to stimulate my guilty intention except ambition—ambition which is like a too eager rider, who in vaulting into the saddle o'erleaps himself and falls on the other side of the horse.' Hunter explains: 'lights on the opposite side of what was intended; that is, dishonour and wretchedness, instead of glory and felicity'. Wilson mentions that vaulting into one's saddle was a much-admired feat. But Grierson, following Steevens, suggests that 'Shakespeare may be thinking of a too furious rider who, leaping too high at an obstacle, clears it indeed but falls on the other side.' Cf. I. iv. 48–50 *ante*. Cuningham wanted to insert 'side' after 'other' to regularize the metre; but the entrance of Lady Macbeth interrupts the soliloquy and fills in the gap. I cannot agree with Wilson that 'Macb. is exhausted by his passion' and that *therefore* Shakespeare 'makes him end with an unfinished sentence; a weary gesture supplying the gap'. The images from horsemanship, *spur* and *vaulting*, were suggested by *hors'd* and *couriers* above.

34. *would*] i.e. should. Cf. IV. iii. 23 *post*.

worn] another clothing image. Cf. *dress'd* (36).

35–6. *Was . . . since*] Cf. *John*, IV. iii. 116–17: 'O where hath our intelligence been drunk? / Where hath it slept?'

36. *dress'd*] another clothing image which has been altered by some editors to '*dressed* (= addressed) and *bless'd*, so as to avoid a mixed metaphor. But *dress'd* is clearly suggested by *worn* and may be intended by Lady Macbeth as a sarcastic reference to it (Abbott).

And wakes it now, to look so green and pale
At what it did so freely? From this time
Such I account thy love. Art thou afeard
To be the same in thine own act and valour,
As thou art in desire? Would'st thou have that
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,
And live a coward in thine own esteem,
Letting 'I dare not' wait upon 'I would,'
Like the poor cat i'th'adage?

Macb. Pr'ythee, peace.
I dare do all that may become a man;
Who dares do more, is none.

Lady M. What beast was't then,
That made you break this enterprise to me?
When you durst do it, then you were a man;
And, to be more than what you were, you would
Be so much more the man. Nor time, nor place,

39. afeard] afraid *F4.* 41, 43. have . . . And] leave . . . And *or* have . . . Or *conj. Johnson.* 45. adage?] *Capell;* Addage. *F.* 47. do] *Rowe;* no *F, Hunter, who gives the whole of 47 to Lady M.* 51. the] than *Hanmer.*

37. *green and pale*] i.e. with a hangover.

38. *did*] Bulloch's conj. 'dared' is attractive at first sight; but 'did' refers to the orgy of which Hope repents.

39. *afeard*] Cf. I. iii. 96 *ante*.

40–1. *act . . . desire*] Cf. II. iii. 29–35 and Introduction, p. xxvii.

42. *ornament of life*] i.e. the crown.

45. *cat i'th'adage*] Heywood, *Three Hundred Epigrammes* (Spenser Society, p. 28) 'The cate would eate fyshe, and would not wet her feete.' Cf. 'Le chat aime le poisson, mais il n'aime pas à mouiller la patte.'

47. *do more*] Rowe's emendation is supported by *Meas.*, II. iv. 134: 'Be that you are, / That is, a woman; if you be more, you're none.'

none] i.e. 'superhuman or devilish' (Wilson) or 'subhuman'.

beast] The whole force of the passage lies in the direct dramatic contrast to *man* in the previous line. Cf. *Rom.*, III. iii. 109–13: 'Art thou a man? . . . fury of a beast'.

48. *That . . . me?*] Chambers and others use this to show that the murder was discussed before the action of the play or in a lost scene (Koester, Wilson). Thaler, *Shakespeare and Democracy*, pp. 88–105, remarks: 'Macbeth's *letter*, written when neither place not time yet "adhered", is sufficient to explain Lady Macbeth's nervous and not necessarily accurate allusion to earlier passages between them on this subject. . . If a scene must be sought in which Macbeth definitely yielded to his wife's urgings, this scene—*unwritten*, i.e. compressed to a mere suggestion, for reasons of artistic economy in an opening action consciously keyed to a swiftly tense crescendo—would logically come *between scenes*, after I. v. which closes with Macbeth's promise, "We will speak further."' Cf. Bradley, *Shakespearean Tragedy*, pp. 480–4, and Introduction, p. xlix.

Did then adhere, and yet you would make both:
They have made themselves, and that their fitness now
Does unmake you. I have given suck, and know
How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me:
I would, while it was smiling in my face,
Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums,
And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn
As you have done to this.

Macb. If we should fail?

Lady M. We fail?
But screw your courage to the sticking-place,

55. me:] *Capell;* me— *Rowe;* me, *F.* 58–9. And . . . this] *F; lines end* you / this, *Steevens (1793).* 59. fail?] *F;* fail,— *Theobald (ed. 2);* fail! *Singer (ed. 2).* 60. We fail?] *most editors give these words as part of line 59;* We fail! *Rowe, Delius, Craig, Arden (ed. 1);* We fail. *Capell.*

52. *adhere*] i.e. 'not the *coherence* of *time* with *place*, but the *adherence* of these two with the murder' (Capell).

54. *I . . . suck*] Cf. IV. iii. 216. This raises the unprofitable question of how many children had Lady Macbeth? Wilson wisely quotes Eckermann, *Conversations*, 18 April 1827: 'Whether this be true or not does not appear; but the lady says it, and she must say it, in order to give emphasis to her speech.' There is no reason to think that Shakespeare was referring to Lady Macbeth's child by her first husband, who is not mentioned by Holinshed. Cf. I. v. 48 *ante*.

57. *pluck'd . . . gums*] Coleridge says that this passage 'though usually thought to prove a merciless and unwomanly nature, proves the direct opposite: she brings it as the most solemn enforcement to Macbeth of the solemnity of his promise to undertake the plot against Duncan. Had *she* so sworn, she would have done that which was most horrible to her feelings, rather than break the oath; and as the most horrible act which it was possible for imagination to conceive, as that which was most revolting to her own feelings, she alludes to the destruction of her infant, while in the act of sucking at her breast. Had she regarded this with savage indifference, there would have been no force in the appeal; but her very allusion to it, and her purpose in this allusion, shows that she considered no tie so tender as that which connected her with her babe' (*op. cit.*, II. 271).

58. *the brains*] 'The' frequently takes the place of the possessive pronoun 'his'.

58–9. *sworn . . . this*] Flatter, *op. cit.*, p. 127, pleads for a restoration of the Folio lineation. This makes a less awkward enjambement, allows for a greater emphasis on the words *dash'd*, *brains out*, and *sworn*, and leaves room for a pause after Lady Macbeth's scornful question in the following line.

60. *We fail?*] Mrs Siddons tried 'We fail?', then '*We* fail!' and finally 'We fail.' Critics have argued in favour of all three. I have kept the Folio punctuation, though 'the note of interrogation in the Folio is frequently equivalent to the note of exclamation' (Cuningham).

61. *But . . . sticking-place*] But = only. Murry, *Shakespeare*, pp. 328–9, describes the significance of this image, derived perhaps from the screwing up of the strings on a viol. Cf. *Tw.N.*, V. i. 125. But Paton and Liddell think the metaphor was suggested by a soldier screwing up the cord of his cross-bow to the 'sticking-place'. Cf. I. 80 below.

And we'll not fail. When Duncan is asleep
(Whereto the rather shall his day's hard journey
Soundly invite him), his two chamberlains
Will I with wine and wassail so convince,
That memory, the warder of the brain,
Shall be a fume, and the receipt of reason
A limbeck only: when in swinish sleep
Their drenched natures lie, as in a death,
What cannot you and I perform upon
Th'unguarded Duncan? what not put upon
His spongy officers, who shall bear the guilt
Of our great quell?

69. lie] *F2;* lyes *F1.* 72–3. officers, . . . quell?] Officers? . . . quell. *F.*

64. *chamberlains*] gentlemen-of-the bedchamber.

65. *convince*] overpower, *convincere*. Cf. IV. iii. 142.

66–8. *memory . . . only*] The old anatomists divided the brain into three ventricles, in the hindmost of which, viz. the cerebellum, they placed the memory. Cf. *LLL.*, IV. ii. 70. Memory, the warder of the cerebellum, warns the reason against attack; and where converted by intoxication into a fume of smoke, it fills the brain, the receptacle of reason, which thus becomes like an 'alembic' or cap of a still. Cf. *Tp.*, V. i. 67: 'the ignorant fumes that mantle / Their clearer reason'.

E. Schanzer, *M.L.R.*, 1957, p. 223, argues that as warder was not used in the sense of jailor in Shakespeare's day, we should emend to 'warden'. He then gives an interpretation based on Davenport's: 'The full meaning of the alchemic methaphor that follows seems never to have been brought out by commentators. "Receipt" appears to comprise both the meaning of "container", suggested by the theory that reason occupies a separate ventricle of the brain, and that of the receiver at the bottom of the still in which the end-product is gathered and condensed. "Limbeck" here clearly refers not to the head or cap of the still, the alembic proper, as it is often explained, but to the retort or cucurbit, the vessel in which the liquids to be distilled are heated. This seems to have been the more common use of "limbeck" or "alembic" in Shakespeare's day. The full meaning of the image is therefore that the receptacle which should collect only the pure drops of reason, the final distillate of the thought-process, will be turned into the retort in which the crude undistilled liquids bubble and fume.'

68. *limbeck*] the corrupt form of 'alembic', a word adopted into most European languages from the Arabic of the Moorish alchemists of Spain. Cf. previous note.

69. *drenched*] drowned. Wilson suggests a pun on 'drench' = a dose of medicine administered to an animal. Cf. 'swinish' (68).

72. *spongy*] drunken. Cf. *Mer.V.*, I. ii. 108.

73. *quell*] i.e. murder. Used as a substantive only in this passage by Shakespeare. It is from the same root as 'kill', i.e. O.E. *cwellan*. Florio, *Worlde of Wordes*, 1598, has 'Mazzare: *to kill, to slay, to quell.*' Cf. *2H4*, II. i. 58: 'a man-queller'.

Macb. Bring forth men-children only!
For thy undaunted mettle should compose
Nothing but males. Will it not be receiv'd,
When we have mark'd with blood those sleepy two
Of his own chamber, and us'd their very daggers,
That they have done't?
Lady M. Who dares receive it other,
As we shall make our griefs and clamour roar
Upon his death?
Macb. I am settled, and bend up
Each corporal agent to this terrible feat.
Away, and mock the time with fairest show:
False face must hide what the false heart doth know.
[*Exeunt.*

77. and] *not in, conj. Capell.*

74. *mettle*] i.e. material, spirit. The same word as 'metal' from which it had not been distinguished.

75–8. *Will . . . done't*] As Curry has pointed out, *Shakespeare's Philosophical Patterns*, p. 119, Macbeth becomes entirely converted to the murder as soon as his wife puts forward a practical scheme. It is irrelevant, as Wilson says, p. lix, that the plan is absurd. It satisfies him, which is all that matters to her. *receiv'd* = accepted as true. Cf. *Meas.*, I. iii. 15–16: 'For so I've strew'd it in the common ear, / And so it is receiv'd.'

78. *other*] otherwise. Cf. *Oth.*, IV. ii. 13.

79. *As*] inasmuch as. Wilson compares this scheme with Lady Macbeth's fainting after the murder.

80. *bend up*] Kittredge suggests that the metaphor from a crossbow is linked with line 61 *ante*.

81. *Each . . . agent*] Cf. I. iii. 81 and *H5*, III. i. 16: 'Hold hard the breath and bend up every spirit / To his full height!'

82–3. *Away . . . know*] echoing her advice of I. v. 64–5. Hunter absurdly suggested that the final couplet should be spoken by Lady Macbeth. She would not speak in this regretful tone at this point.

82. *mock the time*] i.e. delude all observers.

ACT II

SCENE I.—[*The same. Court within the castle.*]

Enter BANQUO, *and* FLEANCE, *with a torch before him.*

Ban. How goes the night, boy?
Fle. The moon is down; I have not heard the clock.
Ban. And she goes down at twelve.
Fle. I take't, 'tis later, Sir.
Ban. Hold, take my sword.—There's husbandry in heaven;
Their candles are all out.—Take thee that too.
A heavy summons lies like lead upon me,
And yet I would not sleep: merciful Powers!
Restrain in me the cursed thoughts that nature
Gives way to in repose!—Give me my sword.

Enter MACBETH, *and a servant with a torch.*

Who's there?

ACT II

Scene I

S.D. *Court within the castle. Capell.* 4. Hold . . . heaven;] *so Rowe; two lines, the first ending* sword: *F.* 7–9. And . . . repose!] *so Rowe; lines end* sleepe: / thoughts / repose. *F.*

S.D. a torch] Dyce remarks that 'in the stage-direction of old plays, "a Torch" sometimes means a *torch-bearer*.' Cf. I. vi. *init.* But here Fleance probably acts as torch-bearer.

4. *husbandry*] thrift, economy. Florio, *Worlde of Wordes*, 1598, has 'Parsimonia, *parcimonie, sparing, husbandrie*.'

5. *Their*] referring presumably to the inhabitants of heaven.

candles . . . out] Cf. *Rom.*, III. v. 9: 'Night's candles are burnt out.' Cf. I. iv. 50, I. v. 50, *ante*.

that] i.e. shield, targe, cloak, dagger, or 'belt with dagger' (Wilson).

6. *summons*] i.e. to sleep.

7–9. *merciful . . . repose*] 'Banquo . . . cannot help dreaming of the three Weird Sisters. . . In his extremity he importunes precisely that order of angels which God, in his providence, has deputed to be concerned especially with the restraint and coercion of demons, namely, Powers' (Curry, *Shakespeare's Philosophical Patterns*, p. 81). Kolbe suggests that Shakespeare echoes the Hymn of Compline, i.e. presumably, 'Procul recedant somnia / Et noctium phantasmata.'

Macb. A friend.
Ban. What, Sir! not yet at rest? The King's a-bed:
He hath been in unusual pleasure, and
Sent forth great largess to your offices.
This diamond he greets your wife withal,
By the name of most kind hostess, and shut up
In measureless content.
Macb. Being unprepar'd,
Our will became the servant to defect,
Which else should free have wrought.
Ban. All's well.
I dreamt last night of the three Weïrd Sisters:
To you they have show'd some truth.
Macb. I think not of them;
Yet, when we can entreat an hour to serve,
We would spend it in some words upon that business,
If you would grant the time.
Ban. At your kind'st leisure.
Macb. If you shall cleave to my consent, when 'tis,

13. and] *so Jennens; begins line 14, F.* 14. offices] *F;* officers *Rowe.* 16. and shut up] *begins next line* And shut up *F1;* And shut it up *F2–3;* and 's shut up *Hanmer;* and shut him up *conj. Kinnear.* 19. All's well] Sir, all is well *conj. Steevens.* 20. Weïrd] *Theobald;* wayward *F.* 24. kind'st] *F1–2;* kind *F3–4.* 25–6. when 'tis . . . you.] *so Rowe; one line, F.*

14. *offices*] i.e. servants' quarters, though Malone and others have supported Rowe's emendation, *officers*. Chambers suggests 'a case of the use of the abstract for the concrete'.

15. *diamond*] Holinshed mentions that Donwald was presented with an honourable gift by King Duff on the night of the murder. See Appendix, p. 165.

16. *shut up*] This means either 'wrapped in' (Chambers) or 'concluded' (Steevens). Duncan has ended his day in measureless content. Cf. Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, IV. ix. 15: 'And for to shut vp all in friendly loue'; *All's W.*, I. i. 197: 'Whose baser stars do shut us up in wishes'; and *Troil.*, I. iii. 57–8: 'In whom the tempers and the minds of all / Should be shut up'.

17–19. *Being . . . wrought*] i.e. As we were unprepared, our desire to give liberal hospitality to the king could not be fulfilled.

20–1. *I . . . truth*] Cuningham thought these words were a 'veiled incitement to Macbeth'; but they are perfectly compatible with innocence.

22. *we*] 'Now that the crown is within his grasp, he seems to adopt the royal "we" by anticipation' (Clarendon). But, as Chambers argues, Macbeth is too good an actor to use the kingly 'we'. It probably means 'you and I' and 'would' (23) = should.

25. *cleave . . . 'tis*] i.e. become or remain an adherent of my party when it exists, *or*, follow my advice when the time comes. Macbeth is purposely ambiguous. His words can mean that

It shall make honour for you.
Ban. So I lose none
In seeking to augment it, but still keep
My bosom franchis'd, and allegiance clear,
I shall be counsell'd.
Macb. Good repose, the while!
Ban. Thanks, Sir: the like to you.
[*Exeunt Banquo and Fleance.*
Macb. Go, bid thy mistress, when my drink is ready,
She strike upon the bell. Get thee to bed.—
[*Exit Servant.*
Is this a dagger, which I see before me,

he wants Banquo to support his claim to the crown in the event of Duncan's natural death, or they can be regarded as a bribe. Case suggests 'when 'tis' means 'when we have our talk'. The phrase *to be of consent* meant *to be accessory*. Cf. *AYL.*, II. ii. 3: 'Some villains . . . Are of consent and sufferance in this.' *Consent* also meant a party united by common agreement, or adherence to an opinion. *O.E.D.* quotes Florio's *Montaigne*: 'Even those which are not of our consent, doe flatly inhibite . . . the use of the sacred name.' The word was often spelt *concent* down to the sixteenth century, and was thus liable to confusion with musical *concent*, when this latter word was introduced. In some passages, it is difficult to say which of the two was meant. For *consent*, meaning counsel or advice, Wilson refers to *Wint.*, V. iii. 136.

26–8. *honour . . . clear*] Bradley, *Shakespearean Tragedy*, pp. 383–4, thinks that 'Banquo fears a treasonable proposal.' Wilson thinks that Banquo supposes Macbeth to refer only to Duncan's death in the course of nature. Liddell believes that Banquo means by *honour*, its feudal sense of *lordship*; i.e. that his honours must be of 'free tenure' as far as Macbeth is concerned. He carries the notion further in *allegiance clear*, i.e. such fealty as no man may owe to more than one lord. It seems to me that Bradley is right, and that we must interpret *franchis'd* as *free from guilt*, and *clear* as *innocent*. Banquo is telling Macbeth that he will only join his party if there is to be no foul play. As Grierson points out, there is a play on the two senses of 'honour' which can either mean the distinction accorded to worth or the honourableness that merits such distinction. Some honours are bought only with the loss of honour.

30.] See note on II. ii. 12–13 *post*.

31. *drink*] i.e. the posset. Cf. note on II. ii. 6 *post*.

33. *Is . . . dagger*] 'the dagger should not be in the air, but on a table; he thinks it real at first' (Chambers). 'Macbeth is to wait for the bell; and to wait is to sit' (Wilson). But if the scene is laid in the courtyard, would there be a table? And would it not be impossible for a man like Macbeth to sit at such a moment? The speech is not realistic; but in answer to Chambers it may be said that if Macbeth indeed thought the dagger a real one he would not begin with a question, and such a question. Seymour, *Remarks*, etc., 1805, I. 196, argues that the actor should not express terror, but confidence and animation. But there is surely an undertone of horror in the speech (59). Curry, *Shakespeare's Philosophical Patterns*, p. 84, suggests that the dagger 'is an hallucination caused

The handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch
thee:—
I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.
Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible
To feeling, as to sight? or art thou but
A dagger of the mind, a false creation,
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain?
I see thee yet, in form as palpable
As this which now I draw.
Thou marshall'st me the way that I was going;
And such an instrument I was to use.—
Mine eyes are made the fools o'th'other senses,
Or else worth all the rest: I see thee still;
And on thy blade, and dudgeon, gouts of blood,
Which was not so before.—There's no such thing.
It is the bloody business which informs
Thus to mine eyes.—Now o'er the one half-world

34. thee:—] thee: *F;* thee— *Rowe.* 41. As . . . draw.] *Walker and Keightley end line at* me (*42*) *with subsequent re-arrangement.*

immediately, indeed, by disturbed bodily humours and spirits but ultimately by demonic powers, who have so controlled and manipulated these bodily forces as to produce the effect they desire'.

36. *sensible*] i.e. capable of being perceived by the senses, perceptible. Florio, *Worlde of Wordes*: 'Percettible, *perceivable, sensible*'. Johnson quotes Hooker, *Ecclesiastical Polity*, I. vii. 1: 'By reason man attaineth unto the knowledge of things that are and are not *sensible*.'

39. *heat-oppressed*] fevered (Wilson).

41.] The short line is filled out by the action of drawing the dagger (Chambers).

42. *marshall'st me*] The dagger seems to move towards the room where Duncan sleeps.

44. *Mine . . . senses*] This conflict between the senses is mentioned several times in the course of the play. See Introduction, p. xxvii.

46. *dudgeon*] haft, handle. Originally the word meant a kind of wood used for the handles of knives and daggers, and thus came to mean the hilt of a dagger made from this wood. Gerard, *Herball*, speaking of the root of the box-tree, says: 'Turners and cutlers, if I mistake not the matter, do calle this woode *dudgeon*, whence they make dudgeon hafted daggers'. And Cotgrave, *Dict.*, 1611, has 'Dague a roëlles: *A Scottish dagger; or Dudgeon haft dagger*'; i.e. one turned with little spiral rings to give a better grip.

gouts] drops, Fr. *goutte*.

48. *informs*] takes shape (*O.E.D.*); gives false impression (Kittredge).

49–50. *o'er . . . dead*] 'over our hemisphere all action and motion seem to have ceased' (Johnson). Malone compares a passage from the opening scene of the second part of Marston, *Antonio and Mellida*, 1602, I. i. 3–8: ''Tis yet dead night, yet al the earth is cloucht / In the dull leaden hand of snoring sleepe: / No breath disturbs the quiet of the ayre. / No spirit moves upon the breast of earth, / Save howling dogs, night-crowes, and screeching

Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse
The curtain'd sleep: Witchcraft celebrates
Pale Hecate's off'rings; and wither'd Murther,
Alarum'd by his sentinel, the wolf,
Whose howl's his watch, thus with his stealthy pace,
With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards his design
Moves like a ghost.—Thou sure and firm-set earth,
Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear

51. sleep:] sleeper *conj. Steevens.* Witchcraft] Now witchcraft *D'Avenant, Rowe, Kittredge.* 55. strides] *Pope;* sides *F.* 56. sure] *Capell (conj. Pope); Rowe, Kittredge.* sowre *F;* sound *Pope.* 57. which way they] *Rowe;* which they may *F.*

owls, / Save meager ghosts, *Piero*, and black thoughts.'

50. *wicked dreams*] Cf. 7–9 *ante.*

abuse] deceive.

51. *sleep: Witchcraft*] Various attempts have been made to regularize the line, by inserting 'now' between these two words (D'Avenant), or by changing 'sleep' to 'sleeper'. But the pause was probably deliberate.

52. *Hecate's*] Cf. note on III. ii. 41 *post.* Hecate was the goddess of classical and medieval witchcraft. Jonson, *Masque of Queenes* (1609) says, 'She was belleeu'd to gouerne in witchcraft; and is remembered in all theyr inuocations.' Baldwin, *Shakespeare's Small Latine*, II. 437, quotes Golding's explanatory interpolation in *Metam.*, vii. 74–5: 'Of whom the witches holde / As of their goddesse'. The word is a dissyllable here. Cf. *Lr.*, I. i. 112: 'The mysteries of Hecate and the night'.

off'rings] rituals (Wilson) or 'mysteries'.

54. *Whose . . . watch*] Craig interprets. 'His (the murderer's) way of knowing the passage of the night'. Cf. *Lucr.*, 370: 'Which gives the watch-word to his hand full soon'. But 'his' probably refers to 'wolf', who howls at regular intervals, as the sentinel calls out, and 'watch' = watchword. Wilson gives 'timepiece' as an alternative meaning.

55. *Tarquin's*] Warburton compares *Lucr.*, 162–8: 'Now stole upon the time the dead of night, / When heavy sleep had clos'd up mortal eyes, / No comfortable star did lend his light, / No noise but owls' and wolves' death-boding cries: / Now serves the season that they may surprise / The silly lambs, pure thoughts are dead and still, / While Lust and Murder wakes to stain and kill.' Cf. II. i. 5, 52, 53, and II. ii. 3. See Appendix D on the relation between *Macbeth* and *Lucrece.*

ravishing] transferred epithet.

strides] Pope's emendation is certain, though Johnson and Knight object to 'stride' as implying violence or impetuosity. Yet the word is coupled with 'tedious' in *R2*, I. iii. 268, and with 'soft' in *Faerie Queene*, IV. viii. 37. Tarquin *stalks* to the chamber of Lucrece (*Lucr.*, 365). Case refers to 'the long tip-toe stealing steps one takes in order to avoid sound by planting the feet as seldom as possible'. Liddell reads *slides* and quotes Cooper's *Thesaurus*; 'Lapsus serpentum, *the sliding, gliding, or creeping of a serpent*' and Cotgrave's *Dict.*, 'Griller: *to glide, slip, slide, steal.*' In spite of *Lucr.*, 305 and 362 (*creeping* and *serpent*), few will agree with this emendation.

56. *sure*] Pope's conj. is now universally accepted. Wilson compares Ps., xciii. 2: 'He hath made the round world so sure: that it cannot be moved.'

57. *which . . . walk*] R. Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 59, points out that in the dedicatory epistle to the Authorized Version, the translators tell James I that on the

Thy very stones prate of my where-about,
And take the present horror from the time,
Which now suits with it.—Whiles I threat, he lives:
Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives.
[*A bell rings.*

I go, and it is done: the bell invites me.
Hear it not, Duncan; for it is a knell
That summons thee to Heaven, or to Hell. [*Exit.*

death of Elizabeth, many illwishers expected 'some thick and palpable cloud of darkness would so have overshadowed this Land, that men should have been in doubt *which way they were to walk*.' The resemblance is probably accidental, though it is not impossible that the writer had seen a performance of *Macbeth*, or that the phrase had been used in a sermon or pamphlet written on the accession of King James.

58. *Thy . . . prate*] 'A reminiscence of Luke xix. 40' (Chambers): 'I tell you if these should hold their peace, the stones would cry' (Geneva). But I suggest the following passage, though less familiar, is closer: 'For the stone shall cry out of the wal, & the beame out of the timber shal aunswere it' (Hab., ii. 11). The neighbouring stanzas fit the *Macbeth* context: 'Thou hast consulted shame to thine owne house, by destroying many people, and hast sinned against thine owne soule... Woe vnto him that buildeth a towne with *blood*, and erecteth a citie by iniquitie. . . But the *Lord is in his holy Temple;* let all the earth *keepe silence* before him' (vv. 10, 12, 20). Cf. with v. 20 'The Lord's anointed Temple' (II. iii. 67 *post*).

where-about] i.e. whereabouts. Shakespeare uses 'where' as a substantive in *Lr.*, I. i. 264: 'a better where'.

59. *take . . . time*] 'Whether to *take horror from the time* means not rather to *catch it* as communicated, than *to deprive the time of horror*, deserves to be considered' (Johnson). 'Macbeth asks that the earth . . . shall not hear his steps, for if it does so the very stones will speak and betray him—thereby breaking the silence and so lessening the horror. "Take" combines two constructions. On the one hand, "for fear they take the present horror from the time" expresses attraction, identification with the appropriate setting of his crime. But "take" is also an imperative, expressing anguish and repulsion. "Which now sutes with it" implies acceptance, either gloating or reluctant according to the two meanings of the previous line' (Knights, *Explorations*, p. 23). I do not think Johnson's first alternative is plausible. As Wilson says, Macbeth 'speaks as if watching himself in a dream'; and in this queer state of objectivity he wants the details of the scene to be in keeping with the deed.

61. *Words . . . gives*] Although this line has been regarded as an interpolation and a 'feeble tag' (Clarendon) it can be paralleled in many scenes in the canon. The opposition between words and deeds was a main theme in *Hamlet*, and it recurs in a different form in *Macbeth* (see Introduction, p. xxvii). The singular verb with a plural subject is common in Shakespeare. 'There is here a double reason for it . . . the exigency of the rhyme; and . . . the occurrence, between the nominative and verb, of two singular nouns, to which, as it were, the verb is attracted' (Clarendon).

63–4. *Hear . . . Hell*] Cf. III. i. 140 *post* and *R3*, I. i. 118–20: 'I do love thee so, / That I will shortly send thy soul to heaven, / If Heaven will take the present at our hands.' F. M. Smith, *P.M.L.A.*, 1945, compares *R3*, v. iii. 313–14.

SCENE II.—[*The same.*]

Enter LADY MACBETH.

Lady M. That which hath made them drunk hath made me bold:
What hath quench'd them hath given me fire.—Hark!
—Peace!
It was the owl that shriek'd, the fatal bellman,
Which gives the stern'st good-night. He is about it.
The doors are open; and the surfeited grooms
Do mock their charge with snores: I have drugg'd their possets,
That Death and Nature do contend about them,
Whether they live, or die.

Scene II

S.D. *The same.*] *Capell.* 2–6. What . . . possets,] *so Rowe; lines end* fire, / shriek'd, / night. / open: / charge / Possets, *F; lines end* fire. / shriek'd / night / open: / snores / possets, *Knight.*

Scene II

The scene follows on with hardly a break; and there is no break between scenes ii and iii. Liddell says that at Kenilworth, with which Shakespeare may have been familiar, there was 'a large courtyard with a flight of steps in one corner leading up to the sleeping-rooms. . . In these quadrangular houses the hall occupied one side of the building, and out of this, at one end, a flight of steps led to a lobby which opened on the guest-chamber... In the theatre this lobby would, of course, be the usual gallery or balcony at the back of the stage. Duncan and his two grooms of the chamber would naturally be lodged in the guest-chamber; back of this would be the "second chamber", occupied by Donalbain and another. Such an arrangement would be familar to the Elizabethan audience, and explains clearly the action of the scene.'

3. *the fatal bellman*] Cf. Webster, *Duchess of Malfi*, IV. ii. 173: 'I am the common Bellman, / That usually is sent to condemn'd persons / The night before they suffer'; and Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, v. vi. 27, where the cock is called 'the natiue Belman of the night'. Liddell quotes from *Phraseologia Generalis*, 1681, a reference to the 'bellman which goeth before a corps, *praeco feralis*'. Thus 'the stern'st good-night is the last good-night of death.' Possibly a reference to Robert Dow's gift in May 1605 to pay for visits of the bellman to condemned prisoners in Newgate (Paul).

5. *grooms*] serving-men; menial servants of any kind.

6. *possets*] Malone quotes Randle Holmes, *Academy of Armourie*, 1688, bk III, p. 84: 'posset is hot milk poured on ale or sack, having sugar, grated bisket, eggs, with other ingredients boiled in it, which goes all to a curd.' Cf. note on II. i. 31 *ante*, and Middleton, *The Witch*, IV. iii. 17: 'For the maide-servants, and the girles o'the house, / I spic'd them lately with a drowsie posset.'

Macb. [*Within.*] Who's there?—what, ho!
Lady M. Alack! I am afraid they have awak'd,
And 'tis not done:—th'attempt and not the deed
Confounds us.—Hark!—I laid their daggers ready;
He could not miss 'em.—Had he not resembled
My father as he slept, I had done't.—My husband!

Enter MACBETH.

Macb. I have done the deed.—Didst thou not hear a noise?
Lady M. I heard the owl scream, and the crickets cry.
Did not you speak?
Macb. When?
Lady M. Now.
Macb. As I descended?

8. S.D.] *Johnson and Steevens (1773).* 10. attempt . . . deed] *Camb. (conj. Hunter);* attempt, and . . . deed, *F;* attempt, and . . . deed *Rowe, Pope, Hanmer;* attempt and . . . deed, *Warburton, Johnson, Var. '73, Singer (ed. 2).* 14. I . . . noise?] *so Rowe; two lines, the first ending* deed. *F.* 16. Did . . . descended?] *Macb.* Did . . . speak? *Lady M.* When? Now? *Macb.* As . . . descended. *conj. Hunter; Macb.* Did . . . speak? *Lady M.* When? *Macb.* Now, as I descended. *conj. Fleay (Shakespeariana, Dec. 1884, apud Camb.).*

8. *Who's there?*] Macbeth loses control over himself, and breaks out into an exclamation, fancying he hears a noise (see l. 14). The S.D. was added by Steevens in place of the Folio 'Enter'. Chambers makes Macbeth enter above, for a moment; and Booth thinks the line was spoken by one of the drunken grooms. Wilson is doubtless right when he says that the Folio S.D. merely means that the player is to speak, and that it is far more effective for Macbeth to be unseen here than seen.

10. *attempt . . . deed*] Critics have quarrelled about the punctuation of this line—unnecessarily, as the Folio commas emphasize the words *attempt* and *deed*, and the meaning is brought out in modern punctuation by the omission of the commas. Lady Macbeth discovers later that the attempt *with* the deed also confounds them.

12–13. *Had . . . done't*] Wilson links these lines with his theory that there was an earlier version of the play. See Introduction, p. xx. Adams believes that at II. i. 30 two scenes, separated in time, have been run together and, possibly, that an intervening scene has been omitted. This omitted scene, he thinks, represented Lady Macbeth in her attempt to kill Duncan without assistance. But neither the alleged break in the metre, nor the fact that several hours are supposed to pass in 200 lines, can be regarded as strong arguments for this fantastic theory. Faustus' last soliloquy takes only five minutes to deliver, though an hour is supposed to pass.

13. *husband*] Only here does she call him that.

15. *crickets*] According to Grimm the cricket foretold death.

16–20.] Murry comments, *Shakespeare*, p. 329, that we can almost hear 'the snapping of the strings'—referring back to I. vii. 61.

Lady M. Ay.
Macb. Hark!
Who lies i'th'second chamber?
Lady M. Donalbain.
Macb. This is a sorry sight.
Lady M. A foolish thought to say a sorry sight.
Macb. There's one did laugh in's sleep, and one cried,
'Murther!'
That they did wake each other: I stood and heard them;
But they did say their prayers, and address'd them
Again to sleep.
Lady M. There are two lodg'd together.
Macb. One cried, 'God bless us!' and, 'Amen,' the other,
As they had seen me with these hangman's hands.
List'ning their fear, I could not say, 'Amen,'
When they did say, 'God bless us.'
Lady M. Consider it not so deeply.
Macb. But wherefore could not I pronounce 'Amen'?
I had most need of blessing, and 'Amen'
Stuck in my throat.
Lady M. These deeds must not be thought
After these ways: so, it will make us mad.
Macb. Methought, I heard a voice cry, 'Sleep no more!
Macbeth does murther Sleep,'—the innocent Sleep;

17. Ay] *Rowe;* I *F;* I! *Chambers.* 18–19. Hark! . . . chamber?] *so Steevens (1793); one line, F.* 22–5. There's . . . sleep] *so Rowe; lines end* sleepe, / other: / prayers, / sleepe. *F.* 27. hands.] hands: *F;* hands, *Rowe.* 31–2. I . . . throat] *one line, F.* 32. thought] thought on *Hanmer.* 34–5.] *Johnson; inverted commas not in F; quotation extends to* feast (*39*), *Hanmer.*

20. *sorry*] miserable, sad, pitiable.

24. *address'd them*] prepared themselves. Cf. *Mer.V.*, II. ix. 19: 'and so have I address'd me'.

25. *two*] Malcolm and Donalbain, not the two grooms. 'The picture of the sons, half waking while their father is murdered, adds to the horror of the situation' (Chambers). But it is curious, if the princes are in the same room, that Lady Macbeth mentions only the younger.

27. *As*] i.e. as if. Cf. *Lr.*, III. iv. 15: 'Is it not as this mouth should tear this hand?'

hangman] The hangman had to draw and quarter his victim, and the word is sometimes used loosely for 'executioner'. Cf. *Mer.V.*, IV. i. 125: 'hangman's axe'.

28. *List'ning*] Cf. *Caes.*, IV. i. 41: 'Listen great things.'

32. *thought*] In support of Hanmer's emendation, Cuningham cites III. ii. 11 *post* and *Tw.N.*, V. i. 324.

34–9. *Methought . . . feast*] perhaps suggested by a passage in Holinshed's account of King Kenneth. See Appendix, p. 166. It cannot be determined from the Folio where the voice

Sleep, that knits up the ravell'd sleave of care,
The death of each day's life, sore labour's bath,
Balm of hurt minds, great Nature's second course,
Chief nourisher in life's feast;—

Lady M. What do you mean?

Macb. Still it cried, 'Sleep no more!' to all the house:
'Glamis hath murther'd Sleep, and therefore Cawdor
Shall sleep no more, Macbeth shall sleep no more!'

36. sleave] *Steevens (conj. Seward);* Sleeue *F.* 39. feast;—] feast.—*Theobald;* Feast. *F.* 41–2.] *Hanmer; inverted commas not in F.*

is supposed to end, but Johnson's arrangement has been followed by nearly all subsequent editors. 'the innocent . . . feast' 'is a comment made by Macbeth upon the words he imagined he heard' (Clarendon).

34. *Sleep no more*] Cf. III. ii. 16–26, III. iv. 141, and v. i *passim*. Cf. also note on I. iii. 19–20. Kolbe analyses the sleep references in *Shakespeare's Way*, pp. 5–10, and Murry in his *Shakespeare*, pp. 332 ff. Cf. Knight, *The Wheel of Fire*, 1949, pp. 126–7. The whole passage is reminiscent of Ovid, *Metam.*, xi. 624: 'Pax animi, quem cura fugit, qui corpora duris / Fessa ministeriis mulces reparasque labori'; which is thus translated by Golding (ed. Rouse, xi. 723–6): 'O sleepe (quoth shee), the rest of things: O gentlest of the Goddes, / Sweete sleepe, the peace of mynd, with whom crookt care is aye at oddes: / Which cherrishest mennes weery limbes appalld with toyling sore, / And makest them as fresh to woork, and lustye as before'. Malone suggested there was an echo of Sidney's sonnet (No. 39): 'Come, Sleepe, O Sleepe, the certaine knot of peace, / The baiting place of wit, the balme of woe.' (Cf. *balm, feast, knits.* The 1591 ed. of *Astrophel and Stella* misprinted *baiting* as *bathing*. Cf. *bath.*) There is another close parallel in Seneca, *Her. Fur.* (1065–7): 'tuque, O domitor / Somne malorum, requies animi, / Pars humanae melior vitae'. Jasper Heywood translates thus: 'And thou O tamer best / O sleepe of toyles, the quietnesse of mynde, / Of all the lyfe of man the better parte'. It seems probable that 'balm of hurt minds' was suggested by the situation in *Hercules Furens*, where the Chorus invokes Sleep to cure the madness of the hero.

36. *sleave*] 'a slender filament of silk obtained by separating a thicker thread' (*O.E.D.*). But it seems also to mean 'coarse silk'. See Florio, *Worlde of Wordes*: 'Sfilazza: *any kinde of raveled stuffe, or sleaue silk* . . . Capitone, *a kinde of course silke called sleaue silke.*'

38–9. *second . . . nourisher*] Pudding appears anciently to have been the first course at dinner, the joint or roast being the 'second'—*the pièce de résistance*. Steevens quotes Chaucer, *Squire's Tale*, 347: 'The norice of digestioun, the slepe'. Wilson makes the admirable point that 'course' (meaning *race* or *career*) suggested to Shakespeare the other meaning of the word.

