Boswell-Stone 1896 W. G. Boswell-Stone, *Shakspere's Holinshed: the chronicle and the historical plays compared* (London, 1896), 18–45.

III. MACBETH.

The historic time embraced by *The Tragedie of Macbeth* begins in 1040, when Duncan was slain, and ends with Macbeth's defeat by Siward on July 27, 1054. The historic Macbeth, however, escaped from the battle, and was killed in August, 1057.

Act I. sc. ii. – The following excerpts contain the materials for this scene. Shakspere was perhaps induced to make "the Norweyan lord" an ally of Macdonwald because Holinshed says that Sueno invaded Scotland/1 "immediately" after the suppression of the rebellion. Steevens conjectured that the mere official title ("sergeant at armes") of the messenger, who was sent to command the rebels' presence at Court, gave Shakspere a hint for introducing a sergeant, from whom Duncan learns the latest news of the revolt (I. ii. 2, 3).

Duncane. Duncan king of Scotland

[Hol. ii. H. S. 168/2/12.] After Malcolme succeeded his nephue Duncane the sonne of his daughter Beatrice: for Malcolme had two daughters, the one which was this Beatrice, being giuen in mariage vnto one Abbanath Crinen, a man of great nobilitie, and thane of the Iles and west parts of Scotland, bare of that mariage the foresaid Duncane; the other called Doada, was maried vnto Sinell/2 the thane of Glammis, by whom she had issue one Makbeth a valiant gentleman, and one that if he had not beene somewhat cruell of nature, might haue beene thought most woorthie the gouernement of a realme. On the other part, Duncane was so soft and gentle of nature,/3 that the people wished the inclinations and maners of these two cousins to haue beene so tempered and interchangeablie bestowed betwixt them, that where

[cousin to Macbeth].

Makbeth [valiant, but somewhat cruel].

Duncan of too soft a nature.

/1 These fictitious invasions of Sueno and Canute are, I believe, mentioned by no writer earlier than Boece, 247/55 b, &c.

/2 This name is variously spelt. Fordun's spelling is "Finele" (IV. xlix, 233), whence perhaps came Boece's "Synel" (246/64 b).

/3 With this description compare Macbeth's epithet, "the *gracious* Duncan" (III. i. 66).

the one had too much of clemencie, and the other of crueltie, the meane vertue betwixt these two extremities might haue reigned by indifferent partition in them both, so should Duncane haue proued a woorthie king, and Makbeth an excellent capteine. The beginning of Duncans reigne was verie quiet and peaceable, without anie notable trouble; but after it was perceiued how negligent he was in punishing offendors, manie misruled persons tooke occasion thereof to trouble the peace and quiet state of the common-wealth, by seditious commotions which first had their beginnings in this wise.

[Duncan was negligent in punishing offenders.]

Banquho thane of Lochquhaber.

Banquho the thane of Lochquhaber, of whom the house of the Stewards is descended, the which by order of linage hath now for

The house of the Stewards.

a long time inioied the crowne of Scotland, euen till these our daies, as he gathered the finances due to the king, and further punished somewhat sharpelie such as were notorious offendors, being assailed by a number of rebels inhabiting in that countrie, and spoiled of the monie and all other things, had much a doo to get awaie with life, after he had receiued sundrie grieuous wounds amongst them. Yet escaping their hands, after hee was somewhat recouered of his hurts, and was able to ride, he repaired to the court, where making his complaint to the king in most earnest wise, he purchased at length that the offendors were sent for by a sergeant at armes, to appeare to make answer vnto such matters as should be laid to their charge: but they augmenting their mischiefous act with a more wicked deed, after they had misused the messenger with sundrie kinds of reproches, they finallie slue him also.

A mutinie amongst the people of Lochquhaber.

A sergeant at armes slain by the rebels.

Then doubting not but for such contemptuous demeanor against the kings regall authoritie, they should be inuaded with all the power the king could make, Makdowald one of great estimation among them, making first a confederacie with his neerest friends and kinsmen, tooke vpon him to be chiefe capteine of all such rebels as would stand against the king, in maintenance of their grieuous offenses latelie committed against him. Manie slanderous words also, and railing tants this Makdowald vttered against his prince, calling him a faint-hearted milkesop, more meet to gouerne a sort of idle moonks in some cloister, than to haue the

Makdowald offereth himselfe to be capteine of the rebels

[He calls Duncan a faint-hearted milksop.]

rule of such valiant and hardie men of warre as the Scots were. He vsed also such subtill persuasions and forged allurements, that in a small time he had gotten togither a mightie power of men: for out of the westerne Iles there came vnto him a great multitude of people, offering themselues to assist him in that rebellious quarell, and out of Ireland in hope of the spoile came no small number of Kernes and Galloglasses, offering gladlie to serue vnder him, whither it should please him to lead them.

[People from the western isles, and kerns and gallow-glasses from Ireland, help him. Cp. Macb. I. i. 12, 13.]

Makdowald thus hauing a mightie puissance about him, incountered with such of the kings people as were sent against him into Lochquhaber, and discomfiting them, by mere force tooke their capteine Malcolme, and after the end of the battell smote off his head. This ouerthrow being notified to the king, did put him in woonderfull feare, by reason of his small skill in warlike affaires. Calling therefore his nobles to a councell, he asked of them their best aduise for the subduing of Makdowald and other the rebels. Here, in sundrie heads (as euer it happeneth) were sundrie opinions, which they vttered according to euerie man his skill. At length Makbeth speaking much against the kings softnes, and ouermuch slacknesse in punishing offendors, whereby they had such time to assemble togither, he promised notwithstanding, if the charge were committed vnto him and vnto Banquho, so to order the matter, that the rebels should be shortly vanquished

Makdowald discomfiteth the kings power.

The smal skil of the king in warlike affaires.

Makbeths offer

[to subdue

the rebels, in concert with Banquo].

and quite put downe, and that not so much as one of them should be found to make resistance within the countrie.

Makbeth and Banquho are sent against the rebels. The rebels forsake their capteine.

And euen so it came to passe: for being sent foorth with a new power, at his entring into Lochquhaber, the fame of his comming put the enimies in such feare, that a great number of them stale secretlie awaie from their capteine Makdowald, who neuerthelesse inforced thereto, gaue battell vnto Makbeth, with the residue which remained with him: but being ouercome, and fleeing for refuge into a castell (within the which his wife and children were inclosed) at length when he saw how he could neither defend the hold anie longer against his enimies, nor yet vpon surrender be suffered to depart with life saued, hee first slue his wife and children, and lastlie himselfe, least if he had yeelded simplie, he should haue beene executed in most cruell wise for an example

Makdowald slaieth his wife and children, and lastlie himselfe.

to other. Makbeth entring into the castell by the gates, as then set open, found the carcasse of Makdowald lieng dead there amongst the residue of the slaine bodies, which when he beheld, remitting no peece of his cruell nature with that pitifull sight, he caused the head to be cut off, and set vpon a poles end, and so sent it as a present to the king, who as then laie at Bertha./1 The headlesse trunke he commanded to bee hoong vp vpon an high paire of gallows. . . . Thus was iustice and law restored againe to the old accustomed course, by the diligent means of Makbeth. Immediatlie wherevpon woord came that Sueno king of Norway was arriued in Fife with a puissant armie, to subdue the whole realme of Scotland.

Makdowald's head sent to the king. Makbeth's crueltie.

Justice and law restored.

Sueno king of Norway landed in Fife.

The army raised to resist Sueno was divided into three "battels"; the van and rear being assigned to Macbeth and Banquo respectively, while Duncan commanded the main body. The events of the subsequent campaign – which ended with an overwhelming defeat of the Danes /2 – are not dramatized. Sueno, accompanied by a few survivors of the expedition, escaped to Norway. – Hol. ii. H. S. 169/2/61–170/2/4.

Solemne processions for victorie gotten.

[Hol. ii. H. S. 170/2/21.] The Scots hauing woone so notable a victorie, after they had gathered and diuided the spoile of the field, caused solemne processions to be made in all places of the realme, and thanks to be giuen to almightie God, that had sent them so faire a day /3 ouer their enimies. But whilest the people were thus at their processions, woord was brought that a new fleet of Danes was arriued at Kingcorne,/4 sent thither by Canute king of England, in reuenge of his brother Suenos ouerthrow. To

A power of Danes arrive at Kingcorne out of England.

