

The Online Library of Liberty

A Project Of Liberty Fund, Inc.

William Shakespeare, *Shakespeare's Sonnets And A Lover's Complaint* [1609]



The Online Library Of Liberty

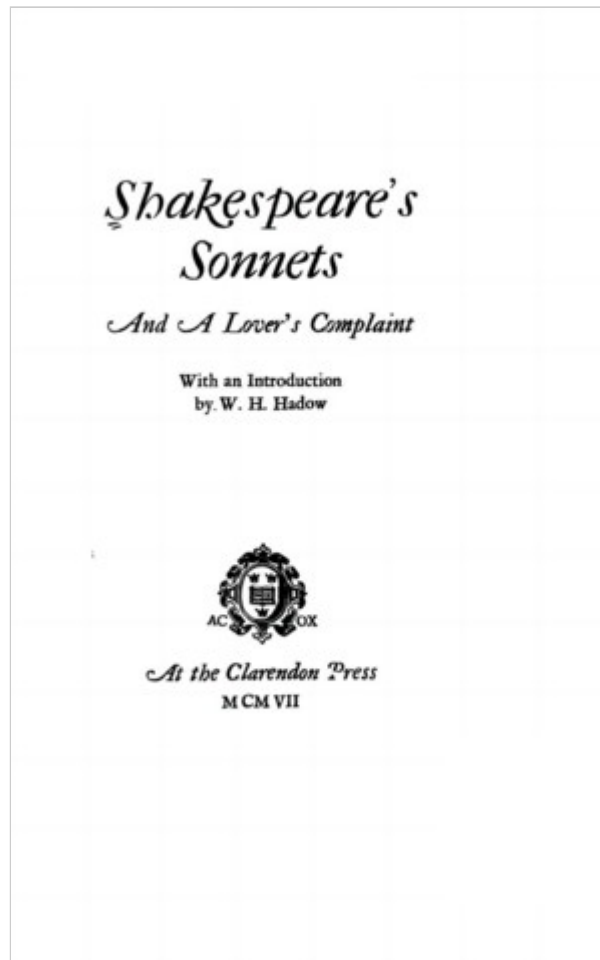
This E-Book (PDF format) is published by Liberty Fund, Inc., a private, non-profit, educational foundation established in 1960 to encourage study of the ideal of a society of free and responsible individuals. 2010 is the 50th anniversary year of the founding of Liberty Fund.

It is part of the Online Library of Liberty web site <http://oll.libertyfund.org>, which was established in 2004 in order to further the educational goals of Liberty Fund, Inc. To find out more about the author or title, to use the site's powerful search engine, to see other titles in other formats (HTML, facsimile PDF), or to make use of the hundreds of essays, educational aids, and study guides, please visit the OLL web site. This title is also part of the Portable Library of Liberty DVD which contains over 1,000 books, audio material, and quotes about liberty and power, and is available free of charge upon request.

The cuneiform inscription that appears in the logo and serves as a design element in all Liberty Fund books and web sites is the earliest-known written appearance of the word “freedom” (amagi), or “liberty.” It is taken from a clay document written about 2300 B.C. in the Sumerian city-state of Lagash, in present day Iraq.

To find out more about Liberty Fund, Inc., or the Online Library of Liberty Project, please contact the Director at oll@libertyfund.org.

LIBERTY FUND, INC.
8335 Allison Pointe Trail, Suite 300
Indianapolis, Indiana 46250-1684



Edition Used:

Shakespeare's Sonnets And A Lover's Complaint, with an Introduction by W.H. Hadow (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1907).

Author: [William Shakespeare](#)
Editor: [William Henry Hadow](#)

About This Title:

A good modern edition of all of Shakespeare's sonnets and A Lover's Complaint accompanied by a scholarly introduction and notes on the poems.

About Liberty Fund:

Liberty Fund, Inc. is a private, educational foundation established to encourage the study of the ideal of a society of free and responsible individuals.

Copyright Information:

The text is in the public domain.

