

KING LEAR

A TRAGEDY IN FIVE ACTS,

BY

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE,

AS ARRANGED FOR THE STAGE

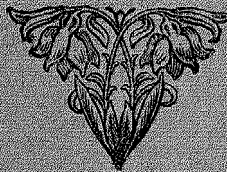
BY

HENRY IRVING,

AND PRESENTED AT

THE LYCEUM THEATRE,

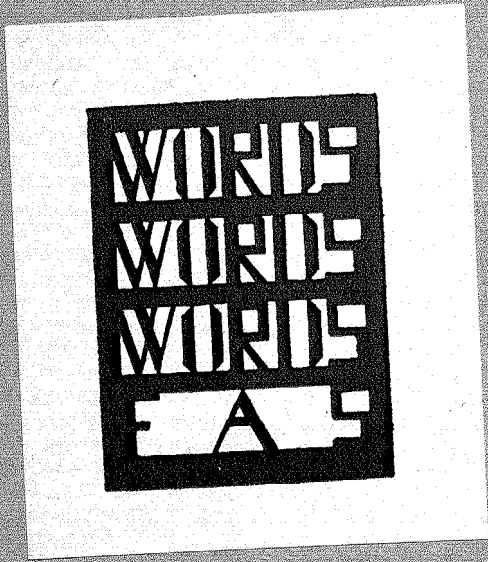
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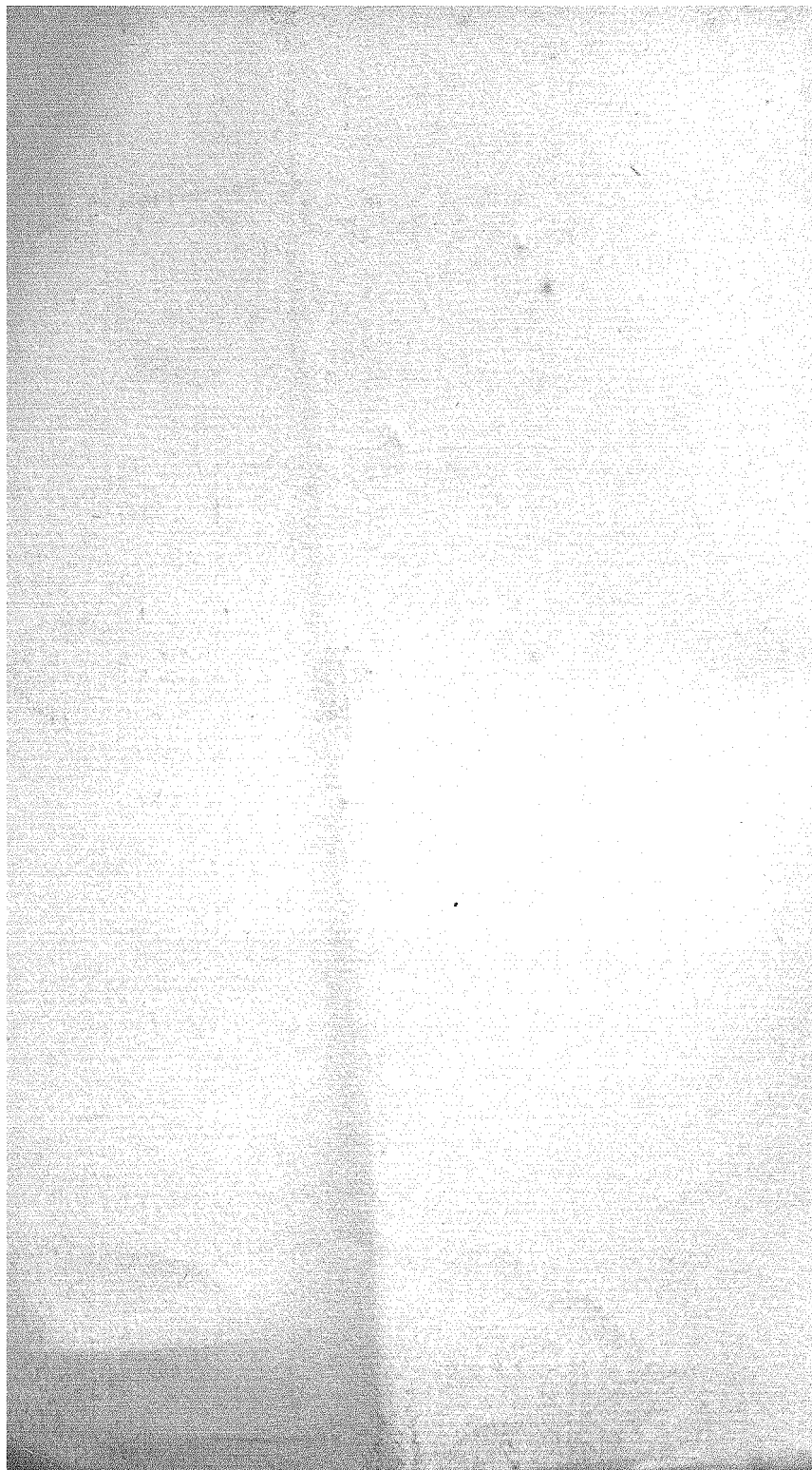