/1 According to Boece (278/45 b) the site of this town was near the modern Perth, founded by William the Lion to replace Bertha, which was destroyed by an inundation in 1210.

/2 The Scots won the victory by drugging the Danes, who incautiously accepted from Duncan a present of ale and bread, compounded with "the iuice of mekilwoort berries." – Hol. ii. H. S. 170/1/41. In the Clarendon Press ed. of *Macbeth*, it is conjectured that "mekilwoort" is the "insane Root," spoken of by Banquo (I. iii. 84). The following description of the plant called by Boece "Solatium amentiale," and here englished as "mekilwoort," was omitted by Hol., and Bellenden, the translator of Boece: "herba est ingentis quantita-

tis, acinos principio virides, ac mox vbi maturuerint purpureos & ad nigredinem vergentes habens, ad caulem enatos & sub foliis latentes sesÓque quasi retrahentes, vimque soporiferam, aut in amentiam agendi si affatim sumpseris habentes, magna vbertate in Scotia proueniens." – 248/59 b.

/3 Cp. Macbeth's words (I. iii. 37): "*So* foule and *faire a day* I haue not seene."

/4 Kinghorn, Fife, on the Firth of Forth.

resist these enimies, which were alreadie landed, and busie in spoiling the countrie; Makbeth and Banquho were sent with the kings authoritie, who hauing with them a conuenient power, incountred the enimies, slue part of them, and chased the other to their ships. They that escaped and got once to their ships, obteined of Makbeth for a great summe of gold, that such of their friends as were slaine at this last bickering, might be buried in saint Colmes Inch./1

The Danes vanquished by Makbeth and Banquho.

Danes buried in S. Colmes Inch.

Act I. sc. iii.–II. iii. – It is possible that some passages in Holinshed, describing the bewitchment of Duff King of Scots, were in Shakspere's mind when he wrote the couplets detailing the First Witch's projects of revenge upon the sea-captain whose wife had insulted her (ll. 18Ñ25). Duff could

[Hol. ii. H. S. 149/2/2.] not sleepe in the night time by anie prouocations that could be deuised,/2 but still fell into exceeding sweats, which by no means might be restreined. . . . But about that present time there was a murmuring amongst the people, how the king was vexed with no naturall sicknesse, but by sorcerie and magicall art, practised by a sort of witches dwelling in a towne of Murrey land, called Fores./3

[He could not sleep at night by any means.]

Witches in Fores.

Becoming aware of this rumour, Duff sent certain trustworthy agents to the castle of Forres, which was held by his lieutenant Donwald, of whom we shall hear again. It chanced that a soldier in the garrison of the castle had a mistress by whom he was made acquainted with the practices and designs of her mother, who was one of the suspected witches, leagued with others for the destruction of Duff. Donwald being informed of these revelations, examined the witch's daughter, who acknowledged that what he had been told was true.

[Hol. ii. H. S. 149/2/59.] Wherevpon learning by hir confession in what house in the towne it was where they wrought there

The witches are found out.

/1 Inchcolm (S. Columba's Island), Firth of Forth. Cp. *Macbeth*, I. ii. 62-65:

> "Sweno, the Norwayes King craues composition;
> Nor would we deigne him buriall of his men,
> Till he disbursëd, at Saint Colmes ynch,
> Ten thousand dollars to our generall vse."

/2 Cp. *Macbeth*, I. iii. 19, 20:

> "Sleepe shall neyther Night nor Day
> Hang vpon his Pent-house Lid;" &c.

/3 Forres is about half way between Elgin and Nairn, and not far from the Moray Firth.

mischiefous mysterie, he sent foorth souldiers about the middest of the night, who breaking into the house, found one of the witches rosting vpon a woodden broch an image of wax at the fier, resembling in each feature the kings person, made and deuised (as is to be thought) by craft and art of the diuell: an other of them sat reciting certeine words of inchantment, and still basted the image with a certeine liquor verie busilie.

An image of wax rosting at the fire.

The souldiers finding them occupied in this wise, tooke them togither with the image, and led them into the castell, where being streictlie examined for what purpose they went about such manner of inchantment, they answered, to the end to make away the king: for as the image did waste afore the fire, so did the bodie of the king breake foorth in sweat. And as for the words of the inchantment, they serued to keepe him still waking from sleepe, so that as the wax euer melted, so did the kings flesh: by the which meanes it should haue come to passe, that when the wax was once cleane consumed, the death of the king should immediatlie follow.

The witches were examined.

The whole matter is confessed.

[The spell kept the king from sleeping; as the wax melted, so did his flesh.]

I now resume the thread of Macbeth's fortunes, from the time when, according to Holinshed (Hol. ii. H. S. 170/2/45), a perpetual peace was established with the Danes.

[Hol. ii. H. S. 170/2/52.] Shortlie after happened a strange and vncouth woonder, which afterward was the cause of much trouble in the realme of Scotland, as ye shall after heare. It fortuned as Makbeth and Banquho iournied towards Fores, where the king then laie, they went sporting by the waie togither without other companie, saue onelie themselues, passing thorough the woods and fields, when suddenlie in the middest of a laund,/1 there met them three women in strange and wild apparell, resembling creatures of elder world, whome when they attentiuelie beheld, woondering much at the sight, the first of them spake and said: "All haile, Makbeth, thane of Glammis!"/2 (for he had latelie entered into that dignitie and office by the death of his father Sinell.) The second of them said: "Haile, Makbeth, thane of Cawder!"

[Macbeth and Banquo meet three women, in strange and wild apparel. Cp. Macb. I. iii. 40.]

The prophesie of three women supposing to be the weird sisters or feiries.

/1 "Medio repente campo" (Boece, p. 249/42).
/2 Glamis is five and a half miles S.W. of Forfar. – Bartholomew.
/3 Cawdor Castle is five and a half miles S.W. of Nairn. – Bartholomew.

But the third said: "All haile, Makbeth, that heereafter shalt be king of Scotland!"/1

Then Banquho: "What manner of women (saith he) are you, that seeme so little fauourable vnto me, whereas to my fellow heere, besides high offices, ye assigne also the kingdome, appointing foorth nothing for me at all?" "Yes (saith the first of them) we promise greater benefits vnto thee, than vnto him, for he shall reigne in deed, but with an vnluckie end: neither shall he leaue anie issue behind him to succeed in his place, where contrarilie thou in deed shalt not reigne at all, but of thee those

shall be borne which shall gouerne the Scotish kingdome by long order of continuall descent." Herewith the foresaid women vanished immediatlie out of their sight. This was reputed at the first but some vaine fantasticall illusion by Mackbeth and Banquho, insomuch that Banquho would call Mackbeth in iest, king of Scotland; and Mackbeth againe would call him in sport likewise, the father of manie kings. But afterwards the common opinion was, that these women were either the weird sisters, that is (as ye would say) the goddesses of destinie, or else some nymphs or feiries, indued with knowledge of prophesie by their necromanticall science, bicause euerie thing came to passe as they had spoken. For shortlie after, the thane of Cawder being condemned at Fores of treason against the king committed; his lands, liuings, and offices were giuen of the kings liberalitie to Mackbeth./2

A thing to wonder at.

[Macbeth (in jest) called King of Scotland.] *Banquho the father of manie kings.* [The women were goddesses of destinie, nymphs, or fairies.]

The thane of Cawder condemned of treason. Mackbeth made thane of Cawder.

/1 The following passage in Wyntoun (VI. xviii. 13-26) gives the earliest known form of this story (about 1424):

Á nycht he [Macbeth] thowcht in hys dremyng,
Đat syttand he wes besyde þe Kyng [Duncan]
At a Sete in hwntyng; swá
In-til his Leisch had Grewhundys twá.
He thowcht, quhile he wes swá syttand,
He sawe thre Wamen by gangand;
And þái Wemen þan thowcht he
Thre Werd Systrys mást lyk to be.
Đe fyrst he hard say gangand by,
"Lo, yhondyr þe Thayne of Crwmbawchty" [Cromarty].
Đe toþir Woman sayd agayne,
"Of Morave [Moray] yhondyre I se þe Thayne."
Đe thryd þan sayd, "I se þe Kyng."
All þis he herd in hys dremyng.