Fair Use Statement:

This material is put online to further the educational goals of Liberty Fund, Inc. Unless otherwise stated in the Copyright Information section above, this material may be used freely for educational and academic purposes. It may not be used in any way for profit.

Contents	
	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	vii
SONNETS	i
A LOVER'S COMPLAINT.	53
NOTES.	95

Table Of Contents

[Introduction](#)

[Note](#)

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

Introduction

One of Shakespeare's most amazing gifts is his power of inspiring with new life and interest a perfectly commonplace topic. Beethoven will sometimes take a theme so bare that you wonder at his wasting a thought on it—the bass it may be of a cadence, or three notes of a diatonic scale—and weave it straightway into a texture of unexpected and incomparable beauty: Shakespeare in like manner will take some familiar fact of human nature and by a fresh turn of idea or a fresh adjustment of relations reveal in it an unforeseen depth of purpose and significance. His most memorable scenes are often those which deal with simplest issues, his most memorable lines those which tell a plain thing in plain words: with the whole palette at his command he lays the foundation of his design upon a scheme of primary colours.

Now there is one topic which is as old as romance itself:—that in which two men bound to one another by ties of friendship or service fall under the attraction of the same woman. It is the theme of *Tristan* and of *Lancelot*, it points the temptation-scene in *Sir Gawain*, it has formed the plot of a thousand novels and the subject of a thousand lyrics. As it turns in the hand it reflects light from many facets: the competing claims of love and friendship, of desire and honour, the imperious demands of passion, the injunctions of duty and self-control: but with all its variety the conclusion of the whole matter has usually been stated in two or three simple alternatives: that to resist is loyal and to fall is treacherous, that the wronged man, robbed of all that he holds dearest on earth, has, if he choose to exercise it, the right of pardon or vengeance, and that the only plea of guilt, if indeed any plea be availing, is an overmastering irresistible passion of love which sweeps a man from his feet like a torrent, and snaps friendship asunder as its waters snap a bridge across their banks. Nor when guilt is deepest, can even that plea stay the course of retribution. There is no issue for Lancelot but exile or for Tristan but death: only so, we judge, can their sin be expiated.

The Sonnets of Shakespeare unfold from the same theme a situation so strange that we may feel little wonder at the controversies to which it has given rise. The dramatic personae are the usual three—two friends and the woman who comes between them—the strangeness lies in the perspective of the story and in its upshot. Of the two friends one is a poet, as yet humble and obscure, often 'in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes', compelled by need of livelihood to join a degraded profession and 'make himself a motley to the view'. The other, a far younger man, is rich, noble, popular, endowed with great personal beauty and charm, a patron of letters, himself perhaps with some skill of verse-making, on all sides one of the most brilliant figures of a brilliant epoch. At the outset the poet's life is swayed by two conflicting influences—the 'angel' and 'devil' of Sonnet cxliv. For his friend he feels a pure passionate affection; such an affection as subsisted between Languet and Sir Philip Sidney; the full expression of his higher and nobler self, devoted, adoring, 'passing the love of women'. And as this is wholly spiritual, so the senses take their revenge by driving him into the toils of an unworthy mistress, a dark-haired, dark-eyed C[Editor:

illegible character]ce skilful and unscrupulous, who holds him enthralled by the gross attraction of desire. Some avocation calls him away from home and during his absence he finds that friend and mistress have conspired to play him false: that the enchantress from whom he cannot escape has given herself to a rival, and that the rival is the man whom he worships.