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UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE
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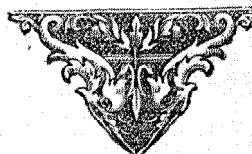
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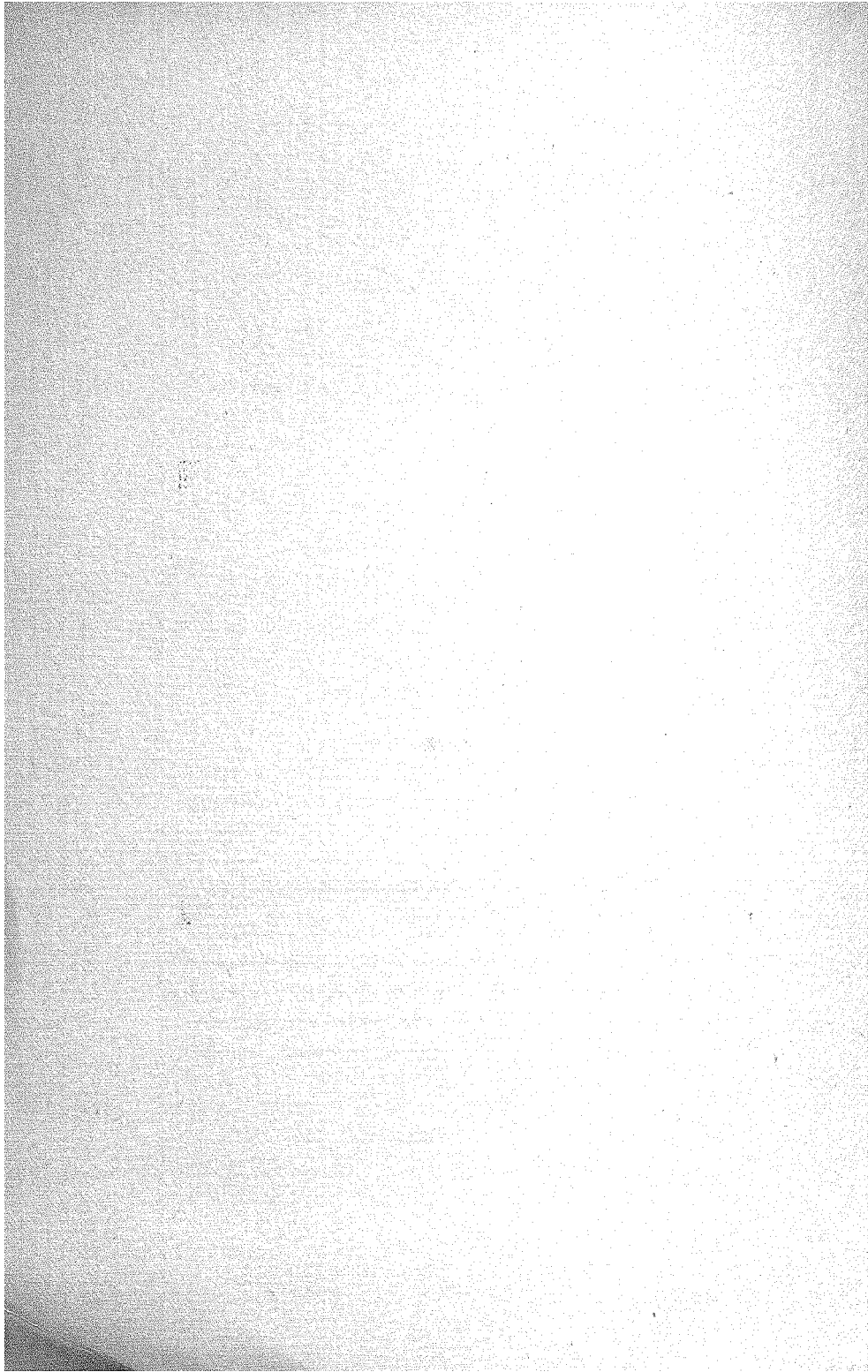


PREFACE.

THIS version of Shakespeare's tragedy, *King Lear*, has been made for practical use on the stage, the play being necessarily reduced to reasonable length to suit the exigencies of the present time. In the curtailment, all superfluous horrors have been omitted.

As the period of *King Lear* is fabulous, I have chosen, at the suggestion of Mr. Ford Madox Brown (who has kindly designed three scenes in the First and Second Acts), a time shortly after the departure of the Romans, when the Britons would naturally inhabit the houses left vacant.

HENRY IRVING.



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LEAR ...	<i>(King of Britain)</i>	...	Mr. IRVING.
King of France	...	...	Mr. PERCIVAL.
Duke of Burgundy	...	...	Mr. BOND.
Duke of Cornwall	...	...	Mr. HAGUE.
Duke of Albany	...	...	Mr. TYARS.
Earl of Kent	...	...	Mr. HOLLOWAY.
Earl of Gloster	...	...	Mr. ALFRED BISHOP.
EDGAR ...	<i>(son to Gloster)</i>	...	Mr. WILLIAM TERRISS.
EDMUND ...	<i>(bastard son to Gloster)</i>	...	Mr. FRANK COOPER.
CURAN	... <i>(a courtier)</i>	...	Mr. HARVEY.
Old Man	... <i>(tenant to Gloster)</i>	...	Mr. HOWE.
Fool	...	...	Mr. HAVILAND.
OSWALD	... <i>(steward to Goneril)</i>	...	Mr. GORDON CRAIG.
Physician	...	...	Mr. LACY.
An Officer	...	...	Mr. LORRIS.
A Gentleman	...	...	Mr. IAN ROBERTSON.
A Messenger	...	...	Mr. POWELL.
A Herald	...	...	Mr. BELMORE.
A Knight	...	...	Mr. TABB.
GONERIL, <i>wife to Albany</i>	}	<i>daughters to Lear</i>	...
REGAN, <i>wife to Cornwall</i>			...
CORDELIA			...