39. *Chief . . . feast*] This may also have been suggested by an alternative meaning of *ravell'd* (36). Ravel, or ravelled, bread was whole meal bread, and could be regarded as 'chief nourisher'. See Harrison, *England* (1877), I. 154: 'The raueled is a kind of cheat bread also.'

41–2. *Glamis . . . more*] Johnson thought the voice said only, 'Glamis hath murther'd sleep', the rest being Macbeth's comment; but it is difficult to distinguish between the voice of conscience speaking directly through

Lady M. Who was it that thus cried? Why, worthy Thane,
You do unbend your noble strength, to think
So brainsickly of things. Go, get some water,
And wash this filthy witness from your hand.—
Why did you bring these daggers from the place?
They must lie there: go, carry them, and smear
The sleepy grooms with blood.

Macb. I'll go no more:
I am afraid to think what I have done;
Look on't again I dare not.

Lady M. Infirm of purpose!
Give me the daggers. The sleeping, and the dead,
Are but as pictures; 'tis the eye of childhood
That fears a painted devil. If he do bleed,
I'll gild the faces of the grooms withal,
For it must seem their guilt. [*Exit.—Knocking within.*

Macb. Whence is that knocking?—
How is't with me, when every noise appals me?
What hands are here? Ha! they pluck out mine eyes.

Macbeth, and the same voice speaking (as he imagines) from outside him. Bradley comments that the voice 'denounced on him, as if his three names gave him three personalities to suffer in, the doom of sleeplessness'.

44. *unbend*] Cf. I. vii. 80 (Wilson).

45. *brainsickly*] Shakespeare uses the adj. 'brainsick' six times but not the adv. elsewhere.

46. *wash*] Cf. v. i. 58 *post.*

witness] evidence. Cf. *Mer.V.*, I. iii. 100.

47. *Why . . . place?*] It is difficult to perform the scene so as to make plausible Lady Macbeth's delay in noticing the daggers. Presumably at lines 20, 27, the daggers were in one hand, perhaps concealed behind Macbeth's back.

51. *Infirm of purpose*] Cf. Introduction, p. xxvii.

54. *painted devil*] Cf. Webster, *White Devil*, III. ii. 151: 'Terrify babes, my Lord, with painted devils.'

55–6. *gild . . . guilt*] Knowles points out that these words are a 'taunt at Macbeth, reminding him of his own arrangement, and the imbecility that prevents him from carrying it into execution'. The grim pun is rather a sign of the immense effort of will needed by Lady Macbeth to visit the scene of the crime. Those who find it distasteful should read more genteel authors. Cf. 'golden blood' (II. iii. 110 *post*); *John*, II. i. 316: 'armours . . . gilt with Frenchmen's blood'; and *2H4*, IV. v. 129: 'England shall double gild his treble guilt.'

58. *hands . . . eyes*] See Introduction, p. xxvii.

R. Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 72, quotes Matt., xviii. 9: 'And if thine eye cause thee to offend, plucke it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eie, then hauing two eyes to be cast into hell fire.' He links this verse with Luke, xi. 34–6, and the knocking at the gate with Luke, xi. 9–10. It may be added Beelzebub is mentioned three times in the same

Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather
The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
Making the green one red.

61. incarnadine,] *Rowe;* incarnardine, *F.* 62. green one red.] *F4;* Greene one, Red *F1–3;* green, One red— *Johnson;* green—one red. *Steevens, 1778 (conj. Murphy).*

chapter, and by Shakespeare a few lines later (II. iii. 4); and that the hell fire of Matt., xviii reappears also in the Porter scene.

59–62. *Will . . . red*] Upton, *Critical Observations*, 1746, compares Sophocles *Oedip. Tyrannos*, 1227; Steevens compares Catullus, *In Gellium*; but Shakespeare is more likely to have read Seneca, *Phaedra*, 715–18 (cited by Cunliffe): 'Quis eluet me Tanais? aut quae barbaris / Maeotis undis Pontico incumbens mari? / Non ipse toto magnus Oceano pater / Tantum expiarit sceleris.' Studley translates: 'What bathing lukewarme Tanais may I defilde obtaine, / Whose clensing watry Channell pure may washe mee Cleane againe? / Or what Meotis muddy meare, with rough Barbarian wave / That boardes on Pontus roring Sea? Not Neptune graundsire grave / With all his Ocean foulding floud can purge and wash away / This dunghill foule of stane.' Cf. the following passage from Seneca, *Hercules Furens*, 1323–9 (1330–6): 'Quis Tanais aut quis Nilus aut quis Persica / Violentus unda Tigris aut Rhenus ferox / Tagusve Hibera turbidus gaza fluens, / Abluere dextram poterit? Arctoum licet / Maeotis in me gelida transfundat mare, / *Et tota Tethys per meas currat manus*, / Haerebit altum facinus.'

C. B. Young (cited by Wilson) points out that Shakespeare's echo is nearer to the original than Heywood's version of the italicized line ('And al the water thereof shoulde now pas by my two handes'). Shakespeare might, perhaps, have amalgamated the two passages in translation. But, as Young also points out, 'Haerebit' etc. is close to v. ii. 17 *post*; and the latter is much closer than the Heywood version ('Yet wil the mischiefe deep remayne'). It is therefore highly probable that Shakespeare knew the original. Chambers compares what is probably an independent imitation of Seneca in Marston, *The Insatiate Countess*, v. i: 'Although . . . the waves of all the northerne sea, / Should flow for ever, through these guiltie hands, / Yet the sanguinolent staine would extant be.'

61. *multitudinous seas*] not referring to the multitude of creatures in the seas, nor the many-waved ocean, but to the countless masses of waters on the surface of the globe (Malone). Cf. Munday and Chettle, *Death of Robert, Earl of Huntingdon*, 1601, II. ii (Dodsley, ed. Hazlitt, VIII. 268), 'The multitudes of seas dyed red with blood'.

incarnadine] The word was used in Shakespeare's days as adj. and sb. but he seems to have been the first to use it as vb. Properly it would mean 'make flesh-coloured', but Shakespeare obviously means 'turn blood-red'. He may have been thinking of a crimson blush.

62. *Making . . . red*] i.e. changing the green sea into total red. Cf. Munday and Chettle, *Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntington*, 1601, IV. i (Dodsley, ed. Hazlitt, VIII. 173), 'And made the greene sea red with Pagan blood'. Chambers compares what is possibly a Shakespearian passage in *Two Noble Kinsmen*, v. i. 49–50: 'Thou mighty one, that with thy power has turn'd / Great Neptune into purple'. Simpson, *Shakespeare's Punctuation*, shows that in the Folio, a comma often follows a stressed word.

Re-enter LADY MACBETH.

Lady M. My hands are of your colour; but I shame
To wear a heart so white. [*Knock.*] I hear a knocking
At the south entry:—retire we to our chamber.
A little water clears us of this deed:
How easy is it then! Your constancy
Hath left you unattended.—[*Knock.*] Hark! more knocking.
Get on your night-gown, lest occasion call us,
And show us to be watchers.—Be not lost
So poorly in your thoughts.
Macb. To know my deed, 'twere best not know myself.
[*Knock.*
Wake Duncan with thy knocking: I would thou couldst!
[*Exeunt.*

64–8. To . . . knocking] *so Pope; seven lines, ending* white. / entry: / Chamber: / deed. / Constancie / unattended. / knocking. *F.* 67. then!] then? *F.* 72–3. To . . . couldst!] *so Pope; four lines, ending* deed, / selfe / knocking: / could'st. *F.* 72. To know] T'unknow *Hanmer.* 73. Wake . . . thy] Wake, Duncan, with this *D'Avenant, Theobald.*

64. S.D.] De Quincey, *Works*, ed. Masson, x. 389, comments on the knocking: '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.'

67–8. *Your . . . unattended*] 'Your firmness has deserted you' (Chambers).

69. *night-gown*] dressing-gown or *robe de chambre*. 'In Macbeth's time and for centuries later, it was the custom for both sexes to sleep without other covering than that belonging to the bed' (Grant White). If Macbeth and his wife were found in ordinary clothing, it would bring suspicion on them.

72. *To know . . . myself*] 'If I must look my deed in the face, it were better for me to lose consciousness altogether' (Clarendon). 'Better be lost in thought than look my deed in the face' (Wilson). The latter brings out the connection between this line and Lady Macbeth's remark, to which it is an answer; but I think it means rather: 'It were better for me to remain permanently "lost" in thought, i.e. self-alienated, than to be fully conscious of the nature of my deed.' Ellis-Fermor suggests the following (privately): 'If I am to live on terms with this deed, I must break with my real—my former —self.'

SCENE III.—[*The same.*]

Enter a Porter.

[*Knocking within.*

Porter. Here's a knocking, indeed! If a man were Porter of Hell Gate, he should have old turning the key. [*Knocking.*] Knock, knock, knock. Who's there, i'th'name of Belzebub?—Here's a farmer, that hang'd himself on th'expectation of plenty: come in, time-pleaser; have napkins enow about you; here

Scene III

S.D. *The same.*] *Capell.* 6. time-pleaser] *conj. Krabbe;* time-server *conj. Wilson;* time *F etc.* enow] *F1;* enough *F2–3.*

Capell in his *Notes*, p. 13, remarks: 'Without this scene Macbeth's dress cannot be shifted nor his hands washed. To give a rational space for the discharge of these actions was this scene thought of.' This may be true, but it can be defended on other grounds. See Introduction, pp. xxiii ff. Pope relegated the first 40 lines of this scene to the margin. Coleridge, *Shakespearean Criticism*, I. 75–8, declares: '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 . . . bonfire" (19–21). Of the rest not one syllable has the ever-present being of Shakespeare.' Hales, *Notes and Essays on Shakespeare*, pp. 273–90, argues that the Porter is inseparably associated with the knocking, which is an integral part of the play; that some relief is necessary at this point in the play; that the whole speech is a powerful piece of irony, because the man *is* Porter of hell-gate as in the Mystery plays, and that the style and language are Shakespearian. The links with medieval drama are discussed by Glynne Wickham in 'Hell-Castle and its Door-Keeper' (*S.S.*, XIX. 68–74).

2. *old*] frequently used as a colloquial augmentative, meaning plentiful, great, abundant or, as Steevens says, '*frequent*, more than enough'.

5. *th'expectation of plenty*] which would, of course, bring low prices. Malone compares Hall, *Satires*, IV. 6 (ed. 1597): 'Ech Muck-worme wil be riche with lawlesse gaine, / Altho he smother vp mowes of seuen yeares graine, / And hang'd himself when corne grows cheap again.' The passage has been used to fix the date of the play by Malone and others. See Introduction, p. xviii.

6. *time-pleaser*] This conjecture by H. Krabbe (in a private communication) seems preferable to Wilson's 'time-server' (*Edin. Bib. Soc. Trans.*, 1946, ii, pt 4, pp. 413–16). The twice-repeated 'Come in' strongly suggests that the Porter also says 'Come in' to the farmer, with some word relating to his miscalculating time (Darmestetter). But although 'time-server' is appropriate to farmers, who must serve time in its changes of seasons, and server (in the sense of waiter) provides a link with napkins, Shakespeare does not use either 'server' or 'time-server'. He does, however, twice use the expression 'time-pleaser' and in *Cor.*, III. i. 45 (as Krabbe points out), it comes just after a mention of 'corn' (43).

napkins] handkerchiefs.

you'll sweat for't. [*Knocking.*] Knock, knock. Who's there, i'th'other devil's name?—Faith, here's an equivocator, that could swear in both the scales against either scale; who committed treason enough for God's sake, yet could not equivocate to heaven: O! come in, equivocator. [*Knocking.*] Knock, knock, knock. Who's there?—Faith, here's an English tailor come hither for stealing out of a French hose: come in, tailor; here you may roast your goose. [*Knocking.*]

8. *other*] The Porter cannot remember the name of another devil.

9. *equivocator*] i.e. a Jesuit (Warburton). See Introduction, pp. xv ff., for the connection between this passage and the trial of Garnet, who went under the name of 'Farmer', so that, as Kellett, *Suggestions*, p. 64, points out, there is a punning link between farmer and equivocator. Cf. *New Variorum*, 1903, p. 355. Dowden, *New Shakes. Soc. Trans.*, 1874, p. 275, thinks we 'should ask whether Shakespeare did not make the porter use this word . . . with unconscious reference to Macbeth, who even then had begun to find that he could not "equivocate to heaven" '.

14. *stealing . . . hose*] The joke against tailors was a very old one. Scot, *Discouerie of Witchcraft*, VII. 12, says of Samuel's apparition: 'Belike he had a new mantell, made him in heaven: and yet they saie Tailors are skantie there, for that their consciences are so large here.' Stubbes, *Anatomie of Abuses*, 1585, fol. 23*b*: 'The Frenche hose are of two diuers makinges, for the common Frenche hose (as they list to call them) containeth length, breadth, and sidenesse sufficient, and is made very rounde. The other contayneth neyther length, breadth, nor sidenesse (being not past a quarter of a yarde side), whereof some be paned, cut, and drawen out with costly ornamentes, with Canions annexed, reaching downe beneath their knees.' This passage is cited by the Clar. Edd. who say that in *Mer.V.*, I. ii. 80, 'Shakespeare clearly speaks of the larger kind, the "round hose" which the Englishman borrows from France, and it is enough to suppose that the tailor merely followed the practice of his trade without exhibiting any special dexterity in stealing.' But Warburton thought that the Porter referred to the latter kind of hose, for 'a tailor must be a master of his trade who could steal anything from thence.' I agree with Wilson that the context implies that the tailor 'had tried the trick once too often' and had been caught when the fashion changed and French hose became tight-fitting. The implication with farmer, equivocator, and tailor is not merely that they go to hell for their sins, but that they are caught out by overreaching themselves.

15. *goose*] smoothing iron. But the word also means a swelling caused by venereal disease, and it may therefore have been suggested by 'sweat' (7) *via* 'French' (14), and it in turn suggests 'lechery' (28). As Wilson observes, the *O.E.D.* gives no instance of 'cook one's goose' (= do for oneself) earlier than 1851; but in the phrase 'roast your goose' there may be a reference to killing the goose that laid the golden eggs, just as the tailor ruined himself in the attempt to get rich quickly. E. A. Armstrong, *Shakespeare's Imagination*, pp. 57–65, 187–8, has some interesting remarks on the image 'cluster' in Shakespeare relating to the goose, and he proves the authenticity of the Porter scene by showing its relations with other scenes in Shakespeare. Cf. in particular Launce's

Knock, knock. Never at quiet! What are you?—But this place is too cold for Hell. I'll devil-porter it no further: I had thought to have let in some of all professions, that go the primrose way to th'everlasting bonfire. [*Knocking.*] Anon, anon: I pray you, remember the Porter. [*Opens the gate.*

Enter MACDUFF *and* LENOX.

Macd. Was it so late, friend, ere you went to bed,
That you do lie so late?

Port. Faith, Sir, we were carousing till the second cock; and drink, Sir, is a great provoker of three things.

Macd. What three things does drink especially provoke?

Port. Marry, Sir, nose-painting, sleep, and urine. Lechery, Sir, it provokes, and unprovokes: it provokes the desire, but it takes away the performance. Therefore, much drink may be said to be an equivocator with lechery: it makes him, and it mars him; it sets him on, and it takes him off; it persuades him, and disheartens him; makes him stand to, and not stand to: in conclusion, equivocates him in a sleep, and, giving him the lie, leaves him.

24–5. Faith . . . things] *prose, Johnson; verse, F.*

soliloquy (*Gent.*, IV. iv) where we have 'steals her capon's leg . . . hanged for't . . . a pissing while . . . geese . . . heave up my leg'. There are close parallels with all these phrases and words in the present scene.

17. *too . . . Hell*] Shakespeare may not have been aware that in Dante's *Inferno*, XXXII–XXXIV, those who were traitors to their kin, to their country, to their friends and guests, and to their lords and benefactors are tortured together in the Ninth, or *frozen* Circle of Hell. Macbeth might be regarded as a traitor to his kinsman, Duncan, to his country, Scotland, to his friend, Banquo, to his guest, lord, and benefactor, Duncan. R. Walker, *op. cit.*, noted this independently.

19. *primrose way*] Cf. *All's W.*, IV. v. 56: 'the flowery way that leads to the broad gate and the great fire'; and *Ham.*, I. iii. 50; 'the primrose path of dalliance'.

20–1. *I . . . Porter*] addressed to the audience (Wilson). Perhaps it was, though I doubt whether Shakespeare intended this.

24. *the second cock*] i.e. 3 a.m. Cf. *Rom.*, IV. iv. 3: 'the second cock hath crow'd, / The curfew bell hath rung, 'tis three o'clock.'

27–35. *Marry . . . him*] See Introduction, p. xxviii. Rabelais also thought that 'Carnal concupiscence is cooled and quelled . . . by the means of wine' (III. xxxi).

34. *in a sleep*] a quibble: 'tricks him *into* a sleep' and 'tricks him in a sleep', i.e. by a dream (Elwin).

35. *giving . . . lie*] laying him out, as in wrestling.

Macd. I believe, drink gave thee the lie last night.

Port. That it did, Sir, i'the very throat on me: but I requited him for his lie; and (I think) being too strong for him, though he took up my legs sometime, yet I made a shift to cast him.

Macd. Is thy master stirring?

Enter MACBETH.

Our knocking has awak'd him; here he comes.

Len. Good morrow, noble Sir!

Macb. Good morrow, both!

Macd. Is the King stirring, worthy Thane?

Macb. Not yet.

Macd. He did command me to call timely on him: I have almost slipp'd the hour.

Macb. I'll bring you to him.

Macd. I know, this is a joyful trouble to you; But yet 'tis one.

Macb. The labour we delight in physics pain. This is the door.

Macd. I'll make so bold to call, For 'tis my limited service. [*Exit.*

Len. Goes the King hence to-day?

Macb. He does:—he did appoint so.

Len. The night has been unruly: where we lay, Our chimneys were blown down; and, as they say, Lamentings heard i'th'air; strange screams of death,

37. on] *F;* o' *Theobald.* 50–1. I'll . . . service] *one line, F.* 51–2.] *Steevens ends lines at* king / so *and begins* 52 From hence. 53–5. The . . . death,] *so Rowe; four lines, ending* vnruly: / downe, / Ayre / Death, *F.*

39. *took . . . legs*] a quibble on the effect of drink, and a wrestling action. Perhaps also an echo of 'heave up my leg' (i.e. like a dog = urinate).

40. *made a shift*] managed.

cast] quibble on cast (= throw in wrestling) and cast = vomit (Wilson). But 'cast' can also mean 'emit', not necessarily through the *mouth*. And cf. v. iii. 50 *post.*

49. *The . . . pain*] Cf. *Cym.*, III. ii. 34, and *Tp.*, III. i. 1–2.

51. *limited*] appointed. Cf. *Meas.*, IV. ii. 176.

52. *he . . . so*] 'guilty self-correction' (Grierson).

53. *The . . . unruly*] Curry, *Shakespeare's Philosophical Patterns*, p. 80, says that 'the storm which rages over Macbeth's castle . . . is no ordinary tempest caused by the regular movements of the heavenly bodies, but rather a manifestation of demonic power over the elements of nature.

And, prophesying with accents terrible
Of dire combustion, and confus'd events,
New hatch'd to th'woeful time, the obscure bird
Clamour'd the livelong night: some say, the earth
Was feverous, and did shake.
Macb. 'Twas a rough night.

57. combustion] combustions *F2–4*. 57–8. events, New . . . time, the] *Knight, Hudson;* Events, New . . . time. The *F;* events. New . . . time, the *conj. Johnson.* 58–60. New . . . night] *so Hanmer; four lines, ending* time. / Night. / feuorous, / Night. *F; lines end* time. / Night, / shake. / Night. *Rowe.*

Indeed, natural forces seem to be partly in abeyance . . . the firm-set earth is so sensitized by the all-pervading demonic energy that it is feverous and shakes. Macbeth senses this magnetization (cf. II. i. 58). . . As the drunken Porter feels, Macbeth's castle is literally the mouth of hell through which evil spirits emerge in this darkness to cause upheavals in nature.' Cf. Masefield, *Recent Prose*, pp. 270–1. James I, *Workes*, p. 117, says that witches 'can raise stormes and tempests in the aire, either vpon Sea or Land, though not vniuersally, but in such a particular place and prescribed bounds, as God will permit them so to trouble.' There was a hurricane on the night of 29 March 1606 (Paul).

56–8. *And . . . bird*] I have adopted the Knight-Hudson punctuation which connects 'prophesying' with 'bird'. Wilson Knight suggests (privately) that the owl in *Caes.* (I. iii. 28) 'hooting and shrieking in the market-place' and prophesying doom may be compared with 'the obscure bird'; that 'new-hatch'd' suits the bird (as it must otherwise have suggested it—cf. Kellett, *Suggestions*, p. 65); that Shakespeare does not elsewhere use 'prophesying' as a gerund; and that the build-up for four lines to a climax, with a quiet and reserved conclusion after 'night' is typically Shakespearian. I agree and add only that with the usual punctuation there are two short sentences at the end of the speech, which prevents the actor from doing much with it; and that all editors emend Folio punctuation and lineation of this speech in one way or another. Cf. Ovid, *Metam.*, xv. 791: 'Tristis mille locis stygius dedit omina bubo.' Pliny (tr. Holland, 1634, x. xii. 276) says: 'The Scritch-Owle alwaies betokeneth some heauie newes and is most execrable and accursed, and namely, in the presages of publick affaires: he keepeth euer in desarts: and loueth not only such vnpeopled places, but also that are horrible and hard of accesse. In summe, he is the very monster of the night, neither crying nor singing out cleare, but vttering a certaine heauy groane of dolefull mourning. And therefore if he be seen to fly either within cities, or otherwise abroad in any place, it is not good, but prognosticates some fearfull misfortune.'

57. *combustion*] tumult, confusion, especially of a political kind. Cf. *H8*, v. iv. 51. Hotson suspects a reference to the Gunpowder Plot.

58. *hatch'd . . . time*] Malone thought *new hatch'd* should be referred to *events*, though the events were yet to come, and he compared *2H4*, III. i. 86, 'Such things become the hatch and brood of time.' He therefore argued that *hatch'd* = hatching, and that 'to' meant 'to suit', or perhaps 'born to'. Cf. *Ham.*, III. i. 173–5.

60. *feverous*] referring perhaps to the fever of the ague, which was very common in Shakespeare's day, but implying, of course, an earthquake.

Len. My young remembrance cannot parallel
A fellow to it.

Re-enter MACDUFF.

Macd. O horror! horror! horror!
Tongue nor heart cannot conceive, nor name thee!
Macb., Len. What's the matter?
Macd. Confusion now hath made his masterpiece!
Most sacrilegious Murther hath broke ope
The Lord's anointed Temple, and stole thence
The life o'th'building!
Macb. What is't you say? the life?
Len. Mean you his Majesty?
Macd. Approach the chamber, and destroy your sight
With a new Gorgon.—Do not bid me speak:
See, and then speak yourselves.—
[*Exeunt Macbeth and Lenox.*
Awake! awake!—
Ring the alarum-bell.—Murther, and treason!
Banquo, and Donalbain! Malcolm, awake!
Shake off this downy sleep, death's counterfeit,

62–4. O . . . matter?] *so F; two lines, ending* heart, / matter? *Capell, etc.* 72. S.D.] *so Dyce; after* awake! *F.*

62–4. *O . . . matter?*] This lineation is in accordance with the Folio. But according to Flatter, *op. cit.*, p. 23, a character, entering, begins a new line, unless he is supposed to overhear the previous conversation. Here Macduff rushes in with his tidings, and he can be heard before he actually appears. His opening words should not, therefore, be regarded as the completion of Lenox's line. Perhaps Macduff's opening words should be heard before Lenox has completed his sentence, while 'What's the matter?' is an extra-metrical interjection. The usual lineation, following Capell, has the effect of making the horror too orderly and metrical; but, of course, in this scene, the lineation of which even the most conservative editors are forced to emend, it would be easy to fall into the error of finding subtleties in textual corruptions.

67. *The Lord's anointed Temple*] Cf. 1 Sam., xxiv. 10: 'The Lord's anointed' and 2 Cor., vi. 16: 'Ye are the Temple of the living God.' Though the metaphor is mixed, it can be regarded as shorthand for 'the temple of the Lord's anointed'; and by putting it in this form, Shakespeare is able to recall both texts and to glance at the heinous sin of regicide—David in the context protests that he could not put forth his hand against King Saul. Draper, *Eng. Stud.*, lxxii, regards the passage as a reference to James I's favourite theory of Divine Right. Cf. II. i. 58 *ante*.

68–9. *What . . . Majesty?*] Macbeth and Lenox possibly speak together.

75–81. *Shake . . . house?*] David E. Jones, *The Plays of T. S. Eliot* (1960),

And look on death itself!—up, up, and see
The great doom's image!—Malcolm! Banquo!
As from your graves rise up, and walk like sprites,
To countenance this horror! [*Bell rings.*

Enter LADY MACBETH.

Lady M. What's the business,
That such a hideous trumpet calls to parley
The sleepers of the house? speak, speak!

Macd. O gentle lady,
'Tis not for you to hear what I can speak:
The repetition, in a woman's ear,
Would murther as it fell.

Enter BANQUO.

O Banquo! Banquo!
Our royal master's murther'd!

Lady M. Woe, alas!
What! in our house?

79. horror!] *Theobald;* horror. Ring the Bell. *F.* 84–6. O . . . anywhere] *Theobald; one line,* O Banquo . . . murther'd. *followed by three lines, ending* alas:/ House? / where *F.*

p. 17, comments: 'Standing probably, in the Elizabethan theatre, upon the upper stage, Macduff calls up "the sleepers of the house" to witness the "great doom's image", the Last Judgment. Rising in their night-shirts and flocking on to the stage by every entrance . . . they present a visual resemblance to the spirits rising from their graves on the Last Day, and the theatrical image complements the verbal image.' He adds that Lady Macbeth calls the bell a trumpet to remind the audience once again of the Last Judgment.

75. *sleep . . . counterfeit*] Cf. *Lucr.*, 402, where sleep is called 'the map of death', and *MND.*, III. ii. 364: 'death-counterfeiting sleep'. Baldwin, *Shakespeare's Small Latine*, I. 591, thinks that Shakespeare may have read at school in *Sententiae Pueriles* the phrase 'Somnus mortis imago'. Cf. Anders, *Shakespeare's Books*, p. 48.

77. *doom's image*] Cf. *Lr.*, v. iii. 264: 'Is this the promised end?' 'Or *image* of that *horror*?' The idea of doomsday is continued in 78–9, and the word 'horror' is used there too.

79. *countenance*] 'suit' or 'behold', or both.

Bell rings] Theobald suggested that the words which complete the line in the Folio were a stage direction accidentally repeated as 'Bell rings'. Stage directions often appear as imperatives (e.g. *Knock*, II. ii. 64 *ante*). Lady Macbeth's opening words complete the line if Theobald's suggestion is adopted. Cuningham, however, agrees with Keightley that Macduff, in his impatience, reiterates the order.

86. *in our house?*] Warburton thought that Lady Macbeth blundered with these words, and that Banquo accordingly reproved her; but Kittredge thinks it 'a natural expression from an innocent hostess'.

Ban. Too cruel, anywhere.
Dear Duff, I pr'ythee, contradict thyself,
And say, it is not so.

Re-enter MACBETH *and* LENOX.

Macb. Had I but died an hour before this chance,
I had liv'd a blessed time; for, from this instant,
There's nothing serious in mortality;
All is but toys: renown, and grace, is dead;
The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees
Is left this vault to brag of.

Enter MALCOLM *and* DONALBAIN.

Don. What is amiss?

Macb. You are, and do not know't:
The spring, the head, the fountain of your blood
Is stopp'd; the very source of it is stopp'd.

Macd. Your royal father's murther'd.

Mal. O! by whom?

Len. Those of his chamber, as it seem'd, had done't:
Their hands and faces were all badg'd with blood;
So were their daggers, which, unwip'd, we found

87. contradict] *F1;* contract *F2–4.* 88. S.D.] *Capell;* Enter Macbeth, Lenox, and Rosse *F.*

89–94. *Had . . . brag of*] Bradley points out, *Shakespearean Tragedy*, p. 359, that 'this is meant to deceive, but it utters at the same time his profoundest feelings.' I would add that Macbeth was unconscious of the truth of his words, though Murry, *Shakespeare*, p. 332, thinks otherwise: 'The irony is appalling: for Macbeth must needs be conscious of the import of the words that come from him. He intends the monstrous hypocrisy of a conventional lament for Duncan; but as the words leave his lips they change their nature, and become a doom upon himself. He is become the instrument of "the equivocation of the fiend That lies like truth".'

91. *mortality*] 'human destiny' (Grierson).

94. *vault*] 'A metaphorical comparison of this world vaulted by the sky and robbed of its spirit and grace, with a vault or cellar from which the wine has been taken and the dregs only left' (Elwin). In Case's view, Macbeth is thinking of the earth as a burial vault, and so proceeds to the idea of a wine vault.

100. *badg'd*] Cf. *2H6*, III. ii. 200: 'murder's crimson badge'.

Upon their pillows: they star'd, and were distracted;
No man's life was to be trusted with them.
Macb. O! yet I do repent me of my fury,
That I did kill them.
Macd. Wherefore did you so?
Macb. Who can be wise, amaz'd, temperate and furious,
Loyal and neutral, in a moment? No man:
Th'expedition of my violent love
Outrun the pauser, reason.—Here lay Duncan,
His silver skin lac'd with his golden blood;
And his gash'd stabs look'd like a breach in nature
For ruin's wasteful entrance: there, the murtherers.
Steep'd in the colours of their trade, their daggers
Unmannerly breech'd with gore. Who could refrain,
That had a heart to love, and in that heart
Courage, to make's love known?
Lady M. Help me hence, ho!
Macd. Look to the Lady.

102–3. Upon . . . them] *so F; three lines, ending* pillows: / life / them. *Steevens (1793).*

102–3. *Upon . . . them*] Many editors have departed from the Folio arrangement of these lines, but with insufficient justification. Cuningham's conj. 'That no man's . . .' is attractive, but not essential. The break in the metre after *pillows* and the rhythm of 103 well express the breathless haste and horror of the speaker.

109. *pauser*] i.e. delayer.

110. *lac'd*] interlaced, in reticulate fashion. Cf. *Rom.*, III. v. 8: 'What envious streaks / Do lace the severing clouds in yonder East'. And *Cym.*, II. ii. 22: 'white and azure laced / With blue of heaven's own tint'. 'It is not improbable that Shakespeare put these forced and unnatural metaphors into the mouth of Macbeth, as a mark of artifice and dissimulation, to show the difference between the studied language of hypocrisy and the natural outcries of sudden passion. The whole speech, so considered, is a remarkable instance of judgment, as it consists entirely of antithesis and metaphor' (Johnson).

112. *wasteful*] destructive. The attackers enter through the breech to lay waste the town (Kittredge).

114. *breech'd*] doubtless suggested by 'breach' (111) and meaning 'covered as with breeches, covered with gore up to the hilts'; and this of course would be 'unmannerly' as contrasted with 'mannerly' breeches, i.e. the sheaths. Harris, *M.L.N.*, xxi. 12, quotes from Guazzo, *The Ciuile Conversation*, tr. G. Pettie, 1586: 'you meane by your wordes to include mee in the number of the melancholike, which have *their wit so breeched*, that they cannot discerne sweete from sowre.' The italicized words translated 'le cerveau obfusqué'. Harris thinks that '*breech*' was more or less current (perhaps current only as an affectation) in the sense of 'cover over' (of the mind, 'becloud'), the original sense being, no doubt, 'cover as with breeches'. But, though affected, the image fits in with the clothing imagery of the play.

117–23. *Look . . . motion*] These asides are spoken while Lady Macbeth is being revived from her fainting-fit—which may be real or pretended. I believe the arrangement of these lines is new, though all editors make some change in the Folio arrangement. It is better to have the metrical pause between 'Look to the lady' and the asides, than between Malcolm's and Donalbain's speeches. Similarly, by preserving the Folio arrangement (121–2) a metrical gap is avoided between the speeches of Donalbain and Malcolm, and the *our*, by coming at the beginning of the line, has its proper emphasis. Donalbain is contrasting the attitude of himself and his brother with the suspiciously glib emotion displayed by the Macbeths.

Mal. [*Aside to Don.*] Why do we hold our tongues, that most may claim
This argument for ours?
Don. [*Aside to Mal.*] What should be spoken
Here, where our fate, hid in an auger-hole,
May rush, and seize us? Let's away:
Our tears are not yet brew'd.
Mal. [*Aside to Don.*] Nor our strong sorrow
Upon the foot of motion.
Ban. Look to the Lady:—
[*Lady Macbeth is carried out.*
And when we have our naked frailties hid,
That suffer in exposure, let us meet,
And question this most bloody piece of work,
To know it further. Fears and scruples shake us:

118, 119, 122. S.D.] *Staunton; not in F.* 118–22. Why . . . sorrow] *lines end* tongues, / ours? / here, / hole, / away, / brew'd. / Sorrow *F; various alternative arrangements.* 120. in] within *F3–4.* auger-hole,] awger-hole, *F3;* augure hole, *F1.* 123. S.D.] *Rowe; not in F.* 125. exposure,] exposure; *F.*

quoted Scot, *The Discouerie of Witchcraft*, I. 4: 'they (witches) can go in and out at awger holes.' I suppose this passage may have suggested the image to Shakespeare; but, as Chambers points out, he may have been thinking primarily of 'a hole made with a sharp point, as of an auger—or a dagger'.

123. *Upon . . . motion*] 'yet begun to express itself'.

Look . . . Lady] Flatter, *op. cit.*, p. 12, believes that a character never completes the line of another's aside; so that we should perhaps assume that these words begin a fresh line, the metrical gap being filled by stage business. It is more likely, I think, that a cut has here obscured Shakespeare's intentions.

120. *where . . . auger-hole*] Cuningham proposes to begin the line with 'where-out' and assumes that Donalbain means that their fate may be 'lurking in any minute spot', ready to rush and seize them. Cf. *Cor.*, IV. vi. 87: 'Confined / Into an auger's bore'. Bradley

124, 131.] The circumlocutions may be explained by the clothing imagery of the play; Shakespeare calls so many other things *clothes*, that he must call *clothes* something else; 'naked frailties' = unclothed, and therefore weak, bodies.

127. *scruples*] doubts.

In the great hand of God I stand; and thence
Against the undivulg'd pretence I fight
Of treasonous malice.
Macd. And so do I.
All. So all.
Macb. Let's briefly put on manly readiness,
And meet i'th'hall together.
All. Well contented.
[*Exeunt all but Malcolm and Donalbain.*
Mal. What will you do? Let's not consort with them:
To show an unfelt sorrow is an office
Which the false man does easy. I'll to England.
Don. To Ireland, I: our separated fortune
Shall keep us both the safer; where we are,
There's daggers in men's smiles: the near in blood,
The nearer bloody.
Mal. This murtherous shaft that's shot
Hath not yet lighted, and our safest way
Is to avoid the aim: therefore, to horse;
And let us not be dainty of leave-taking,
But shift away. There's warrant in that theft
Which steals itself, when there's no mercy left. [*Exeunt.*

133–9. What . . . bloody] *so Rowe; nine lines, ending* doe? / them: / Office / easie. / England. / I: / safer: / Smiles; / bloody. *F.* 141. horse;] house, *F2–4.*

128–9. *hand . . . stand; thence . . . pretence*] Note rhymes. Perhaps two couplets have been rewritten as blank verse.

129. *pretence*] design. Cf. II. iv. 24 *post* and *Lr.*, I. iv. 75: 'a very pretence and purpose of unkindness'. Banquo presumably fears that Macbeth will kill Malcolm.

131. *manly readiness*] Cuningham said this meant merely 'men's clothes'. But it surely implies 'warlike equipment or temper' (New Clarendon). 'Ready' frequently means *dressed*, and 'unready' *undressed*. Cf. *Cym.*, II. iii. 87. Case prefers the straightforward abstract meaning.

135. *easy*] i.e. easily.

138. *the near*] i.e. the nearer. Cf. *R2*, v. i. 88: 'Better far off than near, be ne'er the near'. Donalbain means Macbeth, Duncan's kinsman. Cf. *R3*, II. i. 92: 'Nearer in bloody thoughts, but not in blood'. The phrase means, 'The closer our relationship, the more likely he is to murder us.'

142. *dainty*] particular.

143. *shift away*] slip off.

warrant] justification.

143–4. *theft . . . steals*] Cf. *All's W.*, II. i. 33: '*Bert.* I'll steal away. *First Lord.* There's honour in the theft.'

SCENE IV.—[*Without the castle.*]

Enter ROSSE *and an Old Man.*

Old M. Threescore and ten I can remember well;
Within the volume of which time I have seen
Hours dreadful, and things strange, but this sore night
Hath trifled former knowings.
Rosse. Ha, good Father,
Thou seest the heavens, as troubled with man's act,
Threatens his bloody stage: by th'clock 'tis day,
And yet dark night strangles the travelling lamp.
Is't night's predominance, or the day's shame,
That darkness does the face of earth entomb,
When living light should kiss it?
Old M. 'Tis unnatural,
Even like the deed that's done. On Tuesday last,
A falcon, towering in her pride of place,

Scene IV

S.D. *Without the castle.*] *Hanmer.* 4. Ha] Ah *Rowe.* 6. Threatens] Threaten *Rowe.* his] this *Theobald.* 7. travelling] *F3–4;* trauailing *F1–2.* 10. should] shall *F2.*

This scene, as Liddell remarks, serves as a chorus; but by means of the portents it underlines the unnaturalness of Duncan's murder, it reports the success of Macbeth's schemes, and it gives us a taste of Macduff's integrity.

S.D. Without the castle] Theobald's localizing of the scene has been followed by all editors, presumably on the ground that Macduff arrives with the latest news from the castle.

3. *sore*] dreadful, grievous. Cf. Scottish *sair*.

4. *trifled . . . knowings*] i.e. made former experience seem trifling.

Ha] All editors have followed Rowe's emendation to 'Ah'; but there seems to be no point in the change.

6. *Threatens*] a common use of singular verb with plural subject.

stage] Whiter, *Specimen of a Commentary*, pp. 160–1, shows that this word was suggested by the theatrical meaning of 'heavens', i.e. roof of the stage.

7. *travelling*] The word was spelt indifferently 'travel' and 'travail', and both meanings may be intended.

lamp] i.e. the sun.

8. *Is't . . . shame*] 'Is night triumphant in the deed of darkness . . . or is day ashamed to look upon it?' (Clarendon).

predominance] astrological influence. Cf. *Troil.*, II. iii. 138: 'his humorous predominance', and *Lr.*, I. ii. 134: 'spherical predominance'.

12. *towering . . . place*] terms of falconry. 'Towering' means mounting higher and higher in wide circles, and 'place' is the highest 'pitch' or flight attained by the hawk before stooping. Cf. *John*, v. ii. 149. Turberville, *Book of Falconrie*, ed. 1611, p. 53, writes of 'the number of those Hawkes that are hie flying and towre Hawks'.

Was by a mousing owl hawk'd at, and kill'd.
Rosse. And Duncan's horses (a thing most strange and certain)
Beauteous and swift, the minions of their race,
Turn'd wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out,
Contending 'gainst obedience, as they would make
War with mankind.
Old M. 'Tis said, they eat each other.
Rosse. They did so; to th'amazement of mine eyes,
That look'd upon't.