Such is the bare outline of the situation which Shakespeare presents: it follows to consider how and to what end he develops it. But first a word may be said on the vexed question whether the Sonnets are in any literal sense autobiographical; whether they depict any actual experience of Shakespeare's life. It is known that during the closing years of the sixteenth century he was on terms of friendship with the young William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, a munificent patron of letters who, in Mr. Wyndham's phrase, was then 'one of the brightest particles in the shifting kaleidoscope of Court and Stage'. It is believed that at the same time he was acquainted with the brilliant and unscrupulous Mary Fitton¹ who, before 1600, became Herbert's mistress. If then the Sonnets can be dated between 1597 and 1599 it is quite possible that he dramatized a situation of real life, or at least found in it, like the poet of *A light Woman*, 'a subject made to his hand.' And in this there is no inherent improbability. The last line of Sonnet xciv is identical with one in a scene, attributed to Shakespeare, of *Edward III* which was printed in 1596, and the balance of likelihood is that the Sonnet quoted from the play. The first known allusion to the Sonnets is the statement of Meres (1598), that they, or some of them, were being circulated among Shakespeare's 'private friends'. Two, including one of the most significant, were printed by Jaggard in the *Passionate Pilgrim* (1599). It is arguable that a few were written earlier as isolated numbers and afterwards fitted to their place in the general scheme: it is possible that some were written after 1600, though the supposed allusion to Queen Elizabeth's death (lvii) is far too shadowy to stand as evidence.² We may, therefore, not unreasonably conjecture that the bulk of the sonnets were written when a story suggesting that which they narrate may have actually occurred, and that Shakespeare may have used it with the same imaginative latitude with which he rewrote the history of King Lear or remodelled the caricature of Oldcastle. That the events took place as they are here depicted is not a matter of possible belief. No man, not even Shakespeare, has ever shown the tireless forbearance of the first scene: no man, and least of all Shakespeare, has ever sunk to the degradation of the second. But in human nature are groups of qualities which, though held in check and counterpoise, may for the poet's purpose be analysed separately. If in real life a man is oscillating between a pure friendship and a sensual passion, each will react on the other: the friendship will suffer in some degree, the passion will be in some degree ennobled. Yet nothing prevents the psychologist from severing them, from considering each apart, and, where they clash on the same event, looking on the conflict from their two different points of view. And this may well be what Shakespeare has done. The occasion, whether this or another, may have borne the same relation to the Sonnets as Count Guido Franceschini's trial to *The Ring and the Book*, it may have been but the alloy which held the metal together. If we can suppose that Shakespeare at some time in his life saw friendship and passion on either hand of him, and allowed his imagination to trace each to its furthest conceivable point, we may find a reasonable solution of the question at issue: At any rate it is far more likely than the alternative views which have been suggested—that he was

writing a set of academic exercises, that he was satirizing Drayton and Davies, or that he was constructing an elaborate bloodless allegory of the Ideal Selt and the Catholic Church.

It may be said that the tone of the sonnets is entirely personal, and that had it been genuine, apart from any question of actual experience, Shakespeare would never have admitted the world to so close an intimacy. But this contention proves too much. On the spiritual plane all great poetry is autobiographical: and of all poetic forms the lyric (in which the sonnet may be included) is the most self-revealing. We should know Sidney from *Astrophel and Stella* and Spenser from the *Amoretti* if we had never heard of the passion which inspired the one and the courtship which is narrated by the other. And on this point two further considerations may be added. First, that in Shakespeare's case the story is but the ground-plan of his palace, but the opportunity for those golden thoughts on beauty and decay, on life and time, on love and honour, which are his truest autobiography and which alone would suffice to rank the Sonnets in the forefront of English poems. Second, that he wrote them not for the public but for 'his private friends'. The first edition (1609) was issued, so far as we can tell, without his authorization or knowledge, and there are, indeed, some critics who find in its dedication the saturnine smile of the successful pirate. That he should have circulated in private a key which unlocked his heart is in full accord with the practice of his time: and though Browning protests, 'If so, the less Shakespear he,' yet we think of *One Word More* and the Epilogue to *Asolando* and wonder whether this advocate of reserve is not another Gracchus complaining about sedition.