Knights attending on LEAR, Officers, Messengers, Soldiers, and Attendants.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENERY.

ACT I.

- SCENE 1.—King Lear's Palace *J. Harker.*
SCENE 2.—Earl of Gloster's Castle *J. Harker.*
SCENE 3.—Duke of Albany's Castle *J. Harker.*

ACT II.

- SCENE 1.—Court within Gloster's Castle *J. Harker.*
SCENE 2.—Open Country *Hawes Craven.*
SCENE 3.—Court within Gloster's Castle *J. Harker.*

ACT III.

- SCENE 1.—A Heath *Hawes Craven.*
SCENE 2.—Another part of the Heath *Hawes Craven.*
SCENE 3.—Farm-house *Hawes Craven.*

ACT IV.

- SCENE 1.—Albany's Castle *J. Harker.*
SCENE 2.—Open Country *Hawes Craven.*
SCENE 3.—Country near Dover *Hawes Craven.*
SCENE 4.—French Camp *Hawes Craven.*
SCENE 5.—Tent in the French Camp *Hawes Craven.*

ACT V.

- SCENE 1.—British Camp near Dover *Hawes Craven.*
SCENE 2.—The same *Hawes Craven.*

SCENE.—BRITAIN.



UNIVERSITY OF ADELWIDE

KING LEAR.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—King LEAR'S Palace.

Enter KENT, GLOSTER, and EDMUND.

Kent.

I thought the king had more affected the Duke of Albany than Cornwall.

Glo. It did always seem so to us: but now, in the division of the kingdom, it appears not which of the dukes he values most.

Kent. Is not this your son, my lord?

Glo. His breeding, sir, hath been at my charge: I have so often blush'd to acknowledge him, that now I am braz'd to it. But I have, sir, a son by order of law, some year older than this, who is yet no dearer in my account. Do you know this noble gentleman, Edmund?

Edm. No, my lord.

Glo. My lord of Kent: remember him hereafter as my honourable friend.

Edm. My services to your lordship.

101A/101A
17
TO

KING LEAR.

Kent. I must love you, and sue to know you better.

Edm. Sir, I shall study deserving. [*Trumpets within.*] The king is coming.

Enter LEAR, CORNWALL, ALBANY, GONERIL, REGAN, CORDELIA, Fool, and Attendants.

Lear. Attend the Lords of France and Burgundy, Gloster.

Glo. I shall, my liege.

[*Exeunt* GLOSTER and EDMUND.]

Lear. Meantime we shall express our darker purpose —

Give me the map there.—Know that we've divided
In three our kingdom: and 'tis our fast intent
To shake all cares and business from our age;
Conferring them on younger strengths, while we
Unburden'd crawl toward death.—Our son of
Cornwall,

And you, our no less loving son of Albany,
We have this hour a constant will to publish
Our daughters' several dowers, that future strife
May be prevented now. Tell me, my daughters,—
Since now we will divest us both of rule,
Interest of territory, cares of state,—
Which of you shall we say doth love us most?
That we our largest bounty may extend
Where nature doth with merit challenge.—Goneril,
Our eldest-born, speak first.

Gon. Sir,
I love you more than words can wield the matter;
Dearer than eyesight, space, and liberty;
As much as child e'er lov'd, or father found;
A love that makes breath poor, and speech unable;
Beyond all manner of so much I love you.

Cor. [*aside*] What shall Cordelia do? Love, and
be silent.

Lear. Of all these bounds, even from this line to this,
With shadowy forests and with champions rich'd,
With plenteous rivers and wide-skirted meads,
We make thee lady : to thine and Albany's issue
Be this perpetual.—What says our second daughter,
Our dearest Regan, wife to Cornwall? Speak.

Reg. Sir,
I'm made of that self metal as my sister,
And prize me at her worth. In my true heart
I find she names my very deed of love ;
Only she comes too short.

Cor. [*aside*] Then poor Cordelia!
And yet not so ; since, I am sure, my love's
More richer than my tongue.

Lear. To thee and thine hereditary ever
Remain this ample third of our fair kingdom ;
No less in space, validity, and pleasure,
Than that conferr'd on Goneril.—Now, our joy,
Although our last, not least, to whose young love
The vines of France and milk of Burgundy
Strive to be interest'd ; what can you say to draw
A third more opulent than your sisters? Speak.

Cor. Nothing, my lord.

Lear. Nothing!

Cor. Nothing.

Lear. Nothing will come of nothing: speak again.

Cor. Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave
My heart into my mouth : I love your Majesty
According to my bond ; nor more nor less.

Lear. How, how, Cordelia ! mend your speech a
little,
Lest it may mar your fortunes.

Cor. Good my lord,
You have begot me, bred me, lov'd me ; I
Return those duties back as are right fit,
Obey you, love you, and most honour you.
Why have my sisters husbands, if they say
They love you all? Haply, when I shall wed,
That lord whose hand must take my plight, shall carry

Half my love with him, half my care and duty :
 Sure, I shall never marry like my sisters,
 To love my father all.

Lear. But goes thy heart with this ?

Cor. Ay, good my lord.

Lear. So young, and so untender ?

Cor. So young, my lord, and true.

Lear. Let it be so,—thy truth, then, be thy dow'r :
 For, by the sacred radiance of the sun,
 The mysteries of Hecate, and the night ;
 By all the operation of the orbs
 From whom we do exist, and cease to be ;
 Here I disclaim all my paternal care,
 And as a stranger to my heart and me
 Hold thee, from this, for ever.