These thanedoms were afterwards conferred upon Macbeth by Duncan (ll. 27, 28). /2 Cp. *Macbeth*, I. ii. 63-67; iii. 105-116.

The same night after, at supper, Banquho iested with him and said; Now Mackbeth thou hast obteined those things which the two former sisters prophesied, there remaineth onelie for thee to purchase that which the third said should come to passe. Whereupon Mackbeth reuoluing the thing in his mind, began euen then to deuise how he might atteine to the kingdome: but yet he thought with himselfe that he must tarie a time, which should aduance him thereto (by the diuine prouidence) as it had come to passe in his former preferment. But shortlie after it chanced that king Duncane, hauing two sonnes by his wife which was the daughter of Siward earle of Northumberland, he made the elder of them called Malcolme prince of Cumberland, as it were thereby to appoint him his successor in the kingdome, immediatlie after his deceasse. Mackbeth sore troubled herewith, for that he saw by this means his hope sore hindered (where, by the old lawes of the realme, the ordinance was, that if he that should succeed were not of able age to take the charge vpon himselfe, he that was next of bloud vnto him should be admitted) he began to take counsell how he might vsurpe the kingdome by force, hauing a iust quarell so to doo (as he tooke the matter) for that Duncane did what in

Mackbeth deuiseth how he might atteine the kingdome.

The daughter of Siward earle of Northumberland, wife to king Duncane. [Malcolm is made Prince of Cumberland, and Macbeth's succession to the throne is thus endangered.]

Mackbeth studieth which way he

may take the kingdome by force.

him lay to defraud him of all maner of title and claime, which he might in time to come, pretend vnto the crowne./1

Prophesies mooue men to vnlawfull attempts.

Women desirous of high estate.

The woords of the three weird sisters also (of whom before ye haue heard) greatlie incouraged him herevnto, but speciallie his wife lay sore vpon him to attempt the thing, as she that was verie ambitious, burning in vnquenchable desire to beare the name of a queene. At length therefore, communicating his purposed intent with his trustie friends, amongst whome Banquho was the chiefest, vpon confidence of their promised aid, he slue the king at Enuerns,/2 or (as some say) at Botgosuane, in the sixt yeare of

Mackbeth sleaeth king Duncane [with Banquo's connivance].

/1 Cp. *Macbeth*, I. iv. 37; 48:

> "*King*. . . . We will establish our Estate vpon
> Our eldest, Malcolme; whom we name hereafter,
> The Prince of Cumberland": . . .
> . . . *Macb.* [*aside*]. The Prince of Cumberland! – that is a step
> On which I must fall downe, or else o'er-leape,
> For in my way it lyes."

/2 "Enuern[e]s" = Inverness.

Mackbeth vsurpeth the crowne.

his reigne. Then hauing a companie about him of such as he had made priuie to his enterprise, he caused himselfe to be proclamed king, and foorthwith went vnto Scone, where (by common consent) he receiued the inuesture of the kingdome according to the accustomed maner./1 The bodie of Duncane was first conueied vnto Elgine, and there buried in kinglie wise; but afterwards it was remoued and conueied vnto Colmekill,/2 and there laid in a sepulture amongst his predecessors, in the yeare after the birth of our Sauiour, 1046./3

Duncanes buriall. 1046. H. B.

On comparing the foregoing passages with the play, the reader will observe how closely Shakspere agrees with Holinshed in regard to (1) the weird sisters' apparition and predictions; (2) the effect on Macbeth's mind of Malcolm's recognition as Prince of Cumberland, or heir apparent; and (3) Lady Macbeth's urgency in prompting her husband to attempt Duncan's murder. Shakspere assumed that Cawdor's treason – the nature of which is not specified by Holinshed – consisted in secretly aiding the Norwegians. Banquo's fate could not have moved our pity, if the Chronicles had been followed in making him know of, perhaps even share, Macbeth's crime; and adherence to authority in this respect must have caused Macbeth to appear less sinful by comparison with his old associate, who, as Shakspere represents the matter, strenuously resisted those "cursed thoughts" (II. i. 8) which the weird sisters' prophecies had suggested.

No particulars of Duncan's murder are given. For these Shakspere turned to the murder of King Duff by Donwald. Duff (as we have seen) suffered from the effects of witchcraft. Regaining his former health after the witches' charm had been broken, he put to death the instigators of the sorcery practised against him. Among those thus executed were some kinsmen of Donwald, who, having vainly craved their pardon,

> [Hol. ii. H. S. 150/1/39.] conceiued such an inward malice towards the king (though he shewed it not outwardlie at the first) that

/1 Cp. *Macbeth*, II. iv. 31, 32:

"*Rosse.* . . . Then ' tis most like
The Soueraignty will fall vpon Macbeth.
Macd. He is already nam'd, and gone to Scone
To be inuested."

/2 Iona. Cp. *Macbeth*, II. iv. 32-35:

"*Rosse.* Where is Duncan's body?
Macd. Carried to Colmekill,
The Sacred Store-house of his Predecessors
And Guardian of their Bones."

/3 H[ector] B[oece's] date is wrong. Duncan was slain in 1040. – M. Scottus (Pertz, v. 557).

Donwald conceiued hatred against the king.

the same continued still boiling in his stomach, and ceased not, till through setting on of his wife, and in reuenge of such vnthankefulnesse, hee found meanes to murther the king within the foresaid castell of Fores where he vsed to soiourne. For the king being in that countrie, was accustomed to lie most commonlie within the same castell, hauing a speciall trust in Donwald, as a man whom he neuer suspected.

But Donwald, not forgetting the reproch which his linage had susteined by the execution of those his kinsmen, whome the king for a spectacle to the people had caused to be hanged, could not but shew manifest tokens of great griefe at home amongst his familie: which his wife perceiuing, ceassed not to trauell with him, till she vnderstood what the cause was of his displeasure. Which at length when she had learned by his owne relation, she as one that bare no lesse malice in hir heart towards the king, for the like cause on hir behalfe, than hir husband did for his friends, counselled him (sith the king oftentimes vsed to lodge in his house without anie gard about him, other than the garrison of the castell, which was wholie at his commandement) to make him awaie, and shewed him the meanes wherby he might soonest accomplish it.

Donwalds wife counselled him to murther the king.

[She showed Donwald how the king might be slain when lodging at Forres Castle.]

The womans euill counsell is followed.

Donwald thus being the more kindled in wrath by the words of his wife, determined to follow hir aduise in the execution of so heinous an act. Whervpon deuising with himselfe for a while, which way hee might best accomplish his curssed intent, at length gat opportunitie, and sped his purpose as followeth. It chanced that the king vpon the daie before he purposed to depart foorth of the castell, was long in his oratorie at his praiers, and there continued till it was late in the night. At the last, comming foorth, he called such afore him as had faithfullie serued him in pursute and apprehension of the rebels, and giuing them heartie thanks, he bestowed sundrie honorable gifts amongst them, of the which number Donwald was one, as he that had beene euer accounted a most faithfull seruant to the king.

[The night before the King was to leave the castle he stayed late at his prayers.]

The king rewarded his friends.

The king went to bed.

At length, hauing talked with them a long time, he got him into his priuie chamber, onelie with two of his chamberlains, who hauing brought him to bed, came foorth againe, and then fell to

His chamberleins went to banketting.

banketting with Donwald and his wife, who had prepared diuerse delicate dishes, and sundrie sorts of drinks for their reare supper or collation, wherat they sate vp so long, till they had charged their stomachs with such full gorges, that their heads were no sooner got to the pillow, but asleepe they were so fast, that a man might haue remooued the chamber ouer them, sooner than to haue awaked them out of their droonken sleepe.

[Instigated by his wife, Donwald engages four of his servants to commit the murder.]