Enter MACDUFF.

Here comes the good Macduff.
How goes the world, Sir, now?
Macd. Why, see you not?
Rosse. Is't known, who did this more than bloody deed?
Macd. Those that Macbeth hath slain.
Rosse. Alas, the day!
What good could they pretend?
Macd. They were suborn'd.
Malcolm, and Donalbain, the King's two sons,
Are stol'n away and fled; which puts upon them
Suspicion of the deed.
Rosse. 'Gainst nature still:
Thriftless Ambition, that will ravin up

14. And . . . certain)] *so Pope; two lines, the first ending* horses *F.* 17–18. would make War *so Steevens (1793); line 17 ends* would *F.* 18. eat] ate *Singer.* 19–20. They . . . Macduff] *so Pope; three lines, ending* so: / upon't. / Macduffe. *F.* 28. will] *F;* wilt *Warburton.* ravin up] *Theobald;* rauen up *F1;* raven upon *F2–4.*

14. *horses*] Walker conj. 'horse', the old collective plural. Cf. IV. i. 140: 'the galloping of horse'.

15. *minions*] darlings, favourites, i.e. best of their breed. According to Chambers the owl and the horses symbolize the traitor who struck the king. But it may be an exhibition of demonic power over the elements of nature (cf. note on II. iii. 53) or a reflection of the violation of the natural order which the murder involves.

17. *as*] as if. Cf. II. ii. 27 *ante.*

24. *pretend*] intend. Cf. 'pretence' (II. iii. 129 *ante*).

suborn'd] instigated to commit any evil action.

27–9. *'Gainst . . . means*] R. Walker, *op. cit.*, chap. 4, comments: 'Ostensibly the words relate to Malcolm and Donalbain. . . But how much better the words describe Macbeth!'

28. *will*] No emendation is required as this use was common in Elizabethan English.

ravin up] swallow greedily. Cf. IV. i. ii. 63 *ante* and Appendix, p. 172.

Thine own life's means!—Then 'tis most like
The sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth.
Macd. He is already nam'd, and gone to Scone
To be invested.
Rosse. Where is Duncan's body?
Macd. Carried to Colme-kill,
The sacred storehouse of his predecessors,
And guardian of their bones.
Will you to Scone?
Rosse. No cousin; I'll to Fife.
Macd. Well, I will thither.
Rosse. Well, may you see things well done there:—adieu!—
Lest our old robes sit easier than our new!
Old M. Farewell, Father.
God's benison go with you; and with those
That would make good of bad, and friends of foes!
[*Exeunt.*

29. Thine] Its *Hanmer.* life's] *Pope;* liues *F.* 33. Colme-kill,] Colmeshill, *Rowe;* Colmeskill, *Johnson.* 37. Well, may] *Theobald;* Well may *F.* 40. you;] you Sir, *F2–4.*

24 *post*; *Meas.*, I. ii. 133: 'Like rats that ravin down their proper bane'; and Jonson, *Every Man in His Humour*, III. v. 42: 'I am sure on't; for they rauen up more butter, then all the dayes of the weeke beside.'

31. *nam'd*] chosen.

Scone] The ancient royal city, probably the capital of the old Pictish kingdom, about two miles north of Perth. The Stone of Destiny, on which the Scottish kings were crowned, was thought to have been Jacob's pillow: it was purloined by Edward I in 1296 and taken to Westminster Abbey.

33. *Colme-kill*] Iona. See note on I.

36. *I will thither*] The verb of motion is sometimes omitted. Cf. *R2*, I. ii. 73: 'desolate will I hence and die.'

37. *Well . . . well*] ironical repetition of Rosse's 'well'.

40–1. *and with . . . foes*] Fleay and Wilson suspect an interpolation, but the couplet contains the antitheses so common through the play. 'The Old Man rightly judges Rosse as a mere time-server' (Chambers). The blessing, however, is more likely to be sincere. 'The Old Man blesses those who would transform bad into good and foes into friends' (Flatter).

ACT III

SCENE I.—[*Forres. A room in the palace.*]

Enter BANQUO.

Ban. Thou hast it now, King, Cawdor, Glamis, all,
As the Weïrd Women promis'd; and, I fear,
Thou play'dst most foully for't; yet it was said,
It should not stand in thy posterity;
But that myself should be the root and father
Of many kings. If there come truth from them
(As upon thee, Macbeth, their speeches shine),
Why, by the verities on thee made good,
May they not be my oracles as well,
And set me up in hope? But, hush; no more.

Sennet sounded. Enter MACBETH *as King;* LADY MACBETH, *as Queen;* LENOX, ROSSE, *Lords and Attendants.*

ACT III
Scene I

S.D. *Forres . . . palace.*] *Capell.* 10. *Lady . . . Lenox*] *Rowe;* Lady Lenox *F.*

1–10. *Thou . . . more*] In Holinshed, Banquo is Macbeth's accomplice in the murder of Duncan; but as he was James I's ancestor he had to be treated with some respect. For purely dramatic reasons it was obviously desirable to contrast Macbeth and Banquo, and to give Macbeth and his wife no accomplices. Bradley, *Shakespearean Tragedy*, pp. 384–5, thinks that this speech proves that Banquo has become an accessory to the murder because, out of ambition, he has kept silent about the witches and thus refrained from exposing Macbeth. Wilson argues that Shakespeare could not have depicted James I's ancestor as a cowardly time-server, and refers to Macbeth's oblique compliments later in the scene (49–52 'royalty of nature', 'dauntless temper', 'wisdom'). He suggests further, and rather weakly, that in the un-cut *Macbeth*, Banquo may have been working with Macduff on behalf of Malcolm. If so, the cut (which on Wilson's theory was made by Shakespeare himself) was a very queer one. Cf. Introduction, p. xxi.

3. *play'dst*] Cf. I. v. 21.

4. *stand*] Cf. *MND.*, v. i. 417.

5. *root*] possibly suggested by the Banquo tree in Leslie (Paul).

10. S.D. Sennet] 'A word chiefly occurring in the stage-directions of old plays, and seeming to indicate a particular set of notes on the trumpet or cornet, different from a flourish' (Nares).

Macb. Here's our chief guest.
Lady M. If he had been forgotten,
It had been as a gap in our great feast,
And all-thing unbecoming.
Macb. To-night we hold a solemn supper, Sir,
And I'll request your presence.
Ban. Let your Highness
Command upon me, to the which my duties
Are with a most indissoluble tie
For ever knit.
Macb. Ride you this afternoon?
Ban. Ay, my good Lord.
Macb. We should have else desir'd your good advice
(Which still hath been both grave and prosperous)
In this day's council; but we'll take to-morrow.
Is't far you ride?
Ban. As far, my Lord, as will fill up the time
'Twixt this and supper: go not my horse the better,
I must become a borrower of the night,
For a dark hour, or twain.
Macb. Fail not our feast.
Ban. My Lord, I will not.
Macb. We hear, our bloody cousins are bestow'd
In England, and in Ireland; not confessing
Their cruel parricide, filling their hearers
With strange invention. But of that to-morrow,
When, therewithal, we shall have cause of State,

13. all-thing] *F1;* all-things *F2;* all things *F3–4.* 15. Let your Highness] Lay your Highness's *D'Avenant, Rowe;* Set your highness' *conj. Mason.* 16. upon] be upon *Keightley.* 20–3. We . . . ride?] *lines end* desir'd / grave, / but / ride? *Pope.* 22. take] talk *Malone;* take't *Warburton (MS.) and Keightley (apud Camb.).*

13. *all-thing*] wholly; or everything.

14. *solemn*] formal or ceremonious. Cf. *MND.*, IV. i. 191: 'We'll hold a feast in great solemnity.'

15–16. *Let . . . which*] 'Command upon' is an unusual phrase for 'lay your command upon', but such telescoping is not unique in Shakespeare. Cuningham thought that the antecedent of 'which' was 'Command', the Clar. Edd. thought it was 'the idea contained in the preceding clause', and Case that it was 'your highness'.

21. *still . . . prosperous*] always . . . profitable.

25. *go . . . horse*] i.e. if my horse go not. Cf. *R2*, II. i. 300: 'Hold out my horse, and I will first be there.'

33. *cause*] subject, matter of debate;

Craving us jointly. Hie you to horse: adieu,
Till you return at night. Goes Fleance with you?
Ban. Ay, my good Lord: our time does call upon's.
Macb. I wish your horses swift, and sure of foot;
And so I do commend you to their backs.
Farewell.— [*Exit Banquo.*
Let every man be master of his time
Till seven at night;
To make society the sweeter welcome,
We will keep ourself till supper-time alone:
While then, God be with you.
[*Exeunt all except Macbeth and a Servant.*
Sirrah, a word with you.
Attend those men our pleasure?
Serv. They are, my Lord,
Without the palace gate.
Macb. Bring them before us.
[*Exit Servant.*
To be thus is nothing, but to be safely thus:
Our fears in Banquo
Stick deep, and in his royalty of nature
Reigns that which would be fear'd: 'tis much he
dares;

34–5. Craving . . . you?] *so Pope; three lines, ending* Horse: / Night. / you? *F.* 38. I do] do I *F3–4.* 41–7. Till . . . safely thus:] *lines end* societie / welcome: / alone: / you. / men / pleasure? / Gate. / us. / safely thus: *F.* 41–2. night; To . . . welcome,] *Theobald;* Night, to . . . welcome: *F.* 48–50. Our . . . dares;] *lines end* deepe, / that / dares, F.

cf. IV. iii. 196 *post*, where the 'general cause' means the public interest.

41–8.] The Folio arrangement of these lines cannot be right, and all editors have made some changes. But no editor since Rowe has kept 47 intact and the rhythm of 41–6, as usually printed, is dreadfully flabby. The Folio printers made the mistake of adding 'to make societie' to the short line 41, but they realized that 43 was a complete line. The shortness of line 48 enables a dramatic pause to be made after the key line, 47.

44. *While*] until. Cf. *R2*, IV. i. 269: 'Read o'er the paper while the glass doth come.' This usage is still common in the North of England.

God . . . you] i.e. God b'wi'you (= good-bye), and so scanned.

47. *To be thus . . . thus*] i.e. to be a king in name is nothing, but to reign in safety is the thing. Cf. III. ii. 6, 13–26, 32.

49. *Stick deep*] like thorns (Wilson).

49–53. *royalty . . . safety*] Stewart, *M.L.R.*, 1945, p. 172, claims rightly that 'the ungrudging recognition and boundless admiration' expressed in this speech are not, as some critics believe, psychologically unconvincing. 'It is surely natural enough for Macbeth to assert that the enemy he fears and proposes to have assassinated is a formidable enemy, of regal temper, at once daring and prudent. Anyone who doubts this should try writing a speech for Macbeth in which Banquo is represented as timid, foolish, and generally negligible.' See Introduction p. lviii.

And, to that dauntless temper of his mind,
He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valour
To act in safety. There is none but he
Whose being I do fear: and under him
My Genius is rebuk'd; as, it is said,
Mark Antony's was by Cæsar. He chid the Sisters,
When first they put the name of King upon me,
And bade them speak to him; then, prophet-like,
They hail'd him father to a line of kings:
Upon my head they plac'd a fruitless crown,
And put a barren sceptre in my gripe,
Thence to be wrench'd with an unlineal hand,
No son of mine succeeding. If't be so,
For Banquo's issue have I fil'd my mind;
For them the gracious Duncan have I murther'd;
Put rancours in the vessel of my peace,
Only for them; and mine eternal jewel
Given to the common Enemy of man,
To make them kings, the seed of Banquo kings!
Rather than so, come, fate, into the list,
And champion me to th'utterance!—Who's there?—

69. seed] *Pope;* Seedes *F.* 71. And . . . there] *so Pope; two lines, the first ending* utterance. *F.*

55–6. *My Genius . . . Cæsar*] Cf. *Ant.*, III. iii. 19, and North's *Plutarch* (Temple ed. IX, pp. 43–4): 'For thy demon, said he (that is to say, the good angell and spirit that keepeth thee), is afraid of his: and being couragious and high when he is alone, becometh fearfull and timorous when he cometh neare vnto the other.'

60–3. *Upon . . . succeeding*] This part of the prophecy had not been mentioned earlier as it was necessary in I. iii for the prospect of kingship to appear 'entirely unclouded' (Schanzer).

62. *with*] i.e. by. Cf. e.g. *Wint.*, v. ii. 68.

64. *fil'd*] defiled. The word is used by Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, III. i. 62, and Wilkins, *Miseries of Inforc'd Marriage* (Dodsley, ed. Hazlitt, IX. 511).

66. *Put . . . peace*] Wilson compares Ps., xi. 6, and Isa., li. 17. Grierson suggests the image is drawn from the sacramental cup.

67. *eternal jewel*] immortal soul. Cf. *Oth.*, III. iii. 361: 'eternal soul'.

69. *seed*] Possibly F is correct (Paul).

71. *champion me*] Cuningham thought this 'must mean that Fate is called in to be Macbeth's champion to defend his royal title'; but Macbeth is rather challenging Fate to the combat (*O.E.D.*).

to th'utterance] Holinshed, III. 560*a*,

Re-enter Servant, with two Murderers.

Now, go to the door, and stay there till we call.
[*Exit Servant.*

Was it not yesterday we spoke together?

1 *Mur.* It was, so please your Highness.

Macb. Well then, now
Have you consider'd of my speeches?—know
That it was he, in the times past, which held you
So under fortune, which you thought had been
Our innocent self? This I made good to you
In our last conference; pass'd in probation with you,
How you were borne in hand; how cross'd; the instruments;
Who wrought with them; and all things else, that might,
To half a soul, and to a notion craz'd,
Say, 'Thus did Banquo.'

1 *Mur.* You made it known to us.

Macb. I did so; and went further, which is now
Our point of second meeting. Do you find
Your patience so predominant in your nature,

74–81. It . . . might,] *so Rowe; lines end* then, / speeches: / past, / fortune, / selfe? / conference, / you: / crost: / them: / might *F.* 75. Have you] You have *F3.* speeches?—know] *Muir;* speeches: Know *F;* speeches? Know. *Rowe.* self?] selfe. *F, etc.* 84–90. I . . . ever?] *so Rowe; lines end* so: / now / meeting, / predominant, / goe? / man, / hand / begger'd / euer? *F.*

has: 'the lord Mountainie . . . would not yeeld, but made semblance, as though he meant to defend the place, *to the utterance*.' Cotgrave defines 'Combatre à oultrance' as '. . . to *fight it out, or to the uttermost*'.

S.D. two Murderers] Granville-Barker says that 'the text's implication is surely that they were officers, cast perhaps for some misdemeanour and out of luck.'

75–8. *Have . . . self*] The F punctuation is possible; but editors usually insert a question-mark at 75, and as Macbeth informs the murderers that he has already told them about Banquo's villainy at a previous conference, I believe the meaning is: 'Have you considered my speeches and [do you] know that it was he, etc.'

77. *under fortune*] beneath your deserts.

79. *pass'd in probation*] went over the proof.

80. *borne in hand*] i.e. deceived. Cf. *Ham.*, II. ii. 67: 'That so his sickness, age and impotence / Was falsely borne in hand'. Cf. also *Cym.*, v. v. 43, and Wyatt, *Poems*, ed. Muir, p. 15: 'For he that beleveth bering in hand / Plowithe in water and soweth in the sand.'

82. *notion*] mind.

That you can let this go? Are you so gospell'd,
To pray for this good man, and for his issue,
Whose heavy hand hath bow'd you to the grave,
And beggar'd yours for ever?

1 *Mur.* We are men, my Liege.

Macb. Ay, in the catalogue ye go for men;
As hounds, and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels, curs,
Shoughs, water-rugs, and demi-wolves, are clept
All by the name of dogs: the valu'd file
Distinguishes the swift, the slow, the subtle,
The housekeeper, the hunter, every one
According to the gift which bounteous Nature

93. clept] *Capell;* clipt *F;* cleped *Theobald;* clep'd *Hanmer.*

87–8. *gospell'd . . . man*] Cf. Matt., v. 44 (Geneva): 'Loue your enemies: blesse them that curse you: doe good to them that hate you, and pray for them which hurt you, and persecute you.' In the scenes relating to the murder of Banquo there seem to be several echoes from verses in the same chapter. Cf. 107 'perfect' and v. 48; 127 'shine' and v. 16; III. iii. 16 'rain . . . come down' and v. 45; III. iii. 11–12 'go . . . mile' and v. 41; and perhaps III. i. 108 'vile blows and buffets' and v. 39; and III. i. 141, 'If . . . to-night' and v. 10—implying that Banquo is persecuted for righteousness' sake.

90. *men*] Gervinus notes that Macbeth uses the very means which had wrought most effectually upon himself: he appeals to the manliness of the murderers.

91–100. *Ay . . . men*] 'an image of order' (Knights).

93. *Shoughs*] 'what we now call *shocks*' (Johnson); a shag-haired dog. Steevens quotes Nash, *Lenten Stuffe*, ed. McKerrow, III. 182: 'they are for *Vltima Theule*, the north-seas, or *Island* [Iceland], and thence yerke ouer . . . a trundle-taile tike or *shaugh* or two.'

water-rugs] rough-haired water dog.

demi-wolves] 'dogs bred between wolves and dogs, like the Latin *lycisci*' (Johnson).

clept] called. The word was becoming obsolete in Shakespeare's day. Cf. *LLL.*, v. i. 23, and *Ham.*, I. iv. 19.

94. *the valu'd file*] 'The file or list where the value and peculiar qualities of everything are set down, in contradistinction to what he immediately mentions, "the bill that writes them all alike"' (Steevens). Cf. 101 *post* and v. ii. 8. See also *Meas.*, III. ii. 144: 'The greater file of the subject held the Duke to be wise.' It should be noted that *valu'd* is an adj. from the noun *value*, not the participle of the vb.

96. *housekeeper*] In Topsell, *History of Four-Footed Beasts*, 1608, pp. 160, the *housekeeper* is enumerated among the different kinds of dogs (Clarendon).

97. *According . . . gift*] Noble compares Eph., iv. 7, and Matt., xxv. 15.

bounteous Nature] *naturae benignitas*. The phrase is used by Erasmus in his *Colloquia* (ed. 1664, p. 662). Rea pointed out (*M.L.N.*, xxxv) that in the same colloquy there is a comparison between dogs and men, similar to Macbeth's. Shakespeare may have read the passage at school. For convenience I give H.M.'s translation, 1671, pp. 482–3: '*Sy.* All Dogs are contained under one *species*, but into how innumerable shapes is this special kind divided, so that thou wouldest say that they are distinguished in the *genus*, and not in the *species*. Now how

Hath in him clos'd; whereby he does receive
Particular addition, from the bill
That writes them all alike; and so of men.
Now, if you have a station in the file,
Not i'th'worst rank of manhood, say't;
And I will put that business in your bosoms,
Whose execution takes your enemy off,
Grapples you to the heart and love of us,
Who wear our health but sickly in his life,
Which in his death were perfect.

2 *Mur.* I am one, my Liege,
Whom the vile blows and buffets of the world
Hath so incens'd, that I am reckless what
I do, to spite the world.

1 *Mur.* And I another,
So weary with disasters, tugg'd with fortune,
That I would set my life on any chance,
To mend it, or be rid on't.

Macb. Both of you
Know, Banquo was your enemy.

102. Not] And not *Rowe.* say't] *F;* say it *Rowe.* 103. that] the *F3–4.* 105. heart] heart; *F.* 109. Hath] *F;* Have *most Edd.* 109–10. what I do] *line ends with* doe *F.* 111. weary] weary'd *Capell.* 113–14. Both . . . enemy] *so Rowe; one line F.*

different are the manners and dispositions of Dogs even altogether of the same special kind? *Ph.* There is a very great variety. *Sy.* Suppose that which is spoken of dogs, to be spoken of all the several kinds of living creatures, but the difference appeareth in no kind more than in Horses. *Ph.* Thou sayest true, but to what purpose dost thou speak these things? *Sy.* Whatsoever variety there is in the general kinds, or in the shapes of living creatures, or in every several creature, imagine all this to be in man: Thou shalt find there diverse Wolves, Dogs of an unspeakable variety.' This passage may have been recalled to Shakespeare's mind by the reference to *Genius* (55) for Erasmus also mentions *Genius* (*op. cit.*, p. 661).

98. *clos'd*] set, like a jewel (Wilson); or just 'enclosed'.

99. *addition*] Cf. I. iii. 106 *ante.*

101. *file*] a pun on the two meanings of 'file'—as in 94, and in the military sense.

105. *Grapples*] Cf. *Ham.*, I. iii. 63: 'Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel.'

111. *tugg'd*] scuffled. Cf. *Wint.*, IV. iv. 508: 'let myself and fortune / Tug for the time to come.' The metaphor is apparently from a rough-and-tumble at wrestling. Drayton, *Mortimeriados*, 2725, uses the same expression: 'Fortune and I have tugg'd together so.' Cf. Daniel's *Epistle to Southampton*, 1–2: 'He who hath neuer warr'd with miserie, / Nor euer tugg'd with Fortune and distresse'.

2 *Mur.* True, my Lord.

Macb. So is he mine; and in such bloody distance,
That every minute of his being thrusts
Against my near'st of life: and though I could
With bare-fac'd power sweep him from my sight,
And bid my will avouch it, yet I must not,
For certain friends that are both his and mine,
Whose loves I may not drop, but wail his fall
Who I myself struck down: and thence it is
That I to your assistance do make love,
Masking the business from the common eye,
For sundry weighty reasons.

2 *Mur.* We shall, my Lord,
Perform what you command us.

1 *Mur.* Though our lives—

Macb. Your spirits shine through you. Within this hour, at most,
I will advise you where to plant yourselves,
Acquaint you with the perfect spy o'th'time,

127. Your . . . most] *so Pope; two lines, the first ending* you. *F.* 129. the . . . time] *F;* the perfect spot, the time *conj. Tyrwhitt;* a . . . time *conj. Johnson;* the perfectry o' the time *conj. Beckett;* a perfect spy, o' the time *Collier MS.*

115. *distance*] in fencing, definite interval of space to be kept between the combatants (Onions); hence enmity. Cf. Bacon, *Essays*, XV. *Of Seditions and Troubles*: 'the Dividing and Breaking of all Factions, and setting them at distance, or at least distrust amongst themselves'.

117. *near'st of life*] i.e. vital parts. For the construction, cf. V. ii. 11 *post* and *Meas.*, III. i. 17: 'best of rest'.

119. *avouch*] warrant, justify. Cf. V. v. 47 *post.*

120. *For*] on account of, because of. Cf. Abbott, *Shakes. Gram.*, § 150, and *Ven.*, 114.

121. *but*] Abbott, *Shakes. Gram.*, § 385, considers that the finite verb is to be supplied here *without* the negative, i.e. 'but (I must) wail his fall', etc.; and compares 47 *ante.* Cuningham, however, suggested 'but' was a corruption of 'would'.

122. *Who*] i.e. whom—frequent in Shakespeare.

129. *the perfect . . . time*] The meaning of this is much disputed: (i) the third murderer (Johnson, who emends *the* to *a*); (ii) *espyal* = exact intimation of precise time (Heath); (iii) the exact time most favourable to your purposes (Steevens, who proposes a full-stop at the end of 128). There are numerous variations of these explanations and many conjectural emendations. If Johnson's explanation is correct, it is curious that Macbeth did not introduce the two murderers to the third. In Sc. iii they seem surprised to see him. Wilson thinks there has been a cut. Perhaps for 'spy' we should read 'spial' (= observation, watch—*O.E.D.*). Flatter suggests that *perfect* is the theatrical term, and that it relates to time.

The moment on't; for't must be done to-night,
And something from the palace; always thought,
That I require a clearness: and with him
(To leave no rubs nor botches in the work),
Fleance his son, that keeps him company,
Whose absence is no less material to me
Than is his father's, must embrace the fate
Of that dark hour. Resolve yourselves apart;
I'll come to you anon.

2 Mur. We are resolv'd, my Lord.

Macb. I'll call upon you straight: abide within.—
[*Exeunt Murderers.*
It is concluded: Banquo, thy soul's flight,
If it find Heaven, must find it out to-night. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—[*The same. Another room.*]

Enter LADY MACBETH *and a Servant.*

Lady M. Is Banquo gone from court?

Serv. Ay, Madam, but returns again to-night.

133. (*To . . . work*),] To . . . Worke: *F.* 139. S.D.] *Theobald;* Exeunt (*after 141*) *F.*

Scene II

S.D. *The same. Another room.*] *Capell.*

131. *something*] used adverbially, like 'somewhat'. Cf. *2H4*, I. ii. 212: 'a white head and something a round belly'.

thought] i.e. it being thought. Liddell quotes a similar idiom from Florio's *Montaigne*, I. xxv: 'Alwayes conditioned the master bethinke himselfe where to his charge tendeth'.

132. *clearness*] 'So that he . . . might cleare himselfe' (Holinshed). Cf. Appendix, p. 173. The word also implies 'completeness'. Cf. l. 133.

133. *rubs*] Editors assume that the metaphor is from the bowling-green, a 'rub' being an impediment. Cf. *Ham.*, III. i. 65, and *John*, III. iv. 128. But I doubt whether Shakespeare was thinking of bowls here. The word means 'a roughness; an unevenness or inequality' (*O.E.D.*) in a piece of work as well as on a green. This interpretation is supported by 'botches', which means 'parts spoiled by clumsy work'.

Scene II

1. *Is . . . court?*] 'May not Lady Macbeth's suspicions have been aroused by the particularity with which she had heard her husband ask concerning Banquo's movements in III. i?' (Furness).

Lady M. Say to the King, I would attend his leisure
For a few words.

Serv. Madam, I will. [*Exit.*

Lady M. Nought's had, all's spent,
Where our desire is got without content:
'Tis safer to be that which we destroy,
Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy.

Enter MACBETH.

How now, my Lord? why do you keep alone,
Of sorriest fancies your companions making,
Using those thoughts, which should indeed have died
With them they think on? Things without all remedy
Should be without regard: what's done is done.

Macb. We have scorch'd the snake, not kill'd it:
She'll close, and be herself; whilst our poor malice
Remains in danger of her former tooth.
But let the frame of things disjoint, both the worlds
suffer,

11. all] *not in Hanmer.* 13. scorch'd] *F, Grierson, Wilson;* scotch'd *Theobald, etc.* 16. But . . . suffer] *so Theobald; two lines, the first ending* dis-joynt, *F.* disjoint] become disjoint *conj. Bailey.* suffer] suffer dissolution *conj. Bailey.* But let the frame of things disjoint itself, *followed by Bailey's second conj.*—*conj. Cuningham.*

6–7. *'Tis . . . joy*] Cf. III. i. 47 *ante* and 19–22 *post.*

7. *doubtful*] full of doubt, suspicious, apprehensive. W. D. Sargeaunt, *Macbeth: The Play as Shakespeare Wrote It*, 1916, thinks the line means 'Than to dwell near destruction in joy doubtful (fearful) of destruction'; but the title of the book is somewhat misleading.

8–45.] 'One of the few strokes of pathos that are let soften the grimness of the tragedy is Lady Macbeth's wan effort to get near enough to the tortured man to comfort him. But the royal robes, stiff on their bodies—stiff as with caked blood—seem to keep them apart' (Granville-Barker, *op. cit.*, p. xli).

9. *sorriest*] Cf. II. ii. 20 *ante.*

10. *Using*] keeping company with, entertaining as companions. Cf. *Per.*, I. ii. 3–7.

11. *without all remedy*] i.e. beyond all remedy. Cf. *MND.*, IV. i. 158: 'without the peril of the Athenian law', and *Wint.*, III. ii. 223: 'What's gone and what's past help / Should be past grief.'

12. *what's done is done*] Cf. I. vii. 1; V. i. 64.

13. *scorch'd*] slashed, as with a knife (*O.E.D.*). Theobald's emendation is unnecessary.

snake] possibly suggested by the serpentine trunk of the Banquo tree in Leslie's book. Cf. III. iv. 28 (Paul).

15. *her former tooth*] i.e. her tooth as formerly, before she was 'scorch'd'.

16. *But . . . suffer*] This line, unwieldy as it is, consists of two lines, both imperfect in the Folio. Shakespeare made

Ere we will eat our meal in fear, and sleep
In the affliction of these terrible dreams,
That shake us nightly. Better be with the dead,
Whom we, to gain our peace, have sent to peace,
Than on the torture of the mind to lie
In restless ecstasy. Duncan is in his grave;
After life's fitful fever he sleeps well;
Treason has done his worst: nor steel, nor poison,
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing
Can touch him further!
Lady M. Come on:
Gentle my Lord, sleek o'er your rugged looks;
Be bright and jovial among your guests to-night.
Macb. So shall I, Love; and so, I pray, be you.
Let your remembrance apply to Banquo:
Present him eminence, both with eye and tongue:

20. peace] *F1;* place *F2–4.* 22. In . . . grave] *so Rowe; two lines, the first ending* extasie. *F.* 28. among] *F1;* 'mong *F2–4.* 30. apply] still apply *F2–4.*

frequent use of short lines, but he did not have two together in the middle of a speech. Bailey's conj. given above seems to be unlike the style of the play, and Cuningham's 'disjoint itself' is flat. I suspect we should keep the Folio lines, but emend the first to 'But let the very frame of things disjoint'. Cuningham compares *Ham.*, I. ii. 20: 'Our state to be disjoint and out of frame'. In support of Bailey's conj. 'dissolution', Cuningham quotes *Troil.*, v. ii. 156: 'The bonds of heaven are slipp'd, dissolved, and loosed,' and *Tp.*, IV. i. 154: 'The great globe itself . . . shall dissolve.' Wilson compares *1H4*, III. i. 16. The metaphor is from carpentry or house-building. Macbeth would rather have the universe fall to pieces than suffer from bad dreams. Nashe, *Lenten Stuffe* (ed. McKerrow, III. 214), uses 'disioynt' in an active sense.

frame of things] i.e. the universe, both the worlds, celestial and terrestrial.

18. *dreams*] Wilson says that the context (24–6 *post*) shows that he dreams he is being murdered, apparently by Banquo. This may be; but perhaps he dreams, more terribly, of murdering Duncan or Banquo—as Lady Macbeth was to do. His feeling of guilt would make him fear Banquo.

20. *gain . . . to peace*] i.e. to gain the peace of satisfied ambition have sent to the peace of the grave. F2 ruins a nice point. The critics who defend 'place' on the ground that Macbeth did not gain 'peace' confuse fact and intention.

21. *on . . . lie*] The metaphor is from the rack.

22. *ecstasy*] 'Every species of alienation of mind, whether temporary or permanent, proceeding from joy, sorrow, wonder, or any other exciting cause' (Nares, *Glossary*). Cf. *Err.*, IV. iv. 50.

23. *fitful*] Shakespearian coinage.

30. *remembrance*] a quadrisyllable. Cf. Abbott, *Shakes. Gram.*, § 477.

apply] be given.

31. *Present him eminence*] i.e. assign to him the highest rank.

Unsafe the while, that we
Must lave our honours in these flattering streams,
And make our faces vizards to our hearts,
Disguising what they are.
Lady M. You must leave this.
Macb. O! full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife!
Thou know'st that Banquo, and his Fleance, lives.
Lady M. But in them Nature's copy's not eterne.
Macb. There's comfort yet; they are assailable:

32–3. Unsafe . . . streams,] *lines end* laue / streames, *F.*

32. *Unsafe . . . we*] The Folio line-division is wrong here, and something may be missing; but the general meaning is, 'For the time being we are unsafe, so that we must keep our honours clean by flattering Banquo and disguising our hatred.' Wilson comments that Macbeth fears exposure as well as assassination from Banquo. Grierson points out that 'flattering' has the force of a defining genitive.

36. *full . . . mind*] It has been suggested (*M.L.N.*, LX) that there is a reference to the superstition that basil propagated scorpions. Topsell, *Historie of Serpents*, p. 225, says that '*Hollerius* . . . writeth that in Italy in his dayes, there was a man that had a Scorpion bredde in his braine, by continuall smelling to this herbe Basill, and *Gesner* by relation of an Apothecary in Fraunce, writeth likewise a storie of a young mayde, who by smelling to Basill, fell into an exceeding head-ach, whereof she dyed without cure, and after her death beeing opened, there were found little Scorpions in her braine.' Cf. Browne, *Vulgar Errors*, II. vii. 9 (ed. Keynes, II. 176) and the note on v. iii. 55.

38. *Nature's . . . eterne*] usually explained as 'their holding by "copy" from nature is not for ever'. Copy, or copyhold, is the tenure of lands 'at the will of the lord according to the custom of the manor', by copy of the manorial court-roll. Coke on Littleton (ed. 1670) c. ix, § 73: 'Tenant by copy of court roll is as if a man be seised of a manor within which manor there is a custom which hath been used to have lands and tenements, to hold to them and their heirs in fee simple, or fee tail, or for term of life, at the will of the lord according to the custom of the same manor.' Just as, in the case of the tenure of the estate being only for the life of the tenant, the estate would revert to the lord on the former's death, so the tenure of their lives by Banquo and Fleance under Nature as 'lady of the manor' would cease with their deaths. But Clarkson and Warren in an exhaustive discussion of the passage (*M.L.N.*, LV. 483–93) argue that copyholds were not subject to arbitrary termination; that Shakespeare does not specifically refer to copy of court-roll; and that elsewhere he never uses the terms copyhold or copy of court roll at all; and that by *copy* he invariably means (i) a thing to be copied, or (ii) the result of imitation, or some variation thereof. Shakespeare, perhaps, used the legal term inaccurately; and there is another legal metaphor, 49 *post*; but I agree in the main with Clarkson and Warren, and only add that the *legal* sense of *copy* may be an undertone of the passage. Kittredge compares Massinger, *Fatal Dowry*, IV. i, 'Nature's copy that she works form by', and *Oth.*, v. ii. 11.

39. *There's*] i.e. in that there is.

comfort] Cf. I. ii. 27 *ante*.

Then be thou jocund. Ere the bat hath flown
His cloister'd flight; ere to black Hecate's summons
The shard-born beetle, with his drowsy hums,
Hath rung Night's yawning peal, there shall be done
A deed of dreadful note.

Lady M. What's to be done?

Macb. Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,
Till thou applaud the deed. Come, seeling Night,

42. shard-born] *F3;* shard-borne *Fr–2.* 43–4. Hath . . . note] *so Rowe; lines end* Peale, / note. *F.* 46. seeling] *F;* sealing *Rowe.*

40. *jocund*] a revealing adjective.

41. *cloister'd*] It may be used either literally or metaphorically.

black Hecate] As Shakespeare was aware (cf. *AYL.*, III. ii. 2) Hecate is properly another name for Diana and Luna, so that 'black' might seem to be an inappropriate epithet. Cf. 'pale' (II. i. 52). But already in *MND.* (v. i. 391) Shakespeare had described Hecate almost as a personification of Night, and 'black' also suggests *evil* as well as *dark*.

42. *shard-born*] i.e. dung-bred (*O.E.D.*) though most editors still interpret as 'borne on scaly wings'. Either meaning would suit *Ant.*, III. ii. 20, though the latter is more appropriate to *Cym.*, III. iii. 20, and, perhaps, to the present context. It may be another quibble. Baldwin, *Shakespeare's Small Latine*, I. 635, supports *O.E.D.* Cuningham quotes a passage from Mouffet, *The Theater of Insects*, on the tree-beetle: 'Some there are which fly about with a little *humming*; some with a terrible & with a formidable noise . . . but their breeding in *dung*, their feeding, life, and delight in the same, this is common to them all . . . especially in the moneths of *July* and *August*, after Sun-set, for then it flyeth giddily in men's faces with a great *humming*. . . We call them *Dorrs* in English. . . The sheaths of their wings are of a light red colour . . . in . . . 1574 . . . there fell such a multitude of them into the River *Severn*, that they stopt and clog'd the wheels of the Water-mils.'

beetle] Armstrong, *Shakespeare's Imagination*, pp. 18–24, shows that the word belongs to an image cluster including *crow* (50), *bat* (40), *night* (43), and *deed* (44). Cf. *Lr.*, IV. vi. 13–38.

hums] Armstrong, *op. cit.*, pp. 44–5, shows that after *c.* 1600 this word appears in close proximity to death—Banquo's death being the subject of this speech. Cf. III. vi. 42 and IV. iii. 203 *post*, which are linked to the threat to Macduff and the murder of his family. Also *H5*, I. ii. 202–4, where 'yawning' is used: 'The sad-eyed justice, with his surly hum, / Delivering o'er to executors pale / The lazy yawning drone'. Armstrong might have added that 'executors pale' may be compared with 'that great bond which keeps me pale' (49–50 *post*).

43–4.] Few editors have kept the Folio arrangement of these lines.

45. *dearest chuck*] a familiar term of endearment, in grim contrast to the intended murder of Banquo.

46. *seeling*] In the language of falconry to 'seel' was to sew up the eyelids of a hawk by running a fine thread through them, in order to make her tractable. Cotgrave has: 'Siller les yeux. *To seele, or sow vp, the eyelids; (and thence also) to hoodwinke, blinde, keepe in darknesse, depriue of sight.*' Cf. *Oth.*, III. iii. 210, and *Ant.*, III. xiii. 112. R. Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 104, remarks: 'Macbeth is simultaneously seeling up the eye of nature and filling his whole body with darkness.' The phrase 'is the precise evil counterpart of the superficially similar injunction, if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out'.

Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful Day,
And, with thy bloody and invisible hand,
Cancel, and tear to pieces, that great bond
Which keeps me pale!—Light thickens; and the
crow
Makes wing to th'rooky wood;

50–1. Which . . . wood;] *so Rowe; lines end* thickens, / Wood: *F.* 50. pale] *F;* paled *Hudson (conj. Staunton).*

49–50. *Cancel . . . pale*] Seronsy compares Daniel, *The Queenes Arcadia*, 2564–7: 'Custome, who takes from vs our priuiledge / To be our selues, rendes that great charter too / Of nature and would likewise cancell man.' It may be added that six lines earlier Daniel uses the phrase 'bonds of mischiefe' which may have linked up with 'that great charter' to form Shakespeare's 'that great bond'. There is, however, an even closer parallel (as G. K. Hunter points out) in the episode in Montemayor's *Diana* which was the probable source of *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, as translated by B. Yonge (1598). See Bullough, *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare*, I. 252: 'How small account would I make of my life (my deerest *Felismena*) for cancelling that great bond, wherein (with more then life) I am for ever bound unto thee.' Shortly before this Montemayor speaks of the knight's 'pale visage'.

49. *Cancel . . . bond*] The legal metaphor was probably suggested by a concealed pun on *seeling/sealing* (46) and also by *copy* (38). Steevens compares *R3*, IV. iv. 77: 'Cancel his bond of life, dear God, I pray', and *Cym.*, V. iv. 27: 'Take this life, / And cancel these cold bonds.' Macbeth means 'Cancel the bond by which Banquo and Fleance hold their lives from Nature' (New Clarendon). Some think he refers to the promise of the Weird Sisters to Banquo, but this, in view of the above quotations and 38, is unlikely. Keightley thought 'bond' should be printed 'band' to rhyme with 'hand'. Cf. 'The bands of life' (*R2*, II. ii. 71). I am inclined to agree.