Kent. Good my liege,—

Lear. Peace, Kent !

Come not between the dragon and his wrath.—
 I lov'd her most, and thought to set my rest
 On her kind nursery.—Hence, and avoid my sight !—
 So be my grave my peace, as here I give
 Her fathers heart from her !—Call France ;—who
 stirs ?

Call Burgundy.—[*Exit a Knight.*]—Cornwall and
 Albany,

With my two daughters' dow'rs digest this third :
 Let pride, which she calls plainness, marry her.
 I do invest you jointly with my power,
 Pre-eminence, and all the large effects
 That troop with majesty.—Ourselves, by monthly
 course,

With reservation of an hundred knights,
 By you to be sustain'd, shall our abode
 Make with you by due turns. Only we still retain
 The name, and all th' additions to a king ;
 The sway,
 Revènuè, execution of the rest,

Belovèd sons, be yours : which to confirm,
This coronet part between you.

[Giving the Crown to ALBANY.]

Kent. Royal Lear,
Whom I have ever honour'd as my king,
Lov'd as my father, as my master follow'd,—

Lear. The bow is bent and drawn, make from the
shaft.

Kent. Let it fall rather, though the fork invade
The region of my heart : be Kent unmannerly,
When Lear is mad.

Lear. Kent, on thy life, no more.

Kent. My life I never held but as a pawn
To wage against thine enemies ; nor fear to lose it,
Thy safety being the motive.

Lear. Out of my sight !

Kent. See better, Lear ; and let me still remain
The true blank of thine eye.

Lear. Now, by Apollo,—

Kent. Now, by Apollo, king,
Thou swear'st thy gods in vain.

Lear. O, vassal ! miscreant.

[Seizing his sword.]

Alb., Corn. Dear sir, forbear.

Lear. Hear me, recreant !
On thine allegiance hear me !—
Since thou hast sought to make us break our vow,—
Which we durst never yet,—and with strain'd pride
To come between our sentence and our pow'r,—
Which nor our nature nor our place can bear,—
Our potency made good, take thy reward.
Five days we do allot thee, for provision
To shield thee from diseases of the world ;
And, on the sixth, to turn thy hated back
Upon our kingdom : if, on the tenth day following,
Thy banish'd trunk be found in our dominions,

The moment is thy death. Away! by Jupiter,
This shall not be revok'd.

Kent. Fare thee well, king.

[*To CORDELIA.*] The gods to their dear shelter take
thee, maid!—

[*To REGAN and GONERIL.*] And your large speeches
may your deeds approve.

Thus Kent, O princes, bids you all adieu;
He'll shape his old course in a country new. [*Exit.*]

Flourish. Re-enter GLOSTER and EDMUND, with
FRANCE, BURGUNDY, and Attendants.

Glo. Here's France and Burgundy, my noble lord.

Lear. My Lord of Burgundy,

We first address towards you, who, with this king
Hath rivall'd for our daughter: what, in the least,
Will you require in present dow'r with her,
Or cease your quest of love?

Bur. Most royal majesty,
I crave no more than hath your highness offer'd,
Nor will you tender less.

Lear. Right noble Burgundy,
When she was dear to us, we did hold her so;
But now her price is fall'n. Sir, there she stands:
Dower'd with our curse, and stranger'd with our oath,
Take her, or leave her?

Bur. Pardon me, royal sir;
Election makes not up on such conditions.

Lear. Then leave her, sir; for, by the pow'r that
made me,

I tell you all her wealth.—[*To FRANCE.*] For you,
great king,

I would not from your love make such a stray,
To match you where I hate; therefore beseech you
T' avert your liking a more worthier way
Than on a wretch whom nature is asham'd
Almost t' acknowledge hers.

France. This is most strange!

Cor. I yet beseech your Majesty,—make known,
It is no vicious blot, nor stain of foulness,
No unchaste action, or dishonour'd step,
That hath depriv'd me of your grace and favour;
But even for want of that for which I'm richer,—
A still-soliciting eye, and such a tongue
As I am glad I have not, though not to have it
Hath lost me in your liking.

Lear. Better thou
Hadst not been born than not t' have pleas'd me
better.

France. Is it but this? a tardiness in nature
Which often leaves the history unspoke
That it intends to do? My Lord of Burgundy,
What say you to the lady? Will you have her?
She is herself a dowry.

Bur. Royal King,
Give but that portion which yourself propose,
And here I take Cordelia by the hand,
Duchess of Burgundy.

Lear. I have sworn; I am firm.

Bur. I am sorry, then, you have so lost a father,
That you must lose a husband.

Cor. Peace be with Burgundy.
Since that respects of fortune are his love,
I shall not be his wife.

France. Fairest Cordelia, thou art most rich,
being poor;
Most choice, forsaken; and most lov'd, despis'd!
Thee and thy virtues here I seize upon.
Thy dow'rless daughter, king, thrown to my chance,
Is queen of us, of ours, and our fair France:
Not all the dukes of wat'rish Burgundy
Can buy this unpriz'd precious maid of me.

Lear. Thou hast her, France: let her be thine;
for we
Have no such daughter, nor shall ever see

That face of hers again :— Therefore be gone
Without our grace, our love, our benison.

[*Flourish.* *Exeunt* LEAR, BURGUNDY,
CORNWALL, ALBANY, GLOSTER,
EDMUND, *and* Attendants.]

France. Bid farewell to your sisters.