The Sonnets are divided into two unequal groups, which, in their relation to the story, so far synchronize that a turning-point of both is upon the same event. It is extremely probable that the longer group (i-cxxvi) outlasts the shorter (cxxvii-clii) by some considerable period of time¹: it can hardly be doubted that the catastrophe narrated in xli-xlii of the first is that narrated in cxxxiii-cxxxiv of the second. Each is in a sense complete in itself, for each is the description and analysis of a state of mind; yet they are as interdependent as the movements of a symphony. In one the poet addresses his friend, in the other his mistress: in the two together he tells the history of his fate and reveals in successive aspects the temper with which he meets it. The narrative is broken by digressions, by episodes, by sudden changes of mood: but these, it may be maintained, are psychologically true. The sequence, in short, has its own logic, though it is the logic of a poem, not of a syllogism.

In the first seventeen Sonnets the poet urges his friend to marry. Such advice was natural enough and common enough—Languet writes to Sir Philip Sidney in exactly the same strain—but its appearance here opens the drama on a curious note of irony. The friendship is so secure that even the rivalry of woman's love is not to be feared. Indeed it may be observed that in the whole seventeen hardly a word is said about the lady. The plea is based entirely on the prospective son who is to inherit his father's qualities: the prospective bride never comes into the picture at all. It is death, not estrangement of which the poet is afraid: while his friend lives he will sing his descant on the melody of *Astrophel*:

My true love hath my heart and I have his.

The Sonnets which immediately follow are the happiest of the entire series. Every device of fancy, every sweet and gracious word is heaped upon the altar:

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate.

and again:

Yet do thy worst, old Time: despite thy wrong
My love shall in my verse ever live young.

and again:

Mine eye hath played the painter, and hath steeled
Thy beauty's form in table of my heart.

The affection is so confident that it can afford to smile at its own enthusiasm:

I will not praise that purpose not to sell.

and in xxv the song rises to the highest pitch of rapture as it hymns friendship and its eternity. The prince's favourite is but a marigold which spreads its leaves for a season to the sunshine. The 'painful warrior famed for fight' will some day be razed from the book of honour. But love is everlasting:

Thrice happy I who love and am beloved
Where I may not remove nor be removed.

With xxvi comes the first change to a minor key: the first indication that tragedy is impending. The tone hitherto has sometimes been grave and earnest; it now becomes poignant. The poet is absent from the 'Lord of his love' and writes from a distance his written embassage. In half a dozen sonnets of magnificent and sustained beauty he describes his sorrow at parting, his days of anxiety, his sleepless nights, the gleam of remembrance which comes to cheer him, the relapse back to the thought of

My well-contented day
When that churl Death my bones with dust shall cover;

all that weary round well-known to the lonely room and the solitary watcher. Then, in xxxiii, the current is changed by a hint of disgrace and wrong, which grows more articulate in xxxiv:

Nor can thy shame give physic to my grief,
Though thou repent,

and is stated in plain words by the opening lines of xlii:

That thou hast her it is not all my grief,
And yet it may be said I loved her dearly.

Now had the poet's love for the dark lady been pure and noble, had it been 'the maiden passion for a maid' that was here outraged and deceived, we may gather that Shakespeare would still have held the claims of friendship to be paramount and would have counselled forgiveness. In *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* Valentine grants to Proteus a pardon which we may think too easily earned and even crowns his magnanimity by resigning Silvia to the arms of his treacherous rival:

And that my love may appear plain and free,
All that is mine in Silvia I give thee.

In the Sonnets, and here is the very centre of the situation, we have a different standpoint. All the force of pure and ennobling emotion is bestowed on the friendship, the other tie is but a 'love of despair', a bond of sin and shame the momentary sweets of which are bitter in the recollection. And so, when the first sting of the wound is past, the poet finds that his whole concern is for his friend. He will forgive everything, will resign everything:

Take all my loves, my love, yea take them all:
.....
I do forgive thy robbery, gentle thief,
Although thou steal thee all my poverty:

he forces himself to speak lightly of the wrong

that liberty commits
When I am sometime absent from thy heart;

his deepest sorrow is not the knowledge that his mistress is unfaithful, but his anxiety lest she may take his friend from him:

That she hath thee is of my wailing chief,
A loss in love that touches me more nearly.1

Indeed throughout the numbers from xxxiii to xlii the same theme is developed: a spontaneous cry of pain at the offence, followed by desperate and loving excuses for the offender.