Then Donwald, though he abhorred the act greatlie in heart, yet through instigation of his wife hee called foure of his seruants vnto him (whome he had made priuie to his wicked intent before, and framed to his purpose with large gifts) and now declaring vnto them, after what sort they should worke the feat, they gladlie obeied his instructions, and speedilie going about the murther, they enter the chamber (in which the king laie) a little before

The suborned seruants cut the kings throte.

cocks crow, where they secretlie cut his throte as he lay sleeping, without anie buskling/1 at all: and immediatlie by a posterne gate they caried foorth the dead bodie into the fields, and throwing it vpon an horsse there prouided readie for that purpose, they conuey it vnto a place, about two miles distant from the castell, where they staied, and gat certeine labourers to helpe them to turne the course of a little riuer running through the fields there, and

The king his buriall.

digging a deepe hole in the chanell, they burie the bodie in the same, ramming it vp with stones and grauell so closelie, that setting the water in the right course againe, no man could perceiue that anie thing had beene newlie digged there. This they did by order appointed them by Donwald as is reported, for that the bodie should not be found, and by bleeding (when Donwald should be present) declare him to be guiltie of the murther. ę For such an opinion men haue, that the dead corps of anie man being slaine, will bleed abundantlie if the murtherer be present. But for what consideration soeuer they buried him there, they had no

The poore laborers are slaine.

sooner finished the worke, but that they slue them whose helpe they vsed herein, and streightwaies therevpon fled into Orknie.

Donwald kept himself amongst the watchmen.

Donwald, about the time that the murther was in dooing, got him amongst them that kept the watch, and so continued in

/1 Bustling, noise. "Nullo prope strepitu" (Boece, 222/40).

companie with them all the residue of the night. But in the morning when the noise was raised in the kings chamber how the king was slaine, his bodie conueied awaie, and the bed all beraied with bloud; he with the watch ran thither, as though he had knowne nothing of the matter, and breaking into the chamber, and finding cakes of bloud in the bed, and on the floore about the sides of it, he foorthwith slue the chamberleins, as guiltie of that heinous murther, and then like a mad man running to and fro, he ransacked euerie corner within the castell, as though it had beene to haue seene if he might haue found either the bodie, or anie

Donald a verie dissembler [: he ransacked every corner of the castle to find the king's

body, and slew the two chamberlains, as guilty of the murder].

of the murtherers hid in anie priuie place: but at length comming to the posterne gate, and finding it open, he burdened the chamberleins, whome he had slaine, with all the fault, they hauing the keies of the gates committed to their keeping all the night, and therefore it could not be otherwise (said he) but that they were of counsell in the committing of that most detestable murther.

Some wiser than other. The matter suspected.

Finallie, such was his ouer earnest diligence in the seuere inquisition and triall of the offendors heerein, that some of the lords began to mislike the matter, and to smell foorth shrewd tokens, that he should not be altogither cleare himselfe. But for so much as they were in that countrie, where he had the whole rule, what by reason of his friends and authoritie togither, they doubted to vtter what they thought, till time and place should better serue therevnto, and heerevpon got them awaie euerie man to his home.

The circumstances of Duff's murder, related above, have their dramatic parallels in (1) Duncan's presence as a guest in Macbeth's castle; (2) the part taken by Lady Macbeth in urging and planning the murder; (3) the drunken sleep of Duncan's chamberlains on the night of the murder; (4) Macbeth's precautionary slaughter of the chamberlains; (5) the suspicion caused by his over-acted horror when the murder was discovered.

We have seen how, in *Cymbeline*, Shakspere used a tradition of the three Hays' prowess at the battle of Loncarty, fought in the reign of Kenneth III., King of Scots. A story told of this Kenneth furnished, it has been conjectured,/1 a hint for some words of Macbeth (II. ii. 35; 41–43), uttered in the first agony of remorse for Duncan's murder:

/1 By Dr. Furness. See his variorum *Macbeth*, p. 359.

> Me thought I heard a voyce cry, "Sleep no more!" . . .
> Still it cry'd "Sleepe no more!" to all the House:
> "Glamis hath murther'd Sleepe, and therefore Cawdor
> "Shall sleepe no more; Macbeth shall sleepe no more!"

In order to obtain his son's succession Kenneth had secretly poisoned his nephew Malcolm, – son of the late King Duff – who, by Scottish law, was the rightful heir to the throne. Kenneth ruled well; and his sole guilty deed remained undiscovered.

The king had a giltie conscience.

[Hol. ii. H. S. 158/1/9.] Thus might he seeme happie to all man, hauing the loue both of his lords and commons: but yet to himselfe he seemed most vnhappie, as he that could not but still liue in continuall feare, least his wicked practise concerning the death of Malcolme Duffe should come to light and knowledge of the world. For so commeth it to passe, that such as are pricked in conscience for anie secret offense committed, haue euer an vnquiet mind. And (as the fame goeth) it chanced that a

A voice heard by the king.

voice was heard as he was in bed in the night time to take his rest, vttering vnto him these or the like woords in effect: "Thinke not Kenneth that the wicked slaughter of Malcolme Duffe by thee contriued, is kept secret from the knowledge of the eternall God: thou art he that didst conspire the innocents death, enter-

prising by traitorous meanes to doo that to thy neighbour, which thou wouldest haue reuenged by cruell punishment in anie of thy subiects, if it had beene offered to thy selfe. It shall therefore come to passe, that both thou thy selfe, and thy issue, through the iust vengeance of almightie God, shall suffer woorthie punishment, to the infamie of thy house and familie for euermore. For euen at this present are there in hand secret practises to dispatch both thee and thy issue out of the waie, that other maie inioy this kingdome which thou doost indeuour to assure vnto thine issue."

[After hearing this voice the King passed a sleepless night.]

The king with this voice being striken into great dread and terror, passed that night without anie sleepe comming in his eies.

All now leave the stage except Duncan's sons, Malcolm and Donalbain, who, after a brief colloquy, resolve to fly from Scotland (II. iii. 141–152). Holinshed says that

[Hol. ii. H. S. 171/1/73.] Malcolme Cammore and Donald

Malcolme Cammore and Donald Bane flee into Cumberland. Malcolme Cammore received by Edward king of England.

Bane the sons of king Duncane, for feare of their liues (which they might well know that Mackbeth would seeke to bring to end for his more sure confirmation in the estate) fled into Cumberland, where Malcolme remained, till time that saint Edward the sonne of Ethelred recouered the dominion of England from the Danish power, the which Edward receiued Malcolme by way of most friendlie enterteinment: but Donald passed ouer into Ireland, where he was tenderlie cherished by the king of that land./1

Act II. sc. iv. – Ross and an old man enter and talk of certain portents connected with Duncan's murder (1–20). Similar occurrences attended the murder of Duff, as my next excerpt shows.

Prodigious weather.

[Hol. ii. H. S. 151/1/12.] For the space of six moneths togither, after this heinous murther thus committed, there appeered no sunne by day, nor moone by night in anie part of the realme, but still was the skie couered with continuall clouds, and sometimes such outragious winds /2 arose, with lightenings and tempests, that the people were in great feare of present destruction. . . .

[*No sun* or moon seen for six months, *great winds &c.*]

Horsses eate their owne flesh.

[Hol. ii. H. S. 152/1/9.] Monstrous sights also that were seene within the Scotish kingdome that yeere were these: horsses in Louthian, being of singular beautie and swiftnesse, did eate their owne flesh, and would in no wise taste anie other meate. . . . There was a sparhawke also strangled by an owle. Neither was it anie lesse woonder that the sunne, as before is said, was continuallie couered with clouds for six moneths

A sparhawke strangled by an owle.

/1 Malcolm says: "Ile to England." Donalbain determines otherwise:

> "To Ireland, I; our seperated fortune
> Shall keepe vs both the safer: where we are,
> There's daggers in men's Smiles: the neere in blood,
> The neerer bloody."

II. iii. 143-147. By "England" and "Ireland" the kings of those countries are, I suppose, meant. Shakspere several times uses "England" in this sense: see, for example, *Macbeth*, IV. ii. 43, and *John*, III. iv. 8.