Cor. Ye jewels of our father, with wash'd eyes
Cordelia leaves you : I know you what you are ;
And, like a sister, am most loathe to call
Your faults as they are nam'd. Love well our father :
To your professèd bosoms I commit him :
But yet, alas, stood I within his grace,
I would prefer him to a better place.
So, farewell to you both.

Reg. Prescribe not us our duties.

Gon. Let your study
Be to content your lord, who hath receiv'd you
At fortune's alms.

Cor. Time shall unfold what plaited cunning
hides :
Who cover faults, at last them shame derides.
Well may you prosper.

France. Come, my fair Cordelia.

[*Exeunt* FRANCE *and* CORDELIA.]

Gon. I think our father will hence to-night.

Reg. That's most certain, and with you ; next
month with us.

Gon. You see how full of changes his age is ; he
always lov'd our sister most ; and with what poor
judgment he hath now cast her off appears too
grossly.

Reg. Such unconstant starts are we like to have
from him as this of Kent's banishment.

Gon. Pray you, let us hit together : we must do
something, and i' the heat.

SCENE II. *The Earl of GLOSTER's Castle.**Enter EDMUND, with a letter.**Edmund.*

THOU, nature, art my goddess ; to thy law
 My services are bound. Wherefore should I
 Stand in the plague of custom, and permit
 The curiosity of nations to deprive me,
 For that I am some twelve or fourteen moonshines
 Lag of a brother ? Why bastard ? Wherefore base ?
 When my dimensions are as well compact,
 My mind as gen'rous, and my shape as true,
 As honest madam's issue ?
 Legitimate Edgar, I must have your land :
 Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund
 As to the legitimate : fine word,—legitimate
 Well, my legitimate, if this letter speed,
 And my invention thrive, Edmund the base,
 Shall top the legitimate. I grow ; I prosper !

Enter GLOSTER.

Glo. Kent banish'd thus ! and France in choler
 parted !
 And the king gone to-night !
 Edmund, how now ! what news ?

Edm. So please your lordship, none.*[Hiding the letter.]**Glo.* What paper were you reading ?*Edm.* Nothing, my lord.*Glo.* No ? What needed, then, that terrible dis-
 patch of it into your pocket ? Let's see.*Edm.* I beseech you, sir, pardon me : it is a letter
 from my brother, that I have not all o'er-read ; and
 for so much as I have perus'd, I find it not fit for
 your o'er-looking.

Glo. Give me the letter, sir.

Edm. I hope, for my brother's justification, he wrote this but as an essay or taste of my virtue.

Glo. [*reads*] "*This policy and reverence of age makes the world bitter to the best of our times; keeps our fortunes from us till our oldness cannot relish them. Come to me, that of this I may speak more. If our father would sleep till I wak'd him, you should enjoy half his revènuè for ever, and live the below'd of your brother,*

Edgar."

"Sleep till I wak'd him,—you should enjoy half his revènuè,"—My son Edgar! When came this to you? who brought it?

Edm. It was not brought me, my lord,—there's the cunning of it; I found it thrown in at the case-ment of my closet.

Glo. O villain, villain! Abhorred villain! Go, sirrah, seek him; I'll apprehend him:—abominable villain!

Edm. If your honour judge it meet, I will place you where you shall hear us confer of this, and that without any further delay than this very evening.

Glo. He cannot be such a monster—

Edm. Nor is not, sure.

Glo. To his father, that so tenderly and entirely loves him.—Heaven and earth!—Edmund seek him out. These late eclipses in the sun and moon portend no good to us. Find out this villain, Edmund; it shall lose thee nothing. [*Exit.*]

Edm. This is the excellent foppery of the world, that, when we are sick in fortune,—often the surfeit of our own behaviour,—we make guilty of our disasters the sun, the moon, and the stars. Tut, I should have been that I am, had the maidenliest star in the firmament twinkled on my birth.—Edgar!—pat he comes, like the catastrophe of the old comedy.

ACT I. SCENE II.

19

Enter EDGAR.

Edg. How now, brother Edmund! what serious contemplation are you in?

Edm. I am thinking, brother, of a prediction I read this other day, what should follow these eclipses. When saw you my father last?

Edg. The night gone by.

Edm. Spake you with him?

Edg. Ay, two hours together.

Edm. Found you no displeasure in him by word nor countenance?

Edg. None at all.

Edm. Bethink yourself wherein you may have offended him: and at my entreaty forbear his presence till some little time hath qualified the heat of his displeasure.

Edg. Some villain hath done me wrong.

Edm. That's my fear. Retire with me to my lodging, from whence I will fitly bring you to hear my lord speak: pray ye, go; there's my key:—if you do stir abroad, go arm'd.

Edg. Arm'd, brother!

Edm. Brother, I advise you to the best; I am no honest man if there be any good meaning toward you: pray you, away.

Edg. Shall I hear from you anon?

Edm. I do serve you in this business.

[Exit EDGAR.]

A credulous father! and a brother noble,
Whose nature is so far from doing harms,
That he suspects none; on whose foolish honesty
My practices ride easy!—I see the business.—
Let me, if not by birth, have lands by wit:
All with me's meet that I can fashion fit. *[Exit.]*

SCENE 3.—*Before the Duke of ALBANY'S Castle.*

Enter GONERIL and OSWALD.

Goneril.

DID my father strike my gentleman for chiding
of his fool?

Osw. Ay, madam.

Gon. By day and night, he wrongs me ;
I'll not endure it :

His knights grow riotous, and himself upbraids us
On every trifle.—When he returns from hunting,
I will not speak with him ; say I am sick.

[Horns within.]