As the series proceeds, the fear of estrangement grows more acute, more apprehensive. The poet still writes in absence, and, though he strikes divers notes of regret or protestation or fervour, recurs time after time to the subject which is nearest his heart. Constancy is praised in a more wistful tone; the promise of poetic fame is repeated with more emphasis—as though it were the only bribe he had left to offer: and through all there runs, like a connecting thread, the possibility that he may be cast aside as unworthy, that others may come to take his place, that his love may be postponed to passion or superseded by flattery. Thus in xlix:

Against that time, if ever that time come,
When I shall see thee frown on my defects;

in liv:

O how much more doth beauty beauteous seem
By that sweet ornament which truth doth give;

in lvi:

Sweet love, renew thy force; be it not said
Thy edge should blunter be than appetite.

in lvii—the first hint of a wider rivalry:

Nor dare I question with my jealous thought
Where you may be, or your affairs suppose,
But, like a sad slave, stay and think of nought
Save, where you are, how happy you make those.
So true a fool is love that in your will,
Though you do anything, he thinks no ill.

in lxi:

O no, thy love though much is not so great:
It is my love that keeps mine eye awake;
Mine own true love that doth my rest defeat,
To play the watchman ever for thy sake:
For thee watch I while thou dost wake elsewhere
From me far off, with others all too near.

in lxvii:

Ah, wherefore with infection should he live
And with his presence grace impiety,
That sin by him advantage should receive
And lace itself with his society?

in lxix:

They look into the beauty of thy mind,
And that, in guess, they measure by thy deeds.
Then churls, their thoughts, although their eyes were kind,
To thy fair flower add the rank smell of weeds.
But why thy odour matcheth not thy show,
The solve is this, that thou dost common grow.

At this point it would appear that the friend returns a disdainful answer, asserting his liberty, complaining of reproof, and declaring that he is being better praised by new favourites.¹ The reply to this begins in Sonnet lxxviii:

So oft have I invoked thee for my Muse

And found such fair assistance in my verse
As every alien pen hath got my use
And under thee their poesy disperse;

and continues, with increasing urgency, until in lxxxvi it breaks into an outburst of unconcealed jealousy. 'My rival is no better a man than I am. He has supplanted me not by his genius nor by the spirit which he invokes, but solely by your favour. It is your breath that has filled the sail of his verse, it is your preference that has exalted him and driven me to silence:

No, neither he, nor his compeers by night
Giving him aid, my verse astonished.
He, nor that affable familiar ghost
Which nightly gulls him with intelligence,
As victors, of my silence cannot boast;
I was not sick of any fear from thence:
But when your countenance filled up his line
Then lacked I matter; that enfeebled mine.

In the next Sonnet the blow has fallen: the estrangement has taken place:

Farewell: thou art too dear for my possessing,
And like enough thou know'st thine estimate.

Yet now, as before, and with even more insistence than before, the first cry of pain is followed by a despairing effort to condone and excuse. The poet brings no accusation against his friend: in passionate protestation he takes all blame upon his own head:

For thy right myself will bear all wrong;

and again, lxxxix:

Say that thou didst forsake me for some fault
And I will comment upon that offence.

.....

and in my tongue
Thy sweet beloved name no more shall dwell,
Lest I, too much profane, should do it wrong.

In xc he pleads for hatred rather than coldness, that he may have the worst at once: in the succeeding sonnets he passes from mood to mood of regret, despair, anything but reproach, closing in a love-song which begins like a memory of the lost happiness, and in xcix breaks off abruptly as though the writer's hand faltered.