/2 Compare what Lennox says (II. iii, 59, 60), just before Duncan's murder is discovered:

> "The Night ha's been vnruly: where we lay,
> Our Chimneys were blowne downe"; . . .

space. But all men vnderstood that the abhominable murther of king Duffe was the cause heereof. . . ./1

Two months – the utmost dramatic time, including intervals,/2 which can fairly be assigned to this play – left Shakspere no room to set forth Duncan's murderer as other than a graceless tyrant, led rapidly on from crime to crime. But the following passages witness that ten of the seventeen years of Macbeth's reign were distinguished by a just though rigorous government, harmful to none save lawbreakers and oppressors of the weak.

Mackbeths liberalitie.

[Hol. ii. H. S. 171/2/9.] Mackbeth, after the departure thus of Duncanes sonnes, vsed great liberalitie towards the nobles of the realme, thereby to win their fauour, and when he saw that no man went about to trouble him, he set his whole intention to

Mackbeth studieth to aduance iustice.

mainteine iustice, and to punish all enormities and abuses, which had chanced through the feeble and slouthfull administration of Duncane. . . . Mackbeth shewing himselfe thus a most diligent punisher of all iniuries and wrongs attempted by anie disordered persons within his realme, was accounted the sure defense and

A kinglie endeuour.

buckler of innocent people; and hereto he also applied his whole indeuor, to cause yoong men to exercise themselues in vertuous maners, and men of the church to attend their diuine seruice according to their vocations. . . .

[If Macbeth had been a lawful king, and if he had not proved a tyrant at last, he might have been accounted one of the best of princes.]

To be briefe, such were the woorthie dooings and princelie acts of this Mackbeth in the administration of the realme, that if he had atteined therevnto by rightfull means, and continued in vprightnesse of iustice as he began, till the end of his reigne, he might well haue beene numbred amongest the most noble princes that anie where had reigned. He made manie holesome laws and statutes for the publike weale of his subiects. . . .

Makbeths counterfeit zeale and equitie.

These and the like commendable lawes /3 Makbeth caused to be put as then in vse, gouerning the realme for the space of ten yeares in equall iustice.

/1 An account of the execution of Duff's murderers is followed by these words: "This dreadfull end had Donwald and his wife, before he saw anie sunne after the murther was committed, and that by the appointment of the most righteous God, the creator of that heauenlie planet and all other things, who suffereth no crime to be vnreuenged." – Hol. ii, H. S. 151/2/43. Cp. *Macbeth*, II. iv. 5-7.

/2 T-A., 207, 208. <Daniel 1879:207–8>

/3 Given in Hol. ii. H. S. pp. 171, 172, under this heading: "Lawes made by king Makbeth set / foorth according to Hector / Boetius."

Act III. sc. iii. – These words conclude all that is recorded in

Macbeth's praise; and we then enter upon the second period of his reign, which is said to have begun "shortlie after" the close of his ten years of good rule.

[Hol. ii. H. S. 172/2/24.] But this was but a counterfet zeale of equitie shewed by him, partlie against his naturall inclination to purchase thereby the fauour of the people. Shortlie after, he began to shew what he was, in stead of equitie practising crueltie. For the pricke of conscience (as it chanceth euer in tyrants, and such as atteine to anie estate by vnrighteous means) caused him euer to feare, least he should be serued of the same cup, as he had ministred to his predecessor. The woords also of the three weird sisters, would not out of his mind, which as they promised him the kingdome, so likewise did they promise it at the same time vnto the posteritie of Banquho. He willed therefore the same Banquho with his sonne named Fleance, to come to a supper that he had prepared for them, which was in deed, as he had deuised, present death at the hands of certeine murderers, whom he hired to execute that deed, appointing them to meete with the same Banquho and his sonne without the palace, as they returned to their lodgings, and there to slea them, so that he would not haue his house slandered, but that in time to come he might cleare himselfe, if anie thing were laid to his charge vpon anie suspicion that might arise./1

Makbeths guiltie conscience.

[He remembered also the words of the weird sisters.]

Makbeths deuise to slea Banquho and his sonne [, Fleance].

[They were to be murdered as they returned from a supper at the palace, so that Macbeth might be held guiltless.]

Banquho is slaine, but his sonne escapeth.

It chanced yet by the benefit of the darke night, that though the father were slaine, the sonne yet by the helpe of almightie God reseruing him to better fortune, escaped that danger: and afterwards hauing some inkeling (by the admonition of some friends which he had in the court) how his life was sought no lesse than his fathers, who was slaine not by chancemedlie (as by the handling of the matter Makbeth woould haue had it to appeare) but euen vpon a prepensed deuise: wherevpon to auoid further perill he fled into Wales.

Fleance Banquhos sonne fleeth into Wales.

/1 Macbeth tells the men (III. i. 131-133), who had undertaken to slay Banquo and Fleance, that the murder

> "must be done to-Night,
> And something from the Pallace; alwayes thought,
> That I require a clearenesse": . . .

When the guests have retired from the supper to which Banquo had been invited, Macbeth and Lady Macbeth converse (III. iv. 128-130):

> *Macb.* How say'st thou, that Macduff denies his person
> At our great bidding?
> *Lady M.* Did you send to him, Sir?
> *Macb.* I heare it by the way; but I will send: . . .

Act III. sc. vi./1 – Lennox enquires the issue of Macbeth's summons (ll. 40-43): "Sent he to Macduff?" And the Lord, with whom Lennox talks, replies:

> He did: and with an absolute "Sir, not I,"
> The clowdy Messenger turnes me his backe,

And hums, as who should say, "You'l rue the time
That clogges me with this Answer."

Macduff's refusal to personally superintend the building of Dunsinane Castle may be held to stand for the affront which the dramatic Macbeth receives from the answer brought him by his "clowdy Messenger." This is the sole point of comparison with the following excerpt.

[Hol. ii. H. S. 174/1/26.] But to returne vnto Makbeth, in continuing the historie, and to begin where I left, ye shall vnderstand that after the contriued slaughter of Banquho, nothing prospered with the foresaid Makbeth: for in maner euerie man began to doubt his owne life, and durst vnneth appeare in the kings presence; and euen as there were manie that stood in feare of him, so likewise stood he in feare of manie, in such sort that he began to make those awaie by one surmized cauillation or other, whome he thought most able to worke him anie displeasure.

[Nothing prospered with Macbeth after Banquo's murder.]

Makbeths dread. His crueltie caused throgh feare.

At length he found such sweetnesse by putting his nobles thus to death, that his earnest thirst after bloud in this behalfe might in no wise be satisfied: for ye must consider he wan double profit (as hee thought) hereby: for first they were rid out of the way whome he feared, and then againe his coffers were inriched by their goods which were forfeited to his vse, whereby he might better mainteine a gard of armed men about him to defend his person from iniurie of them whom he had in anie suspicion. Further, to the end he might the more cruellie oppresse his subiects with all tyrantlike wrongs, he builded a strong castell

/1 As to the impossibility of fixing the time of this scene, see T-A., 205.

The castell of Dunsinane builded.

on the top of an hie hill called Dunsinane, situate in Gowrie, ten miles from Perth, on such a proud height, that standing there aloft, a man might behold well neere all the countries of Angus, Fife, Stermond, and Ernedale,/1 as it were lieng vnderneath him. This castell then being founded on the top of that high hill, put the realme to great charges before it was finished, for all the stuffe necessarie to the building, could not be brought vp without much toile and businesse. But Makbeth being once determined to haue the worke go forward, caused the thanes of each shire within the realme, to come and helpe towards that building, each man his course about.

[Macbeth bade the thanes come to Dunsinane, and overlook the building of the castle.]

At the last, when the turne fell vnto Makduffe thane of Fife to build his part, he sent workemen with all needfull prouision, and commanded them to shew such diligence in euerie behalfe, that no occasion might bee giuen for the king to find fault with him, in that he came not himselfe as other had doone, which he refused to doo, for doubt least the king bearing him (as he partlie vnderstood) no great good will, would laie violent hands vpon him, as he had doone vpon diuerse other. Shortlie after, Makbeth comming to behold how the worke went forward, and bicause

Makduffe thane of Fife [sent workmen but refused to come himself, because he feared Macbeth would seize him.]