Osw. He's coming, madam ; I hear him.

Gon. Put on what weary negligence you please,
You and your fellows ; I'd have it come to question.
Idle old man. Remember what I've said.

Osw. Very well, madam. *[Exit.]*

Enter KENT, disguised.

Kent. Now, banish'd Kent,
If thou canst serve where thou dost stand condem'nd,
(So may it come !) thy master, whom thou lov'st,
Shall find thee full of labours. *[Horns within.]*

Enter LEAR, Knights, and Attendants.

Lear. Let me not stay a jot for dinner ; go get it
ready. *[Exit a Knight.]*

How now ! what art thou ?

Kent. A man, sir.

Lear. What dost thou profess ? What wouldst
thou with us ?

Kent. I do profess to be no less than I seem; to serve him truly that will put me in trust; to love him that is honest; to converse with him that is wise, and says little; to fear judgment; to fight when I cannot choose; and to eat no fish.

Lear. What art thou?

Kent. A very honest-hearted fellow, and as poor as the king.

Lear. If thou be as poor for a subject, as he is for a king, thou art poor enough. What wouldst thou?

Kent. Service.

Lear. Whom wouldst thou serve?

Kent. You.

Lear. Dost thou know me, fellow?

Kent. No, sir; but you have that in your countenance which I would fain call master.

Lear. What's that?

Kent. Authority.

Lear. What services canst thou do?

Kent. I can keep honest counsel, ride, run, mar a curious tale in telling it, and deliver a plain message bluntly.

Lear. How old art thou?

Kent. Not so young, sir, to love a woman for singing, nor so old to dote on her for any thing: I have years on my back forty-eight.

Lear. Follow me; thou shalt serve me. If I like thee no worse after dinner, I will not part from thee yet. Dinner, ho, dinner!—Where's my knave? my fool?—Go you, and call my fool hither.

[*Exit a Knight.*]

Enter OSWALD.

You, you, sirrah, where's my daughter?

Osw. So please you,—

[*Exit.*]

Lear. What says the fellow there? Call the clotpoll back. [*Exit KENT and a Knight.*—Where's my fool, ho?—I think the world's asleep.

Re-enter Knight.

How now! where's that mongrel?

Knight. He says, my lord, your daughter is not well.

Lear. Why came not the slave back to me when I call'd him?

Knight. Sir, he answer'd me in the roundest manner, he would not.

Lear. He would not!

Knight. My lord, I know not what the matter is; but, to my judgment, your highness is not entertain'd with that ceremonious affection as you were wont.

Lear. Ha! sayest thou so? Thou but rememb'erst me of mine own conception: I have perceiv'd a most faint neglect of late; which I have rather blam'd as mine own jealous curiosity than as a very pretence and purpose of unkindness: I will look further into't.—But where's my fool? I have not seen him this two days.

Knight. Since my young lady's going to France, sir, the fool hath much pined away.

Lear. No more of that; I have noted it well.—Go you, and tell my daughter I would speak with her. [*Exit a Knight.*]—Go you, call hither my fool.

[*Exit a Knight.*]

Re-enter KENT with OSWALD.

O, you sir, you, come you hither, sir: who am I, sir?

Osw. My lady's father.

Lear. "My lady's father"! my lord's knave: you dog! you slave! you cur!

Osw. I am none of these, my lord.

Lear. Do you bandy looks with me, you rascal?

[*Striking him.*]

ACT I. SCENE III.

23

Osw. I'll not be struck, my lord.

Kent. Nor tripp'd neither, you base football
player. *[Tripping up his heels.]*

Lear. I thank thee, fellow; thou serv'st me, and
I'll love thee.

Kent. Come, sir, arise, away! I'll teach you
differences: away, away! *[Pushes OSWALD out.]*

Lear. Now, my friendly knave, I thank thee:
there's earnest of thy service. *[Giving KENT money.]*

Enter Fool.

Fool. Let me hire him too:—here's my coxcomb.
[Offering KENT his cap.]

Lear. How now, my pretty knave! how dost
thou?

Fool. Sirrah, you were best take my coxcomb.

Kent. Why, fool?

Fool. Why, for taking one's part that's out of
favour: there, take my coxcomb. Why, this fellow
has banish'd two on's daughters, and did the
third a blessing against his will; if thou follow
him, thou must needs wear my coxcomb. Sirrah,
I'll teach thee a speech.

Lear. Do.

Fool. Mark it, nuncle:

*Have more than thou showest,
Speak less than thou knowest,
Lend less than thou owest,
Ride more than thou goest,
Learn more than thou trowest,
Set less than thou throwest;
And thou shalt have more
Than two tens to a score.*

Kent. This is nothing, fool.

Fool. Then 'tis like the breath of an unfee'd lawyer; you gave me nothing for 't. I would not be thee, nuncle: thou hast pared thy wit o' both sides, and left nothing i' th' middle. Here comes one o' the parings.

Enter GONERIL.

Lear. How now, daughter! what makes that frontlet on? Methinks you are too much of late i' the frown.

Gon. Not only, sir, this your all-licens'd fool, But other of your insolent retinue Do hourly carp and quarrel; breaking forth In rank and not-to-be-endurèd riots.

Sir,
I had thought, by making this well-known unto you, T' have found a safe redress; but now grow fearful, That you protect this course, and put it on By your allowance.

Fool. For, you trow, nuncle,

*The hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo so long,
That it had its head bit off by its young.*

So out went the candle, and we were left darkling.

Lear. Are you our daughter?

Gon. I would you would make use of your good wisdom,

Whereof I know you're fraught; and put away These dispositions, that of late transform you From what you rightly are.