50. *pale*] Staunton's impression was that this should be *paled*, on the ground that the context required a word implying *restraint, abridgement of freedom*, etc., rather than *dread*; and there is something to be said for this view. Cf. III. iv. 23 *post*. Wilson points out that 'paled' would develop another aspect of 'bond' and 'only involves a simple *e:d* misprint'. Shakespeare used the word in *Cym.*, III. i. 19. But, on the other hand, the word 'pale' may have been suggested by the parchment. Cf. IV. i. 84–5 ('bond of fate . . . pale-hearted fear') and note on 42 *ante*. Curry, *Shakespeare's Philosophical Patterns*, p. 127, says that Macbeth 'recognizes that the acts of conscience which torture him are really expressions of that outraged natural law, which inevitably reduces him as individual to the essentially human. This is the inescapable bond that keeps him pale.'

thickens] Malone compares Spenser, *Shep. Cal.*, March, 115: 'the welkin thicks apace.'

crow] i.e. the rook: the carrion crow is not gregarious.

51. *Makes . . . wood*] Cuningham thought that 'some words, the last rhyming with *crow*, have been carelessly omitted . . . either "all on a row" or "in due arow" .' Few would agree.

rooky] i.e. black and filled with rooks. There have, however, been many attempts to save Shakespeare from writing this excellent line, which is regarded as tautological—'murky' (Roderick), 'roky' = misty (various),

Good things of Day begin to droop and drowse,
Whiles Night's black agents to their preys do rouse.
Thou marvell'st at my words: but hold thee still;
Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill.
So, pr'ythee, go with me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—[*The same. A park, with a road leading to the palace.*]

Enter three Murderers.

1 *Mur.* But who did bid thee join with us?
3 *Mur.* Macbeth.

Scene III

S.D. *The same . . . palace.*] *Rowe. subst.*

'rouky' = perching, i.e. where the crow settles for the night (Cuningham), 'reeky' = steamy (Wilson), 'rooky' = foggy, misty (Scots and northern dial.), 'rouky' = chattering (from 'rouk', talk privately), 'rucky' (from 'ruck') = multitudinous. With the last two suggestions, cf. Meredith, *Modern Love*, 'multitudinous chatterings'.

52. *Good . . . drowse*] 'the motto of the entire tragedy' (Dowden).

53. *Night's . . . rouse*] Steevens quotes Sidney, *Astrophel and Stella*, XCVI. 10: 'In night, of Sprites the ghastly powers do stir'; and Ascham, *Toxophilus* (ed. Arber, p. 52): 'For on the nighte tyme & in corners, Sprites and theues, rattes and mise, toodes and oules . . . and noysome beastes, vse mooste styrringe, when in the dayelyght, and in open places whiche he ordenyed of God for honeste thynges, they darre not ones come, which thinge Euripides noted verye well, sayenge, *Il thinges the night, good thinges the daye doth haunt & vse.*' The quotation is from *Iphig. in Taur.*, 1027.

55. *Things . . . ill*] Wilson compares Seneca, *Agam.*, 115: 'per scelera semper sceleribus tutum est iter' ('The safest path to mischiefe is by mischiefe open still'—Studley).

56. *So . . . me*] either 'consent to my design' or 'a mere exit note' (Chambers). But cf. 45 *ante*, which implies that Macbeth is not asking his wife's advice. See on this speech Empson, *op. cit.*, pp. 23–5.

Scene III

S.D. Enter three Murderers] Johnson here remarks: 'The *perfect* spy mentioned by Macbeth in the foregoing scene has, before they enter upon the stage, given them the directions which were promised at the time of their agreement; yet one of the murderers suborned, suspects him of intending to betray them; the other observes that, by his exact knowledge of *what they were to do* he appears to be employed by Macbeth, and needs not to be mistrusted.' It has been argued that the Third Murderer was Macbeth himself (*N.Q.*, 1869). Irving thought he was the attendant or servant mentioned in III. i (*Nineteenth Century*, 1877). Libby thought he was Rosse (*New Notes on Macbeth*). Another critic thought he was Destiny. These theories are all fantastic. Macbeth's agitation in III. iv when he hears that Fleance has escaped is proof that he cannot have been present at the murder of Banquo. Shakespeare, as Wilson suggests, introduces the Third Murderer to show that Macbeth, 'tyrant-like, feels he must spy even upon his chosen instruments'.

2 *Mur.* He needs not our mistrust; since he delivers
Our offices, and what we have to do,
To the direction just.
1 *Mur.* Then stand with us.
The west yet glimmers with some streaks of day;
Now spurs the lated traveller apace,
To gain the timely inn; and near approaches
The subject of our watch.
3 *Mur.* Hark! I hear horses.
Ban. [*Within.*] Give us a light there, ho!
2 *Mur.* Then 'tis he: the rest
That are within the note of expectation,
Already are i'th'court.
1 *Mur.* His horses go about.
3 *Mur.* Almost a mile; but he does usually,
So all men do, from hence to the palace gate
Make it their walk.

Enter BANQUO, *and* FLEANCE, *with a torch.*

2 *Mur.* A light, a light!
3 *Mur.* 'Tis he.
1 *Mur.* Stand to't.
Ban. It will be rain to-night.
1 *Mur.* Let it come down.
[*The First Murderer strikes out the light, while the others assault Banquo.*

6. lated] latest *F2–4*. 7. and] *F2*; end *F1*. 9–10. Give . . . expectation,] *lines end* hee: / expectation, *F*. 9. 'tis] *F*; it is *Pope, Arden (ed. 1)*. 16. S.D.] *Wilson, subst.*

4–8.] 'The lovely lines . . . are not gutter-bred' (Granville-Barker, *Preface*, p. li). But 'it is . . . dangerous to speak of certain characters as being more "poetic" than others: in poetic drama every one necessarily speaks poetry' (Bethell, *Shakespeare and the Popular Dramatic Tradition*, p. 65).

6. *lated*] belated.

7. *timely*] in good time.

10. *note of expectation*] list of expected guests.

2. *He . . . mistrust*] i.e. we need not distrust him.

4. *To . . . just*] exactly according to Macbeth's instructions.

Ban. O, treachery! Fly, good Fleance, fly, fly, fly!
Thou may'st revenge—O slave! [*Dies. Fleance escapes.*
3 *Mur.* Who did strike out the light?
1 *Mur.* Was't not the way?
3 *Mur.* There's but one down: the son is fled.
2 *Mur.* We have lost
Best half of our affair.
1 *Mur.* Well, let's away,
And say how much is done. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—[*A room of state in the palace.*]

A banquet prepared. Enter MACBETH, LADY MACBETH, ROSSE, LENOX, *Lords, and Attendants.*

Macb. You know your own degrees, sit down: at first
And last, the hearty welcome.
Lords. Thanks to your Majesty.
Macb. Ourself will mingle with society,
And play the humble host.
Our hostess keeps her state; but, in best time,
We will require her welcome.
Lady M. Pronounce it for me, Sir, to all our friends;
For my heart speaks, they are welcome.

Enter first Murderer, to the door.

17. O . . . fly] *so Hanmer; two lines, the first ending* Trecherie *F.* good] godd *F1*. 18. S.D.] *Pope; not in F.* 21–2. Well . . . done] *one line, F.*

Scene IV

S.D. *A room . . . palace.*] *Capell, subst.* 1–2. You . . . welcome] *so Capell (conj. Johnson); lines end* downe: / welcome. *F; lines end* last / welcome. *Delius; Arden (ed. 1).* 1. down: at first] down at first *conj. Johnson.* at] to *conj. Johnson.* 5. best] *F1;* the best *F2–4.*

18. Fleance escapes] the turning point of the play.

Scene IV

1–2. *at . . . last*] i.e. from beginning to end. Cf. *1H6*, v. v. 102, and *Cym.*, I. iv. 102.

5. *state*] originally the canopy, then the chair of state with a canopy. Cotgrave has 'Dais or Daiz. A *cloth of Estate, Canopie, or Heauen, that stands ouer the heads of Princes thrones; also, the whole State, or seat of Estate.*'

6. *require*] request, not with the modern meaning of demanding as of right.

Macb. See, they encounter thee with their hearts' thanks.
Both sides are even: here I'll sit i'th'midst.
Be large in mirth; anon, we'll drink a measure
The table round. [*Goes to door.*
There's blood upon thy face.
Mur. 'Tis Banquo's then.
Macb. 'Tis better thee without, than he within.
Is he dispatch'd?
Mur. My Lord, his throat is cut;
That I did for him.
Macb. Thou art the best o'th'cut-throats;
Yet he's good that did the like for Fleance:
If thou didst it, thou art the nonpareil.
Mur. Most royal Sir . . . Fleance is scap'd.
Macb. Then comes my fit again: I had else been perfect;
Whole as the marble, founded as the rock,

12–13. The table . . . then] *lines end* face. / then. *F, etc.* 14. he] him *Hanmer.* 15–19. Is . . . scap'd] *lines end* dispatch'd? / him. / Cut-throats, / Fleans: / Nonpareill. / Sir / scap'd *F; lines end* dispatch'd? / him. / good, / it, / Sir, / scap'd. *Rowe.* 20. Then . . . perfect] *so Pope; two lines, the first ending* againe: *F.*

10. *Both . . . even*] i.e. there are equal numbers on both sides of the table. But it has been suggested that the phrase might mean, 'Lady Macbeth's welcome has now been answered by the guests' thanks, so that both parties are now on a level, *quits.*'

11. *large*] liberal, free. Cf. *Ant.*, III. vi. 93: 'most large / In his abominations'.

13. *There's . . . face*] absurd from a naturalistic point of view, but proper to a murderer in a poetic play. In previous editions these words are printed as part of the previous line; but it is better to have the metrical gap before these words than after. A pause is necessary while Macbeth goes to the door, and one is undesirable either before or after the speech of the murderer.

14. *'Tis . . . within*] 'I am more pleased that the blood of Banquo should be on thy face than in his body' (Johnson). Hunter thinks the words are an aside, meaning, 'It is better that the murderer should be without the banquet than that Banquo should be inside as a guest'; but there is no effective antithesis unless we construe: 'the blood is better outside thee than inside him.'

15–19. *Is . . . 'scap'd*] This arrangement of the lines eliminates the superfluous break after *dispatch'd*, preserves the Folio lineation in Macbeth's speech (16–18) which Rowe and later editors have abandoned, emphasizes *I* (16), *he* (17), and *thou* (18), and provides an effective pause of embarrassment before the murderer can bring out his confession of failure (19). This is suggested in the Folio by printing the line as two. But Flatter, *op. cit.*, p. 104, ends the lines with *nonpareil, Sir, again.*

18. *nonpareil*] paragon. Cf. *Tw.N.*, I. v. 273.

20. *perfect*] Cf. III. i. 107.

21. *founded*] immovable. Cf. Matt., vii. 25.

As broad and general as the casing air:
But now, I am cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd, bound in
To saucy doubts and fears.—But Banquo's safe?
Mur. Ay, my good Lord, safe in a ditch he bides,
With twenty trenched gashes on his head;
The least a death to nature.
Macb. Thanks for that.—
There the grown serpent lies; the worm, that's fled,
Hath nature that in time will venom breed,
No teeth for th'present.—Get thee gone; to-morrow
We'll hear ourselves again. [*Exit Murderer.*
Lady M. My royal Lord,
You do not give the cheer: the feast is sold,
That is not often vouch'd, while 'tis a-making,
'Tis given with welcome: to feed were best at home;
From thence, the sauce to meat is ceremony;
Meeting were bare without it.
Macb. Sweet remembrancer!—

31. We'll] Well *F3*. 31. hear ourselves] *F;* hear't, ourselves, *Theobald;* hear, ourselves *Steevens;* hear, ourselves, *Dyce*. 32. sold] cold *Pope*. 33. vouch'd] vouched *Rowe*. a-making,] *Hudson;* a making: *F1;* making *F2–4*.

22. *broad and general*] free and unrestrained.
casing] surrounding.
23. *cribb'd*] shut in a hovel.
24. *saucy*] insolent, importunate.
24, 25. *safe*] Cf. III. v. 32–3.
26. *trenched*] cut.
27. *a death to nature*] enough to kill a man (New Clarendon).
28. *worm*] serpent. Cf. *Ant.*, v. ii. 243.
31. *hear . . . again*] i.e. hear each other again, when I shall receive a more detailed account of the affair, and you will get your promised reward. R. Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 111, says, 'this plural royalty will hear himself when he hears the murderers again; murderers and "ourselves" are one.'
32–4. *the feast . . . welcome*] That feast can only be considered as sold, not given, during which the entertainers omit such courtesies as may assure their guests that it is given with welcome (Dyce).
33. *vouch'd*] 'warranted', 'recommended by words of welcome'. Cf. III. i. 119.
35. *From thence*] i.e. away from home.
ceremony] a trisyllable, as frequently in Shakespeare. Marston, *Sophonisba*, I. ii. 5–27, has a discussion on the value of ceremony, which may either have suggested this passage or been suggested by it.
36. *remembrancer!*] Perhaps, as Cunningham suggests, a playful reference to the Remembrancers, officers of the Exchequer, of whom there were three, i.e. The King's Remembrancer, the Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer, and the Remembrancer of First Fruits. But I can see little resemblance between these functionaries and Lady Macbeth who reminds Macbeth of his duties as host, and 'remembrancer' probably means simply 'one engaged or appointed to remind another'.

Now, good digestion wait on appetite,
And health on both!
Len. May it please your Highness sit?
Macb. Here had we now our country's honour roof'd,
Were the grac'd person of our Banquo present;

The Ghost of BANQUO *enters, and sits in* MACBETH'S *place.*

Who may I rather challenge for unkindness,
Than pity for mischance!
Rosse. His absence, Sir,
Lays blame upon his promise. Please't your Highness
To grace us with your royal company?
Macb. The table's full.
Len. Here is a place reserv'd, Sir.
Macb. Where?
Len. Here, my good Lord. What is't that moves your Highness?
Macb. Which of you have done this?
Lords. What, my good Lord?
Macb. Thou canst not say, I did it: never shake

40. S.D.] *See note below; after* without it (*36*) *F*. 42. mischance!] *Pope;* Mischance. *F*. 43. Please't] *F;* Please it *Steevens*. 47. Here . . . Highness] *so Capell; two lines, the first ending* Lord. *F*.

39. *our . . . honour*] not, as Wilson suggests, 'all the rank and distinction of Scotland', but Banquo.
40. *grac'd*] gracious, gracing, or full of grace. Cf. *Lr.*, I. iv. 267: 'a graced palace'.
S.D.] The Folio marks the entrance of the Ghost after Lady Macbeth's last speech. This may be either a premature direction to give plenty of warning to the actor, or it may merely indicate that on the Elizabethan stage the ghost would have some distance to walk. According to Forman's account the Ghost entered as Macbeth began to speak of Banquo. I have marked the entrance accordingly. Wilson adheres to the Folio entrance, other editors have marked it at 43 and 45, but the favourite place is after 39. The Ghost appears when summoned. In De Loier's *Treatise of Spectres* (1605), p. 113, King Thierry 'on an evening as he sat at supper' is haunted by the ghost of a man he has slain (Paul).
47. *Here . . . Highness?*] Wilson argues that F prints this line as two, to mark the pause as Macbeth recognizes the figure. Flatter, *op. cit.*, pp. 106–8, argues for the F lineation, and remarks that by printing 'Where?' in a line by itself, the pause comes here, thereby obliterating the essential pause after 'Here, my good Lord'—which, in a modern edition, should be printed as part of line 46. There is another pause after 'Highness?'
48. *done this*] i.e. killed Banquo.
49. *Thou . . . it*] 'He has had some strange childish notion that the second murder would not afflict his conscience if he did not wet his own hands in Banquo's blood' (Grierson).

Thy gory locks at me.
Rosse. Gentlemen, rise; his Highness is not well.
Lady M. Sit, worthy friends. My Lord is often thus,
And hath been from his youth: pray you, keep seat;
The fit is momentary; upon a thought
He will again be well. If much you note him,
You shall offend him, and extend his passion;
Feed, and regard him not.—Are you a man?
Macb. Ay, and a bold one, that dare look on that
Which might appal the Devil.
Lady M. O proper stuff!
This is the very painting of your fear:
This is the air-drawn dagger, which, you said,
Led you to Duncan. O! these flaws and starts
(Impostors to true fear), would well become
A woman's story at a winter's fire,
Authoris'd by her grandam. Shame itself!
Why do you make such faces? When all's done,
You look but on a stool.
Macb. Pr'ythee, see there!
Behold! look! lo! how say you?
Why, what care I? If thou canst nod, speak too.—
If charnel-houses and our graves must send
Those that we bury, back, our monuments
Shall be the maws of kites. [*Ghost disappears.*

63. Impostors to true] *F;* Impostors of true *Hanmer;* Impostures true to *conj. Johnson;* Impostures of true *Capell.* 67–8. Pr'ythee . . . you?] *so F; one line, Capell.*

54. *upon a thought*] in a moment. Cf. *Tp.*, IV. i. 164.

56. *extend his passion*] i.e. prolong his suffering or emotion.

59. *stuff!*] Curry, *Shakespeare's Philosophical Patterns*, p. 85, thinks 'Banquo's ghost is an infernal illusion created out of air by demonic forces and presented to Macbeth's sight at the banquet in order that the murderer may be confused and utterly confounded.' But this is questionable. See Introduction, p. lxii.

61. *air-drawn*] drawn on the air, or drawn through the air, or both (Wilson).

62. *flaws*] sudden squalls or gusts of wind, hence bursts of passion. Cf. *Ham.*, v. i. 239, and *2H6*, III. i. 354.

63. *to*] i.e. compared with.

65. *Authoris'd*] sanctioned, warranted, given on the authority of. The accent is on the second syllable. Cf. *Sonn.*, XXXV. 6.

67–8. *You . . . you?*] There seems to be no point in altering the Folio division of these lines.

71–2. *monuments . . . kites*] Wilson quotes Scot, *The Discouerie of Witchcraft*, v. vi: 'Some write that after the death of Nabuchadnezzar his sonne Eilusmorodath gave his bodie to the ravens to be devoured, least afterwards his father should arise from death.' The meaning would thus be: 'To prevent bodies from returning from the grave, we shall have to give them to the ravens to be devoured' (cf. Nashe, ed. McKerrow, III. 281).

There seems to be no substance in Harry Rowe's explanation that the food of carnivorous birds was vulgarly supposed to pass their stomachs undigested, the clause therefore meaning: 'Our monuments will be like the maws of kites in that they send back those that we bury *undigested*.' But Harting, *Ornithology of Shakespeare*, p. 46, mentions the kite's habit of disgorging the undigested portions of food; and Miss Dorothy Sasse calls my attention to Whitney, *Choice of Emblems*, 1586, p. 170, where the emblem represents two kites, one of which is disgorging 'what appears to be a knotted snake'. Underneath are the following verses: 'The greedie kyte, so full his gorge had cloy'de, / He could not brooke his late deuoured praie: / Wherefore with griefe, vnto his damme he cry'de, / My bowelles lo, alas, doe waste awaie. / With that quoth shee, why doste thou make thy mone, / This losse thou haste is nothinge of thy owne. / By which is mente, that they who liue by spoile, / By rapine, thefte, or griping goodes by mighte, / If that with losse they suffer anie foile, / They loose but that, where in they had no right! / Hereof, at firste the prouerbe oulde did growe: / *That goodes ill got, awaie as ill will goe.*' Shakespeare may have unconsciously remembered these verses about ill-gotten gains, though I believe Wilson's explanation is correct. For the idea of a grave as a maw, compare *Rom.*, v. iii. 45 ff.: 'Thou detestable maw . . . / Gorg'd with the dearest morsel of the earth, / Thus I enforce thy rotten jaws to open; / And, in despite, I'll cram thee with more food.' Armstrong, *Shakespeare's Imagination*, pp. 11–17, shows that 'kite' belonged to a cluster of ideas in the poet's mind, and that *bed*, *death*, *spirits*, *birds*, and *food* were likely to be mentioned in the same context. Cf. *Ham.*, II. ii. 595–620, and *Wint.*, IV. iii. 5–57. In the present context we have *sleep* (141), *monuments* (71), *ghost* (72), *birds* (124), *feed* (57), and *maws* (72). Steevens compares Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, II. viii. 16: 'But be entombed in the rauen or the Kight'; and Malone cites Kyd, *Cornelia*, v. i. 33–6: 'Where are our Legions? . . . the vultures and the Crowes, / Lyons and Beares, are theyr best Sepulchers.'

Lady M. What! quite unmann'd in folly?
Macb. If I stand here, I saw him.
Lady M. Fie! for shame!
Macb. Blood hath been shed ere now, i'th'olden time,
Ere humane statute purg'd the gentle weal;

75. humane] *F;* human *Theobald (ed. 2), etc.*

75. *humane*] not distinguished in Shakespeare's day from *human*, and as the word may here imply both meanings, it is better to retain F spelling. Cf. *Cor.*, III. i. 327: 'It is the humane way; the other course / Will prove too bloody.' See Empson, *op. cit.*, p. 258.

purg'd] This and other images of purging may have been suggested by James I's *Counter-Blaste to Tobacco*: 'For remedie whereof, it is the kings part (as the proper Phisician of his politicke-bodie) to purge it of all those diseases, by Medicines meete for the same' (Paul).

gentle weal] 'The *peaceable community*,

Ay, and since too, murthers have been perform'd
Too terrible for the ear: the time has been,
That, when the brains were out, the man would die,
And there an end; but now, they rise again,
With twenty mortal murthers on their crowns,
And push us from our stools. This is more strange
Than such a murther is.
Lady M. My worthy Lord,
Your noble friends do lack you.
Macb. I do forget.—
Do not muse at me, my most worthy friends,
I have a strange infirmity, which is nothing
To those that know me. Come, love and health to all;
Then, I'll sit down.—Give me some wine: fill full:—
I drink to th'general joy o'th'whole table,
And to our dear friend Banquo, whom we miss;
Would he were here!

Re-enter Ghost.

To all, and him, we thirst,
And all to all.
Lords. Our duties, and the pledge.
Macb. Avaunt! and quit my sight! let the earth hide thee!
Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold;
Thou hast no speculation in those eyes,

76. have] hath *Johnson.* 77. time has] *Grant White;* times has *F1;* time have *F2–4.*

the state made quiet and safe by human statutes' (Johnson). A proleptic use of the adjective, with the meaning 'purged the commonwealth and thus made it gentle'.

80. *mortal murthers*] i.e. deadly wounds, each of itself sufficient to effect murder. Cf. 26–7 *ante.*

90. S.D.] Grierson marks the Ghost's re-entry here. 'He comes again when summoned.' In the Folio the entrance is marked after 88, but cf. note on 40 *ante.*

91. *all to all*] i.e. all good wishes to all. Cf. *Tim.*, I. ii. 234: 'All to you.' Wilson suggests that the phrase means, 'Let everybody drink to everybody.'

94. *speculation*] i.e. the intelligence arising in the brain but seen in the eye of which the eye is only the medium, 'intelligent or comprehending vision' (*O.E.D.*). Cf. *Troil.*, III. iii. 107–11: 'but eye to eye opposed / Salutes each other with each other's form; / For speculation turns not to itself, / Till it hath travell'd and is mirror'd there / Where it may see itself.' See also *Oth.*, I. iii. 271: 'speculative . . . instruments'; and Bullokar, *Expositor*, 1616: 'Speculation: the inward knowledge or beholding of a thing.'

Which thou dost glare with.
Lady M. Think of this, good Peers,
But as a thing of custom: 'tis no other;
Only it spoils the pleasure of the time.
Macb. What man dare, I dare:
Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,
The arm'd rhinoceros, or th'Hyrcan tiger;
Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves
Shall never tremble: or, be alive again,
And dare me to the desert with thy sword;
If trembling I inhabit then, protest me
The baby of a girl. Hence, horrible shadow!
Unreal mock'ry, hence!— [*Ghost disappears.*
Why, so;—being gone,
I am a man again.—Pray you, sit still.
Lady M. You have displac'd the mirth, broke the good meeting
With most admir'd disorder.
Macb. Can such things be,

104. I inhabit then,] *F1;* I inhabit, then *F2–4;* I inhibit, then *Pope, Theobald, Hanmer, Warburton, Halliwell;* I evade it, then *conj. Johnson;* I inhibit then, *Capell;* I inhibit thee, *Malone (conj. Steevens), Dyce;* I exhibit, then *A. Hunter (conj. Robinson);* I inhabit here *conj. Camb.;* I inherit then, *conj. Kinnear;* in habit then *conj. Jennens.* protest] protect *F4.* 105. horrible] terrible *Theobald (ed. 2), Warburton, Johnson.* 106. being gone,] be gone *F3–4.* 108–9. broke . . . disorder] *so Rowe; one line, F.*

98. *What . . . dare*] This line would seem to be merely a continuation of Macbeth's last speech, Lady Macbeth's speech coming by way of parenthesis. Flatter, *op. cit.*, p. 110, suggests that the Macbeths speak simultaneously. This is improbable.

99–100. *bear . . . tiger*] Cf. *H5*, III. vii. 154: 'Russian bear'; *3H6*, I. iv. 155: 'tigers of Hyrcania'. The Hircanian tiger and the rhinoceros are mentioned on adjacent pages of Holland's *Pliny.*

103. *dare*] Cf. *R2*, IV. i. 74: 'I dare meet Surrey in a wilderness'; i.e. for a fight to the death, with none to interrupt. See also *Cor.*, IV. ii. 23, and *Cym.*, I. i. 167.

desert] Cf. *Mer.V.*, II. vii. 41: 'Hyrcanian deserts'.

104. *If . . . then*] three possible meanings: (i) If I inhabit, or house, trembling (Wilson); (ii) if I trembling stay at home (Henley); (iii) if I wear (inhabit) trembling (Maxwell).

105. *baby of a girl*] Not 'baby of an immature mother' (Clarendon), but 'girl's doll' (cf. Bald. *S.A.B.*, 1949, pp. 220–2), or 'baby girl' (Harrison *apud* Hudson). Cf. such a phrase as 'fool of a commentator'.

109. *admir'd*] wonderful, amazing.

disorder] 'lack of self-control' (Wilson); but there is an implied reference to the overthrowing of *order*—one of the main themes of the play.

And overcome us like a summer's cloud,
Without our special wonder? You make me strange
Even to the disposition that I owe,
When now I think you can behold such sights,
And keep the natural ruby of your cheeks,
When mine is blanch'd with fear.

Rosse. What sights, my Lord?

Lady M. I pray you, speak not; he grows worse and worse;
Question enrages him. At once, good night:—
Stand not upon the order of your going,
But go at once.

Len. Good night, and better health
Attend his Majesty!

Lady M. A kind good night to all!

[*Exeunt Lords and Attendants.*

Macb. It will have blood, they say: blood will have blood:
Stones have been known to move, and trees to speak;

115. is] are *Malone.* sights,] *F1;* signes *F2–4.* 121. It . . . blood:] *so Rowe; two lines, the first ending* say *F.* blood, they say:] *F;* blood: they say, *Rowe;* blood, they say *Pope;* blood.—They say, *Johnson.*

110. *overcome*] i.e. pass over.

111–12. *strange . . . owe*] i.e. self-alienated or, perhaps, amazed at my own nature. 'He had thought himself brave; now, when he sees her unmoved at sights which appal him, he is staggered in his estimate of himself' (Grierson).

112. *owe*] own, as often.

115. *mine*] the natural ruby of my cheeks.

121. *It*] i.e. the murder of Banquo.

blood, they say: blood] As Simpson, *Shakespeare's Punctuation*, p. 78, points out, a colon often introduced a noun clause, so that the Folio punctuation is best represented by that of the text (Wilson). But A. P. Rossiter argues convincingly for the retention of F punctuation, to preserve 'the rhythm of terror'. Noble refers to Gen., ix. 6, and Wilson to *Mirror for Magistrates*, ed. Campbell, p. 99: 'Bloud wyll haue bloud, eyther [at] fyrst or last.'

122. *Stones*] Two possible explanations: (i) covering the corpse of the murdered man (Clarendon, Wilson); (ii) Paton, *N.Q.*, 1869, argues that this would only reveal the victim and not the murderer. (But the discovery of the corpse is the first step towards the detection of the murderer.) He suggests that the allusion may be to the rocking-stones, or 'stones of judgment', by which the Druids tested the guilt or innocence of accused persons. There is one near Glamis Castle, though there is no reason to believe that Shakespeare had heard of it.

trees to speak] possibly a reminiscence of Scot, *Discouerie of Witchcraft* (1930), VIII. vi. 94: 'This practice began in the Okes of Dodona, in the which was a wood, the trees thereof (they saie) could speake.' Furness also quotes from the same work, XI. xviii. 119: 'Divine auguries were such, as men were made beleeve were done miraculouslie, as when dogs spake; as at the expulsion of Tarquinius out of his kingdome; or when trees spake, as before the death of *Caesar*.' Furness adds a reference to *Georgics*, I. 476–7, where Virgil, speaking of the portents before that event, says: 'Vox quoque per lucos vulgo exaudita silentes Ingens'. Most editors, however, follow Steevens in assuming that there is a reference to *Aen.*, III. 22–68, the story of the ghost of Polydorus speaking from a tree.

Augures, and understood relations, have
By magot-pies, and choughs, and rooks, brought forth
The secret'st man of blood.—What is the night?

Lady M. Almost at odds with morning, which is which.

Macb. How say'st thou, that Macduff denies his person,
At our great bidding?

Lady M. Did you send to him, Sir?

Macb. I heard it by the way; but I will send.
There's not a one of them, but in his house

123. Augures] *F;* Augurs *Theobald;* Auguries *Rann (conj. Steevens).* and understood] that understood *Rowe;* that understand *Warburton.*

123. *Augures*] i.e. auguries. In Florio's *Worlde of Wordes*, 1598, *augure* is given as an equivalent of *soothsaying, prediction*. In the 1611 edition, the word is also given as an equivalent of *soothsayer*. Shakespeare uses the word *augury* twice, and *augurer* five times; but he also uses *augur* (*Sonn.*, 107, and *Phoenix and the Turtle*, where it may mean either *soothsayer* or *omen*). Wilson thinks that *Augures* here may be a misprint for *Auguries*, but the metre is better without emendation.

understood relations] not 'reports properly comprehended' (Kittredge) or 'overheard conversations' (*N.Q.*, 2 Dec. 1933). Johnson explained: 'the connection of effects with causes; to understand relations as an augur, is to know how those things relate to each other, which have no visible combination or dependence.' Schanzer compares *Per.*, IV. iii. 21–3, and interprets 'reports which could be understood' because the birds used human language.

124. *magot-pies*] i.e. magpies. (The Fr. *margot*, a familiar form of *Marguerite*, is also used to denote a magpie.)

choughs] The chough is a bird of the crow family, and the word formerly included all the smaller 'chattering' species, and esp. the jackdaw. See *MND.*, III. ii. 21 (note in Arden ed.), and *Tp.*, II. i. 265: 'a chough of as deep chat'.

125. *The . . . blood*] Wilson refers to a passage in James I's *Dæmonologie* (*Workes*, 1616, p. 136): 'for as in a secret murther, if the dead carkasse bee at any time thereafter handled by the murtherer, it will gush out of bloud, as if the bloud were crying to the heauen for reuenge of the murtherer, God hauing appoynted that secret supernaturall signe, for tryall of that secrete vnnaturall crime.' Furness refers to Florio's *Montaigne*, II. v. (Temple ed., III. 60).

126. *at odds with*] disputing with. Wilson comments: 'A symbolical timing of the central moment of the play; borne out by the immediate reference to Macduff, who is to usher in the dawn'.

127. *How say'st thou*] i.e. what do you say to this? Banquo being dead, Macbeth is driven towards the next murder.

130. *one*] Theobald conj. 'thane' and White 'man', but unnecessarily.

I keep a servant fee'd. I will to-morrow
(And betimes I will) to the Weïrd Sisters:
More shall they speak; for now I am bent to know,
By the worst means, the worst. For mine own good,
All causes shall give way: I am in blood
Stepp'd in so far, that, should I wade no more,
Returning were as tedious as go o'er.
Strange things I have in head, that will to hand,
Which must be acted, ere they may be scann'd.
Lady M. You lack the season of all natures, sleep.
Macb. Come, we'll to sleep. My strange and self-abuse
Is the initiate fear, that wants hard use:
We are yet but young in deed. [*Exeunt.*

132. Weïrd] *Theobald;* weyard *F1;* wizard *F2–4;* wayward *Pope;* weird *Capell.* 134. worst. For . . . good] *Johnson;* worst, for . . . good, *F;* worst, for . . . good; *Rowe.* 136. Stepp'd] (Stept) *F1;* Spent *F2–4.* 143. in deed] *Theobald;* indeed *F.*

131. *fee'd*] Cf. Holinshed: 'in euerie noble man's house one slie fellow or other in fee with him'.

131–2. *I will . . . Sisters*] The Folio has the phrase 'And betimes I will' in brackets; but Shakespeare perhaps intended the first 'I will' (131) to apply to his sending to Macduff, and it should be punctuated: 'I will to-morrow: / And betimes I will to the weird sisters.' Wheelock, *M.L.N.*, xv, makes the same suggestion but since *betimes* means *very early* we do not remove the difficulty of the time sequence in this and the following scenes. But see Introduction, p. xxxii.

135. *All . . . way*] i.e. everything else must take second place.

I . . . blood] Cf. *MND.*, III. ii. 47: 'Being o'er shoes in blood, plunge in knee deep, / And kill me too.' And, closer, *R3*, IV. ii. 63–4: 'I am in / So far in blood that sin will pluck on sin.'

138–9. *Strange . . . scann'd*] Cf. IV. i. 145–8 *post.*

140. *season*] Whiter, *Specimen of a Commentary*, p. 147, showed that Shakespeare was thinking of the preservative power of sleep. Cf. *Lucr.*, 796, *Ado.*, IV. i. 144, *Troil.*, I. ii. 278, and *Tw.N.*, I. i. 30. Macbeth, it will be remembered, has murdered sleep.

141. *self-abuse*] deception, self-delusion. Cf. II. i. 50.

142. *the initiate fear*] i.e. the fear of a novice (Grierson).

hard use] practice that hardens one (Kittredge).

143. *We . . . deed*] a 'line which looks to nethermost hell' (Granville-Barker).

SCENE V.—[*The heath.*]

Thunder. Enter the three Witches, meeting HECATE.

1 *Witch.* Why, how now, Hecate? you look angerly.
Hec. Have I not reason, beldams as you are,
Saucy, and overbold? How did you dare
To trade and traffic with Macbeth,
In riddles, and affairs of death;
And I, the mistress of your charms,
The close contriver of all harms,
Was never call'd to bear my part,
Or show the glory of our art?
And, which is worse, all you have done
Hath been but for a wayward son,
Spiteful, and wrathful; who, as others do,
Loves for his own ends, not for you.
But make amends now: get you gone,
And at the pit of Acheron
Meet me i'th'morning: thither he
Will come to know his destiny.
Your vessels, and your spells, provide,
Your charms, and everything beside.
I am for th'air; this night I'll spend
Unto a dismal and a fatal end:
Great business must be wrought ere noon.

Scene V

1. Hecate? . . . angerly.] Hecat, . . . angerly? *F.* 2. are,] are? *F.* 3. overbold?] over-bold, *F.*

This scene is probably not Shakespeare's. See Introduction, p. xxx.

1. *Hecate*] The common pronunciation of this name was dissyllabic, as in II. i. 52 and III. ii. 41 *ante*; and *MND.*, V. i. 391. Shakespeare was possibly not responsible for the trisyllable in *1H6*, III. ii. 64: 'I speak not to that railing Hecate.'

8–9.] Nosworthy, *R.E.S.*, Apr. 1948, argues that these lines were inserted to explain the interpolation and he explains 'to bear my part' as 'to take part in a previous performance'.

11. *wayward son*] 'We do not need Hecate to tell us that he is but a wayward son, who . . . loves for his own end. . . Whatever he does is inevitably in pursuance of some apparent good, even though that apparent good is only temporal or nothing more than escape from a present evil' (Curry, *Shakespeare's Philosophical Patterns*, p. 131).

21. *dismal*] disastrous.

Upon the corner of the moon
There hangs a vap'rous drop profound;
I'll catch it ere it come to ground:
And that, distill'd by magic sleights,
Shall raise such artificial sprites,
As, by the strength of their illusion,
Shall draw him on to his confusion.
He shall spurn fate, scorn death, and bear
His hopes 'bove wisdom, grace, and fear;
And you all know, security
Is mortals' chiefest enemy.

[*Song within:* 'Come away, come away,' etc.

26. sleights,] *Collier;* slights, *F.* 27. raise] *F1;* rise *F2.* 33. S.D.] *Musicke, and a Song. F. See 35.*

23–9. *Upon . . . confusion*] These lines can mean that 'with the aid of her magic potion Hecate will fashion phantom figures' or else that she will 'use her magic potion to call up powerful demons, just as is done with the magic ingredients of the witches' cauldron'. 'Artificial' would then mean (*N.E.D.*, II. 9) 'displaying artifice; artful, cunning, deceitful'. The second explanation is the more likely one (Schanzer).

24. *vap'rous drop profound*] 'This vaporous drop seems to have been meant for the same as the *virus lunare* of the ancients, being a foam which the moon was supposed to shed on particular herbs, or other objects, when strongly solicited by enchantment' (Steevens). Cf. Lucan, *Pharsalia*, VI. 669. profound = with deep or hidden qualities (Johnson), rather than 'deep, and therefore ready to fall' (Clarendon). James O. Wood (*N.Q.*, 1964, pp. 262–4) suggests that 'profound' means 'profounded' (i.e. poured out) and is derived from Leslie's *De origine*, p. 193, 'instillato perfundere'.

32. *security*] i.e. over-confidence.

33. S.D.] The song is to be found in Middleton, *The Witch*, III. iii, though this does not necessarily mean that he wrote the whole of this scene:

'Come away, come away,
Hecate, Hecate, come away!
Hec. I come, I come, I come, I come,
With all the speed I may,
With all the speed I may.
Where's Stadlin?
Voice. Here.
Hec. Where's Puckle?
Voice. Here;
And Hoppo too, and Hellwain too;
We lack but you, we lack but you;
Come away, make up the count.
Hec. I will but 'noint, and then I mount.

(*A Spirit like a cat descends.*

Voice. There's one comes down to fetch his dues,
A kiss, a coll, a sip of blood;
And why thou stay'st so long,
I muse, I muse,
Since the air's so sweet and good.
Hec. O, art thou come?
What news, what news?
Spirit. All goes still to our delight:
Either come, or else
Refuse, refuse.
Hec. Now I'm furnish'd for the flight.
Fire. Hark, hark, the cat sings a brave treble in her own language!
Hec. (*going up*) Now I go, now I fly,
Malkin my sweet spirit and I.

Hark! I am call'd: my little spirit, see,
Sits in a foggy cloud, and stays for me. [*Exit.*
1 *Witch.* Come, let's make haste: she'll soon be back again.
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.—[*Somewhere in Scotland.*]

Enter LENOX *and another Lord.*

Len. My former speeches have but hit your thoughts,
Which can interpret farther: only, I say,
Things have been strangely borne. The gracious Duncan
Was pitied of Macbeth:—marry, he was dead:—
And the right-valiant Banquo walk'd too late;
Whom, you may say (if't please you) Fleance kill'd,
For Fleance fled. Men must not walk too late.