Makbeth is offended with Makduffe.

he found not Makduffe there, he was sore offended, and said; I perceiue this man will neuer obeie my commandements, till he be ridden with a snaffle: but I shall prouide well inough for him.

Act IV. sc. i. – In the columns immediately preceding the excerpt which begins with the words "But to returne," Shakspere would find James VI.'s descent traced from Banquo./2 Part of this genealogy may have suggested the stage direction, "A show of eight Kings" (IV. i. 111). Banquo's chief descendants, in successive generations, were: Fleance; Walter, "who was made lord steward of Scotland"; Alan; Alexander; John; and Walter, who "maried Margerie Bruce daughter to king Robert Bruce, by whome he had issue king Robert the second." The lineal successors of Robert II. – first of the Stewards who wore the crown, and first in the "shew of eight Kings" – were: Robert III. (2); James I. (3); James II. (4); James III. (5); James IV. (6); James V. (7); Mary; and James VI. (8), who, ere this play was acted, had become the first King of Great Britain and Ireland.

/1 "Stermond and Ernedale" are Stormont and Strathern, districts of Perthshire.

/2 This descent is fictitious. Chalmers (*Caledonia*, i. 572-574) has deduced the Fitz-Alans and the Stewards from a common ancestor, Alan, who was a contemporary of our Henry I.

Angered by the Thane of Fife's refusal to assist personally at the building of Dunsinane Castle, Macbeth could not

[Hol. ii. H. S. 174/2/4] afterwards abide to looke vpon the said Makduffe, either for that he thought his puissance ouer great; either else for that he had learned of certeine wizzards, in whose words he put great confidence (for that the prophesie had happened so right, which the three faries or weird sisters had declared vnto him) how that he ought to take heed of Makduffe, who in time to come should seeke to destroie him.

Makbeths confidence in wizzards [, who told him to beware of Macduff]. [A witch told him that no man born of woman should slay him, nor should he be vanquished till Birnam Wood came to Dunsinane Castle.]

And suerlie herevpon had he put Makduffe to death, but that a certeine witch, whome hee had in great trust, had told that he should neuer be slaine with man borne of anie woman, nor vanquished till the wood of Bernane came to the castell of Dunsinane. By this prophesie Makbeth put all feare out of his heart, supposing he might doo what he would, without anie feare to be punished for the same, for by the one prophesie he beleeued it was vnpossible for anie man to vanquish him, and by the other vnpossible to slea him. This vaine hope caused him to doo manie outragious things, to the greeuous oppression of his subiects. At length Makduffe, to auoid perill of life, purposed with himselfe to passe into England, to procure Malcolme Cammore to claime the crowne of Scotland. But this was not so secretlie deuised by Makduffe, but that Makbeth had knowledge giuen him thereof: for kings (as is said) haue sharpe sight like vnto Lynx, and long ears like vnto Midas. For Makbeth had in euerie noble mans house, one slie fellow or other in fee with him, to reueale all that was said or doone within the same, by which slight he oppressed the most part of the nobles of his realme./1

[Macduff resolves upon going to England, and inviting Malcolm to claim the Scottish crown. Macbeth hears of this.]

Lynxs eies and Midas-eares. [Macbeth had spies in every nobleman's house.]

Act IV. sc. ii. – Macduff's flight to England is reported to Lennox by a Lord, who enters in a previous scene (III. vi. 29-31). As soon as the witches vanish, Macbeth hears the same news from Lennox, and thereupon forms this resolve (IV. i. 150-153):

> The Castle of Macduff, I will surprize;
> Seize vpon Fife; giue to th' edge o' th' Sword
> His Wife, his Babes, and all vnfortunate Soules
> That trace him in his Line.

/1 Cp. *Macbeth*, III. iv. 131, 132:

> "There's not a one of them but in his house
> I keepe a Seruant Feed."

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On comparing the following passage with Act IV. sc. i. ll. 80-85, it will be noticed that Shakspere did not allow Macbeth to personally direct the slaughter.

[Macbeth besieges Macduff's castle, but is admitted without resistance.]

[Hol. ii. H. S. 174/2/37.] Immediatlie then, being aduertised whereabout Makduffe went, he came hastily with a great power into Fife, and foorthwith besieged the castell where Makduffe dwelled, trusting to haue found him therein. They that kept the house, without anie resistance opened the gates, and suffered him to enter, mistrusting none euill. But neuerthelesse Makbeth most cruellie caused the wife and children of Makduffe, with all other whom he found in that castell, to be slaine. Also he confiscated the goods of Makduffe, proclamed him traitor, and confined him out of all the parts of his realme; but Makduffe was alreadie escaped out of danger, and gotten into England vnto Malcolme Cammore, to trie what purchase hee might make by means of his support, to reuenge the slaughter so cruellie executed on his wife, his children, and other friends.

Makbeths crueltie vsed against Makduffs familie.

Macduffe escapeth into England vnto Malcolme Commore.

Act IV. sc. iii. – The dialogue which succeeds the account (quoted below) of Macduff's meeting with Malcolm is freely paraphrased in this scene. In Holinshed the dialogue contains four clauses, namely: Malcolm's confessions of (1) incontinence, (2) avarice, (3) faithlessness, – each clause including Macduff's answers, – and (4) Malcolm's disavowal of his self-detraction. With these clauses compare the lines in Act IV. sc. iii., indicated by the following references: (1) ll. 57-76, (2) 76-90, (3) 91-114, (4) 114-132.

Makduffes words vnto Malcolme [, declaring Macbeth's cruelty].

[Hol. ii. H. S. 174/2/53.] At his comming vnto Malcolme, he declared into what great miserie the estate of Scotland was brought, by the detestable cruelties exercised by the tyrant Makbeth, hauing committed manie horrible slaughters and murders, both as well of the nobles as commons, for the which he was hated right mortallie of all his liege people, desiring nothing more than to be deliuered of that intollerable and most heauie yoke of thraldome, which they susteined at such a caitifes hands.

Malcolme sigheth [, whereupon Macduff urged that the enterprise was easy, because Malcolm's

Malcolme, hearing Makduffes woords, which he vttered in verie lamentable sort, for meere compassion and verie ruth that pearsed his sorowfull hart, bewailing the miserable state of his countrie, he fetched a deepe sigh; which Makduffe perceiuing, began to fall most earnestlie in hand with him, to enterprise the deliuering of

[title was good, and the people hated Macbeth.]

the Scotish people out of the hands of so cruell and bloudie a tyrant, as Makbeth by too manie plaine experiments did shew himselfe to be: which was an easie matter for him to bring to passe, considering not onelie the good title he had, but also the earnest desire of the people to haue some occasion ministred, whereby they might be reuenged of those notable iniuries, which they dailie susteined by the outragious crueltie of Makbeths misgouernance. Though Malcolme was verie sorowfull for the oppression of his countriemen the Scots, in maner as Makduffe had declared; yet doubting whether he were come as one that ment vnfeinedlie as he spake, or else as sent from Makbeth to betraie him, he thought to haue some further triall, and therevpon dissembling his mind at the first, he answered as followeth:

[But, though Malcolm was sorry for his countrymen, he dissembled, fearing that Macduff might be an emissary from Macbeth.]

Malcolme Cammore his answer.

"I am trulie verie sorie for the miserie chanced to my countrie of Scotland, but though I haue neuer so great affection to relieue the same, yet by reason of certeine incurable vices, which reigne in me, I am nothing meet thereto. First, such immoderate lust and voluptuous sensualitie (the abhominable founteine of all vices) followeth me, that, if I were made king of Scots, I should seeke to defloure your maids and matrones, in such wise that mine intemperancie should be more importable vnto you, than the bloudie tyrannie of Makbeth now is." Heerevnto Makduffe answered: "This suerlie is a verie euill fault, for manie noble princes and kings haue lost both liues and kingdomes for the same; neuerthelesse there are women enow in Scotland, and therefore follow my counsell. Make thy selfe king, and I shall conueie the matter so wiselie, that thou shalt be so satisfied at thy pleasure in such secret wise, that no man shall be aware thereof."