The last twenty-six sonnets of this group (c-cxxv)¹ take up the thread again after a great silence. The poet has accepted his doom, has gone forth into the outer darkness, and he now pleads for pardon and recall. During his wanderings he has sunk in fortune and in character, he has consorted with ill companions, he has tried to seek

forgetfulness in 'harmful deeds'. But through all changes and vicissitudes his constancy has remained unbroken:

Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds
Or bends with the remover to remove.

His affection, indeed, has been confirmed and strengthened by suffering:

Those lines that I before have writ do lie,
Even those that said I could not love you dearer:

and again, cxix:

Ruined love, when it is built anew,
Grows fairer than at first, more strong, far greater.

He is ready to take a humble place if he may only return, if he may only end the intolerable separation: his love is not dependent on beauty or favour or any other accident of circumstance, he rises above the hope of reward or the fear of denial, and in the last number offers his 'oblation poor but free' as a willing gift to the shrine that he adores.

The first group of sonnets traces the course of a man's better nature as it passes through the extreme alternations of joy and sorrow, of hope and disappointment. The second group, pendant and antithesis of the first, shows how the worsen nature answers to a similar assay. In one the soul, buffeted and storm-beaten, driven sometimes from its course, tottering sometimes near to shipwreck, yet holds throughout to the helm of constant loyalty until it finds its haven in the certain peace of self-sacrifice and self-devotion. In the other a sensual passion puts forth, without pilot or compass, into an ocean of turbulent desires: at the outset it is gay with pleasures and gallantry, amid seas it is helplessly drifting before every gust, and at the last it founders.

The sonnets to the 'dark lady' form a sequence from cxxvii to clii.¹ It is possible that in some instances the order might be bettered; at any rate the transitions are often very abrupt: but the whole scene is such a chaos of conflicting emotions that any exact consecution would be against the truth of human nature. Some are playful, some even bantering, some couched in that tone of courtly compliment which, at the time, any lover might have used toward his mistress: then the mood sways and in the magnificent sonnet on 'lust in action' pours forth its flood of repentance and self-reproach. But the chain is too strong to break. In the next number he laughs away his contrition, in the next he is back at his mistress's door asking for pity; even when he finds that she is unfaithful he cannot leave her:

When my love swears that she is made of truth
I do believe her, though I know she lies.

and again:

O call me not to justify the wrong
That thy unkindness lays upon my heart;

and again, more ominously:

Be wise as thou art cruel, do not press
My tongue-tied patience with too much disdain,
Lest sorrow lend me words, and words express
The manner of my pity-wanting pain.

When feeling comes to this point words are not far off. Once more the moods change with rapid alternation, but in shorter and shorter circuit they return to the sense of sin and dishonour and unworthiness. The whole head is sick and the whole heart faint, fevered with desire, torn between love and loathing, more sensitive to wounds as it has less vitality to heal them, until in Sonnet clii 'all honest faith is lost' and passion itself dies away into remorse and hatred.

In all literature there is no more tremendous revelation of human weakness. The cry of Catullus:—

Odi et amo: quare id faciam fortasse requiris:
Nescio, sed fieri sentio et excrucior.

is faint in comparison: the story of Lesbia and her poet does not lift the veil with such a remorseless hand. To ask how this hand could be Shakespeare's is an idle question. All things were in Shakespeare: he was, as Sainte-Beuve said, 'la nature même', and to his power of creation we can place no limit. But at the same time it cannot be too strongly insisted that the Sonnets, though lyric, have a dramatic basis: and that Shakespeare's true self is revealed not in the story which they narrate but in the judgements on life and love which they contain.

It may be worth while to add a few words of formal criticism. Wyatt, who introduced the Sonnet into England, adopted with one slight variation the 'Petrarchian' form, which was almost universal among the writers of France and Italy; the form which consists of an octave on two rhymes and a sextain on two or three. Surrey, Wyatt's younger contemporary, chose instead the scheme of three alternate-rhyming quatrains with a final couplet; as described, some thirty years after his time, in George Gascoigne's treatise *The Making of Verse*:

'I can best allow to call those sonnets which are of fourteen lines, every line containing ten syllables. The first twelve do rhyme in staves of four lines by cross-metre, and the last two, rhyming together, do complete the whole.'