Fool. May not an ass know when the cart draws the horse?—

Whoop, Jug! I love thee.

Lear. Doth any here know me?—Why, this is not

Lear:

Doth Lear walk thus? speak thus? Where are his eyes?

Who is it that can tell me who I am?—

Fool. Lear's shadow.—

Lear. I would learn that; for by the marks of sovereignty, knowledge and reason, I should be false persuaded I had daughters. Your name, fair gentlewoman?

Gon. This admiration, sir, is much o' the savour Of other your new pranks. I do beseech you To understand my purposes aright :

As you are old and rev'rend, you should be wise. Here do you keep a hundred knights and squires; Men so disorder'd, so debauch'd, and bold, That this our court, infected with their manners, Shows like a riotous inn.

Be, then, desir'd

By her, that else will take the thing she begs,

A little to disquantity your train;

And the remainder, that shall depend,

To be such men as may besort your age,

Which know themselves and you.

Lear. Darkness and devils!—

Saddle my horses; call my train together.—

Degenerate bastard! I'll not trouble thee:

Yet have I left a daughter.

Woe, that too late repents,— [Enter ALBANY.]

O, sir, are you come?

Is it your will? Speak, sir.—Prepare my horses.—

Ingratitude, thou marble-hearted fiend,

More hideous when thou show'st thee in a child

Than the sea-monster!

Alb. Pray, sir, be patient.

Lear. [To GONERIL.] Detested kite! thou liest:
My train are men of choice and rarest parts,

That all particulars of duty know,
 And in the most exact regard support
 The worships of their name.—O most small fault,
 How ugly didst thou in Cordelia show,
 Which like an engine, wrench'd my frame of nature
 From the fix'd place; drew from my heart all love,
 And added to the gall. O Lear, Lear, Lear!
 Beat at this gate, that let thy folly in,

[Striking his head.]

And thy dear judgment out!—Go, go, my people.

Alb. Now, gods that we adore, whereof comes this?

Lear. I'll tell thee,—[To GONERIL.] Life and death! I am asham'd

That thou hast power to shake my manhood thus;
 That these hot tears, which break from me perforce,
 Should make thee worth them.—Blasts and fogs
 upon thee!

Th' untented woundings of a father's curse
 Pierce every sense about thee!—Old fond eyes,
 Beweep this cause again, I'll pluck ye out,
 And cast you, with the waters that you lose,
 To temper clay.—Ha, is it come to this?
 Let it be so:—I have another daughter,
 Who, I am sure, is kind and comfortable:
 When she shall hear this of thee, with her nails
 She'll flay thy wolfish visage. Thou shalt find
 That I'll resume the shape which thou dost think
 I have cast off for ever; thou shalt, I warrant thee.

Gon. Do you mark that?

Alb. My lord, I'm guiltless, as I'm ignorant
 Of what hath mov'd you.

Lear. It may be so, my lord.—

Hear, nature, hear; dear goddess, hear!
 Suspend thy purpose, if thou didst intend
 To make this creature fruitful!
 Into her womb convey sterility!

Dry up in her the organs of increase ;
And from her derogate body never spring
A babe to honour her ! If she must teem,
Create her child of spleen ; that it may live,
And be a thwart disnatur'd torment to her !
Let it stamp wrinkles in her brow of youth ;
With cadent tears fret channels in her cheeks ;
Turn all her mother's pains and benefits
To laughter and contempt ; that she may feel
How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
To have a thankless child !—Away, away !



ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Court within GLOSTER'S Castle.*

Enter EDMUND and CURAN, meeting.

Edmund.

SAVE thee, Curan.

Cur. And you, sir. I have been with your father, and given him notice that the Duke of Cornwall and Regan his duchess will be here with him this night.

Edm. How comes that?

Cur. Have you heard of no likely wars toward 'twixt the Dukes of Cornwall and Albany?

Edm. Not a word.

Cur. You may do, then, in time. Fare you well, sir. *[Exit.]*

Edm. The duke be here to-night? The better! best!

This weaves itself perforce into my business.
My father hath set guard to take my brother;
And I have one thing, of a queasy question,
Which I must act:—briefness and fortune, work!—
Brother, a word;—descend:—brother, I say!

Enter EDGAR.

My father watches:—O sir, fly this place;
Intelligence is given where you are hid:—
You've now the good advantage of the night:—

Have you not spoken 'gainst the Duke of Cornwall?
He's coming hither.

Edg. I'm sure on't, not a word.

Edm. I hear my father coming:—pardon me;
In cunning I must draw my sword upon you:—
Draw: seem to defend yourself: now quit you well.—
Yield:—come before my father.—Light, ho, here!
Fly, brother.—Torches, torches!—So, farewell.

[*Exit EDGAR.*]

Some blood drawn on me would beget opinion
[*Wounds his arm.*]

Of my more fierce endeavour: I have seen drunkards
Do more than this in sport.—Father, father!—
Stop, stop!—No help?

Enter GLOSTER and Servants with torches.

Glo. Now, Edmund, where's the villain?

Edm. Here stood he in the dark, his sharp sword
out,

Mumbling of wicked charms, conjuring the moon
To stand auspicious mistress,—

Glo. But where is he?

Edm. Look, sir, I bleed.

Glo. Where is the villain, Edmund?

Edm. Fled this way, sir. When by no means he
could—

Glo. Pursue him, ho!—Go after. [*Exeunt some
Servants.*]—By no means what?