35.] S.D. *Sing within . . . etc. F. See 33.* 36. Come . . . again] *two lines, the first ending* be *F.*

Scene VI

1. My . . . thoughts] *so Rowe; two lines, the first ending* Speeches, *F.* 5. right-valiant] *so Theobald;* right valiant *F.*

O what a dainty pleasure 'tis
To ride in the air
When the moon shines fair,
And sing and dance, and toy and kiss!
Over woods, high rocks, and mountains,
Over seas, our mistress' fountains,
Over steep towers and turrets,
We fly by night, 'mongst troops of spirits:
No ring of bells to our ears sounds,
No howls of wolves, no yelps of hounds;
No, not the noise of water's breach,
Or cannon's throat our height can reach.
(*Voices above*) No ring of bells, etc.'

35.] Hecate is taken up in the cloud, i.e. a stage car, drawn up on pulleys, and concealed by billowing draperies (Wilson, who refers to Adams, *The Globe Playhouse*, pp. 335–66).

Scene VI

The location of this scene seems to be quite immaterial, but the conversation is unlikely to have taken place in a room of the palace, which was Capell's suggestion. The scene may have come originally after IV. i. See Introduction, p. xxxi.

S.D. another Lord] Johnson suggested that the abbreviation *An.* (for Angus) in the manuscript was erroneously expanded by a transcriber into 'another Lord'. But cf. the anonymity of the Old Man in II. iv *ante.*

3. *borne*] carried on. Cf. 17 *post*, and *Ado*, II. iii. 229: 'The conference was sadly borne,' i.e. seriously conducted.

5. *walk'd too late*] Cf. Kyd, *Spanish Tragedie*, III. iii. 39 (see *M.L.R.*, I. 54): 'Why hast thou thus vnkindely kild the man? / Why? because he walkt abroad so late.' Ellis-Fermor suggests, privately, that there is an undertone of meaning—'lived too long'.

Who cannot want the thought, how monstrous
It was for Malcolm, and for Donalbain,
To kill their gracious father? damned fact!
How it did grieve Macbeth! did he not straight,
In pious rage, the two delinquents tear,
That were the slaves of drink, and thralls of sleep?
Was not that nobly done? Ay, and wisely too;
For 'twould have anger'd any heart alive
To hear the men deny't. So that, I say,
He has borne all things well: and I do think,
That, had he Duncan's sons under his key
(As, and't please Heaven, he shall not), they should find
What 'twere to kill a father; so should Fleance.
But, peace!—for from broad words, and 'cause he fail'd
His presence at the tyrant's feast, I hear,

8. Who . . . the] You cannot want the *Hanmer;* We cannot want the *Keightley;* Who can but want the *Collier (ed. 3);* Who can now want the *Hudson (1879; conj. Cartwright).* 11. Macbeth!] *Capell;* Macbeth? *F.* 14. not that] *F1–2;* that not *F3–4.* 18. his key] the key *F2–4.* 19. and't] *F;* an't *Theobald (ed. 2).* should] *F1;* shall *F2–4.* 21. 'cause] *Pope;* cause *F.*

8. *want the thought*] i.e. help thinking. Shakespeare must have meant 'can' and not 'cannot'; but 'this construction arises from a confusion of thought common enough when a negative is expressed or implied' (Clarendon). But perhaps an ambiguity was intended, as Empson suggests, *Seven Types of Ambiguity,* 1930, p. 265: 'Who *can* avoid thinking, is the meaning; but the *not* breaks through the irony into "Who must not feel that they have not done anything monstrous at all?" "Who must not avoid thinking altogether about so touchy a state matter?" This is not heard as the meaning, however, the normal construction is too strong, and the negative acts as a sly touch of disorder.'

monstrous] probably a trisyllable, though the dissyllable is much more common in Shakespeare. Cf. I. v. 39 and III. ii. 30 *ante.*

10. *fact*] act, deed. Invariably used in Shakespeare in the sense of 'evil deed', 'crime'.

12. *pious*] loyal.

14. *Was . . . done*] Lenox apparently accepted Macbeth's story at the time (cf. II. iii. 99); but he may have changed his mind on reflection, or perhaps he has been substituted here for another character (cf. Introduction, p. xxxi), or he may be regarded as a chorus, rather than as a person of distinct character. He is still serving Macbeth in IV. i.

17. *He . . . well*] Cf. III. vi. 3 and III. i. 80. He has managed things successfully and cunningly.

19. *and't*] if it. See Abbott, *Shakes. Gram.,* § 101. Theobald's emendation to the more usual form *an't* was unnecessary.

should] would be sure to.

21. *broad*] open, plain. Cf. *Tim.,* III. iv. 64.

fail'd] Cf. III. iv. 127 *ante.*

22. *tyrant's*] 'usurper's' (Clarendon); 'Not *usurper's* but a blood-thirsty king's' (Wilson). I think both senses are implied.

Macduff lives in disgrace. Sir, can you tell
Where he bestows himself?
Lord. The son of Duncan,
From whom this tyrant holds the due of birth,
Lives in the English court; and is receiv'd
Of the most pious Edward with such grace,
That the malevolence of fortune nothing
Takes from his high respect. Thither Macduff
Is gone to pray the holy King, upon his aid
To wake Northumberland, and warlike Siward;
That, by the help of these (with Him above
To ratify the work), we may again
Give to our tables meat, sleep to our nights,
Free from our feasts and banquets bloody knives,
Do faithful homage, and receive free honours,
All which we pine for now. And this report
Hath so exasperate the King, that he
Prepares for some attempt of war.
Len. Sent he to Macduff?
Lord. He did: and with an absolute 'Sir, not I,'
The cloudy messenger turns me his back,
And hums, as who should say, 'You'll rue the time
That clogs me with this answer.'
Len. And that well might
Advise him to a caution, t'hold what distance

24. son] *Theobald;* Sonnes *F.* 26. Lives] Live *F2–4.* 31. Siward] *Theobald (ed. 2), Hanmer;* Seyward *F.* 38. the] *Hanmer;* their *F.* 44. caution, t'hold] *F;* caution, to hold *Camb.*

27. *Of*] by. Cf. III. vi. 4 *ante.*

30. *Is gone*] Perhaps, as Cuningham and others suggest, these words ought to be printed at the end of the previous line.

upon his aid] on Malcolm's behalf.

35. *Free . . . knives*] i.e. free our feasts and banquets from bloody knives. Cf. *Tp.,* Epil. 18: 'frees all faults', i.e. frees me from all faults.

36. *free*] not bought by servility and crime, but enjoyed in freedom.

38. *exasperate*] Cf. *Troil.,* v. i. 34: 'Why art thou then exasperate?' See Abbott, *Shakes. Gram.,* §§ 341–2.

the] their—F. Presumably the printer thought the king referred to was Edward the Confessor.

40. *absolute*] curt, peremptory. Cf. *Cor.,* III. i. 90.

41. *cloudy*] cloudy-visaged, sullen. Cf. *1H4,* III. ii. 83.

42. *hums*] Cf. note on III. ii. 42.

43. *clogs*] The messenger knows he will suffer for the bad tidings. Cf. the reception of the messengers later in the play, v. iii. 11 and v. v. 35.

44. *Advise . . . t'hold*] Cf. *Lr.,* I. ii. 188: 'I advise you to the best' and *ib.,* III. vii. 9.

His wisdom can provide. Some holy Angel
Fly to the court of England, and unfold
His message ere he come, that a swift blessing
May soon return to this our suffering country
Under a hand accurs'd!

Lord. I'll send my prayers with him.

[*Exeunt.*

48–9. *suffering . . . Under*] i.e. country suffering under. Cf. *R2*, III. ii. 8: 'As a long-parted mother with her child'. Or 'Under a hand accurs'd' may be a kind of relative clause, with 'which is' understood.

ACT IV

SCENE I.— [*A house in Forres. In the middle, a boiling cauldron.*]

Thunder. Enter the three WITCHES.

1 *Witch.* Thrice the brinded cat hath mew'd.
2 *Witch.* Thrice, and once the hedge-pig whin'd.
3 *Witch.* Harpier cries:—'Tis time, 'tis time.

ACT IV

Scene I

S.D. *A . . . Forres*] *Paul.* *In . . . cauldron*] *Rowe.* *Thunder . . . Witches*] *F.*
2. hedge-pig] Hedges Pigge *F2–4*.

S.D.] Paul points out that the cave setting, suggested by Rowe and followed by nearly all editors, conflicts with the locks mentioned later (46). Holinshed speaks of a house in Forres where the witches met.

1. *the brinded cat*] the first sister's familiar. Cf. 'Graymalkin', I. i. 8 *ante*. 'Brinded', i.e. branded, as if with fire, streaked, is the Elizabethan form of 'brindled'. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, VII. 466, speaks of the lion's 'brinded mane'.

2. *Thrice, and once*] 'The Second Witch only repeats the number which the First had mentioned, in order to confirm what she had said; and then adds, that the *hedge-pig* had likewise cried, though but once. Or what seems more easy, the hedge-pig had whined *thrice*, and after an interval had whined once again' (Steevens). Theobald quotes Virgil, *Ecl.*, viii. 75, 'Numero deus impare gaudet,' and Elwin says that 'as even numbers were considered inappropriate to magical operations, the Second Witch makes the *fourth* cry of the hedge-pig an odd number by her method of counting. She tells three, and then begins a new reckoning.' Jonson, however, used even numbers in his *Masque of Queenes*, ed. Herford and Simpson, VII. 300: 'Thou shalt haue three, thou shalt haue foure, / Thou shalt haue ten, thou shalt haue a score.'

3. *Harpier*] the third sister's familiar. Steevens suggested it was a corruption of 'Harpy' which appears in Marlowe, *1 Tamb.*, II. vii. 50, as 'Harpyr' (1590), 'Harpye' (1592), and 'Harper' (1605). Cuningham thinks that Shakespeare took the word from Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, II. xii. 36: 'The hellish Harpyes prophets of sad destiny'. The suggestion that the word may be derived from the Hebrew *Habar*, mentioned in Scot, *Discouerie of Witchcraft*, XII. 1 (Clarendon), is overingenious. R. Walker cites *Aen.* III, which contains a description of harpies. Paul, however, thinks harpier is an owl. There are references to the owl before the three murders of Duncan, Banquo, and Lady Macduff.

'*Tis time*] Harpier cries, i.e. gives them the signal, and therefore it is time for them to begin.

1 *Witch.* Round about the cauldron go;
In the poison'd entrails throw.—
Toad, that under cold stone
Days and nights has thirty-one
Swelter'd venom, sleeping got,
Boil thou first i'th'charmed pot.
All. Double, double toil and trouble:
Fire, burn; and, cauldron, bubble.
2 *Witch.* Fillet of a fenny snake,
In the cauldron boil and bake;
Eye of newt, and toe of frog,
Wool of bat, and tongue of dog,
Adder's fork, and blind-worm's sting,
Lizard's leg, and howlet's wing,
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.
All. Double, double toil and trouble:

5. throw.] *Rowe;* throw *F.* 6. cold] *F;* the cold *Rowe (ed. 2);* coldest *Steevens (1793);* a cold *conj. Staunton.* 7. has] *F3–4;* ha's *F1–2;* hast *Capell.* thirty-one] *Capell;* thirty one: *F.* 10,20. Double, double] *Steevens;* Double, double, *F.*

6. *cold*] Various superfluous attempts have been made to emend this line; but it is not even desirable to regard the word as a dissyllable. The juxtaposed stresses on *cold stone* make the stone colder than Steevens's *coldest.*

8. *Swelter'd*] exuded, like sweat (*O.E.D.*).

venom] Topsell, *History of Serpents* (ed. 1658, p. 730) says: 'All manner of toads, both of the earth and of the water, are venomous, although it be held that the toads of the earth are more poysonful than the toads of the water. . . But the toads of the land, which do descend into the marishes, and so live in both elements, are most venomous. . . The women-witches of ancient time which killed by poysoning, did much use Toads in their confections.' The secretion of the skin-glands of the toad contains a poisonous substance (phrynin) acrid enough to be felt on tongue or eyes, and serving to protect the toad.

12. *Fillet . . . snake*] i.e. a slice of snake from the fens. Furness thinks there may also be a reference to the other meaning of fillet, *headband*, and he compares Lucan, *Pharsal.*, VI. 656: 'Et coma vipereis substringitur horrida sertis.' The line comes in a passage about a witch, only a few lines from the quotation given in the note to III. v. 24 *ante*. Paul compares Ovid, *Metam.*, VII. 269, 272, with this line and I. 17 *post.*

16. *fork*] i.e. double tongue. Cf. *Meas.*, III. i. 16.

blind-worm's sting] Cf. *MND.*, II. ii. 11, and *Tim.*, IV. iii. 182: 'The eyeless venom'd worm'. Drayton, *Noah's Floud*, 481–4, ed. Hebel, III. 339, mentions that 'The small-ey'd slowe-worme held of many blinde . . . / Out of its teeth shutes the invenom'd slime.' Topsell, *History of Serpents*, p. 763, says, 'it receiveth name from the blindnesse and deafness thereof. . . It is harmless except being provoked . . . for the poyson thereof is very strong.' It is now known that both the slow-worm and the newt are harmless.

Fire, burn; and, cauldron, bubble.
3 *Witch.* Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf;
Witches' mummy; maw, and gulf,
Of the ravin'd salt-sea shark;
Root of hemlock, digg'd i'th'dark;
Liver of blaspheming Jew;
Gall of goat, and slips of yew,
Sliver'd in the moon's eclipse;
Nose of Turk, and Tartar's lips;
Finger of birth-strangled babe,
Ditch-deliver'd by a drab,
Make the gruel thick and slab:
Add thereto a tiger's chaudron,

23. Witches'] *Theobald (ed. 2);* Witches *F;* Witch's *Singer.* 28. Sliver'd] Silver'd *Rowe (ed. 3).*

23. *mummy*] 'Egyptian mummy, or what passed for it, was formerly a regular part of the *Materia Medica*' (Nares). Johnson mentions there were two substances for medical use, which went under the same name, 'the dried flesh of human bodies embalmed with myrrh and spice' and 'the liquor running from such mummies when newly prepared, or when affected by great heat'. Cf. *Oth.*, III. iv. 74. Wilson has an appropriate quotation from James I, *Dæmonologie*, p. 43. The Devil 'causeth them to joynt dead corpses, and to make powders thereof, mixing such other thinges there amongst, as he giues vnto them' (*Workes*, 1616, p. 116).

gulf] stomach, voracious appetite. Cf. *Cor.*, I. i. 101. *O.E.D.* quotes Spenser, *Shepherd's Calendar*, Sept. 184–5: 'a wicked Wolfe / That with many a Lambe had glutted his gulfe'.

24. *ravin'd*] 'glutted with prey' (Steevens); the maw of a shark glutted with human flesh has the right note of horror. Other explanations: 'Used for *ravenous*, the passive participle for the adj.' (Malone, Chambers) and 'used rather for the active participle ravening' (Cuningham).

25. *dark*] The time when an herb was gathered was supposed to affect its potency (Kittredge).

27. *yew*] The yew, which grows freely in churchyards, was regarded as poisonous by the ancients, by writers in the Middle Ages, and by Shakespeare's contemporaries. Douce quotes Batman, *Uppon Bartholome*, XVII. 161: 'yew is altogether venomous, and against man's nature. The birdes that eate the redde berryes, eyther dye, or cast theyr fethers.' Cf. *R2*, III. ii. 117: 'double-fatal yew'.

28. *Sliver'd*] cut or sliced off. Cf. *Lr.*, IV. ii. 34; and *Ham.*, IV. vii. 174. According to Craig the word is still used in dialect and in America.

moon's eclipse] 'A most unlucky time for lawful enterprises, and therefore suitable for evil designs' (Clarendon).

29. *Nose . . . lips*] Turks and Tartars were not only regarded as types of cruelty, as in *Mer.V.*, IV. i. 32 (Craig), but also like the Jew (26) and the birth-strangled babe (30) they were *unchristened*, and hence valued by the witches (Wilson).

31. *drab*] prostitute.

32. *slab*] thick.

33. *chaudron*] entrails. Cf. Dekker, *Honest Whore*, Part I, sc. vii: 'Sixpence a meale, wench, as well as heart can

For th'ingredience of our cauldron.
All. Double, double toil and trouble:
Fire, burn; and, cauldron, bubble.
2 *Witch.* Cool it with a baboon's blood:
Then the charm is firm and good.

[*Enter* HECATE, *and the other three Witches.*]

Hec. O, well done! I commend your pains,
And every one shall share i'th'gains.
And now about the cauldron sing,
Like elves and fairies in a ring,
Enchanting all that you put in.

[*Music and a song,* 'Black spirits,' etc.

[*Exeunt Hecate and the three other Witches.*]

34. ingredience] *F;* ingredients *Rowe.* 38. S.D.] *F; Enter Hecate Ritson; Enter Hecate to the other three witches Globe.* 43. *Exeunt . . . Witches*] *Hecate retires Globe; Hecate goes Wilson; not in F.*

wish, with Calves chaldrons and chitterlings'.

34. *ingredience*] Cf. I. vii. 11.

37. *baboon*] with the accent on the first syllable. Cf. *Per.*, IV. vi. 189. Nosworthy suggests 'babione'.

38. Enter Hecate, and the other three Witches] Probably the appearance of Hecate with three additional witches was a non-Shakespearian interpolation. Some have thought the S.D. should read 'Enter Hecate *to* the other three Witches.' Hecate was not a witch, but might have been regarded as such by book-keeper or printer. The three spurious witches were needed for the song and perhaps for the 'antic round' (132 *post*).

39–43. *O . . . put in*] The metre changes and 'Like elves and fairies' is manifestly spurious.

43. song] It is given in *The Witch*, v. ii:

'*Hec.* Black spirits and white, red spirits and gray,
Mingle, mingle, mingle, you that mingle may!
Titty, Tiffin,
Keep it stiff in;
Firedrake, Puckey,
Make it lucky;
Liard, Robin,
You must bob in.
Round, around, around, about about!
All ill come running in, all good keep out!
1 *Witch.* Here's the blood of a bat.
Hec. Put in that, O put in that!
2 *Witch.* Here's libbard's-bane.
Hec. Put in again!
1 *Witch.* The juice of toad, the oil of adder.
2 *Witch.* Those will make the younker madder.
Hec. Put in—there's all—and rid the stench.
Fire. Nay, here's three ounces of the red-hair'd wench.
All the Witches. Round, around, around, etc.'

It is to be hoped that this song was altered for *Macbeth*, as some lines are relevant only to the plot of Middleton's play. But the 1673 edition of *Macbeth* prints them without alteration. No exit is marked for Hecate and the spurious witches; but the sooner

2 *Witch.* By the pricking of my thumbs,
Something wicked this way comes.— [*Knocking.*
Open, locks,
Whoever knocks.

Enter MACBETH.

Macb. How now, you secret, black, and midnight hags!
What is't you do?
All. A deed without a name.
Macb. I conjure you, by that which you profess,
Howe'er you come to know it, answer me:
Though you untie the winds, and let them fight
Against the Churches; though the yesty waves
Confound and swallow navigation up;
Though bladed corn be lodg'd, and trees blown down;
Though castles topple on their warders' heads;
Though palaces, and pyramids, do slope

46–7. Open . . . knocks.] *so Dyce; one line F.*

they depart the better. In the illustration of this scene in Rowe's edition, there are only three witches remaining at 112 *post*, though in D'Avenant's version Hecate speaks 125–32.

44.] Shakespeare again.

pricking] 'It is a very ancient superstition that all sudden pains of the body which could not naturally be accounted for, were presages of somewhat that was shortly to happen' (Steevens).

48. *black . . . hags*] i.e. who practised the Black Art.

50. *conjure*] here, as usually, with the accent on the first syllable.

that . . . profess] i.e. the Black Art.

51. *Howe'er . . . it*] e.g. by making a pact with the Devil.

52. *winds*] Scot, *The Discouerie of Witchcraft*, 1930, p. 1, says: 'Such faithlesse people (I saie) are also perswaded, that neither haile nor snowe, thunder nor lightening, raine nor tempestuous winds come from the heauens at the commandement of God; but are raised by the cunning and power of witches and conjurors.'

53. *Against the Churches*] symbolically, as well as literally.

yesty] foaming, frothy, in a ferment. Cf. *Ham.*, v. ii. 186; and *Wint.*, III. iii. 94.

55. *bladed corn*] Scot, *Discouerie of Witchcraft*, p. 6, tells us that witches were thought to be able to 'transferre corne in the blade from one place to another'. Comenius, *Janua Linguarum*, 1673, ch. 32 (cited by Staunton), says: 'As soon as standing corn shoots up to a blade, it is in danger of scathe by a tempest.'

lodg'd] laid, beaten down. Cf. *2H6*, III. ii. 176, and *R2*, III. iii. 163.

56. *Though . . . heads*] Cf. Seneca, *Agam.*, tr. Studley, Chor. 1: 'What castell strongly buylt, what bulwarke, tower or towne, / Is not by mischyefes meanes, brought topsy turuye downe?' See note on v. iii. 45 *post*.

57. *slope*] i.e. bend. Not used elsewhere by Shakespeare. Capell conj. 'stoop', which, spelt 'stope', might easily have been misread.

Their heads to their foundations; though the treasure
Of Nature's germens tumble all together,
Even till destruction sicken, answer me
To what I ask you.

1 *Witch.* Speak.

2 *Witch.* Demand.

3 *Witch.* We'll answer.

1 *Witch.* Say, if thou'dst rather hear it from our mouths,
Or from our masters?

Macb. Call 'em; let me see 'em.

1 *Witch.* Pour in sow's blood, that hath eaten
Her nine farrow; grease, that's sweaten
From the murderer's gibbet, throw
Into the flame.

59. germens] *Globe;* Germaine *F1–2;* germain *F3–4;* germen *Delius;* germains *Pope;* germins *Theobald;* german *Elwin.* all together] *Pope;* altogether *F.* 62. thou'dst] *Capell;* th' hadst *F.* 63. masters?] *Pope;* Masters. *F;* masters'? *Capell.*

59. *germens*] The collective form, 'germen', may be correct; but cf. *Lr.*, III. ii. 8: 'Crack Nature's moulds, all germens spill at once'. For the idea cf. *Wint.*, IV. iv. 490: 'Let nature crush the sides o' th' earth together / And mar the seeds within.' Curry shows, *Shakespeare's Philosophical Patterns*, pp. 31 ff., that Nature's germens are the *rationes seminales*, 'the material essences which correspond to the exemplars in God's mind'. He quotes Augustine, *De Trinitate*; 'But in truth, some hidden seeds of all things that are born corporeally and visibly, are concealed in the corporeal elements of this world... For the Creator of these invisible seeds is the Creator of all things himself; since whatever comes forth to our sight by being born, receives the first beginnings of its course from hidden seeds, and takes the successive increments of its proper size and its distinctive forms from these as it were original rules.' Cf. note to I. iii. 58 *ante*. By being willing to tumble the germens all together in confusion, so that they became barren or produced only monstrosities, Macbeth shows how far he has declined since the beginning of the play. Wilson (lxiii) thinks that Macbeth dwells on the prospect of such ultimate destruction with delight. It is rather the *reductio ad absurdum* of the principle that the end justifies the means, of which the equivocator in the Porter scene provides a mild example. Macbeth is willing to sacrifice the future of the universe to his own personal and temporary satisfaction. Cf. III. ii. 16 *ante*, and Knight, *The Wheel of Fire*, 1949, p. 154.

60. *sicken*] i.e. through surfeit.

64. *sow's . . . eaten*] Steevens cites Holinshed, *Hist. Scot.*, 1585, p. 133 (on the laws of Kenneth II): 'If a sow eate hir pigs, let hir be stoned to death, and buried, so that no man eate of hir fleshe.'

65. *farrow*] litter. Holland, *Pliny*, VIII. 51 (cited Clarendon) says: 'One sow may bring at one farrow twentie pigges.'

sweaten] irregularly formed, to rhyme with 'eaten'. Cf. Abbott, *Shakes. Gram.*, § 344.

All. Come, high, or low;
Thyself and office deftly show.

Thunder. First Apparition, an armed head.

Macb. Tell me, thou unknown power,—

1 *Witch.* He knows thy thought:
Hear his speech, but say thou nought.

1 *App.* Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth! beware Macduff;
Beware the Thane of Fife.—Dismiss me.—Enough.
[*Descends.*

Macb. Whate'er thou art, for thy good caution, thanks:
Thou hast harp'd my fear aright.—But one word more:—

1 *Witch.* He will not be commanded. Here's another,
More potent than the first.

68. S.D.] *F; Wilson adds: like Macbeth's, rises from the cauldron.* 71. Macbeth ... Macduff.] *so Rowe; two lines, the second beginning* beware *F.*

68, 76, 86. an armed head, etc.] Upton, *Crit. Obs.*, 1746, says: 'The armed head represents symbolically Macbeth's head cut off and brought to Malcolm by Macduff. The bloody child is Macduff untimely ripped from his mother's womb. The child with a crown on his head, and a bough in his hand, is the royal Malcolm, who ordered his soldiers to hew them down a bough and bear it before them to Dunsinane.'

Crawford, *M.L.N.*, XXXIX, and Kittredge both think the 1st Apparition is Macduff. Knight, *The Imperial Theme*, pp. 150–3, points out 'the vivid destruction-birth sequence' in this scene. 'The Armed Head, recalling Macdonwald's head (I. ii. 23) ... blends with the "chaos" and "disorder" thought throughout ... and ... suggests both the iron force of evil and also its final destruction.' He suggests that the order in which the apparitions appear is important: 'Violent destruction, itself to be destroyed; the blood-agony of birth that travails to wrench into existence a force to right the sickening evil; the future birth splendid in crowned and accomplished royalty'.

69. *Tell . . . thought*] Grierson calls attention to the irony of these two sentences, as the apparition is Macbeth's head.

70. *say . . . nought*] Steevens quotes Marlowe, *Faustus*, sc. x. (ed. Brooke, p. 212): 'demand no questions . . . / But in dumbe silence let them come and goe.'

72. *Enough*] He is in torment. Cf. *2H6*, I. iv. 38.

74. *harp'd*] guessed. Cotgrave translates 'Parler à taston' by 'to speak by ghesse or conjecture, onely to harpe at the matter'.

76. *More potent*] This does not necessarily mean that Macduff is more potent than Macbeth, but merely that the apparition is more powerful than the other. The First Witch has previously referred to them as their 'masters', which can only mean the demons who assume the shape of the apparitions. The phrase does not therefore dispose of Kittredge's theory (cf. note to 68 *ante*) as Wilson asserts.

Thunder. Second Apparition, a bloody child.

2 *App.* Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth!—
Macb. Had I three ears, I'd hear thee.
2 *App.* Be bloody, bold, and resolute: laugh to scorn
The power of man, for none of woman born
Shall harm Macbeth. [*Descends.*
Macb. Then live, Macduff: what need I fear of thee?
But yet I'll make assurance double sure,
And take a bond of Fate: thou shalt not live;
That I may tell pale-hearted fear it lies,
And sleep in spite of thunder.—

Thunder. Third Apparition, a child crowned, with a tree in his hand.

What is this,
That rises like the issue of a king;
And wears upon his baby brow the round
And top of sovereignty?
All. Listen, but speak not to't.
3 *App.* Be lion-mettled, proud, and take no care
Who chafes, who frets, or where conspirers are:
Macbeth shall never vanquish'd be, until
Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill

78–81. Had . . . Macbeth.] *three lines, Var. 1803, ending* bold / man, / Macbeth. 79. Be . . . scorn] *so Rowe; two lines, the first ending* resolute: *F.* 83. assurance, double] *Pope;* assurance: double *F1;* assurance, double *F2–4.* 86–7. What . . . king] *so Rowe; one line, F.* 89. top] type *conj. Theobald.* 93. Birnam] *F4;* Byrnam *F1–3.*

80–1. *for . . . Macbeth*] Cf. Holinshed (Appendix, p. 175).

83–4. *assurance . . . Fate*] Macbeth, unwitting that Macduff is not in the number of *woman born* is assured that Macduff cannot harm him. By killing him, Macbeth means to bind fate to perform the promise and make his own 'assurance double sure'. Rushton, *Shakespeare a Lawyer*, 1858, p. 20, says that the allusion is to 'a conditional bond, under or by virtue of which when forfeited, double the principal sum was recoverable'. Kittredge remarks that Fate has to break two of her fixed laws, produce a man never born, and bring back a man from the dead.

89. *top*] 'The crown not only completes (especially in the eye of Macbeth, the usurper) and rounds, as with the perfection of a circle, the claim to sovereignty, but it is figuratively the top, the summit, of ambitious hopes' (R. G. White).

93. *Birnam*] a high hill near Dunkeld, 12 miles W.N.W. of Dunsinnan, which is 7 miles N.E. of Perth.

Dunsinane] now Dunsinnan. The word here seems to be accented on the second syllable; but elsewhere in the play on the first syllable. Both pronunciations seem to have been employed by all Scottish writers. Wilson suspects from the pronunciation of 'Dunsinane' here, the use of 'rise' (98), and the rhythm of 105, the presence of an interpolator. R. Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 143, suggests that 'the unusual accentuation . . . produced the startling auditory sensation that the castle of Macbeth is torn asunder by *sin*, and therefore doomed to fall.' This is overingenious.

Shall come against him. [*Descends.*
Macb. That will never be:
Who can impress the forest; bid the tree
Unfix his earth-bound root? Sweet bodements! good!
Rebellious dead, rise never, till the wood
Of Birnam rise; and our high-plac'd Macbeth
Shall live the lease of Nature, pay his breath
To time, and mortal custom.—Yet my heart
Throbs to know one thing: tell me (if your art
Can tell so much), shall Banquo's issue ever
Reign in this kingdom?

97. Rebellious dead] *F;* Rebellious head *Theobald (Warburton);* Rebellion's head *Hanmer (conj. Theobald).* 98. Birnam] *F2;* Byrnan *F1.* our] your *conj. S. Walker.*

94. *That*] Macbeth continues the oracle in rhyme, and thus identifies himself with the lying spirits (Kittredge).

97. *Rebellious dead*] Theobald's emendation has been generally accepted, and Macbeth may be referring to 'conspirers' (91 *ante*). Perhaps 'head' was suggested by the Armed Head (Clarendon). For 'head' in the sense of armed force, see *1H4*, III. ii. 167, and *Ham.*, IV. v. 101. Halliwell, however, thought that the Folio 'dead' referred to Banquo's ghost, which would not stay buried (III. iv. 79–80 *ante*) and the original reading has been defended by W. D. Sargeaunt, *Macbeth—a New Interpretation*, 1937, pp. 154–5, and by R. Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 143. The latter argues that the Folio reading links up better with the reference to Banquo, 100–3 *post*, and that Macbeth is afraid that the dead will rise and drag him down into the grave, or at least that Banquo's son will avenge his father. Walker also compares v. ii. 3–5 *post*. On the whole there would seem to be insufficient justification for emending the Folio reading; cf. *T.L.S.*, 23 Sept. 1949.

98. *Birnam*] With Folio spelling, cf. Holinshed: 'till the wood of Bernane came to the castell of Dunsinane'.

rise] probably copied by mistake from the previous line. Wilson conj. 'move'. The text seems to be corrupt here. Cf. next note.

our . . . Macbeth] Even if 'our' is a misprint for 'your', the phrase would be queer in Macbeth's mouth. Cuningham interprets 'ourself, Macbeth, the King'. Was Macbeth perhaps disguised, and here pretending that he was not Macbeth? Or, as Fleay suggests, was this passage originally spoken by one of the witches? Even as the lines stand (96–100: 'Sweet . . . custom') they might be given to the First Witch, and we could then interpret the passage as another example of 'the equivocation of the fiend / That lies like truth'.

99. *the lease of Nature*] the term of life.

100. *mortal custom*] the custom of mortality, natural death.

All. Seek to know no more.
Macb. I will be satisfied: deny me this,
And an eternal curse fall on you! Let me know.—
Why sinks that cauldron? and what noise is this?
[*Hautboys.*

1 *Witch.* Show!
2 *Witch.* Show!
3 *Witch.* Show!
All. Show his eyes, and grieve his heart;
Come like shadows, so depart.

A show of eight Kings, the last with a glass in his hand; BANQUO *following.*

Macb. Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo: down!
Thy crown does sear mine eye-balls:—and thy hair,
Thou other gold-bound brow, is like the first:—
A third is like the former:—filthy hags!
Why do you show me this?—A fourth?—Start, eyes!
What! will the line stretch out to th'crack of doom?
Another yet?—A seventh?—I'll see no more:—
And yet the eighth appears, who bears a glass,
Which shows me many more; and some I see,
That two-fold balls and treble sceptres carry.

105–6. know.—Why] know. Why *F;* know Why *conj. S. Walker.* 111. S.D.] *Hanmer subst. See note below.* 113. hair,] haire *F;* air *Johnson;* heir *Jackson.* 116. eyes!] eye *F2–4.* 119. eighth] *F3;* eight *F1–2.*

106. *noise*] A concert or company of musicians, usually three in number, who attended taverns, etc., was called a 'noise'. Cf. *2H4*, II. iv. 12.

111. A show . . . following] The S.D. in Folio 'and Banquo last, with a glasse in his hand' is inconsistent with 119 *post.*

113. *hair*] Johnson's conj. 'air' is attractive. 'As Macbeth expected to see a train of kings, and was only inquiring from what race they would proceed, he could not be surprised that the hair of the second was bound with gold like that of the first; he was offended only that the second resembled the first, as the first resembled Banquo.' Steevens compares *Wint.*, v. i. 128: 'Your father's image is so hit in you, / His very air, that I should call you brother.' But *O.E.D.* gives five quotations, from 1387 to 1625, of 'hair' used in the sense 'of one colour and external quality; . . . stamp, character'.

119. *the eighth*] Shakespeare refers to kings only, omitting all mention of Mary, Queen of Scots. Perhaps we should retain the F reading. But cf. l. 118.

glass] not an ordinary mirror in which King James could see himself (cf. Flatter, *T.L.S.*, 23/3/51) but a prospective, or magic, glass.

121. *two-fold . . . sceptres*] The two-fold balls are usually taken to refer to the double coronation of James at Scone and at Westminster. Chambers, *William Shakespeare*, I. 473, interprets 'balls' to mean the 'mounds' borne on the English and Scottish crowns; but surely it is the orb, carried in the left hand. The treble sceptres are the two used for investment in the English coronation, and the one used in the Scottish coronation (Chambers).

Horrible sight!—Now, I see, 'tis true;
For the blood-bolter'd Banquo smiles upon me,
And points at them for his.—What! is this so?
1 *Witch.* Ay, Sir, all this is so:—but why
Stands Macbeth thus amazedly?—
Come, sisters, cheer we up his sprites,
And show the best of our delights.
I'll charm the air to give a sound,
While you perform your antic round;
That this great King may kindly say,
Our duties did his welcome pay.
[*Music. The Witches dance, and vanish.*
Macb. Where are they? Gone?—Let this pernicious hour
Stand aye accursed in the calendar!—
Come in, without there!

Enter LENOX.

Len. What's your Grace's will?
Macb. Saw you the Weïrd Sisters?
Len. No, my Lord.
Macb. Came they not by you?
Len. No, indeed, my Lord.

124. What! is] What? is *F1;* What is *F2–4;* What, is *Pope.* 133. Where . . . hour] *so Rowe; two lines, the first ending* Gone? *F.* 136. Weïrd] *Theobald;* Weyard *F1;* wizard *F2–3;* wizards *F4.*

123. *blood-bolter'd*] i.e. with the hair in tangled knots, or clotted or matted together in a coagulated mass. According to Malone the term was a provincialism, used in Warwickshire. Other forms are *bolstred*, used in *Arden of Fevershame*, III. i. 73, and *balter*, used in Holland's *Pliny*, XII. xvii. 370 (cited Steevens), referring to a goat's beard: 'it baltereth and cluttereth into knots and balls.'

125–32. *Ay . . . pay*] possibly an interpolation. See Introduction, p. xxiii.

130. *antic round*] fantastic dance. Wilson quotes Jonson's description in *The Masque of Queenes*: 'a *magicall Daunce* full of praeposterous change and gesticulation . . . dauncing, back to back, hip to hip, theyr handes joyn'd, and making theyr *circles* backward to the left hand, with strange, phantastique motions of theyr heads and bodyes' (ed. Herford and Simpson, VII. 301).

131. *this . . . King*] If the speech is interpolated, this line may be addressed to a King in the audience rather than to Macbeth.

Macb. Infected be the air whereon they ride;
And damn'd all those that trust them!—I did hear
The galloping of horse: who was't came by?
Len. 'Tis two or three, my Lord, that bring you word,
Macduff is fled to England.
Macb. Fled to England?
Len. Ay, my good Lord.
Macb. [*Aside.*] Time, thou anticipat'st my dread exploits:
The flighty purpose never is o'ertook,
Unless the deed go with it. From this moment,
The very firstlings of my heart shall be
The firstlings of my hand. And even now,
To crown my thoughts with acts, be it thought and done:
The castle of Macduff I will surprise;
Seize upon Fife; give to th'edge o'th'sword
His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls
That trace him in his line. No boasting like a fool;
This deed I'll do, before this purpose cool:
But no more sights!—Where are these gentlemen?
Come, bring me where they are. [*Exeunt.*

144. S.D.] *Johnson.* 147. firstlings] *F1;* firstling *F2–4.* 148. firstlings] *F;* firstling *Rowe (ed. 2).* 155. sights!] flights *Singer (ed. 2).*

138. *air . . . ride*] Cf. Scot, *The Discouerie of Witchcraft*, 1930, pp. 6, 19. 'These can passe from place to place in the aire invisible . . . they ride and flie in the aire.'

139. *damn'd . . . them*] as Macbeth does.

142. *Macduff . . . fled*] Kittredge notes that as in I. iii 'the predictions begin to fulfil themselves instantly, and thus their trustworthiness is established in Macbeth's mind.'

143. *Ay . . . Lord*] Flatter, *op. cit.*, p. 26, notes the significant pause before Macbeth speaks.

144. *anticipat'st*] forestallest.

145–6. *The flighty . . . it*] Cf. II. iii. 28–35, 'flighty' = swift, fleet. *O.E.D.* quotes Huloet (1552), 'Flighty, *pernix.*' Cf. *All's W.*, v. iii. 40: 'on our quick'st decrees, / The inaudible and noiseless foot of Time / Steals ere we can effect them.'

147–8. *firstlings . . . firstlings*] 'the first conceptions of the heart and the first acts of the hand' (Clarendon). Cf. *Troil.*, Prol. 27: 'the vaunt and firstlings of those broils'. *O.E.D.* quotes Coverdale (1535), Prov., iii. 9, 'ye firstlinges of all thine encrease'.

153. *trace*] in the sense of succeeding, following in, another's tracks, as in *1H4*, III. i. 47.

153–4. *No . . . cool*] Wilson, following Fleay and others, thinks this rhyming tag is spurious.

SCENE II.—[*Fife. A room in Macduff's castle.*]

Enter LADY MACDUFF, *her Son, and* ROSSE.