[His vices: 1. Lust.]

Makduffes answer.

[Malcolm's 2nd vice: Avarice.]

Then said Malcolme, "I am also the most auaritious creature on the earth, so that if I were king, I should seeke so manie waies to get lands and goods, that I would slea the most part of all the nobles of Scotland by surmized accusations, to the end I might inioy their lands, goods, and possessions; . . . Therefore saith Malcolme, suffer me to remaine where I am, least if I atteine to the regiment of your realme, mine vnquenchable auarice may prooue such that ye would thinke the displeasures,

which now grieue you, should seeme easie in respect of the vnmeasurable outrage, which might insue through my comming amongst you."

[Macduff's answer:] *Couetousnesse the root of all mischiefe.*

Makduffe to this made answer, how it was a far woorse fault than the other: "for auarice is the root of all mischiefe, and for that crime the most part of our kings haue beene slaine and brought to their finall end. Yet notwithstanding follow my counsell, and take vpon thee the crowne. There is gold and riches inough in Scotland to satisfie thy greedie desire." Then said Malcolme againe, "I am furthermore inclined to dissimula-

[Malcolm's vices of] *Dissimulation and deliting in lies.*

tion, telling of leasings, and all other kinds of deceit, so that I naturallie reioise in nothing so much, as to betraie and deceiue such as put anie trust or confidence in my woords. Then sith there is nothing that more becommeth a prince than constancie, veritie, truth, and iustice, with the other laudable fellowship of those faire and noble vertues which are comprehended onelie in soothfastnesse, and that lieng vtterlie ouerthroweth the same; you see how vnable I am to gouerne anie prouince or region: and therefore sith you haue remedies to cloke and hide all the rest of my other vices, I praie you find shift to cloke this vice amongst the residue."

Makduffes exclamation.

Then said Makduffe: "This yet is the woorst of all, and there I leaue thee, and therefore saie; Oh ye vnhappie and miserable Scotishmen, which are thus scourged with so manie and sundrie calamities, ech one aboue other! Ye haue one curssed and wicked tyrant that now reigneth ouer you, without anie right or title, oppressing you with his most bloudie crueltie. This other that hath the right to the crowne,/1 is so replet with the inconstant

/1 In ll. 108-111, Macduff refers to the saintly parents of Malcolm, who was "the truest Issue" of the Scottish throne. Perhaps Shakspere transferred to Malcolm's father, and to his mother, – of whom we know nothing, – the virtues which Malcolm himself possessed, and which were shared with him, in larger measure, by his wife Margaret. Hol. says (ii. H. S. 178/2/44):

King Malcolme, through exhortation of his wife, giueth himselfe to deuotion. A godlie strife.

. . . "king Malcolme (speciallie by the good admonishment and exhortation of his wife queene Margaret, a woman of great zeale vnto the religion of that time) gaue himselfe in maner altogither vnto much deuotion, and workes of mercie; as in dooing of almes deeds, by prouiding for the poore, and such like godlie exercises: so that in true vertue he was thought to excell all other princes of his time. To be brief, herein there seemed to be in maner a certeine strife betwixt him and that vertuous queene his wife, which of them should be most feruent in the loue of God, so that manie people by the imitation of them were brought vnto a better life."

behauiour and manifest vices of Englishmen, that he is nothing woorthie to inioy it: for by his owne confession he is not onelie auaritious, and giuen to vnsatiable lust, but so false a traitor withall, that no trust is to be had vnto anie woord he speaketh. Adieu Scotland, for now I account my selfe a banished man for euer, without comfort or consolation:" and with those woords the brackish teares trickled downe his cheekes verie abundantlie.

Makduffe weepeth.

At the last, when he was readie to depart, Malcolme tooke him by the sleeue, and said: "Be of good comfort Makduffe, for I haue none of these vices before remembred, but haue iested with thee in this manner, onelie to prooue thy mind: for diuerse times heeretofore hath Makbeth sought by this manner of meanes to bring me into his hands, but the more slow I haue shewed my selfe to condescend to thy motion and request, the more diligence shall I vse in accomplishing the same." Incontinentlie heerevpon they imbraced ech other, and promising to be faithfull the one to the other, they fell in consultation how they might best prouide for all their businesse, to bring the same to good effect.

Malcolme comforteth Makduffe.

Makduffe and Malcolme imbrace ech other.

For the matter of the loyal digression (IV. iii. 140-159) which precedes Ross's entrance, Shakspere might have turned to Holinshed's first volume, where the subjoined account of Eadward the Confessor's miraculous gifts is to be found.

[Eadward's gift of prophecy, and power of healing the king's evil.]

[Hol. i. H. E. 195/1/50.] 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 helpe those that were vexed with the disease, commonlie called the kings euill, and left that vertue as it were a portion of inheritance vnto his successors the kings of this realme.

The latter part of sc. iii., Act IV., from Ross's entrance, is wholly of Shakspere's invention, for, according to Holinshed, the slaughter of Lady Macduff and her children was known to Macduff before he joined Malcolm.

Act V. scc. ii.-viii. – The following excerpts illustrate the last Act of *Macbeth*.

Makduffe writeth letters to his friends in Scotland.

[Hol. ii. H. S. 175/2/35.] Soone after, Makduffe repairing to the borders of Scotland, addressed his letters with secret dispatch vnto the nobles of the realme, declaring how Malcolme was con-

federat with him, to come hastilie into Scotland to claime the crowne, and therefore he required them, sith he was right inheritor thereto, to assist him with their powers to recouer the same out of the hands of the wrongfull vsurper.

Siward earle of Northumberland [sent, with 10,000 men, to support Malcolm against Macbeth].

In the meane time, Malcolme purchased such fauor at king Edwards hands, that *old Siward* earle of Northumberland was appointed *with ten thousand men* to go with him into Scotland, to support him in this enterprise, for recouerie of his right./1 After these newes were spread abroad in Scotland, the nobles drew into two seuerall factions, the one taking part with Makbeth, and the other with Malcolme. Heerevpon insued oftentimes sundrie bickerings, and diuerse light skirmishes: for those that were of Malcolmes side, would not ieopard to ioine with their enimies in a pight field, till his comming out of England to their support. But after that Makbeth perceiued his enimies power to increase, by such aid as came to them foorth of England with his aduersarie Malcolme, he recoiled backe into Fife, there purposing to abide in campe fortified, at the castell of Dunsinane, and to fight with his enimies, if they ment to pursue him; howbeit some of his friends aduised him, that it should be best for him, either to make some agreement with Malcolme, or else to flee with all speed into the Iles, and to take his treasure with him, to the end he might wage sundrie great princes of the realme to take his part, and reteine strangers, in whome he might better trust than in his owne subiects, which stale dailie from him: but he had such confidence in his prophesies, that he beleeued he should neuer be vanquished, till Birnane wood were brought to Dunsinane; nor yet to be slaine with anie man, that should be or was born of anie woman.

The nobles of Scotland diuided.

Makbeth recoileth [to Dunsinane Castle].

Makbeth is counselled to flee into the Iles.

Makbeths trust in prophesies.

It has been conjectured that Shakspere was thinking of a later passage in the Chronicles when he made Macbeth call Malcolm's English allies "Epicures" (V. iii. 8). Malcolm III. (Canmore), Macbeth's successor, offended his Gaelic subjects by his partiality to English ideas and manners. On his death, in 1093, his brother Donalbain – who had lived under very different conditions – came

/1 Malcolm tells Macduff (IV. iii. 133-135):

> . . . "before thy [they F.] heere approach,
> *Old Seyward, with ten thousand* warlike *men*,
> Already at a point, was setting foorth."

forward as the representative of the old Scottish nation, and was chosen king, in exclusion of Malcolm's sons. To a people of few wants the standard of living adopted by a more luxurious society might appear to be mere sensual indulgence; and Donalbain owed some of his success to this feeling.

The respect that the people had to receiue Donald Bane for their king [was, that they hoped he would put down English gormandizing and riotous manners].

[Hol. ii. H. S. 180/1/61.] 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 (bicause he had beene brought vp in the Iles with the old customes and maners of their ancient nation, without tast of the English likerous delicats) they should by his seuere order in gouernement recouer againe the former temperance of their old progenitors.