Edm. Persuade me to the murder of your lordship.
Seeing how loathly opposite I stood
To his unnatural purpose, in fell motion,
With his preparèd sword he charges home
My unprovided body, lanc'd mine arm:
But when he saw my best alarm'd spirits,
Bold in the quarrel's right, rous'd to th' encounter,
Or whether gasted by the noise I made,
Full sudden'ly he fled.

Glo. Let him fly far :
Not in this land shall he remain uncaught.

Hark, the duke's trumpets! I know not why he
comes.— [*Trumpets within.*]

All ports I'll bar; the villain shall not scape;
The duke must grant me that; and of my land,
Loyal and natural boy, I'll work the means
To make thee capable.

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, *and* Attendants.

Corn. How now, my noble friend! since I came
hither,—

Which I can call but now,—I've heard strange news.

Reg. What, did my father's godson seek your life?
He whom my father nam'd? your Edgar?

Glo. O lady, lady, shame would have it hid!

Reg. Was he not companion with the riotous knights
That tend upon my father?

Glo. I know not, madam:—'tis too bad, too bad.

Corn. Is he pursu'd?

Glo. Ay, my good lord.

Corn. If he be taken, he shall never more
Be fear'd of doing harm. For you, Edmund,
Whose virtue and obedience doth this instant
So much commend itself, you shall be ours.

You know not why we came to visit you,—

Reg. Thus out of season, threading dark-ey'd
night.

Our father he hath writ, so hath our sister,
Of differences, which I best thought it fit
To answer from our home.

Glo. I serve you, madam:
Your graces are right welcome. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter KENT *and* OSWALD, *severally.*

Osw. Good dawning to thee, friend: art of this
house?

ACT II. SCENE I.

31

Kent. Ay.

Osw. Where may we set our horses?

Kent. I' th' mire.

Osw. Prithee, if thou lov'st me, tell me,

Kent. I love thee not.

Osw. Why dost thou use me thus? I know thee not.

Kent. Fellow, I know thee.

Osw. What dost thou know me for?

Kent. A knave; a rascal; an eater of broken meats; a base, proud, shallow, beggarly, three-suited, filthy, worsted-stocking knave.

[Drawing his sword.

Osw. Away! I have nothing to do with thee.

Kent. Draw, you rascal: you come with letters 'gainst the king; draw, you rascal.

Osw. Help, ho! murder! help!

Kent. Strike, you slave; stand, rogue, stand.

[Beating him.

Osw. Help, ho! murder! murder!

Enter EDMUND.

Edm. How now! What's the matter?

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, GLOSTER, and Servants.

Reg. The messengers from our sister and the king.

Corn. What is your difference? speak.

Osw. I am scarce in breath, my lord.

Corn. Speak yet, how grew your quarrel?

Osw. This ancient ruffian, sir, whose life I have spar'd at suit of his gray beard,—

Kent. Thou zed! thou unnecessary letter!—"Spare my gray beard," you wagtail!

Corn. Peace, sirrah! Know you no reverence?

Kent. Yes, sir; but anger hath a privilege.

Corn. Why art thou angry?

Kent. That such a knave as this should wear a sword, who wears no honesty.

Corn. Why dost thou call him knave? What's his offence?

Kent. His countenance likes me not.

Corn. No more, perchance, does mine, nor his, nor hers.

Kent. Sir, 'tis my occupation to be plain :
I have seen better faces in my time
Than stands on any shoulder that I see
Before me at this instant.

Corn. This is some fellow,
Who, having been prais'd for bluntness, doth affect
A saucy roughness.

What was the offence you gave him?

Osw. I never gave him any :
It pleas'd the king his master very late
To strike at me, upon his misconstruction ;
When he, conjunct, and flattering his displeasure,
Tripp'd me behind ; drew on me here again.

Corn. Fetch forth the stocks!—
We'll teach you—

Kent. Sir, I am too old to learn :
Call not your stocks for me ; I serve the king.

Corn. Fetch forth the stocks!—As I have life and
honour,
There shall he sit till noon.

Reg. Till noon! till night, my lord ; and all night
too.

Kent. Why, madam, if I were your father's dog,
You should not use me so.

Reg. Sir, being his knave, I will.

[*Exit. Stocks brought out.*]

Glo. Let me beseech your grace not to do so :
His fault is much, and the good king his master
Will check him for it.

Corn. I will answer that.

[*KENT is put in the stocks.*

[*Exeunt all except GLOSTER and KENT.*

Glo. I'm sorry for thee, friend; 'tis the duke's pleasure,

Whose disposition, all the world well knows,
Will not be rubb'd nor stopp'd: I'll entreat for thee.

Kent. Pray, do not, sir: I've watch'd, and travell'd hard;

Some time I shall sleep out, the rest I'll whistle.
Give you good morrow.

Glo. The duke's to blame in this; 'twill be ill taken. [Exit.

Kent. Good king, that must approve the common saw,—

Thou out of heaven's benediction com'st
To the warm sun!
Approach, thou beacon to this under globe,
That by thy comfortable beams I may
Peruse this letter!—I know 'tis from Cordelia,
Who hast most fortunately been informed
Of my obscured course, all weary and o'erwatch'd,
Take vantage, heavy eyes, not to behold
This shameful lodging.
Fortune, good night: smile once more; turn thy
wheel!

SCENE 2.—*The Open Country.*

Enter EDGAR.

Edgar,

E heard myself proclaim'd;
And by the happy hollow of a tree
Escap'd the hunt. No port is free; no place,
That guard, and most unusual vigilance,
Does not attend my taking. While I may 'scape,