L. Macd. What had he done, to make him fly the land?
Rosse. You must have patience, Madam.
L. Macd. He had none:
His flight was madness: when our actions do not,
Our fears do make us traitors.
Rosse. You know not,
Whether it was his wisdom, or his fear.
L. Macd. Wisdom! to leave his wife, to leave his babes,
His mansion, and his titles, in a place
From whence himself does fly? He loves us not:
He wants the natural touch; for the poor wren,

Scene II

S.D. *Fife . . . castle.*] *not in F.* 1. L. Macd.] Wife *F passim.*

Bradley says of this and the following scene, *Shakespearean Tragedy*, p. 391: 'They have a technical value in helping to give the last stage of the action the form of a conflict between Macbeth and Macduff. But their chief function is of another kind. It is to touch the heart with a sense of beauty and pathos, to open the springs of love and tears.' But Knights, *op. cit.*, pp. 26–7, points out that this scene 'echoes in different keys the theme of the false appearance, of doubt and confusion', and 'shows the spreading evil. . . . There is much more in the death of young Macduff than "pathos"; the violation of the natural order is completed by the murder.' Macduff and his wife, says Fletcher, *Studies of Shakespeare*, p. 166 (*apud* Furness), 'are the chief representatives in the piece of the interests of loyalty and domestic affection, as opposed to those of the foulest treachery and . . . ambition'.

1. *What . . . land?*] Masefield, *Thanks before Going*, 1947, p. 172, argues that in the uncut *Macbeth*, Macduff 'debated with his wife the policy of going and had her full approval. Her outcry against him to Rosse, in the beginning of this scene, is surely to divert suspicion from herself . . . she knows that spies are everywhere, and that Rosse may be one.' I think it more likely that Macduff did not discuss the matter with this wife, for fear of implicating her. There does not seem to be sufficient evidence for a cut here. Nor, although Rosse might well be suspect after his time-serving, can I see any evidence that Lady Macduff does suspect him; and it is apparently the murder of Lady Macduff which finally makes him desert Macbeth.

4. *traitors*] 'Our flight is considered as an evidence of our treason' (Steevens).

7. *titles*] This is usually explained to mean everything to which he was entitled, i.e. his possessions.

9. *natural touch*] the feeling of natural affection, 'natural sensibility' (Johnson). Cf. *Gent.*, II. vii. 18: 'the inly touch of love'; and *Tp.*, v. i. 21: 'Hast thou, which art but air, a touch, a feeling'.

wren] It need not worry us that the wren is not the smallest of birds, nor that it would not fight in defence of its

The most diminitive of birds, will fight,
Her young ones in her nest, against the owl.
All is the fear, and nothing is the love;
As little is the wisdom, where the flight
So runs against all reason.

Rosse. My dearest coz,
I pray you, school yourself: but, for your husband,
He is noble, wise, judicious, and best knows
The fits o'th'season. I dare not speak much further:
But cruel are the times, when we are traitors,
And do not know ourselves; when we hold rumour
From what we fear, yet know not what we fear,
But float upon a wild and violent sea

10. diminitive] *F1;* diminutiue *F4.* 19. know] know't *Hanmer.* 19–20. we hold rumour . . . we . . . we] we bode ruin . . . we . . . we *or else* the bold running . . . they . . . they *conj. Johnson.* 21. sea] *F;* sea, *Arden* (*ed.* 1), *Wilson, etc.*

young. See Harting, *The Ornithology of Shakespeare*, p. 91.

10. *diminitive*] variant of diminutive.

12. *All . . . love*] Noble, *Shakespeare's Biblical Knowledge*, compares 1 John, iv. 18: 'There is no feare in loue, but perfect loue casteth out feare: for feare hath painfulnesse: and he that feareth is not perfect in loue.'

13. *wisdom*] Cf. IV. iii. 15 *post.*

15. *school*] control.

17. *The fits o'th'season*] Steevens explains as *the violent disorders* of the season, its convulsions; and quotes *Cor.*, III. ii. 33: 'the violent fit o' the time'. The metaphor is from the fits of an intermittent fever. Cf. III. ii. 23 *ante.* Rosse is hinting at Macbeth's murderous fits.

19. *ourselves*] i.e. as such, 'without realizing it'. Cuningham suggests the word might mean 'one another'.

rumour] Paul thinks there may be an allusion to the rumour that James I had been stabbed on 22 March 1606.

19–20. *when . . . fear*] Cf. *John*, IV. ii. 144–6: 'I find the people strangely fantasied, / Possess'd with rumours, full of idle dreams, / Not knowing what they fear, but full of fear.' Rosse means: 'When we entertain rumours, inspired by our fears, and those fears are themselves vague'.

21–2. *But . . . move—*] This passage is a field for much conjecture. Knights argues for the punctuation I have adopted: 'The substitution of a dash for the full stop after "move" is the only alteration that seems necessary in the Folio text. The other emendations . . . ruin both the rhythm and the idiom. Rosse is in a hurry and breaks off. . . That the tide is about to turn against Macbeth is suggested both by the rhythm and the imagery of Rosse's speech.' Wilson, however, argues that 'moue' is a simple minim error for 'none' and compares *Ant.*, I. iv. 44–7. One might also compare *Ant.*, III. ii. 49. But Taylor, *Shakespeare's Debt to Montaigne*, draws attention to a parallel with a passage in Florio, which seems to me decisive against the Camb. conj., accepted by Wilson: 'So are we drawne, as wood is shoved, / By others sinnewes, *each way moved.* / We goe not, but we are carried: as things that *flote*, now gliding gently, now hulling *violently*; according as the water is, either stormy or calme' (II. i, *Temple* III, p. 4). See Empson, *op. cit.*, pp. 128–9.

Each way, and move—I take my leave of you:
Shall not be long but I'll be here again.
Things at the worst will cease, or else climb upward
To what they were before.—My pretty cousin,
Blessing upon you!

L. Macd. Father'd he is, and yet he's fatherless.

Rosse. I am so much a fool, should I stay longer,
It would be my disgrace, and your discomfort:
I take my leave at once. [*Exit.*

L. Macd. Sirrah, your father's dead:
And what will you do now? How will you live?

Son. As birds do, mother.

L. Macd. What, with worms and flies?

Son. With what I get, I mean; and so do they.

L. Macd. Poor bird! thou'dst never fear the net, nor lime,
The pit-fall, nor the gin.

Son. Why should I, mother?
Poor birds they are not set for.
My father is not dead, for all your saying.

22. Each . . . move—] *conj. Johnson;* each way, and moue. *F;* Each way and wave. *conj. Theobald;* And move each way. *Capell;* And each way move. *Keightley* (*conj. Steevens*); Each sway and move *conj. Staunton;* Each way it moves *Hudson* (*conj. Daniel*); Each day a new one *conj. Ingleby;* Each way and none. *Wilson* (*conj. Camb. subst.*); Each wayward move *conj. Leighton;* Each way we move *conj. Rolfe.* 26–9. Blessing . . . discomfort:] *lines end* yet / Foole, / disgrace, / discomfort. *Walker.* 27. Father'd . . . fatherless] *so Rowe; two lines, the first ending* is *F.* 33. I mean] *not in F2–4.* 34. Poor . . . lime] *so Theobald; two lines, the first ending* Bird, *F.* lime] *F1;* line *F2–4.* 35–6. The pit-fall . . . set for] *so F;* Why . . . for. *one line, Pope.*

23. *Shall not*] 'It', 'I', or 'And' understood; but Rosse is in a hurry, and there are plenty of examples in Elizabethan English of the omission of the subject.

24–5. *Things . . . before*] another metaphor relating to the turn of the tide.

29. *disgrace*] i.e. by weeping.

30. *Sirrah*] 'not always a term of reproach but sometimes used by masters to servants, parents to children, etc.' (Malone).

32. *As birds do*] The boy is thinking of Matt., vi. 26.

with] i.e. on.

34. *lime*] bird lime.

35. *gin*] snare.

Why . . . mother?] All editors have followed Pope in detaching these words from this line, which they complete.

36. *Poor . . . for*] 'In life traps are not set for the poor but for the rich' (Clarendon). 'Poor' is emphatic, and 'birds' is probably the object of 'set for', 'they' referring to the traps. But 'they' may be in apposition to 'birds'. The boy is referring, of course, to his mother's epithet.

L. Macd. Yes, he is dead: how wilt thou do for a father?
Son. Nay, how will you do for a husband?
L. Macd. Why, I can buy me twenty at any market.
Son. Then you'll buy 'em to sell again.
L. Macd. Thou speak'st with all thy wit;
And yet, i'faith, with wit enough for thee.
Son. Was my father a traitor, mother?
L. Macd. Ay, that he was.
Son. What is a traitor?
L. Macd. Why, one that swears and lies.
Son. And be all traitors that do so?
L. Macd. Every one that does so is a traitor, and must be hang'd.
Son. And must they all be hang'd that swear and lie?
L. Macd. Every one.
Son. Who must hang them?
L. Macd. Why, the honest men.
Son. Then the liars and swearers are fools; for there are liars and swearers enow to beat the honest men, and hang up them.
L. Macd. Now God help thee, poor monkey! But how wilt thou do for a father?
Son. If he were dead, you'ld weep for him: if you would not, it were a good sign that I should quickly have a new father.
L. Macd. Poor prattler, how thou talk'st!

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Bless you, fair dame! I am not to you known,

38. Yes, . . . father?] *one line, Rowe; two lines, the first ending* dead *F.* 41. buy] *F3;* by *F1–2.* 42–3. Thou . . . thee] *lines end* faith / thee. *Pope.* 42. with all] *F2;* withall *F1.* 49–50. Every . . . hang'd] *prose, Pope; lines divided after* Traitor *F.* 54. the] *not in F3–4.* 56. enow] *F;* enough *Hanmer.* 58–9. Now . . . father] *so Pope; verse, divided after* Monkie: *F.* 58. Now] *not in F4.*

44–63.] Wilson thinks this passage was added for a court performance after the hanging of Henry Garnet.

47. *one . . . lies*] Cf. II. iii. 10–12 *ante.*

57. *hang up them*] Cf. *Rom.*, IV. ii. 41: 'deck up her'.

64–72. Messenger] He is a welcome reminder that all have not been corrupted by Macbeth's tyranny. There is no reason to believe, with Heath, that he is one of the murderers; or, with Paul, that he has been sent by Lady Macbeth. Cf. V. i. 6n.

Though in your state of honour I am perfect.
I doubt, some danger does approach you nearly:
If you will take a homely man's advice,
Be not found here; hence, with your little ones.
To fright you thus, methinks, I am too savage;
To do worse to you were fell cruelty,
Which is too nigh your person. Heaven preserve you!
I dare abide no longer. [*Exit.*
L. Macd. Whither should I fly?
I have done no harm. But I remember now
I am in this earthly world, where, to do harm
Is often laudable; to do good, sometime
Accounted dangerous folly: why then, alas!
Do I put up that womanly defence,
To say, I have done no harm? What are these faces!

Enter Murderers.

Mur. Where is your husband?
L. Macd. I hope, in no place so unsanctified,
Where such as thou may'st find him.
Mur. He's a traitor.
Son. Thou liest, thou shag-hair'd villain!

68–9. ones. To . . . thus,] *F2, subst.;* ones To . . . thus. *F1.* 70. worse to you] less, to you *Hanmer;* less to you, *Capell.* 72. Whither] *F3–4;* Whether *F1–2.* 78. To . . . faces] *so Rowe; two lines, the first ending* harme? *F.* I have] *F1;* I had *F2–4;* I'd *Theobald;* I've *Dyce (ed. 2).* 82. shag-hair'd] *Singer (ed. 2), conj. Steevens;* shagge-ear'd *F1–2;* shag-ear'd *F3–4, Camb.*

65. *state . . . perfect*] perfectly acquainted with your rank. Cf. *R3*, III. vii. 120: 'Your state of fortune, and your due of birth'.

66. *doubt*] i.e. fear; a common usage. Cf. *R2*, III. iv. 69; and Bacon, *Essays, Of Vicissitude of things*: 'You may doubt the springing up of a *New Sect.*'

68. *little ones*] Cf. Matt., xviii. 6: 'But whosoeuer shall offend one of these little ones which beleeue in mee, it were better for him, that a millstone were hanged about his necke, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.'

70. *To . . . cruelty*] three explanations, of which I incline to the third: (i) 'to fright you more, by relating all the circumstances of your dangers; which would detain you so long, that you could not avoid it' (Edwards); (ii) 'to let her and her children be destroyed without warning' (Johnson); (iii) 'It is too savage of me even to frighten you like this: to harm you would be the act of a monster—and such monsters, alas, are on your track' (Grierson).

80. *unsanctified*] 'We recall the associations set up in III. vi, a scene of choric commentary upon Macduff's flight . . . to the "pious Edward" ' (Knights, *Explorations*, p. 27).

82. *shag-hair'd*] Steevens's conj. has been generally adopted. The epithet

Mur. What, you egg!
[Stabbing him.
Young fry of treachery!
Son. He has kill'd me, mother:
Run away, I pray you! *[Dies.*
[Exit Lady Macduff, crying 'Murther!' and pursued by the Murderers.

SCENE III.—[*England. A room in the King's palace.*]

Enter MALCOLM *and* MACDUFF.

Mal. Let us seek out some desolate shade, and there
Weep our sad bosoms empty.
Macd. Let us rather
Hold fast the mortal sword, and like good men
Bestride our downfall birthdom. Each new morn,
New widows howl, new orphans cry; new sorrows
Strike heaven on the face, that it resounds
As if it felt with Scotland, and yell'd out
Like syllable of dolour.

82. S.D.] *Rowe; not in F.*

Scene III

S.D.] *England . . . palace*] *Rowe subst.* 4. downfall] *F;* down-fall'n *Johnson.*

occurs in *2H6*, III. i. 367, and *Sir Thomas More*, Add. IVc. The spelling *heare* is common in Shakespeare, and Wilson points out that in his hand *g* and *h* are similar, so that 'shagheard' might be misread 'shaggeard'.

egg] Cf. *LLL.*, v. i. 78: 'thou pigeon-egg of discretion'.

Scene III

This scene is based on Holinshed (see Appendix, pp. 176 ff.) and it is the only considerable passage of dialogue in the *Chronicle* relating to Macbeth's reign. The dialogue is also given prominence in Bellenden and Stewart. Knights remarks of this scene that 'Malcolm's suspicion and the long testing of Macduff emphasize the mistrust which has spread from the central evil of the play. But the main purpose of the scene is obscured unless we realize its function as choric commentary. In alternating speeches the evil which Macbeth has caused is explicitly stated, without extenuation. And it is stated impersonally' (*op. cit.*, p. 28). Chambers, more representatively, regards the scene as tedious. It does not seem tedious today, perhaps, as Masefield suggests, because of the events of recent years.

3. *mortal*] deadly. Cf. I. v. 41 *ante.*

4. *downfall*] i.e. downfallen.

birthdom] i.e. native land. The phrase means 'defend our fatherland, as we would the body of a fallen comrade'.

6. *that*] so that. Cf. I. ii. 60 *ante.*

8. *Like . . . dolour*] Baldwin, *Shake-*

Mal. What I believe, I'll wail;
What know, believe; and what I can redress,
As I shall find the time to friend, I will.
What you have spoke, it may be so, perchance.
This tyrant, whose sole name blisters our tongues,
Was once thought honest: you have lov'd him well;
He hath not touch'd you yet. I am young; but something
You may deserve of him through me, and wisdom
To offer up a weak, poor, innocent lamb,
T'appease an angry god.
Macd. I am not treacherous.
Mal. But Macbeth is.
A good and virtuous nature may recoil,
In an imperial charge. But I shall crave your pardon:
That which you are my thoughts cannot transpose:
Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell:
Though all things foul would wear the brows of grace,

11. What] When *Chambers.* 15. deserve] *Theobald (Warburton); discerne F.* of him] *not in, conj. Steevens.* and wisdom] *F;* 'tis wisdom *Hanmer;* and wisdom is it *conj. Steevens;* and 'tis wisdom *conj. Collier;* and wisdom bids *conj. Staunton;* and wisdom 'twere *Keightley;* and wisdom / Bids me remember it may be your wisdom *conj. Grierson;* And wisdom 'tis *conj. Cuningham (lines 14–17 end* but / me, / weak / god). 16. To offer] 'Tis t'offer *Nicholson (apud Camb.).* 17. T' appease] *F;* To appease *many Edd.* 23. wear] bear *F4.*

peare's Small Latine, I. 570, shows that Shakespeare might have read in his *Accidence of Interjections*: 'Some are of . . . Sorowe: as *Heu, hei.*'

10. *to friend*] i.e. for friend, to befriend me. Cf. *All's W.*, v. iii. 182, and *Caes.*, III. i. 143.

12. *whose sole name*] the mere mention of whose name (Chambers).

14–17. *He hath . . . god*] Cuningham wished to alter the lineation of these lines and to insert *'tis* after *wisdom.* But *'tis* or *'twere* may be understood, and need not be inserted.

15. *deserve*] Theobald's emendation is almost universally accepted, but Upton's explanation of the Folio 'discerne' ('You may see something to your advantage by betraying me') is not impossible.

19–20. *recoil . . . charge*] give way under pressure of a royal command. For this use of 'recoil' cf. v. ii. 23 and *Cym.*, I. vi. 128.

20. *imperial*] royal. Cf. *MND.*, II. i. 163.

charge] command; but the word was suggested by 'recoil', by a quibble.

21. *transpose*] change. Cf. *MND.*, I. i. 233: 'Love can transpose to form and dignity.' The line means: 'my thoughts cannot alter what you really are.'

23–4. *Though . . . so*] 'I do not say that your virtuous appearance proves you a traitor; for virtue must wear its proper form, though that form be counterfeited by villainy' (Johnson).

23. *would*] should. Cf. I. vii. 34, etc.

Yet Grace must still look so.

Macd. I have lost my hopes.

Mal. Perchance even there where I did find my doubts.
Why in that rawness left you wife and child
(Those precious motives, those strong knots of love),
Without leave-taking?—I pray you,
Let not my jealousies be your dishonours,
But mine own safeties: you may be rightly just,
Whatever I shall think.

Macd. Bleed, bleed, poor country!
Great tyranny, lay thou thy basis sure,
For goodness dare not check thee! wear thou thy wrongs;
The title is affeer'd!—Fare thee well, Lord:
I would not be the villain that thou think'st
For the whole space that's in the tyrant's grasp,
And the rich East to boot.

Mal. Be not offended:

25. Perchance . . . doubts] *so Rowe; two lines, the first ending* there *F.* 26. child] Childe? *F;* children *F2–4.* 33. dare] *F1–2;* dares *F3–4, Wilson.* 34. The] Thy *Malone.* affeer'd] *Hanmer;* affear'd *F.* 35. think'st] think'st me *Keightley.*

24–5. *hopes . . . doubts*] Macduff is thinking of an expedition against Macbeth; Malcolm is suspicious of Macduff's conduct in leaving his wife and children.

26. *rawness*] unprotected condition. He suspects Macduff of having an understanding with Macbeth, or he would not have left his family to the tyrant's mercies. Cf. *H5*, IV. i. 147: 'children rawly left'.

27. *motives*] persons inspiring love or devotion, as well as incentives. Cf. *All's W.*, IV. iv. 20, and *Tim.*, V. iv. 27.

28. *Without . . . you*] Some editors assume that something is missing. But, as Abbott suggests, the pause after 'leave-taking' may be 'explained by the indignation of Macduff, which Malcolm observes and digresses to appease'. Not that it is necessary to explain every irregularity in the metre.

29. *jealousies*] suspicions.

33. *goodness . . . thee*] a criticism of Malcolm's nervousness. Check = hold in check, or call to account.

wrongs] ill-gotten gains.

34. *The . . . affeer'd!*] i.e. assured or confirmed. '*Affeerers* . . . signifies in the common law such as are appointed in Court-Leets, upon oath, to set the fines on such as have committed faults arbitrarily punishable, and have no express penalty appointed by statute' (Cowell, *Interpreter*, cited Clarendon). Ritson says: 'To *affeer* is to assess, or reduce to certainty. All amerciaments are by Magna Charta to be *affeered* by lawful men, sworn to be impartial.' Originally a commercial term, meaning 'fix the market-price'. Elwin suggests that there is a pun, the phrase meaning also 'Malcolm is afraid of asserting his title to the throne.'

37. *to boot*] in addition.

I speak not as in absolute fear of you.
I think our country sinks beneath the yoke;
It weeps, it bleeds; and each new day a gash
Is added to her wounds: I think, withal,
There would be hands uplifted in my right;
And here, from gracious England, have I offer
Of goodly thousands: but, for all this,
When I shall tread upon the tyrant's head,
Or wear it on my sword, yet my poor country
Shall have more vices than it had before,
More suffer, and more sundry ways than ever,
By him that shall succeed.

Macd. What should he be?

Mal. It is myself I mean; in whom I know
All the particulars of vice so grafted,
That, when they shall be open'd, black Macbeth
Will seem as pure as snow; and the poor State
Esteem him as a lamb, being compar'd
With my confineless harms.

Macd. Not in the legions
Of horrid Hell can come a devil more damn'd
In evils, to top Macbeth.

Mal. I grant him bloody,
Luxurious, avaricious, false, deceitful,
Sudden, malicious, smacking of every sin

44. thousands] thousands ten *conj. Cuningham.* but] but yet *Hanmer.* 59. smacking] *F1;* smoaking *F2–4.*

42. *my right*] *mon droit.*

43. *gracious England*] i.e. Edward the Confessor.

50–102. *It . . . spoken*] Knights, *Explorations*, p. 28, argues that Malcolm here 'has ceased to be a person. His lines repeat and magnify the evils which have already been attributed to Macbeth, acting as a mirror wherein the ills of Scotland are reflected. And the statement of evil is strengthened by contrast with the opposite virtues.'

52. *open'd*] i.e. like buds—suggested by 'grafted'.

55. *confineless*] boundless. Not used elsewhere by Shakespeare.

56–7. *devil . . . evils*] pronounced as monosyllables.

58. *Luxurious*] in the now obsolete sense of 'lascivious', 'lustful', as always in Shakespeare. Lust, avarice, and deceit are the three vices which Malcolm, as in Holinshed, proceeds to charge himself with. He only grants that Macbeth has these vices for the sake of argument. Shakespeare is showing the nature of royalty by describing its opposite.

59. *Sudden*] hasty, passionate, violent. Cf. *AYL.*, II. vii. 151: 'sudden and quick in quarrel'.

That has a name; but there's no bottom, none,
In my voluptuousness: your wives, your daughters,
Your matrons, and your maids, could not fill up
The cistern of my lust; and my desire
All continent impediments would o'erbear,
That did oppose my will: better Macbeth,
Than such an one to reign.

Macd. Boundless intemperance
In nature is a tyranny; it hath been
Th'untimely emptying of the happy throne,
And fall of many kings. But fear not yet
To take upon you what is yours: you may
Convey your pleasures in a spacious plenty,
And yet seem cold—the time you may so hoodwink:
We have willing dames enough; there cannot be
That vulture in you, to devour so many
As will to greatness dedicate themselves,
Finding it so inclin'd.

Mal. With this, there grows
In my most ill-compos'd affection such
A staunchless avarice, that, were I King,
I should cut off the nobles for their lands;
Desire his jewels, and this other's house:

66. an] a *Capell.* Boundless] *not in, conj. Steevens.* 72. cold—] cold, *Theobald (Johnson)*; cold. *F.*

63. *cistern*] Cf. *Oth.*, IV. ii. 61, where also the word is used in connection with lust. Holinshed here speaks of 'the abhominable founteine of all vices'.

64. *continent*] restraining and chaste, a quibble on the two meanings. Cf. *Lr.*, I. ii. 182, 'continent forbearance', *LLL.*, I. i. 262, 'continent canon', and *Wint.*, III. ii. 35, 'as continent, as chaste'.

65. *will*] desire, lust.

66–7. *Boundless . . . tyranny*] i.e. want of control over the natural appetites constitutes a tyranny or usurpation in the 'little kingdom' of man's nature.

71. *Convey*] The word is used in the corresponding passage in Holinshed (see Appendix, p. 176). It means 'arrange, manage secretly'; cf. 'hoodwink' (72). Staunton quotes *The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven* (1599): 'But verily, verily, though the adulterer do never so closely and cunningly *convey* his sin under a canopy, yet . . .' etc. 'Convey' and 'Conveyers' were euphemisms for *theft* and *thieves*, as in *Wiv.*, I. iii. 32: '"Convey" the wise it call', and *R2*, IV. i. 317: 'Conveyers are you all.'

75. *dedicate*] See Murry, *Countries of the Mind*, II, for an interesting essay on Shakespeare's use of this word, though I disagree with Murry's chronology of the plays.

77. *affection*] disposition.

78. *staunchless*] insatiable.

80. *his*] i.e. one man's.

And my more-having would be as a sauce,
To make me hunger more; that I should forge
Quarrels unjust against the good and loyal,
Destroying them for wealth.

Macd. This avarice
Sticks deeper, grows with more pernicious root
Than summer-seeming lust; and it hath been
The sword of our slain kings: yet do not fear;
Scotland hath foisons to fill up your will,
Of your mere own. All these are portable,
With other graces weigh'd.

Mal. But I have none: the king-becoming graces,
As Justice, Verity, Temp'rance, Stableness,
Bounty, Perseverance, Mercy, Lowliness,
Devotion, Patience, Courage, Fortitude,
I have no relish of them; but abound
In the division of each several crime,
Acting it many ways. Nay, had I power, I should

85. Sticks] Strikes *Hanmer (conj. Theobald).* 86. summer-seeming] *F*; summer-teeming *Theobald (Warburton)*; summer-seeding *Steevens (1785), conj. Heath*; summer-seaming *conj. Staunton.* 88. foisons] Poisons *F3–4.*

82–3. *forge Quarrels*] Rushton, *Shakespeare Illustrated by the Lex Scripta*, quoted a statute of Henry IV's reign about the making of faulty arrow-heads and defective quarrels (i.e. square-headed arrows for a cross-bow) and argued that Malcolm here and 137 *post* ('warranted quarrel') was using the word in a double sense, because the verbs 'forge' and 'warrant' might both be applied to arrows. I think this is very unlikely, though the double meaning might have been at the back of Shakespeare's mind.

85. *Sticks*] Theobald's change is unnecessary. Cf. III. i. 49 *ante*, and *Meas.*, V. i. 480.

root] See Holinshed, Appendix, p. 177.

86. *summer-seeming*] i.e. either summer-beseeming, or summer-like. Lust fades with the winter of age, but avarice does not. Malone compared Donne's 'Love's Alchymy': 'So, lovers dreame a rich and long delight, / But yet a winter-seeming summer's night.' Here *winter-seeming* = winter-like, i.e. long. Lust and summer are often juxtaposed in Shakespeare, e.g. *Oth.*, IV. ii. 66.

87. *slain kings*] see Holinshed, Appendix, p. 177.

88. *foisons*] plenty, abundance. The plural form is unusual. Cf. *Tp.*, IV. i. 110.

89. *Of your mere own*] i.e. royal property.

portable] Holinshed uses the word 'importable' in this dialogue. See Appendix, p. 176.

90. *weigh'd*] i.e. counterbalanced.

93. *Perseverance*] The accent is on the second syllable.

95. *relish*] savour, trace. Cf. *Ham.*, III. iii. 92: 'Some act / That hath no relish of salvation in't.'

96. *division*] variation, descant.

Pour the sweet milk of concord into Hell,
Uproar the universal peace, confound
All unity on earth.
Macd. O Scotland! Scotland!
Mal. If such a one be fit to govern, speak:
I am as I have spoken.
Macd. Fit to govern?
No, not to live.—O nation miserable!
With an untitled tyrant bloody-scepter'd,
When shalt thou see thy wholesome days again,
Since that the truest issue of thy throne
By his own interdiction stands accus'd,
And does blaspheme his breed? Thy royal father
Was a most sainted King: the Queen, that bore thee,
Oft'ner upon her knees than on her feet,

98. Pour] Sow'r *Hanmer.* Hell] hate *Hanmer.* 99. Uproar] Uproot *or* Uptear *conjs. Keightley.* 102–3. Fit . . . miserable!] *so Pope; one line, F.* 107. accus'd] *Grierson, Harrison, Wilson;* accust *F1;* accurst *F2–4, most Edd.*

98. *milk of concord*] Cf. I. v. 17 *ante.*

99. *Uproar*] throw into confusion (*O.E.D.*).

99–100. *confound . . . earth*] 'This is what Macbeth has done' (Knights, *op. cit.*, p. 29). As this is not in Holinshed, Wilson suspects an interpolation by Shakespeare to please James I, who had ambitions as a peacemaker and hoped for the unity of Christendom. 'It seems that the crowning horror in Malcolm's self-indictment is violent opposition to James's cherished foreign policy.' Later (125–31) Malcolm recants three vices—lechery, avarice, and falsehood, as in Holinshed—though he has not accused himself specifically of falsehood; and in his recantation he does not mention his hatred of peace. This is an ingenious theory. But it should be noted that Malcolm does accuse himself of lack of verity (92) and that the 'milk of concord' is a main theme of the play (cf. the chapter of that title in Knight, *The Imperial Theme*). But although there is insufficient evidence of an insertion to please King James, there may have been a cut at 89 or 90 of a passage in which Malcolm spoke in detail of the third vice, falsehood.

101. *such a one*] Cf. 'such an one', 66 *ante.*

107. *interdiction*] An interdiction was normally an authoritative or peremptory prohibition, particularly in ecclesiastical matters; but it seems here to be a term in Scots law = 'a restraint imposed upon a person incapable of managing his own affairs on account of unsoundness of mind, improvidence, etc.' (*O.E.D.*). Such an interdiction might be 'voluntary', when a man resigned the conduct of his affairs to another.

accus'd] Nearly all editors follow F2 reading, 'accurst'. But 'accus'd' (F1 'accust') makes better sense if 'interdiction' is interpreted as above, and makes a tolerable sense even if 'interdiction' is interpreted in the ordinary way.

108. *blaspheme*] slander, defame. Cf. Bacon, *Advancement of Learning*, I. ii. 9: 'And as to the judgment of Cato the Censor, he was well punished for his *blasphemy* against learning.'

Died every day she liv'd. Fare thee well!
These evils thou repeat'st upon thyself
Hath banish'd me from Scotland.—O my breast,
Thy hope ends here!
Mal. Macduff, this noble passion,
Child of integrity, hath from my soul
Wip'd the black scruples, reconcil'd my thoughts
To thy good truth and honour. Devilish Macbeth
By many of these trains hath sought to win me
Into his power, and modest wisdom plucks me
From over-credulous haste: but God above
Deal between thee and me! for even now
I put myself to thy direction, and
Unspeak mine own detraction; here abjure
The taints and blames I laid upon myself,
For strangers to my nature. I am yet
Unknown to woman; never was forsworn;
Scarcely have coveted what was mine own;
At no time broke my faith: would not betray
The Devil to his fellow; and delight
No less in truth, than life: my first false speaking
Was this upon myself. What I am truly,
Is thine, and my poor country's, to command:

111. liv'd] *F;* lived *Capell, Wilson.* 113. Hath] Have *Rowe.* 126. woman] women *F2–4.* forsworn] foreswore *F2–4.*

111. *Died . . . liv'd*] Malone compared 1 Cor., xv. 31: 'I die dayly.'

liv'd] Most editors correct this to 'lived'; but although Shakespeare uses the dissyllabic word in *Caes.*, III. i. 257, 'That ever lived in the tide of times', it is better here to retain the Folio reading and assume a pause, which is natural and necessary. Cf. Flatter, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

113. *Hath*] Rowe's emendation is unnecessary. Macduff means either that Malcolm's sins, which he has just confessed, or the same sins in Macbeth, have banished him.

118. *trains*] stratagems, artifices, plots. Cotgrave defines 'Traine' as 'a plot, practise, conspiracie, deuise'. Cf. *1H4*, v. ii. 21. In hunting and hawking the term was used for a bait trailed or drawn along the ground to entice an animal; or for a lure of some kind to reclaim a hawk. Baynes, *Shakespeare Studies*, 1896, p. 312, quotes Turberville, *Book of Hunting*, 1908, p. 210: 'When a huntsman would hunt the wolfe, he must trayne them by these means . . . there lette them lay downe their traynes. And when the wolves go out in the night to pray and to feede, they will crosse upon the trayne and follow it.'

123. *mine own detraction*] my detraction of myself.

125. *For strangers*] as being strangers.

Whither, indeed, before thy here-approach,
Old Siward, with ten thousand warlike men,
Already at a point, was setting forth.
Now we'll together, and the chance of goodness
Be like our warranted quarrel. Why are you silent?

Macd. Such welcome and unwelcome things at once,
'Tis hard to reconcile.

Enter a Doctor.

Mal. Well, more anon.
Comes the King forth, I pray you?

133. thy] *F2;* they *F1.* here-approach] *Pope;* heere approach *F1.* 135. Already] *F;* All ready *Rowe.* forth.] foorth? *F2–3.* 136–7. the chance . . . quarrel] our chance, in goodness . . . quarrel *Hanmer;* the chance, O goodness . . . quarrel *conj. Johnson;* the chance of good success Betide our . . . quarrel *conj. Bailey;* the grace of Goodness Betide . . . quarrel *conj. Cuningham.* 139–40. 'Tis . . . you?] *Muir;* Well, . . . you? *one line F.*

133. *here-approach*] Cf. 'here-remain', 148 *post.*

134. *Siward*] the son of Beorn, Earl of Northumberland. He assisted King Edward the Confessor in suppressing the rebellion of Earl Godwin and his sons in 1053.

135. *at a point*] in readiness, prepared, in agreement. The Clar. Edd. quote Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*, 1570, p. 2092: 'The Register there sittyng by, beying weery, belyke, of tarying or els perceauyng the constant Martyrs to be at a point, called vpon the chauncelour in hast to rid them out of the way, and to make an end.' Cf. *Ham.*, I. ii. 200: 'armed at point'.

136–7. *the chance . . . quarrel*] i.e. may the chance of success be proportionate to the justice of our cause. *goodness* = good fortune. (Or, might it mean 'may our just cause be Goodness's (i.e. God's) opportunity to overthrow evil in the shape of Macbeth'?)

139. *Well, more anon*] The pause comes better after this phrase than before it, for during the pause the doctor comes down stage.

140–59. *Comes . . . grace*] Although one motive for the introduction of this passage may have been to flatter James I, and although the fact that ''Tis hard to reconcile' (139) and 'See who comes here' (159) might be joined to make a line suggests that the intervening lines might be an interpolation, it can still be justified on dramatic grounds. The good supernatural described here is a contrast to the evil supernatural of the Weird Sisters (cf. Knight, *The Wheel of Fire*, 1949, p. 148). Knights, *op. cit.*, p. 31, links the passage with the disease imagery of Act v; and there is an obvious contrast between the holy king of England and the unholy king of Scotland. There has been some preparation for the account of Edward in III. vi and in the list of the king-becoming graces. It is also arguable that the entrance of Rosse, with his tragic news, comes more dramatically after an undramatic interlude than it would at 139. The passage is based on the account of Edward the Confessor in Holinshed, *Hist. Eng.*, 1954: 'As hath beene thought he was inspired with the gift of prophesie and also to haue had the gift of healing infirmities and diseases. He vsed to help those that were vexed with the disease, commonlie called the kings euill, and left that

Doct. Aye, Sir; there are a crew of wretched souls,
That stay his cure: their malady convinces
The great assay of art; but at his touch,
Such sanctity hath Heaven given his hand,
They presently amend.

Mal. I thank you, Doctor. [*Exit Doctor.*

Macd. What's the disease he means?

Mal. 'Tis call'd the Evil:
A most miraculous work in this good King,
Which often, since my here-remain in England,
I have seen him do. How he solicits Heaven,
Himself best knows; but strangely-visited people,
All swoln and ulcerous, pitiful to the eye,
The mere despair of surgery, he cures;
Hanging a golden stamp about their necks,
Put on with holy prayers: and 'tis spoken,
To the succeeding royalty he leaves
The healing benediction. With this strange virtue,
He hath a heavenly gift of prophecy;
And sundry blessings hang about his throne,
That speak him full of grace.

Enter ROSSE.

Macd. See, who comes here.

Mal. My countryman; but yet I know him not.

148. here-remain] *Pope;* heere remaine *F.* 150. strangely-visited] *Pope;* strangely visited *F.* 160. not] nor *F.*

vertue as it were a portion of inheritance vnto his successors the kings of this realme.'

142. *convinces*] conquers.

143. *great . . . art*] greatest effort of medical skill.

146. *the Evil*] the king's evil—scrofula.

148. *here-remain*] i.e. stay.

149. *solicits*] prevails by entreaty. King James in 1603 ascribed the effect of his 'touch' to prayer. Cf. Gardiner, *History of England*, I. 152.

152. *mere*] utter.

153. *stamp*] i.e. stamped coin: an angel. Cf. *Wint.*, IV. iv. 747: 'we pay them for it with stamped coin.' The gift is not mentioned in Holinshed, but was customary in Shakespeare's day. Paul supposes that Shakespeare was asked to insert this reference to the coin to overcome the King's reluctance to use it in the ceremony.

156. *virtue*] healing power.

160. *My countryman*] Malcolm recognizes him by his dress—Wilson suggests a blue bonnet. There are no signs of Scottish costume in the earliest illustration to the play (1709) and Macklin is reputed to have introduced

Macd. My ever-gentle cousin, welcome hither.
Mal. I know him now. Good God, betimes remove
The means that makes us strangers!
Rosse. Sir, amen.
Macd. Stands Scotland where it did?
Rosse. Alas, poor country!
Almost afraid to know itself. It cannot
Be call'd our mother, but our grave; where nothing,
But who knows nothing, is once seen to smile;
Where sighs, and groans, and shrieks that rent the air
Are made, not mark'd; where violent sorrow seems
A modern ecstasy: the dead man's knell
Is there scarce ask'd for who; and good men's lives
Expire before the flowers in their caps,
Dying or ere they sicken.
Macd. O relation,
Too nice, and yet too true!
Mal. What's the newest grief?
Rosse. That of an hour's age doth hiss the speaker;
Each minute teems a new one.
Macd. How does my wife?

161. ever-gentle] *Pope;* euer gentle *F.* 163. The means] The meanes, the meanes *F2–4.* makes] make *Hanmer.* 168. rent] *F;* rend *Rowe.* 173–4. O . . . true!] *so Theobald; one line, F. Steevens.* What's] What is *Hanmer, etc.* 174. and . . . true] yet true *conj. Steevens.* 176–7. Each . . . too] *lines end* one. / children? / too. *Arden (ed. 1).*

it in 1773. R. Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 167, suggests that Malcolm refuses to know Rosse, diplomatically, because he is a collaborator. I doubt this; but Walker also draws a suggestive parallel between this entry and Rosse's first entry in I. ii: 'Again it is Ross who comes to the King of Scotland, again with news of a treacherous thane of Cawdor—and again from Fife.'

167. *once*] ever, at any time. Cf. *Ant.*, v. ii. 50.

168. *rent*] used indifferently with *rend*, as the present tense of the verb (Clarendon).

170. *A modern ecstasy*] i.e. a commonplace emotion. Cf. *Rom.*, III. ii. 120: 'modern lamentation'; *All's W.*, II. iii. 2: 'to make modern and familiar things supernatural and causeless'. For 'ecstasy' see III. ii. 22 *ante*. The words may mean a sham trance or fit of hysteria and allude to the sham demoniacs exposed in Harsnett's *Declaration* (Paul).

171. *who*] for 'whom'.

172. *flowers*] H. Rowe thought there might be a reference to the way Highlanders stick heather in their bonnets.

174. *nice*] elaborate. Cf. *Rom.*, v. ii. 18: 'The letter was not nice, but full of charge.'

175. *hiss*] cause to be hissed.

176. *teems*] also in the active sense in *H5*, v. ii. 52: 'nothing teems / But hateful docks, rough thistles.'