I resume the illustrative excerpts from the point where we are told of Macbeth's trust in a prophecy that he could not be slain by any man who "was borne of anie woman."

[Malcolm comes to Birnam Wood.]

Branches of trees [borne by Malcolm's soldiers as they advance against Dunsinane]. [Macbeth remembers the prophecy about Birnam Wood.]

Makbeth setteth his men in order of battell. Makbeth fleeth, & is pursued of Makduffe.

[Hol. ii. H. S. 176/1/1.] Malcolme following hastilie after Makbeth, came the night before the battell vnto Birnane wood, and when his armie had rested a while there to refresh them, he commanded euerie man to get a bough of some tree or other of that wood in his hand, as big as he might beare, and to march foorth therewith in such wise, that on the next morrow they might come closelie and without sight in this manner within view of his enimies. On the morrow when Makbeth beheld them comming in this sort, he first maruelled what the matter ment, but in the end remembred himselfe that the prophesie which he had heard long before that time, of the comming of Birnane wood to Dunsinane castell, was likelie to be now fulfilled./1 Neuerthelesse, he brought his men in order of battell, and exhorted them to doo valiantlie, howbeit his enimies had scarselie cast from them their boughs, when Makbeth perceiuing their numbers, betooke him streict to flight, whom Makduffe pursued with great hatred euen till he came

/1 There are stories, belonging to other times and places, of armies bearing leafy boughs while advancing upon the forces opposed to them. See Furness's ed. of *Macbeth*, pp. 379-381. The removal of Birnam Wood seems, however, to have been a tradition in Wyntoun's age (fourteenth century), for he says (VI. xviii. 379, 380):

> "Đe flyttand Wod þai callyd ay
> Đat [Birnam Wood] lang tyme eftyrehend þat day."

[Macbeth cannot (as he tells Macduff) be slain by any one born of a woman.]

vnto Lunfannaine, where Makbeth perceiuing that Makduffe was hard at his backe, leapt beside his horsse, saieng; "Thou traitor, what meaneth it that thou shouldest thus in vaine follow me that am not appointed to be slaine by anie creature that is borne of a woman, come on therefore, and receiue thy reward which thou hast deserued for thy paines," and therwithall he lifted vp his swoord thinking to haue slaine him.

[Macduff answers that he was not born of his mother, but ripped out of her womb.]

But Makduffe quicklie auoiding from his horsse, yer he came at him, answered (with his naked swoord in his hand) saieng: "It is true Makbeth, and now shall thine insatiable crueltie haue an end, for I am euen he that thy wizzards haue told thee of, who was neuer borne of my mother, but ripped out of her wombe:" therewithall he stept vnto him, and slue him in the place. Then cutting his head from his shoulders, he set it vpon a pole, and brought it vnto Malcolme. This was the end of Makbeth, after he had reigned 17 yeeres ouer the Scotishmen. In the beginning of his reigne he accomplished manie woorthie acts, verie profitable to the common-wealth (as ye haue heard) but afterward by illusion of the diuell, he defamed the same with most terrible crueltie. He was slaine in the yeere of the incarnation, 1057, and in the 16 yeere of king Edwards reigne ouer the Englishmen.

Makbeth is slaine.

1057. Io. M./1
1061. H. B.
8. H. B.

When Earl Siward hears of his son's death, he asks: "Had he his hurts before?" And on Ross answering, "I, on the Front," the old warrior exclaims (V. viii. 46-50):

> Why, then Gods Soldier be he!
> Had I as many Sonnes as I haue haires,
> I would not wish them to a fairer death:
> And so, his Knell is knoll'd.

This event was derived from another account of the war with Macbeth, given in Holinshed's first volume.

Matth. West.
1054
Hector Boet.

[Hol. i. H. E. 192/1/27.] About the thirteenth yeare of king Edward his reigne/2 (as some write) or rather about the nineteenth or twentith yeare, as should appeare by the Scotish writers,

/1 John Mair or Major, a Scottish divine and historian, whose *Historia Gentis Scotorum* appeared in 1521. He died about 1549. His date (1057) for Macbeth's death is confirmed by M. Scottus (Pertz, v. 558).

/2 Eadward was crowned on Easter Day (April 3), 1043. – A-S. Chron. (M. H. B.), 434.

[Siward went into Scotland with an army, defeated Macbeth, and placed Malcolm on the Scottish throne.]

Siward the noble earle of Northumberland with a great power of horssemen went into Scotland, and in battell put to flight Mackbeth/1 that had vsurped the crowne of Scotland, and that doone, placed Malcolme surnamed Camoir, the sonne of Duncane, sometime king of Scotland, in the gouernement of that realme, who afterward slue the said Mackbeth, and then reigned in quiet. . . .

Simon. Dun.
M. West.

It is recorded also, that in the foresaid battell, in which earle Siward vanquished the Scots, one of Siwards sonnes chanced to

[In this battle with Macbeth, a son of Siward was slain, but Siward rejoiced when told that his son's death-wound was in front.] [It is also reported that Siward's son invaded Scotland before this battle, and was slain, whereupon his father (hearing of the death-wound in front) said that neither of them would wish any other kind of death.]

be slaine, whereof although the father had good cause to be sorowfull, yet when he heard that he died of a wound which he had receiued in fighting stoutlie in the forepart of his bodie, and that with his face towards the enimie, he greatlie reioised thereat, to heare that he died so manfullie. But here is to be noted, that not now, but a little before (as Henrie Hunt. saith)/2 that earle Siward went into Scotland himselfe in person, he sent his sonne with an armie to conquere the land, whose hap was there to be slaine: and when his father heard the newes, he demanded whether he receiued the wound whereof he died, in the forepart of of the bodie, or in the hinder part: and when it was told him that he receiued it in the forepart; "I reioise (saith he) euen with all my heart, for I would not wish either to my sonne nor to my selfe any other kind of death."

Malcolm's closing speech (V. viii. 60-75) is illustrated by the subsequent passage, which comprises the names of several characters who appear in *Macbeth*.

Malcolme. [Malcolm crowned at Scone.]

[Hol. ii. H. S. 176/1/47.] Malcolme Cammore thus recouering the relme (as ye haue heard) by support of king Edward, in the 16 yeere of the same Edwards reigne, he was crowned at Scone/3

/1 Macbeth was defeated by Siward on July 27, 1054. – A-S. Chron. (M. H. B., 453). Macbeth's escape from the battle is recorded in the Cottonian MS. (Tiberius, B. 1.) of the A-S. Chron.

/2 Henr. Hunt (M. H. B., 760 B): "Circa hoc tempus [1052] Siwardus Consul fortissimus Nordhumbre . . . misit filium suum in Scotiam conquirendam." The passage given in my excerpt from Holinshed ("whose hap was . . . kind of death") is taken from Henry, who proceeds thus: "Siwardus igitur in Scotiam proficiscens, regem bello vicit, regnum totum destruxit, destructum sibi subjugavit."

/3 Cp. the closing lines of *Macbeth*:

> "So thankes to all at once, and to each one
> Whom we inuite to see vs Crown'd at Scone."

A parlement at Forfair.

the 25 day of Aprill, in the yeere of our Lord 1057. Immediatlie after his coronation he called a parlement at Forfair, in the which he rewarded them with lands and liuings that had assisted him against Makbeth, aduancing them to fees and offices as he saw cause, and commanded that speciallie those that bare the surname of anie offices or lands, should haue and inioy the same. He created manie earles, lords, barons, and knights. Manie of them, that before were thanes, were at this time made earles, as Fife, Menteth, . . . Leuenox, . . . Cathnes, Rosse, and Angus. These were the first earles that haue beene heard of amongst the Scotishmen/1 (as their histories doo make mention.) Manie new surnames were taken vp at this time amongst them, as Cauder, . . . Seiton, . . . with manie other that had possessions giuen them, which gaue names to the owners for the time.

Thanes changed into earles.

Surnames.

/1 "*Mal.* . . . My Thanes and Kinsmen,
Henceforth be Earles, the first that euer Scotland
In such an Honor nam'd."