Rosse. Why, well.
Macd. And all my children?
Rosse. Well too.
Macd. The tyrant has not batter'd at their peace?
Rosse. No; they were well at peace, when I did leave 'em.
Macd. Be not a niggard of your speech: how goes't?
Rosse. When I came hither to transport the tidings,
Which I have heavily borne, there ran a rumour
Of many worthy fellows that were out;
Which was to my belief witness'd the rather,
For that I saw the tyrant's power afoot.
Now is the time of help. Your eye in Scotland
Would create soldiers, make our women fight,
To doff their dire distresses.
Mal. Be't their comfort,
We are coming thither. Gracious England hath
Lent us good Siward, and ten thousand men;
An older, and a better soldier, none
That Christendom gives out.
Rosse. Would I could answer
This comfort with the like! But I have words,
That would be howl'd out in the desert air,
Where hearing should not latch them.
Macd. What concern they?
The general cause? or is it a fee-grief,

179. 'em] *F;* them *Capell.* 180. goes't] *Capell;* gos't *F.* 195. latch] catch *Rowe.* 195–6. What . . . cause?] *Theobald;* What . . . they, . . . cause, *F;* What? concern they The gen'ral cause? *Rowe.*

177. *well*] Cf. *Ant.*, II. v. 32: 'We use To say, the dead are well.' Craig quotes Heywood, *Faire Maid of the West* (ed. Pearson, II. 299): 'Why well . . . He's well in heaven, for, mistresse, he is dead.'

children] The metrical pause after this word suggests Rosse's embarrassment.

179. *at peace*] Cf. 'sent to peace', III. ii. 20 *ante*, and *R2*, III. ii. 127–8.

181. *tidings*] i.e. of the murder of Macduff's family. Rosse twice shies away from his message.

183. *out*] i.e. in the field, in rebellion. The followers of the two Pretenders were frequently spoken of as 'out' in the '15 and '45.

186. *Your*] i.e. Malcolm's.

188. *doff*] clothing image. Cf. 33 *ante*.

189. *Gracious England*] Cf. 43 *ante*.

192. *gives out*] proclaims.

194. *would*] should.

195. *latch*] i.e. catch. See Palsgrave, *Lesclarcissement*, 1530, p. 604: 'I latche, I catche a thynge that is throwne to me in my handes, *je happe*.' Cf. *Sonn.*, cxiii. 6.

196. *fee-grief*] An estate in fee simple is the largest estate in land known to

Due to some single breast?
Rosse. No mind that's honest
But in it shares some woe, though the main part
Pertains to you alone.
Macd. If it be mine,
Keep it not from me; quickly let me have it.
Rosse. Let not your ears despise my tongue for ever,
Which shall possess them with the heaviest sound,
That ever yet they heard.
Macd. Humh! I guess at it.
Rosse. Your castle is surpris'd; your wife, and babes,
Savagely slaughter'd: to relate the manner,
Were, on the quarry of these murther'd deer,
To add the death of you.
Mal. Merciful Heaven!—
What, man! ne'er pull your hat upon your brows:
Give sorrow words; the grief, that does not speak,
Whispers the o'er-fraught heart, and bids it break.
Macd. My children too?
Rosse. Wife, children, servants, all
That could be found.
Macd. And I must be from thence!
My wife kill'd too?
Rosse. I have said.

203. Humh!] Hum! *Rowe;* Humh: *F;* Humph! *Malone.* 211–13. Wife . . . too?] *so Capell; two lines, the first ending* found *F.*

the English law, and Shakespeare here may convey a twofold idea of boundless grief, i.e. the utmost which could be contained in 'some single breast', and of particular ownership as opposed to ownership in common. But Shakespeare may have meant no more than 'a peculiar sorrow, a grief which hath a single owner' (Johnson).

197. *Due to*] i.e. owned by.

198. *in . . . woe*] continuation of legal metaphor.

202. *possess*] inform precisely (Dyce).

203. *Humh*] Cf. note on III. ii. 42 *ante.*

206. *quarry*] game killed in hunting or hawking. Cf. *Ham.*, v. ii. 375.

deer] a pun.

209–10. *the grief . . . break*] a variation on one of the favourite lines in Seneca, *Hippolytus*, 607: 'Curae leves loquuntur, ingentes stupent.' Florio, *Essayes*, I. ii, translates: 'Light cares can freely speake, / Great cares heart rather breake.' Shakespeare uses the same rhyme. Cf. Ford, *Broken Heart*, v. iii. 76: 'They are the silent griefs which cut the heart-strings'; and Webster, *White Devil*, II. i. 279: 'Those are the killing greifes which dare not speake.'

211–13.] Perhaps the F lineation, suggesting dramatic pauses in the metrical gaps, is preferable.

212. *must*] preterite.

Mal. Be comforted:
Let's make us med'cines of our great revenge,
To cure this deadly grief.
Macd. He has no children.—All my pretty ones?
Did you say all?—O Hell-kite!—All?
What, all my pretty chickens, and their dam,
At one fell swoop?
Mal. Dispute it like a man.
Macd. I shall do so;
But I must also feel it as a man:
I cannot but remember such things were,
That were most precious to me.—Did Heaven look on,
And would not take their part? Sinful Macduff!
They were all struck for thee. Naught that I am,
Not for their own demerits, but for mine,
Fell slaughter on their souls: Heaven rest them now!
Mal. Be this the whetstone of your sword: let grief
Convert to anger; blunt not the heart, enrage it.
Macd. O! I could play the woman with mine eyes,
And braggart with my tongue.—But, gentle Heavens,
Cut short all intermission; front to front,

214–15. *Let's . . . grief*] One passion was thought to drive out another. Cf. H. Craig, *The Enchanted Glass*, 1936, pp. 116 *seq.*

216. *He . . . children*] There are three explanations of this passage. (i) He refers to Malcolm, who if he had children of his own would not suggest revenge as a cure for grief. Cf. *John*, III. iv. 91: 'He talks to me that never had a son.' This was supported by Malone and Bradley. (ii) He refers to Macbeth, on whom he cannot take an appropriate revenge (Clarendon, New Clarendon, Cuningham). (iii) He refers to Macbeth, who would never have slaughtered Macduff's children if he had had any of his own. Cf. *3H6*, II. v. 63: 'You have no children, butchers if you had, / The thought of them would have stirred up remorse' (Delius). I adhere to (ii).

217. *Hell-kite*] Cf. note on III. iv. 61–2 *ante*, and *deer* (206), *chickens* (218), *slaughter*, *souls* (227) and *Lr.*, I. iv. 260.

218. *dam*] used of birds as well as of quadrupeds.

219. *swoop*] i.e. of the hell-kite. But Wilson suggests there is also present the sense of losing all in a sweepstake. Cf. *Ham.*, IV. v. 142.

220. *Dispute*] struggle against.

225. *Naught*] wicked.

226. *Not . . . mine*] He is not blaming himself for his flight from Scotland, but for his sinful nature. The word 'demerits' is used by Holinshed of Donwald (p. 151).

229. *Convert*] turn; here used intransitively, as in *R2*, v. i. 66: 'The love of wicked men converts to fear'; and *ibid.*, v. iii. 64: 'Thy overflow of good converts to bad.' Anderson, *Elizabethan Psychology and Shakespeare's Plays*, p. 99, comments that 'to weep . . . is to make less the fuel of revenge.'

232. *intermission*] interruption, delay, interval of time. Cf. *Mer.V.*, III.

Bring thou this fiend of Scotland, and myself;
Within my sword's length set him; if he 'scape,
Heaven forgive him too!

Mal. This tune goes manly.
Come, go we to the King: our power is ready;
Our lack is nothing but our leave. Macbeth
Is ripe for shaking, and the Powers above
Put on their instruments. Receive what cheer you may;
The night is long that never finds the day. [*Exeunt.*

235. Heaven] *F;* Then Heaven *Pope;* O God *or* Then God *or* May God *or* God, God *Camb.* tune] *Rowe (ed. 3);* time *F.*

ii. 201: 'You loved, I loved, for intermission / No more pertains to me, my lord, than you', and *Lr.*, II. iv. 33: 'spite of intermission'.

235. *Heaven*] 'Probably the original MS. had "May God", or "Then God", or "God, God", as in v. i. 72, which was changed in the actors' copy to *Heaven* for fear of incurring the penalties provided by the Act of Parliament against profanity on the stage' (Clarendon). The Act 3 James I, cap. 21, *An Act to Restrain the abuses of Players*, 'For the preventing and avoiding of the great abuse of the holy Name of God, in Stage-playes, Enterludes, May-games, Shews, and such-like', enacted that 'if . . . any person do or shall in any Stage-play . . . jestingly or prophanely speak, or use the holy Name of God, or of Jesus Christ, or of the Holy Ghost, or of the Trinity . . . shall forfeit for every such offence . . . ten pounds'; half of the fine going to the king and half to 'him or them that will sue for the same'. I suspect that 'God' rather than the conjectures of the Camb. and Clar. Edd. was what Shakespeare wrote.

too] because if he escapes, it will be a sign that my hatred is appeased. Wilson compares *Ham.*, I. ii. 182–3 and III. iii. 73–95.

tune] Rowe's emendation for 'time' is generally accepted. But Cuningham defends the Folio reading by quoting *Ham.*, III. i. 166 (Q2): 'Like sweet bells jangled out of *time* and harsh' and two other passages from Elizabethan plays. Though the *Hamlet* 'time' was probably a misprint, which was corrected in the Folio, and though the other passages by Cuningham are not decisive, it is possible that Malcolm here means 'time'; for the time of manly music would differ from that of a plaint or dirge.

236. *power*] army. Cf. 238 *post.*

237. *Our lack . . . leave*] i.e. we have only to take our leave of the king.

238. *ripe for shaking*] Noble compares Nahum, iii. 12: 'All thy strong cities shall be like figge trees with the first ripe figs: for if they bee shaken, they fall into the mouth of the eater.'

Powers] Cf. note on II. i. 7–9 *ante.*

239. *Put . . . instruments*] i.e. arm themselves; not 'set us, their instruments, to the work' (Steevens, Clarendon, Cuningham).

239–40. *Receive . . . day*] Wilson and others suspect the hand of the interpolator; but the tag makes an easier finish to the act, and the alexandrine (239) is insufficient evidence of an interpolation. Cuningham argues that 'Put on' (239) should be printed in the previous line.

ACT V

SCENE I.—[*Dunsinane. A room in the castle.*]

Enter a Doctor of Physic and a Waiting-Gentlewoman.

Doct. I have two nights watch'd with you, but can perceive no truth in your report. When was it she last walk'd?

Gent. Since his Majesty went into the field, I have seen her rise from her bed, throw her night-gown upon her, unlock her closet, take forth paper, fold it, write upon't, read it, afterwards seal it, and again return to bed; yet all this while in a most fast sleep.

Doct. A great perturbation in nature, to receive at once the benefit of sleep, and do the effects of watching! In this slumbery agitation, besides her walking and

ACT V

Scene I.

S.D. *Dunsinane.*] *Capell.* *A . . . castle*] *Rowe (subst.).* 1. two] too *F.* 9. nature,] *F;* nature,— *Dyce.* 10. watching!] *Dyce, Wilson;* watching. *F.*

4. *into the field*] Steevens complains that Shakespeare 'forgot he had shut up Macbeth in Dunsinane and surrounded him with besiegers. That he could *not go into the field* is observed by himself with a splenetic impatience, v. v. 5–7.' But Macbeth was not yet surrounded by besiegers; and in IV. iii. 185 Rosse speaks of having seen 'the tyrant's power afoot', probably to suppress the rebels 'that were out'; and Macbeth would not necessarily be beleaguered in his fortress until the arrival of the English forces under Siward. Holinshed mentions 'light skirmishes'. See Appendix, p. 178.

5. *night-gown*] See II. ii. 69 *ante.*

6. *closet*] private repository of valuables. Cf. *Lr.*, III. iii. 11: 'I have lock'd the letter in my closet.'

paper] Critics suggest that she writes a letter to Macbeth; perhaps indicating that she still wishes to control him, though he no longer consults her. But it might be a confession. Paul thinks she is writing to warn Lady Macduff.

fold it] probably to mark a margin. Cf. Florio's *Montaigne*, I. 39: 'a sheete without folding or margine'.

9. *perturbation in nature*] constitutional disorder (Wilson).

10. *watching*] i.e. waking. Cf. *Rom.*, IV. iv. 8; and Holland, *Pliny*, XXV. 18 (cited Clarendon): 'two kindes of wine of contrary operations; the one procureth sleepe, the other causeth watching'.

11. *slumbery*] Cf. Phaer, *Virgil* (sig.

other actual performances, what, at any time, have you heard her say?

Gent. That, Sir, which I will not report after her.

Doct. You may, to me; and 'tis most meet you should.

Gent. Neither to you, nor any one; having no witness to confirm my speech.

Enter LADY MACBETH, *with a taper.*

Lo you! here she comes. This is her very guise; and, upon my life, fast asleep. Observe her: stand close.

Doct. How came she by that light?

Gent. Why, it stood by her: she has light by her continually; 'tis her command.

Doct. You see, her eyes are open.

Gent. Ay, but their sense are shut.

Doct. What is it she does now? Look, how she rubs her hands.

Gent. It is an accustom'd action with her, to seem thus washing her hands. I have known her continue in this a quarter of an hour.

Lady M. Yet here's a spot.

Doct. Hark! she speaks. I will set down what comes from her, to satisfy my remembrance the more strongly.

14. report] *F;* repeat *conj. Warburton.* 17. *Lady Macbeth*] *Rowe; Lady F.* 24. sense are] *F;* senses are *Keightley;* sense' are *Dyce* (*conj. S. Walker*), *Arden* (*ed. 1*); sense is *Rowe and many Edd.* 32. satisfy] satisfie *F;* fortifie *Warburton.*

1. 4, ed. 1620): 'the place of sleepe and slumbry night'.

agitation] physical activity, not mental. 'slumbery agitation = sleep-walking' (Wilson).

12. *actual*] exhibited in deeds (*O.E.D.*).

15. *You may . . . should*] blank verse.

16–17. *Neither . . . speech*] Liddell comments: 'The gentlewoman's canny reluctance to shelter herself under the physician's professional privilege is probably due to Shakespeare's knowledge of law . . . her unsupported statement as to what Lady Macbeth has said would amount to treason if the doctor chose to betray her confidence.' This is most unlikely.

18. *Lo . . . guise*] blank verse.

This . . . guise] 'This is the way she has done it before' (New Clarendon).

19. *close*] concealed. Cf. *Caes.*, I. iii. 131.

21. *light*] because she is now terrified of the dark.

24. *are*] often emended; but Shakespeare probably wrote 'are' on account of the plural contained in 'their', and because the sense of two eyes is referred to (Delius). Walker compares *Sonn.*, cxii. 10–11: 'that my adder's sense, / To critic and to flatterer stopped are'.

30. *spot*] Cf. II. ii. 66–7.

32. *satisfy*] furnish with sufficient proof, i.e. support. Cuningham thinks it means 'assure' and quotes *H5*, III. ii. 105; *Tw.N.*, III. iii. 22; and Coles, *Lat. Dict.* (1677): 'satisfied, certior factus.'

Lady M. Out, damned spot! out, I say!—One; two: why, then 'tis time to do't.—Hell is murky.—Fie, my Lord, fie! a soldier, and afeard?—What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to accompt?—Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?

Doct. Do you mark that?

Lady M. The Thane of Fife had a wife: where is she now?—What, will these hands ne'er be clean?—No more o'that, my Lord, no more o'that: you mar all with this starting.

34. murky.] *F;* murky! *Steevens.* 36–7. fear who . . . accompt?] feare? who . . . accompt: *F1–2;* fear who . . . account? *Theobald;* fear? who . . . account: *F3–4.* 38. him?] *Rowe;* him. *F;* him! *Knight.* 43. this] *not in F2–4.* starting] *F1;* stating *F2.*

33–65. *Out . . . to bed*] Lady Macbeth's speeches might be printed as rough blank verse (cf. Bayfield, *Shakespeare's Versification*) though Shakespeare probably intended them as prose. The verse fossils (cf. notes to 15, 18 *ante*) may indicate a revision of this scene. It must be in prose, writes J. Wilson, *Dies Boreales* (Blackwood's, 1849), 'because these are the *ipsissima verba*—yea, the escaping sighs and moans of the bared soul. There must be nothing, not even the thin and translucent veil of the verse, betwixt her soul showing itself, and yours beholding.'

33. *One; two*] Lady Macbeth thinks she hears the clock strike—not, I think as Wilson suggests, the bell she struck at II. i. 61; cf. Marston, *2 Antonio and Mellida*, I. i. 9.

34. *Hell is murky*] The Folio punctuation, i.e. with the full stop, is correct here and not Steevens's emendation. Bradley, *Shakespearean Tragedy*, p. 334, remarks: 'The failure of nature in Lady Macbeth is marked by her fear of darkness: "She has light by her continually." And in the one phrase of fear that escapes her lips even in sleep, it is of the darkness of the place of torment that she speaks.' Steevens thought she imagined herself here talking to Macbeth, who (she supposed) had first said *Hell is murky*, and repeats his words in contempt of his cowardice: and he punctuated with a note of exclamation accordingly. But, as Bradley further remarks, 'He would hardly in those days have used an argument or expressed a fear that could provoke nothing but contempt.' In I. vii Macbeth never appeals to moral principles, and he would jump the life to come.

36–7. *none . . . accompt*] Rushton, *Shakespeare a Lawyer* (1858), p. 37, says: 'Reference seems to be here made to the ancient and fundamental principle of the English Constitution that the King can do no wrong.' Cuningham supported this view by a quotation from Blount's *Law Dictionary* (1670). But I agree with Case that 'a more ancient and fundamental principle is that tyrant power cannot be brought to book.'

40. *Fife . . . wife*] The doggerel rhyme is used with superb effect.

41. *clean*] imitated by Webster, *White Devil*, v. iv. 76: 'Heere's a white hand: / Can bloud so soone bee washt out?'

43. *starting*] Cf. III. iv. 62.

Doct. Go to, go to: you have known what you should not.
Gent. She has spoke what she should not, I am sure of that: Heaven knows what she has known.
Lady M. Here's the smell of the blood still: all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. Oh! oh! oh!
Doct. What a sigh is there! The heart is sorely charg'd.
Gent. I would not have such a heart in my bosom, for the dignity of the whole body.
Doct. Well, well, well.
Gent. Pray God it be, sir.
Doct. This disease is beyond my practice: yet I have known those which have walk'd in their sleep, who have died holily in their beds.
Lady M. Wash your hands, put on your night-gown; look not so pale.—I tell you yet again, Banquo's buried: he cannot come out on's grave.
Doct. Even so?
Lady M. To bed, to bed: there's knocking at the gate. Come, come, come, come, give me your hand. What's done cannot be undone. To bed, to bed, to bed. [*Exit.*
Doct. Will she go now to bed?
Gent. Directly.
Doct. Foul whisp'rings are abroad. Unnatural deeds

44. Go . . . not.] *one line, Pope; two lines, the first ending* to: *F.* 51–2. the dignity] *F1–2;* dignity *F3–4.*

44. *Go . . . not*] This line is not addressed to the Gentlewoman, as some have imagined.

47. *smell*] Grierson contrasts Macbeth's visual imagination with Lady Macbeth's sense of smell.

50. *sorely*] heavily.

52. *dignity*] worth, value. Cf. *Troil.*, I. iii. 204.

55. *practice*] art.

59–60. *I tell you . . . grave*] Adams thinks that these words indicate that a scene has been lost, because there is nothing like it in the Banquet scene. But Shakespeare does not attempt to chronicle every hour of the lives of his characters; and this sentence is merely a retrospective indication of the terrible dreams and hallucinations which once afflicted Macbeth nightly, but no longer. Direness cannot once start him. Cf. v. v. 9 *post.*

60. *on's*] i.e. of his. Cf. *Lr.*, I. iv. 114: 'two on's daughters'; and 'on' for 'of', I. iii. 84 *ante.*

64. *What's . . . undone*] Cf. III. ii. 12.

68. *Foul whisp'rings*] insinuations, slanders, rumours. Cf. 2 Cor., xii. 20.

68–70. *Foul . . . secrets*] Knight, *New Adelphi*, 1927, pp. 69–73, compares *2H6*, III. ii. 374–6: 'he calls the King / And *whispers* to his *pillow*, as to him; / Do breed unnatural troubles: infected minds
To their deaf pillows will discharge their secrets.
More needs she the divine than the physician.—
God, God forgive us all! Look after her;
Remove from her the means of all annoyance,
And still keep eyes upon her.—So, good night:
My mind she has mated, and amaz'd my sight.
I think, but dare not speak.
Gent. Good night, good Doctor.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—[*The country near Dunsinane.*]

Enter, with drums and colours, MENTETH, CATHNESS, ANGUS, LENOX, *and Soldiers.*

Ment. The English power is near, led on by Malcolm,
His uncle Siward, and the good Macduff.

72. God, God] *F;* God, God, *Theobald;* Good God *Pope.*

Scene II

S.D.] *The . . . Dunsinane.*] *Capell.*

The *secrets* of his over-*charged* soul.'

73. *annoyance*] injury, harm to herself; 'annoy' and 'annoyance' were used in a stronger sense than at present. This hint prepares us for Lady Macbeth's suicide.

75. *mated*] bewildered, confounded. Cotgrave's *Dict.* gives the two senses: 'Mater: *To mate, or giue a mate unto; to . . . amate, quell, subdue, ouercome.*' Both senses are played upon in *Err.*, III. ii. 54: 'not mad but *mated*'. Cf. Marlowe, *1 Tamb.*, I. i. 107: 'How now, my lord, what mated and amazed?' The original form, *amate*, occurs in Greene, *Orlando Furioso*, II. i. 488: 'Hath love *amated* him?' Sidney, *Arcadia*, III. vii, uses the expression 'mated minde' (ed. Feuillerat, I. 385).

Scene II

S.D. Angus] R. Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 204, remarks that the 're-appearance of Angus . . . in the rebel ranks in Scotland suggests an almost organic relationship between the invaders and the rebels, for Angus is almost as much Rosse as Rosse himself! The same qualities of Scottish manhood march with Malcolm and march to meet Malcolm, the union of the two armies is not merely an Anglo-Scottish alliance but an organic union of the sundered parts of the snake which Macbeth scotched but could not kill.'

2. *His uncle Siward*] Holinshed speaks of him as the grandfather of Malcolm: 'Duncane, hauing two sonnes by his wife which was the daughter of Siward, Earle of Northumberland'. Cuningham points out that 'nephew' with Elizabethans clearly meant 'grandson' as well as our 'nephew', as in Spenser, *Ruines of Rome*, 8: 'Of vertuous nephewes, that posteritie / Striuing in power their grandfathers to passe.' But

Revenges burn in them; for their dear causes
Would, to the bleeding and the grim alarm,
Excite the mortified man.

Ang. Near Birnam wood
Shall we well meet them: that way are they coming.

Cath. Who knows if Donalbain be with his brother?

Len. For certain, Sir, he is not. I have a file
Of all the gentry: there is Siward's son,
And many unrough youths, that even now
Protest their first of manhood.

Ment. What does the tyrant?

Cath. Great Dunsinane he strongly fortifies.
Some say he's mad; others, that lesser hate him,
Do call it valiant fury: but, for certain,
He cannot buckle his distemper'd cause
Within the belt of rule.

4. bleeding] bleeding, *F.* 5. Birnam] *F3–4;* Byrnan *F1–2.* 6. well] *not in F3–4, Chambers.* 10. unrough] *Theobald;* vnruffe *F;* unruff'd *Pope.* 11. tyrant?] *F4;* Tyrant. *F1–3.*

Duncan in the play seems to be at least as old as Siward; Shakespeare made him older than in the *Chronicle* and made Siward Malcolm's uncle instead of grandfather to harmonize with the other alteration.

3. *Revenges*] used in the plural, meaning either the desire for vengeance or the act of revenge. Cf. *Cym.*, II. v. 24.

dear causes] heartfelt grounds of accusation, grievous wrongs (Wilson); or grounds of action; or grievous diseases (Liddell). The last meaning suggested 'bleeding' (4) and 'mortified' (5) and 'cause' (15). Cf. *All's W.*, II. i. 113: 'toucht With that malignant cause'.

4. *the bleeding . . . alarm*] i.e. the battlefield. But 'bleeding' may have been suggested by the word 'burn' in the previous line and by 'causes', bleeding being the remedy for a fever (Liddell). 'Bleeding' may also have been suggested by the superstition that the corpse of a murdered man bled afresh in the presence of the murderer (Clarendon); which Shakespeare might have been reminded of by Holinshed's account of Donwald, where it is mentioned.

5. *Excite . . . man*] either (i) raise up the dead, or (ii) stir up the numbed. Cf. *Caes.*, II. i. 324: 'Thou, like an exorcist, hast conjured up / My mortified spirit.' 'Excite' (from *excitare*) would thus mean 'call forth' or 'quicken'. The whole passage is discussed in *M.L.N.*, XXIX. 94–5, and thus paraphrased: 'The justice of their cause should rouse even the dead to an interest in the bloodshed and din of the battle.' This is, I believe, what Shakespeare meant, though there may have been unconscious or concealed puns.

8. *file*] list, roll. Cf. III. i. 94 *ante.*

10. *unrough*] unbearded.

11. *Protest*] proclaim. Cf. III. iv. 104 *ante*, and *Ado.*, V. i. 149.

15–16. *He . . . rule*] For the metaphor compare *Troil.*, II. ii. 30: 'And buckle in a waist most fathomless / With spans and inches so diminutive / As fears and reasons.' Cf. note to 3 *ante*: *cause* = sickness. It may mean that Macbeth,

Ang. Now does he feel
His secret murthers sticking on his hands;
Now minutely revolts upbraid his faith-breach:
Those he commands move only in command,
Nothing in love: now does he feel his title
Hang loose about him, like a giant's robe
Upon a dwarfish thief.

Ment. Who then shall blame
His pester'd senses to recoil and start,
When all that is within him does condemn
Itself, for being there?

Cath. Well; march we on,
To give obedience where 'tis truly ow'd:
Meet we the med'cine of the sickly weal;
And with him pour we, in our country's purge,
Each drop of us.

Len. Or so much as it needs
To dew the sovereign flower, and drown the weeds.
Make we our march towards Birnam.

[*Exeunt, marching.*

like a man with dropsy who cannot get his belt on (cf. Falstaff), cannot restrain his passions (cf. 'mad'). Or, it may mean that the kingdom which he rules is sick and rebellious. Cf. *2H4*, III. i. 38 ff.: 'the body of our kingdom / . . . is but as a body, yet distemper'd.'

17. *sticking*] Cf. note on II. ii. 59–62 *ante.*

18. *minutely*] adj. 'very frequent'.

upbraid] used with accusative of things as well as of persons. Cf. *Troil.*, III. ii. 198: 'Upbraid my falsehood'.

his faith-breach] i.e. his own treason.

19. *in command*] i.e. under orders.

21–2. *Hang . . . thief*] The same image is repeated in different forms several times in the course of the play. Cf. I. iii. 108–9 and I. iii. 145–7. Traversi, *Approach to Shakespeare*, 1938, p. 100, comments: 'Before the advancing powers of healing good, evil has shrunk to insignificance.'

23. *pester'd*] embarrassed, troubled, Cotgrave gives: 'Empestrer. *To pester, intricate, intangle, trouble, incomber.*' The original sense was 'to hobble a horse, or other animal, to prevent it straying'. Cf. *1H4*, I. iii. 50: 'To be so pester'd with a popinjay', and *Troil.*, V. i. 38: 'pester'd with such water flies'.

27. *med'cine*] probably used in the sense of doctor (Fr. *médecin*), though Shakespeare usually uses it in the sense of drug. Cuningham points out that Minsheu's *Spanish Dictionary* (1599) and Cotgrave's *French Dictionary* (1611) have the word only in the latter sense. In either case Malcolm is meant.

28. *purge*] The blood they shed, absorbed by the earth, will act as a purgative drug. Wilson explains the whole passage: 'they are ready to help . . . Malcolm purge the land of its fever, even if it means bleeding themselves to the last drop of their blood.'

30. *dew*] bedew. Cf. *2H6*, III. ii. 340.

sovereign] 'Two ideas are suggested by this epithet, royal or supreme, and powerfully remedial, the latter con-

SCENE III.—[*Dunsinane. A room in the castle.*]

Enter MACBETH, *Doctor, and Attendants.*

Macb. Bring me no more reports; let them fly all:
Till Birnam wood remove to Dunsinane,
I cannot taint with fear. What's the boy Malcolm?
Was he not born of woman? The spirits that know
All mortal consequence have pronounc'd me thus:
'Fear not, Macbeth; no man that's born of woman
Shall e'er have power upon thee.'—Then fly, false
Thanes,
And mingle with the English epicures:
The mind I sway by, and the heart I bear,
Shall never sag with doubt, nor shake with fear.

Enter a Servant.

The devil damn thee black, thou cream-fac'd loon!

Scene III

S.D. *Dunsinane . . . castle.*] *Capell.* 2. Birnam] *F3–4;* Byrnane *F1;* Byrnam *F2.* 3. taint] faint *conj. S. Walker.* 5. consequence] *Singer (ed. 1), Wilson;* Consequences *F;* consequents *Steevens (1793).*

tinuing the metaphor of 27–9' (Clarendon). Fleay and Wilson suspect that the couplet is interpolated.

Scene III

1. *them*] the thanes.

3. *taint*] go rotten, become weak, wither. Cf. *Tw.N.*, III. iv. 145. Liddell quotes Comenius, *Janua linguarum*, 106: 'failing of that moisture it flags, tainteth, and by and by drieth away'.

4. *spirits*] not the witches but their 'masters' who appear as the apparitions in IV. i.

5. *consequence*] As Shakespeare does not elsewhere use the plural form, and as the rhythm is improved by using the singular form here, 'used collectively and comprising in its meaning all subsequent circumstances', I have adopted Singer's emendation.

me] 'in my case' or 'me to be circumstanced'.

8. *epicures*] Perhaps suggested by Holinshed, 1587, pp. 179–80, who says that 'The Scottish people before had no knowledge nor understanding of fine fare or riotous surfet . . . those superfluities came into the realme of Scotland with the *Englishmen*. . . For manie of the people abhorring the riotous maners and superfluous gormandizing brought in among them by the *Englishmen*, were willing inough to receiue this Donald for their King, trusting . . . they should by his severe order in gouernement recouer againe the former temperance of their old progenitors.'

9. *sway*] control myself, direct my actions. Cf. *Tw.N.*, II. iv. 32.

10. *sag*] droop. Not used elsewhere by Shakespeare, but in Golding, Ovid's *Metam.*, xi. 198: 'And made them downe to sag'.

11. *loon*] a rogue or worthless rascal:

Where gott'st thou that goose look?
Serv. There is ten thousand—
Macb. Geese, villain?
Serv. Soldiers, Sir.
Macb. Go, prick thy face, and over-red thy fear,
Thou lily-liver'd boy. What soldiers, patch?
Death of thy soul! those linen cheeks of thine
Are counsellors to fear. What soldiers, whey-face?
Serv. The English force, so please you.
Macb. Take thy face hence. [*Exit Servant.*]—Seyton!—I am sick at heart,
When I behold—Seyton, I say!—This push
Will cheer me ever, or disseat me now.
I have liv'd long enough: my way of life

12. goose look?] *Capell;* Goose-looke. *F.* 19. Seyton] *F;* Seton *Wilson.* 21. cheer] cheere *F1–2;* chair *Dyce (conj. Percy).* disseat] *Steevens (conj. Jennens and Capell);* dis-eate *F1;* disease *F2–4;* disseize *conj. Bailey;* defeat *conj. Daniel;* dis-ease *Furness.* 22. way] May *Steevens (1778), (conj. Johnson).*

F4 spelling and *Oth.*, II. iii. 95, 'lown', correspond to the Southern pronunciation.

12. *goose*] Cf. II. iii. 15 *ante*. Armstrong, *Shakespeare's Imagination*, p. 60, suggests that the black and white imagery was 'almost certainly aroused by the thought of writing with a goose-quill on white paper'. He also shows that prick (14), lily-liver'd (15), sick (19), water (51), and sere (23) all appear elsewhere in Shakespeare in goose contexts.

15. *patch*] properly, a domestic fool or clown. It is also used as a term of contempt. It is perhaps derived from Ital. *pazzo*, or from the fool's wearing a 'patched', or parti-coloured, coat. Cf. *MND.*, III. ii. 9: 'a crew of patches'. An unconscious pun on 'patch' (= also *plaster*) would suit the associations of *goose* and *disease*. Cf. note on 12 *ante*.

17. *Are . . . fear*] prompt others to fear (Kittredge).

20. *push*] crisis, assault of fortune, attack. Cf. III. iv. 81 *ante* and *Caes.*, V. ii. 5.

21. *cheer*] probably a quibble on *cheer* and *chair* (which Percy proposed). The former links up with 'sick at heart' and the latter with 'disseat' (Wilson). Cuningham points out that *cheer* is misprinted *chair* in *Cor.*, IV. vii. 52, and that it is quite common in the Folio to find *heare* for *hair*; a proof that the pronunciation of our *hair* in Shakespeare's day must have been close to *heer*. So, Cuningham argues, the *cheere* of the Folio might easily represent a phonetic spelling of *chair*. 'Chair' in the sense of throne is common enough in Shakespeare. Cf. *R3*, V. iii. 251. But Cuningham's arguments for emendation are more powerful as arguments for a quibble.

22. *way of life*] course of life. Cf. Horace, *Epistles*, I. xvii. 26. Baldwin, *Shakespeare's Small Latine*, II. 518, thinks Shakespeare was recalling the context. Johnson supporting his conjecture, argued that there was no relation between 'way of life' and 'fallen into the sere', and that Shakespeare had 'May' in the same sense elsewhere (e.g. *Ado.*, V. i. 76, and *R2*, III. iv. 48–9). Steevens, in support of Johnson, quoted Sidney, *Astrophel and Stella*, XXI: 'If now the May of my years much decline'. The

Is fall'n into the sere, the yellow leaf;
And that which should accompany old age,
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,
I must not look to have; but in their stead,
Curses, not loud, but deep, mouth-honour, breath,
Which the poor heart would fain deny, and dare not.
Seyton!—

Enter SEYTON.

Sey. What's your gracious pleasure?
Macb. What news more?
Sey. All is confirm'd, my Lord, which was reported.
Macb. I'll fight, till from my bones my flesh be hack'd.
Give me my armour.
Sey. 'Tis not needed yet.
Macb. I'll put it on.
Send out moe horses, skirr the country round;

32. be] *F1;* is *F2–4.* 35. moe] *F1–2;* more *F3–4.* skirr] skirre *F1–2;* skir *F3–4.*

Clar. Edd. object to the mixture of metaphors in the Folio reading; and Cuningham points out that 'may' is misprinted for 'way' at II. i. 57 *ante*. But the lines from *Sonn.* lxxiii, which Cuningham cites in support of Johnson, are used by Wilson in support of Folio: 'That time of year thou may'st in me behold / When yellow leaves, or few, or none, do hang. . .' Wilson also quotes Seneca, *Her. Fur.*, 1258–9: 'Cur animam in ista luce detineam amplius/ Morerque nihil est; cuncta iam amisi bona.' The parallel is not very close. But certainly no emendation is desirable. The image 'way of life' is not sufficiently vivid to conflict with the image of 'the yellow leaf' and may refer also to the 'process of the seasons' (*Sonn.* civ, in which Shakespeare mentions 'Three beauteous springs to yellow autumn turn'd'). See Empson, *op. cit.*, pp. 104–6.

23. *sere*] the withered state (Onions, who points out in *T.L.S.*, 24 Oct. 1935, that the word is printed with a capital in the Folio, that Shakespeare often converted adjectives into nouns, and that 'the withered state, i.e. yellow-leaf state' makes better sense than 'the withered, i.e. the yellow, leaf'.

25. *As*] i.e. namely.

27. *mouth-honour*] Cf. Isa., xxix. 13: 'Because this people come neere vnto me with their mouth, and honour me with their lippes, but haue remooued their heart farre from me'.

29. Seyton] French, *Shakespeareana Genealogica*, p. 296, says: 'The Setons of Touch were (and are still) hereditary armour-bearers to the Kings of Scotland; there is thus a peculiar fitness in the choice of this name.' One critic suggests wildly that Shakespeare intended a quibble on *Satan*.

35. *moe*] Shakespeare used both forms, *moe* and *more*; the former usually relating to number, the latter to size. But the distinction, if any there really were, was not always observed.

skirr] move rapidly, scour. Cf. *H5*, IV. vii. 64.

Hang those that talk of fear. Give me mine armour.—
How does your patient, Doctor?
Doct. Not so sick, my Lord,
As she is troubled with thick-coming fancies,
That keep her from her rest.
Macb. Cure her of that:
Canst thou not minister to a mind diseas'd,
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,
Raze out the written troubles of the brain,
And with some sweet oblivious antidote
Cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff

36. talk of] *F1;* stand in *F2–4.* armour.—] *Wilson adds S.D.: Seton goes to fetch it.* 39. Cure her] *F2–3;* Cure *F1.* of] *F1–2;* from *F3.* 44. stuff'd] *Theobald;* stufft *F1;* stuft *F2–4.* stuff] *F3;* stuffe *F1–2. See note below.*

37. *How . . . doctor?*] Cuningham suggests that the doctor should enter at this point. As there is no occasion for his presence until now, and as the names of characters who appear in a scene are sometimes given at the beginning, though they do not appear until later, I agree.

39–45. *Cure . . . heart?*] Cf. Daniel, *The Queenes Arcadia*, 1240–51, where Daphne laments the insomnia caused by her guilty conscience which presents 'Those onely formes of terror that affright / My broken sleepes, that layes vpon my heart / This heauy loade that weighes it downe with griefe; / And no disease beside, for which there is / No cure I see at all, nor no redresse.' The parallel is discussed in K. Muir, *Shakespeare's Sources*, I. 167.

40. *Canst . . . diseas'd*] Cf. Seneca, *Her. Fur.*, 1261–2: 'nemo polluto queat / Animo mederi.' Heywood translates: 'no man may heale and loose from gylty bandes / My mynd defyled.'

42. *written . . . brain*] 'written' and hence fixed or permanent. Cf. *Ham.*, I. v. 103.

43. *oblivious*] Cotgrave, *Dict.*, 'Oblivieux: *causing forgetfulnesse.*' Cf. Horace, *Odes*, II. vii. 21: '*Oblivioso* levia Massico Ciboria exple.' Other critics quote Spenser, *F.Q.*, IV. iii. 43; Virgil, *Aen.*, VI. 714–15. See note to II. ii. 34 *ante*, and compare the following lines from Seneca, *Herc. Fur.*, 1077–81: 'placidus fessum lenisque fove, / preme devinctum torpore gravi; / sopor indomitos alliget artus / nec torva prius pectora linquat, / quam mens repetat pristina cursum.' Heywood translates: 'Keepe him fast bound with heavy sleepe opprest, / Let slomber deepe his Limmes untamed bynde, / Nor soner leave his unright raginge breaste / Then former mynd his course agayne may fynd.'

44. *stuff'd . . . stuff*] Editors suspect that one of these words is a corruption. For 'stuff'd' (F 'stufft') numerous words have been proposed: full, foul, steep'd, fraught, clogged, slufft, press'd, charg'd. For 'stuff' the following: load, matter, freight, fraught, slough, sluff. Wilson voted for *charged*, and failing that, *pressed* = oppressed. Cf. *2H6*, III. ii. 376: 'the secrets of his over-charged soul' (cf. v. i. 50 *ante*), and *3H6*, II. v. 78: 'o'ercharged with grief'. *Oth.*, III. iv. 177: 'I have this while with leaden thoughts been pressed', and *Per.*, III. ii. 84: 'the o'erpressed spirits'. I think we should rule out words which rhyme with 'stuff' as the jingle would be more offensive than the repetition. But I believe that Shakespeare wrote the text as printed. If an alteration were necessary, 'fraught' for 'stuff'd'

Which weighs upon the heart?
Doct. Therein the patient
Must minister to himself.
Macb. Throw physic to the dogs; I'll none of it.—
Come, put mine armour on; give me my staff.—
Seyton, send out—Doctor, the Thanes fly from me.—
Come, sir, despatch.—If thou couldst, Doctor, cast
The water of my land, find her disease,
And purge it to a sound and pristine health,

46. to] *Fr;* unto *F2–4.* himself.] *Wilson adds S.D.: Seton returns with armour and an armourer, who presently begins to equip Macbeth.* 48. mine] my *F4.* 52. pristine] *F2;* pristiue *F1.*

would be comparatively harmless. The Folio spelling 'stufft' might conceivably have been a misreading of 'fraught', the initial *fr* being read as *st* and the concluding *ght* as *ff*. Cf. *Oth.*, III. iii. 449: 'Swell bosom with thy fraught, for 'tis of aspics' tongues'; and IV. iii. 210 *ante*, 'o'erfraught'.

45. *Which . . . heart*] There would seem to be echoes in this scene and in Scene v of Seneca, *Agam.*, tr. Studley (Chorus 1): 'Sleepe that doth ouercome and breake the bonds of griefe, / It cannot ease theyr heartes, nor mynister reliefe.' Cf. 'minister' (46 *post*) and II. ii. 36–8 *ante*). 'Can not bestow on them her safe and quiet rest'. Cf. 39 *ante*. 'No banners be displayed'. Cf. v. v. 1: 'Hang out our banners.' 'castell strongly built'. Cf. v. v. 2: 'castle's strength.' 'From high and proude degre driues downe in dust to lye'. Cf. v. v. 23: 'The way to dusty death'. It may be added that the 'paynted pomp' and wretchedness of the monarch described in the chorus may be compared with Macbeth's speech, v. iii. 22 ff.; that the repetition of 'fear' (3, 10, 14, 17, 36 *ante*) may have been suggested by the lines: 'Fayne would they dreaded bee, and yet not settled so, / When as they feared are, they feare, and lyue in woe'; that v. v. 19 ff. resembles 'To-morrow shall we rule, as wee haue done to-day. / One clod of croked care another bryngeth in, / One hurly burly done, another doth begin'—the 'clod of croked care' being 'the perilous stuff' (44 *ante*) and the 'hurly burly' is echoed in I. i. 3; and finally that 'those *Erennys* wood turmoyles' links up, by a quibble, with Birnam wood (2, 60, *ante* and *post*). It may be worth noting that the same chorus contains the phrase 'light and vaine conceipt' (cf. *R2*, III. ii. 166), the line 'The bloudy Bellon those doth haunt with gory hand' (cf. I. ii. 55 and II. ii. 60–3 *ante*), and a parallel with IV. i. 56. Cf. note on that line.

45–6. *Therein . . . himself*] Baldwin quotes from *Ciceronis Sententiae*, which Shakespeare may have read at school: 'Corpora curari possunt, animorum nulla medicina est.' Timothy Bright, *Treatise on Melancholy*, p. 189, says: 'Here no medicine, no purgation, no cordiall, no tryacle or balme are able to assure the afflicted soule and trembling heart, now painting [i.e. panting] vnder the terrors of God.'

50. *cast*] the term employed in the diagnosis of ailments by inspection of the urine. Shakespeare would find it in Lyly, *Euphues* (ed. Arber), 296: 'An Italian . . . casting my water . . . commaunded the chamber to be voyded'; and in Greene, *Menaphon* (ed. Arber), p. 35: 'Able to cast his disease without his water'. Cf. *Tw.N.*, III. iv. 114.

52. *purge*] Cf. III. iv. 75.

I would applaud thee to the very echo,
That should applaud again.—Pull't off, I say.—
What rhubarb, cyme or what purgative drug,
Would scour these English hence?—Hear'st thou of them?
Doct. Ay, my good Lord: your royal preparation
Makes us hear something.
Macb. Bring it after me.—
I will not be afraid of death and bane,
Till Birnam forest come to Dunsinane. [*Exit.*
Doct. [*Aside.*] Were I from Dunsinane away and clear,
Profit again should hardly draw me here. [*Exeunt.*

55. cyme] *Fr;* Cæny *F2–3;* senna *F4;* Sirrah *conj. Bulloch. See note below.* 60. Birnam] Birnane *F.*

55. *cyme*] Some think that this word is a misprint of *cynne*, an earlier spelling of senna. Hunter defends F2, whose spelling 'correctly represents the pronunciation'. Cotgrave spells it *Sene* and *Senne*, and Dodoens, *New Herball*, 1586, mentions that 'The cods and leaues of Sena taken in the quantitie of a dram do loose and purge the belly, scoure away fleume and choler, especially blacke choler and melancholie.' The curious may be referred to a long controversy in *M.L.N.*, where the following suggestions were made: *Tyme* (liv), *sium* = wild parsley (lvi), a doublet of *cumin* (lvii), and *Ocyme* = basil (lx). The last, which is mentioned in Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, is superficially attractive because, as Gerard, *Herbal*, p. 548, says, 'the seede cureth the infirmities of the hart, taketh away sorrowfulnesse which cometh of melancholie, and maketh a man merrie and glad.' This links up with Macbeth's previous speech (40–5 *ante*) but it does not suggest a purgative drug, which the sense requires. The various Herbals I have consulted make no mention of the use of basil as a purge. Dodoens, *op. cit.*, p. 272, is typical: 'The later writers say, that it doth fortifie and strengthen the hart and the brayne, and that it reioyceth and recreateth the spirits, and is good against melancholie and sadnesse, and that if it be taken in wine, it cureth an old cough.' *Cynne* or *senna* therefore gives the best sense. But as Rea points out (*M.L.N.*, xxxv) the word *cyme* is used in Holland's *Pliny*, 1634, bk. xix, vol. 2, p. 26: 'Moreouer, like as Coleworts may be cut at all times of the years for our vse, so may they be sown and set all the yere long. . . . The tender crops called Cymæ after the first cutting, they yeeld the Spring next following: now are these Cymæ nothing els but the yong delicat tops or daintier tendrils of the maine stem . . . and yet none put forth their Cymes or tender buds more than they.' Coleworts (*op. cit.*, pp. 48–9) 'be good for the stomack, and gently loosen the belly . . . they purge cholerick humours, being taken with sweet grosse wine'. Rea comments that the reading of the First Folio is perfectly intelligible, 'meaning the tops and tendrils of the Colewort'. But *cyme* is the top of any plant, not specifically of the Colewort (cf. *O.E.D.*). The later contributors to *M.L.N.* seem not to have noticed this passage.

58. *it*] i.e. some part of his armour.

61–2. *Were . . . here*] Fleay thought this couplet spurious and beneath the

SCENE IV.—[*Country near Dunsinane. A wood in view.*]

Enter, with drum and colours, MALCOLM, *old* SIWARD, *and his Son,* MACDUFF, MENTETH, CATHNESS, ANGUS, LENOX, ROSSE, *and Soldiers, marching.*

Mal. Cousins, I hope the days are near at hand,
That chambers will be safe.
Ment. We doubt it nothing.
Siw. What wood is this before us?
Ment. The wood of Birnam.
Mal. Let every soldier hew him down a bough,
And bear't before him: thereby shall we shadow
The numbers of our host, and make discovery
Err in report of us.
Soldier. It shall be done.
Siw. We learn no other but the confident tyrant
Keeps still in Dunsinane, and will endure
Our setting down before't.
Mal. 'Tis his main hope;
For where there is advantage to be gone,

Scene IV

S.D. *Country . . . view.*] *Capell subst.* 1. Cousins] Cousin *F3–4.* 3. Birnam] *F3–4;* Byrnam *F2;* Birnane *F1.* 11. advantage to be gone,] *Capell, Wilson;* aduantage to be giuen, *F;* a vantage to be gone, *conj. Johnson;* advantage to be got *conj. Steevens;* advantage to be gotten *Collier (ed. 2);* advantage to be ta'en *Dyce (ed. 2), (conj. S. Walker);* advantage to 'em given, *conj. Clar.*

dignity of tragedy. 'But when Shakespeare saw a chance to salt the meats of his plays with such touches he did not stand upon tragic dignity' (Granville-Barker).

Scene IV

2. *chambers . . . safe*] Shakespeare may refer to the espionage mentioned in III. iv. 130–1. But there is more likely to be a reference to Duncan's murder, the phrase meaning: 'When we can sleep in our beds without fear of being murdered'.

4–7. *Let . . . us*] This incident is in Holinshed, and there is therefore no point in tracing its origins to the *Romance of Alexander* or to the battle of Lamberkine, in 1332.

6. *discovery*] i.e. reconnaissance. Cf. *Lr.*, v. i. 53.

9. *endure*] allow.

10. *setting down before*] i.e. laying siege to. Cf. *Cor.*, I. ii. 28: 'Let us along to guard Corioli: / If they set down before's.' Cuningham thinks that the above should read *sit* and the *Macbeth* passage *sitting*.

11. *advantage*] opportunity.

gone] Johnson's conj. makes sense, which the Folio reading does not. The compositor's eye obviously hit on the 'giuen' in the following line. This means that 'giuen' is more likely to be wrong than 'to be', so that the Clarendon conj. should be rejected. Kittredge retains F, and explains: 'Wherever the circumstances are such that an opportunity can offer itself'.

Both more and less have given him the revolt,
And none serve with him but constrained things,
Whose hearts are absent too.
Macd. Let our just censures
Attend the true event, and put we on
Industrious soldiership.
Siw. The time approaches,
That will with due decision make us know
What we shall say we have, and what we owe.
Thoughts speculative their unsure hopes relate,
But certain issue strokes must arbitrate;
Towards which advance the war. [*Exeunt, marching.*

SCENE V.—[*Dunsinane. Within the castle.*]

Enter, with drum and colours, MACBETH, SEYTON, *and Soldiers.*

Macb. Hang out our banners on the outward walls;
The cry is still, 'They come!' Our castle's strength

14–15. Let our just censures Attend] *F1;* Let our best Censures Before *F2–4.*

Scene V

S.D. *Dunsinane . . . castle.*] *Malone subst.* 1–2. Hang . . . come!'] Hang . . . banners! On . . . walls The cry is still, "They come!" *Keightley;* Hang . . . banners! On . . . walls The cry is still. They come. *Robert Nichols.*

12. *more and less*] great and small. Cf. *2H4*, I. i. 209.

14–15. *Let . . . event*] i.e. we shall know after the battle if the rumours about the morale of Macbeth's army are true or not.

19. *Thoughts . . . relate*] Siward, as well as Macduff, warns Malcolm of the dangers of optimism.

20. *certain . . . arbitrate*] i.e. actual fighting must decide the issue and make it a certainty. Steevens cites Chapman, *Odyssey*, bk. XVIII: 'Can arbitrate a war of deadliest weight'. Fleay thought that this and the preceding couplet could not be Shakespeare's, and Wilson suspected 19–20 because 'due decision' (17) makes a good antecedent to 'which' (21). But 'certain issue' (20) is an equally good antecedent.

Scene V

1–2. *Hang . . . cry*] Keightley justified his emended punctuation by declaring that it was from the keep, not the walls, that the banner was hung. But the rhythm of the line is against Keightley and Nichols. Cf. also *1H6*, I. vi. 1: 'Advance our waving colours on the walls'.

Will laugh a siege to scorn: here let them lie,
Till famine and the ague eat them up.
Were they not forc'd with those that should be ours,
We might have met them dareful, beard to beard,
And beat them backward home. What is that noise?
[*A cry within, of women.*
Sey. It is the cry of women, my good Lord. [*Exit.*
Macb. I have almost forgot the taste of fears.
The time has been, my senses would have cool'd
To hear a night-shriek; and my fell of hair
Would at a dismal treatise rouse, and stir,
As life were in't. I have supp'd full with horrors:
Direness, familiar to my slaughterous thoughts,
Cannot once start me.

Re-enter SEYTON.

Wherefore was that cry?
Sey. The Queen, my Lord, is dead.
Macb. She should have died hereafter:

5. forc'd] 'forc'd *Hanmer.* 8. S.D.] *Dyce; not in F.* 9. fears] tears *conj. Bayliss.* 15. S.D.] *Dyce; not in F.* 17–18. died hereafter: There] died: hereafter There *Jackson.*

5. *forc'd*] reinforced, strengthened. In *Troil.*, v. i. 64, 'wit larded with malice and malice forced with wit', where forced = farced, stuffed; the metaphor is from the kitchen. In the present passage there is a quibble on the two meanings.

6. *dareful*] bold or boldly; or defiantly. Not used elsewhere by Shakespeare.

8. cry] Lady Macbeth has not died a natural death.

10. *cool'd*] used in a stronger sense than at present. Cf. *John*, II. i. 479, and Florio's *Montaigne*, iii. 5: 'In like case, incorporeal pleasures, is it not injustice to quaile and coole the minde, and say it must thereunto be entrained as unto a forced bond, or servile necessity?' (Temple ed., v. 179). Collier's reading 'quail'd' may have come first to Shakespeare's mind, and may then have recalled the word near it in the Florio context.

11. *fell of hair*] skin with the hair on. Florio, *Worlde of Wordes*, for 'Vello' has 'a fleese of wooll, a fell or skin that hath wooll on'. Cf. Job, iv. 15.

12. *treatise*] story, recital. Cf. *Ado*, I. i. 317, and *Ven.*, 774.

13. *with*] Cf. IV. ii. 32 *ante*.

14–15. *Direness . . . me*] Horror can never make me start.

17. *She . . . hereafter*] This apparently simple statement is ambiguous. Either 'She would have died sometime' (Wilson, Arrowsmith) or 'Her death should have been deferred to a more peaceful hour; had she lived longer there would have been a more convenient time for such a word.' On this, Johnson's interpretation, Murry, *Shakespeare*, p. 335, comments: 'Macbeth's meaning is stranger than that.

There would have been a time for such a word.—
To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
To the last syllable of recorded time;
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!

23. dusty] study *F2–4;* dusky *Hanmer (conj. Theobald).*

"Hereafter", I think, is purposely vague. It does not mean "later"; but in a different mode of time from that in which Macbeth is imprisoned now. "Hereafter"—in the not-Now: *there* would have been a time for such a word as "The Queen is *dead*." But the time in which he is caught is tomorrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow—one infinite sameness, in which yesterdays have only lighted fools the way to dusty death. Life in this time is meaningless—a tale told by an idiot—and death also. For his wife's death to have meaning there needs some total change—a plunge across a new abyss into a Hereafter.' That Shakespeare would have been puzzled by this explanation is not necessarily a condemnation of it. Perhaps 'should' is used indifferently to denote either what will be or what ought to be; cf. 31 *post.*

18. *time . . . word*] i.e. such a phrase, expression, intelligence, as 'the queen is dead.' Cf. *R2*, I. iii. 152: 'The hopeless word of "never to return" '; and Ecc., iii. 2, 'a time to die'.

19–28. *To-morrow . . . nothing*] 'Expresses in Shakespeare's terms the hopelessness of a hardened sinner, to whom the universe has now no meaning . . .'; 'merely implies the atheism . . . which has resulted from his gradual hardening in crime' (Bethell, *Shakespeare and the Popular Dramatic Tradition*, pp. 74, 98). See Introduction, p. liii. Halliwell thought the lines were suggested by 'a remarkable engraving' in Barclay's *Ship of Fooles*, 1570, p. 61: 'They folowe the crowes crye to their great sorowe, / *Cras, cras, cras,* tomorrowe we shall amende.' / Cuningham thinks Shakespeare may have been influenced by his recent perusal of Florio's *Montaigne*, I. xix: 'That to Philosophie, is to learne how to die.'

21. *recorded time*] the record of time (Hudson). This seems to be the best and simplest explanation. Johnson suggests: 'the time fixed in the decrees of Heaven for the period of life'. Steevens thinks recorded was used for *recording* or *recordable*. Elwin thinks the line means 'till the last judgment'. Cf. Rev., x. 5, 6.

22. *fools*] not 'foules' = crowds, as Hunter conjectured, but just ordinary foolish people.

23. *dusty*] Theobald's conj. 'dusky' has little to recommend it; cf. Ps., xxii. 15: 'dust of death'. Steevens suggests that *dusty* refers to 'dust to dust' of the burial service. Collier cites Copley, *Fig for Fortune* (1596, Spenser Soc., p. 55): 'Inviting it to dusty death's defeature'. But Cuningham supports *dusky* on the ground that Shakespeare often used the word in connection with death. He cites *1H6*, II. ii. 27; *2H6*, III. ii. 104; *R3*, IV. iv. 70: 'dusky graves'. Cuningham proceeds to summarize Elwin's arguments: Light lights folly on its way to darkness; this is connected with the idea of darkness as a *shadow*; the living man is the shadow walking between the light and that dusky death to which it is lighting him. Life has only a delusive resemblance to an endurable substance, and the poor player is but the shadow of the substance or reality whose semblance he has assumed. I agree with some of Elwin's analysis of the passage, but not with his conclusion: 'With the term *dusty* the shadow

Life's but a walking shadow; a poor player,
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more: it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

Enter a Messenger.

Thou com'st to use thy tongue; thy story quickly.
Mess. Gracious my Lord,
I should report that which I say I saw,
But know not how to do't.
Macb. Well, say, sir.
Mess. As I did stand my watch upon the hill,
I look'd toward Birnam, and anon, methought,
The wood began to move.
Macb. Liar, and slave!
Mess. Let me endure your wrath, if't be not so.

28–30. Signifying . . . Lord] *two lines, the first ending* tongue, *conj. Lettsom.* 30. Gracious my] My gracious *F2–4.* 30–1. Gracious . . . which] *one line Keightley.* 34, 44. Birnam] *F4;* Byrnam *F2–3;* Byrnane *F1.*

has no affinity: and by retaining this word the otherwise exquisitely preserved unity of thought would consequently be destroyed.' Shakespeare would cheerfully violate a unity of impression for his own purposes—in this case to extend the associations of the word 'death'.

candle] Cf. Job, xviii. 6: 'The light shall be darke in his dwelling, and his candle shall be put out with him.' Cf. Ps., xviii. 28. Wilson contrasts Prov., xx. 27.

24. *shadow*] Cf. Ps., xxxix. 7: 'For man walketh in a vain shadow'; Job, viii. 9: 'For wee are but of yesterday, and are ignorant: for our dayes vpon earth are but a shadow.'

player] suggested by *shadow*. Cf. *MND.*, v. i. 213: 'The best in this kind are but shadows'; and *MND.*, v. i. 430. *Poor* player does not mean a *bad actor*—or not primarily—but one who is to be pitied because his appearance on the stage of life is so brief (Kittredge).

26–7. *it . . . Told*] Cf. Ps., xc. 9: 'We bring our years to an end as a tale that is told.'

28. *Signifying nothing*] 'The theme of the false appearance is revived—with a difference. It is not only that Macbeth sees life as deceitful, but the poetry is so fine that we are almost bullied into accepting an essential ambiguity in the final statement of the play, as though Shakespeare were expressing his own "philosophy" in the lines. But the speech is "placed" by the tendency of the last Act (order emerging from disorder, truth emerging from deceit)' (Knights, *op. cit.*, p. 36).

28–30. *Signifying . . . my Lord*] The text could be printed in two lines, the first ending with 'use' or 'tongue'.

31. *should*] Cf. 17 *ante*.

32. *say*] Pope's insertion of 'it' is essential to neither the rhythm nor the meaning of the line.

Within this three mile may you see it coming;
I say, a moving grove.
Macb. If thou speak'st false,
Upon the next tree shalt thou hang alive,
Till famine cling thee: if thy speech be sooth,
I care not if thou dost for me as much.—
I pull in resolution; and begin
To doubt th'equivocation of the fiend,
That lies like truth: 'Fear not, till Birnam wood
Do come to Dunsinane';—and now a wood
Comes toward Dunsinane.—Arm, arm, and out!—
If this which he avouches does appear,
There is nor flying hence, nor tarrying here.
I 'gin to be aweary of the sun,
And wish th'estate o'th'world were now undone.—
Ring the alarum bell!—Blow, wind! come, wrack!
At least we'll die with harness on our back. [*Exeunt.*

37. may you] *F1–2;* you may *F3–4.* 39. shalt] shall *F.* 42. pull] *F;* pall *conj. Johnson, A. Hunter, Wilson.* 48. nor flying] *F1–2;* no flying *F3–4.*

37. *mile*] Cf. *Wiv.*, III. ii. 33: 'This boy will carry a letter twenty mile'; and *Ado*, II. iii. 17: 'he would have walked ten mile afoot.'

39. *the next tree*] Cf. *Tp.*, III. ii. 42.

40. *cling*] shrink up, wither. Used of the drawing together and shrinking up of animal or vegetable tissue; and still used in dialect. *O.E.D.* quotes *Cov. Myst.*, 54: 'My heart doth clynge and cleve as clay.'

42. *pull in*] rein in. Kittredge explains: 'I can no longer give free rein to confidence and determination.' He cites as illustration of alternative meanings Dekker, *Old Fortunatus*, Prol. ('feare . . . makes her pull in her fainting pinions'), and Fletcher, *The Sea Voyage*, III. i; ('All my spirits . . . Pull in their powers'). Johnson's conj. 'pall' is, however, possible. Cf. *Ham.*, v. ii. 9, and *Ant.*, II. vii. 88.

43. *equivocation*] Cf. II. iii. 9; Introduction, pp. xv–xviii; Scot, *The Discouerie of Witchcraft*, XII. xv ('How men have beene abused with words of equivocation, with sundrie examples thereof'); and *2H6*, I. iv. 60–75.

47–50.] The Clar. Edd. thought these lines were interpolated.

47. *avouches*] Cf. III. i. 119 *ante*.

50. *estate o'th'world*] the universe. Cf. III. ii. 16 *ante*: 'frame of things'. Wilson suggests that the phrase implies both structure and organization.

51. *Ring . . . bell!*] Theobald believed these words to be a 'Stage-direction crept from the Margin into the text' because the line was 'deficient without them, occasioned probably by a Cut that had been made in the Speech by the Actors. They were a Memorandum to the Prompter to ring the *Alarum-bell.*' I see no sufficient warrant for Theobald's belief in this instance, though I think he was right on II. iii. 79 *ante*.

wrack] The usual spelling in Shakespeare. Cf. I. iii. 114.

52. *At . . . back*] If Macbeth had not sallied forth the attackers might have stayed 'till famine and the ague eat

SCENE VI.—[*The same. A plain before the castle.*]

Enter, with drum and colours, MALCOLM, *old* SIWARD, MACDUFF, *etc., and their army, with boughs.*

Mal. Now, near enough: your leavy screens throw down,
And show like those you are.—You, worthy uncle,
Shall, with my cousin, your right noble son,
Lead our first battle: worthy Macduff, and we,
Shall take upon's what else remains to do,
According to our order.
Siw. Fare you well.—
Do we but find the tyrant's power to-night,
Let us be beaten, if we cannot fight.
Macd. Make all our trumpets speak; give them all breath,
Those clamorous harbingers of blood and death.
[*Exeunt. Alarums continued.*

SCENE VII.—[*The same. Another part of the plain.*]

Enter MACBETH.

Macb. They have tied me to a stake: I cannot fly,
But, bear-like, I must fight the course.—What's he,

Scene VI

S.D. *A plain . . . castle.*] *Rowe, subst.* 1. Now . . . down,] *so Rowe; two lines, the first ending* enough: *F.* leavy] *F;* leafy *Collier.*

Scene VII

S.D. *The . . . plain.*] *Capell, subst.*

them up'. By leaving the castle, he enables the prophecies to be fulfilled.

harness] gear, equipage, furniture, and specifically, armour for a man or horse. Shakespeare uses it in both senses. See Bible (A.V.), 1 Kings, xxii. 34.

Scene VI

1. *leavy*] Cf. *Ado*, II. iii. 75, where the word rhymes with 'heavy'. Cotgrave has 'Feuillu: *leauie.*'

2. *uncle*] See note to V. ii. 2 *ante.*

4. *battle*] Nares defines as 'the main or middle body of an army, between the van and the rear'. But it is often used of a whole army in order of battle, e.g. *John*, IV. ii. 78. Probably Shakespeare took the word from Holinshed. See Appendix, p. 169.

9–10. *Make . . . death*] Fleay regarded this couplet as an interpolation.

10. *harbingers*] Cf. note on I. iv. 45.

Scene VII

2. *bear-like . . . course*] Bear-baiting was a favourite old English sport; and a 'course' was the technical term for a bout or round between the bear and the dogs. Cf. *Lr.*, III. vii. 54: 'I am tied to the stake, and I must stand the course.'

That was not born of woman? Such a one
Am I to fear, or none.

Enter young SIWARD.

Yo. Siw. What is thy name?
Macb. Thou'lt be afraid to hear it.
Yo. Siw. No; though thou call'st thyself a hotter name
Than any is in hell.
Macb. My name's Macbeth.
Yo. Siw. The devil himself could not pronounce a title
More hateful to mine ear.
Macb. No, nor more fearful.
Yo. Siw. Thou liest, abhorred tyrant: with my sword
I'll prove the lie thou speak'st.
[*They fight, and young Siward is slain.*
Macb. Thou wast born of woman:—
But swords I smile at, weapons laugh to scorn,
Brandish'd by man that's of a woman born. [*Exit.*

Alarums. Enter MACDUFF.

Macd. That way the noise is.—Tyrant, show thy face:
If thou be'st slain, and with no stroke of mine,
My wife and children's ghosts will haunt me still.
I cannot strike at wretched Kernes, whose arms
Are hir'd to bear their staves: either thou, Macbeth,
Or else my sword, with an unbatter'd edge,
I sheathe again undeeded. There thou shouldst be;

10. abhorred] *F1;* thou abhorred *F2–4.* 12. swords] words *conj. Daniel.*

17. *Kernes*] Cf. I. ii. 13 *ante.* Macbeth has to rely on Irish mercenaries, upon whom Macdonwald had relied before (Wilson).

18. *staves*] spear-shafts. Cf. *R3*, V. iii. 341.

thou] Commentators have worried themselves over the grammar. 'We must supply some words like *must be my antagonist*' (Clarendon).

20. *undeeded*] i.e. not having performed any deeds: the word was probably coined by Shakespeare.

11. *born of woman*] Cf. Job, xiv. 1, and the Burial Service: 'Man that is born of a woman'.

13. *born*] 'Shakespeare designed Macbeth should appear invincible till he encountered the object destined for his destruction' (Steevens).

By this great clatter, one of greatest note
Seems bruited. Let me find him, Fortune!
And more I beg not. [*Exit. Alarum.*

Enter MALCOLM *and old* SIWARD.

Siw. This way, my Lord;—the castle's gently render'd:
The tyrant's people on both sides do fight;
The noble Thanes do bravely in the war.
The day almost itself professes yours,
And little is to do.
Mal. We have met with foes
That strike beside us.
Siw. Enter, Sir, the castle.
[*Exeunt. Alarum.*

SCENE VIII.—[*Another part of the field.*]

Enter MACBETH.

Macb. Why should I play the Roman fool, and die

Scene VIII

S.D. *Another . . . field.*] *Dyce. Scene vii continued F, Rowe, Arden (ed. 1); sc. viii Pope, Camb. etc.*

21. *clatter*] another word not found elsewhere in Shakespeare's works.

22. *bruited*] announced, reported, with the idea of clamour. Cf. *1H6*, II. iii. 68: 'I find thou art no less than fame hath bruited.'

Let] Although the line wants a foot, we need not assume that a word has dropped out. There is room for a pause, a move, or a gesture after *bruited*.

23. Enter Malcolm and old Siward] Siward does not notice his son's body; and we hear later (v. ix. 10) that it has been 'brought off the field'. This was, perhaps, just before the entrance of old Siward, as Macduff should obviously enter immediately after the exit of Macbeth. In which case 24–9 would be virtually a separate scene, its effectiveness depending mainly on the ironical juxtaposition of the removal of young Siward's body and the entrance of his father. Granville-Barker, however, suggests (Preface, xxxi) that young Siward has been killed in the gallery, and that his body is concealed by the drawing of a curtain.

24. *gently render'd*] i.e. tamely surrendered.

29. *strike beside us*] i.e. by our side. Some, however, interpret 'deliberately miss us' and cite *3H6*, II. i. 130–2.

Scene VIII

S.D.] There is no scene division in the Folio at this point, but most editors follow Pope and Johnson in beginning a new scene. Siward and Malcolm enter the castle, and Macbeth is obviously on another part of the field.

1. *Roman fool*] e.g. Cato, Brutus, Antony.

On mine own sword? whiles I see lives, the gashes
Do better upon them.

Re-enter MACDUFF.

Macd. Turn, Hell-hound, turn!
Macb. Of all men else I have avoided thee:
But get thee back, my soul is too much charg'd
With blood of thine already.
Macd. I have no words;
My voice is in my sword: thou bloodier villain
Than terms can give thee out! [*They fight.*
Macb. Thou losest labour:
As easy may'st thou the intrenchant air
With thy keen sword impress, as make me bleed:
Let fall thy blade on vulnerable crests;
I bear a charmed life; which must not yield
To one of woman born.
Macd. Despair thy charm;
And let the Angel, whom thou still hast serv'd,
Tell thee, Macduff was from his mother's womb
Untimely ripp'd.
Macb. Accursed be that tongue that tells me so,
For it hath cow'd my better part of man:
And be these juggling fiends no more believ'd,

5–6. *my . . . already*] 'the only touch of real remorse in Macbeth' (Chambers). Or is he rationalizing his fear?

9. *intrenchant*] incapable of being cut: the active in a passive sense. Shakespeare uses *trenchant* in an active sense in *Tim.*, IV. iii. 115: 'trenchant sword'.

12. *charmed life*] Cf. Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, I. iv. 50: 'he beares a charmed shield, / And eke enchaunted armes, that none can perce'; and *Cym.*, V. iii. 68.

13. *Despair*] i.e. despair of; the preposition being omitted after verbs regarded as transitive.

14. *Angel*] i.e. bad angel, demon.

16. *Untimely ripp'd*] Furness quoted Virgil, *Aen.*, X. 315: 'Inde Lichan ferit, exsectum jam matre peremptа / Et tibi, Phoebe, sacrum'. Shakespeare may have read the passage in Virgil; but he probably relied on Holinshed; see Appendix A, p. 179. Flatter, *op. cit.*, p. 27, notes that the line is filled out by a pause, before Macbeth's speech.

18. *better part*] This seems to mean simply the mind, soul, or spirit: not 'the better part of my manhood' (Clarendon). Cf. *Sonn.*, lxxiv. 8: 'My spirit is thine, the better part of me'; and Peele's *Arraignment of Paris*, II. i. 76: 'And look how much the mind, the better part, / Doth overpass the body in desert.'

19–20. *these . . . sense*] Simpson (*apud* Wilson) cites Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, III. iv. 28: 'So tickle be the termes of mortall state, / And full of subtile sophismes, which doe play / With

That palter with us in a double sense;
That keep the word of promise to our ear,
And break it to our hope.—I'll not fight with thee.
Macd. Then yield thee, coward,
And live to be the show and gaze o'th'time:
We'll have thee, as our rarer monsters are,
Painted upon a pole, and underwrit,
'Here may you see the tyrant.'
Macb. I will not yield,
To kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet,
And to be baited with the rabble's curse.
Though Birnam wood be come to Dunsinane,
And thou oppos'd, being of no woman born,
Yet I will try the last: before my body
I throw my warlike shield: lay on, Macduff;
And damn'd be him that first cries, 'Hold, enough!'
[*Exeunt, fighting. Alarums. Re-enter fighting, and Macbeth slain.*

22–3. And . . . coward] *lines end* hope! / coward, *and read* I will *for* I'll *S. Walker.*
30. Birnam] *F4;* Byrnam *F2–3;* Byrnane *F1.* 31. being] be *Theobald.*
34. S.D.] *F subst.* *Re-enter . . . slain*] *not in Pope, etc.; restored by Wilson.*

double sences, and with false debate, / T'approue the vnknown purpose of eternal fate.'

20. *palter*] shuffle, equivocate. Cf. *Caes.*, II. i. 125: 'Secret Romans, that have spoke the word, / And will not palter.' Cotgrave has '*Harceler: to haggle, hucke, dodge, or paulter long in the buying of a commoditie.*'

22–3. *I'll . . . coward*] S. Walker's arrangement may be right.

24. *show*] Cf. *Ant.*, IV. xii. 36: 'most monster-like be shown'.

26. *Painted . . . pole*] i.e. painted on a cloth or board suspended on a pole. Cf. Benedick's jest, *Ado*, I. i. 267: 'and let let me be vilely painted'. Craig conj. that *Painted* should be *Paunched* = disembowelled. But Macduff threatens Macbeth with life in captivity.

32–3. *before . . . shield*] The Clar. Edd thought this sentence must be interpolated. It would certainly be improved by Hilton's conj. (*apud* Wilson) of 'warlock' for 'warlike'.

34. *Hold*] The cry of the heralds, 'Ho! Ho!' commanding the cessation of a combat, is probably corrupted from 'Hold, hold' (Clarendon).

S.D.] I have retained the substance of the Folio directions. On the Elizabethan stage the fight would be concluded either on the inner stage (Wilson), or in the gallery (Granville-Barker, *op. cit.*, p. xxxii), in either case the curtain being drawn on Macbeth's body.

SCENE IX.—[*Within the castle.*]

Retreat. Flourish. Enter, with drum and colours, MALCOLM, *old* SIWARD, ROSSE, *Thanes, and Soldiers.*

Mal. I would the friends we miss were safe arriv'd.
Siw. Some must go off; and yet, by these I see,
So great a day as this is cheaply bought.
Mal. Macduff is missing, and your noble son.
Rosse. Your son, my Lord, has paid a soldier's debt:
He only liv'd but till he was a man;
The which no sooner had his prowess confirm'd,
In the unshrinking station where he fought,
But like a man he died.
Siw. Then he is dead?
Rosse. Ay, and brought off the field. Your cause of sorrow
Must not be measur'd by his worth, for then
It hath no end.
Siw. Had he his hurts before?
Rosse. Ay, on the front.
Siw. Why then, God's soldier be he!
Had I as many sons as I have hairs,
I would not wish them to a fairer death:
And so, his knell is knoll'd.
Mal. He's worth more sorrow,
And that I'll spend for him.

Scene IX
S.D.] *Pope, Wilson (conj. Kittredge); sc. vii continues, F.*

S.D.] I follow Kittredge and Wilson in assuming that a new scene begins at this point, inside the castle. There is no reason to believe that Shakespeare intended Malcolm to leave the castle once he had entered it. The Clar. Edd. questioned the authenticity of the whole of this scene; but it has been convincingly defended by Nosworthy, *R.E.S.*, April 1948, p. 139.

2. *go off*] a stage metaphor, signifying the exit from life's stage. Cf. *Ant.*, IV. xiii. 6, and the similar expressions I. vii. 20 and III. i. 104 *ante*.

7. *prowess*] probably a monosyllable, though elsewhere in Shakespeare it is a dissyllable. Butler, *Hudibras*, III. iii. 357, rhymes *prowess* and *cows*.

8. *unshrinking station*] i.e. the station whence he did not shrink.

9. *he died . . . dead?*] Nosworthy compares Laertes' reception of Ophelia's death.

12–15. *Had he . . . death*] Shakespeare closely follows Holinshed. See Appendix A, p. 180.

14. *Had . . . hairs*] quibble on hairs/heirs. Nosworthy compares Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus*, 339: 'Had I as many soules as there be starres'.

Siw. He's worth no more;
They say he parted well and paid his score:
And so, God be with him!—Here comes newer comfort.

Re-enter MACDUFF, *with* MACBETH's *head.*

Macd. Hail, King! for so thou art. Behold, where stands
Th'usurper's cursed head: the time is free.
I see thee compass'd with thy kingdom's pearl,
That speak my salutation in their minds;
Whose voices I desire aloud with mine,—
Hail, King of Scotland!

All. Hail, King of Scotland! [*Flourish.*

Mal. We shall not spend a large expense of time,
Before we reckon with your several loves,
And make us even with you. My Thanes and kinsmen,
Henceforth be Earls; the first that ever Scotland
In such an honour nam'd. What's more to do,
Which would be planted newly with the time,—
As calling home our exil'd friends abroad,
That fled the snares of watchful tyranny;
Producing forth the cruel ministers
Of this dead butcher, and his fiend-like Queen,
Who, as 'tis thought, by self and violent hands

20. Hail . . . stands] *so Rowe; two lines, the first ending* art. *F.* 22. pearl] peers *Rowe;* pearls *Var. '73.* 26. expense] extent *conj. Steevens;* expanse *conj. Singer.* 28. My] *not in Pope.*

18. *parted*] Cf. *H5*, II. iii. 12 (of the death of Falstaff): 'a' parted even just between twelve and one.'

20–1. *stands . . . head*] 'vpon a pole' (Holinshed).

21. *the time*] See I. v. 63 and IV. iii. 72 *ante*, etc.

22. *pearl*] used collectively for the nobles of Scotland, and probably suggested by 'the row of pearls which usually encircled a crown' (Clarendon). Florio, *Worlde of Wordes*, called Southampton 'Braue Earle, bright Pearle of Peeres'. Cf. *Ham.*, IV. vii. 93: 'he is the brooch indeed and gem of all the nation.'

26. *spend . . . expense*] Cf. *Err.*, III. i. 123: 'This jest shall cost me some expense,' and Num., xxiii. 10: 'die the death of the righteous'. There is no reason to think that the passage is corrupt.

time] Cf. 21 *ante*, 31, 39 *post.*

27–8. *Before . . . you*] before we reward you for your services, so that we are no longer in your debt.

29. *Earls*] from Holinshed. See Appendix A, p. 180.

34. *Producing forth*] bringing out of hiding.

36. *self and violent hands*] Cf. *R2*, III. ii. 166: 'Infusing him with self and vain conceit'. 'Self is used by Shakespeare as an adjective, as in *Tw.N.*, I. i. 39, "one self king", so that he felt no awkwardness in separating it from the

Took off her life;—this, and what needful else
That calls upon us, by the grace of Grace,
We will perform in measure, time, and place.
So thanks to all at once, and to each one,
Whom we invite to see us crown'd at Scone.

[*Flourish. Exeunt.*

37. what] what's *Hanmer.*

substantive, whose sense it modifies, by a second epithet' (Clarendon).

38. *the grace of Grace*] Theobald compares *Gent.*, III. i. 146; *All's W.*, II. i. 163. Cuningham compares his own emendation for IV. iii. 136: 'the grace of Goodness'.

39. *measure*] due proportion (Wilson).

40. *So . . . one*] Manly suggested that this was addressed to the audience rather than the *dramatis personæ.*

41. *Scone*] See note on II. iv. 31 *ante.*