This passage of Gascoigne is the more noteworthy since the pattern which it 'best allows' had not been preferred by any considerable poet except Surrey, and was not preferred afterwards either by Sidney or by Spenser. However, in the press of sonnet-writing which followed the publication of *Astrophel and Stella* it came into not infrequent use: there are many examples of it among the collections of Daniel and

Drayton and their lesser contemporaries, and amid all these it was raised to its highest honour by the invariable practice of Shakespeare.

The reasons of his choice are not difficult to conjecture. One of them is that from the beginning of his career he was evidently interested in experimenting with the quatrain and the couplet: he uses them separately, he weaves them into every conceivable pattern. In the plays of his first period there are at least two instances of dialogue written in quatrains¹: there are throughout many instances in which a single rhymed couplet sums up and concludes a speech or scene of blank verse. We have the pattern of one quatrain with a couplet in *Venus and Adonis*, of two in Beatrice's soliloquy,² of three—the Shakespearian sonnet-form—in Helena's letter,³ in two choruses of *Romeo and Juliet*, and in no less than five examples of *Love's Labour's Lost*.⁴ It has been argued from these analogies that the Sonnets themselves are early in date, and very possibly some of them, e. g. the last two, may belong to this period of metrical experiment. In any case there can be little question of its bearing upon the formal side of Shakespeare's ultimate selection. And, for another reason, the general character of the Elizabethan Sonnet is akin to that of the Epigram—its nearest analogue is perhaps to be found in the Palatine Anthology—and for purposes of the Epigram the final couplet, which Petrarch studiously avoided, has special use and appropriateness. Sometimes it may degenerate into a mere conceit, as, for example, in lxxv; far more often it brings to a pointed climax the thought which has been developed through the preceding staves.

In point of pure structure the Shakespearian scheme is perhaps less beautiful, certainly less organic, than that of Petrarch. It is like the sonata form of Bach beside that of Beethoven: more narrow in scope, more fixed and determinate in measure. But the outline is filled with such living melody that we cannot wish it otherwise. All the strength and sweetness of Elizabethan song are here; pictures of exquisite invention, haunting cadences of musical speech, lines that have passed, like jewels, into the treasury of our language:

Thou art thy mother's glass and she in thee
Calls back the lovely April of her prime;

and

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day;

and

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past;

and

Full many a glorious morning have I seen
Flatter the mountain-tops with sovereign eye,
Kissing with golden face the meadows green,
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy;

and

Bare ruined choirs where late the sweet birds sang,

and

To me, fair friend, you never can be old.

and

Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds.

It may be true that the Sonnets are unequal: that is the common censure brought against every great poet. It is more to the purpose that they have given us an inexhaustible heritage of beauty, and that each successive reading only deepens our wonder and our admiration.

The edition of 1609 appended to the Sonnets an elegiac poem called *A Lover's Complaint*, which is therefore included in the present reprint. It is the lament of a girl who has been betrayed and abandoned, and is told in gentle smooth stanzas of the Rhyme Royal which, in 1594, Shakespeare employed for *Lucrece*. Its authenticity may be questioned. The picture with which it opens is more in Shakespeare's manner than in that of any known contemporary: but the verse, especially if we take 1597 as its date, is far inferior to his. A further piece of evidence is afforded by the strangeness of the vocabulary. Shakespeare was rich in the coinage of new words, but this poem is lavish beyond his measure. A few seem to have been accepted by him, like 'credent' which afterwards appears in *Hamlet*; a few like 'impleach'd' may have been his, though they are not elsewhere found in his work: but there is little trace of his mintage in such forms as 'acture,' 'enpatron,' 'fluxive,' though that is used by Drayton, and 'laundering', though that is borrowed, together with the line in which it occurs, by Drummond of Hawthornden. Indeed one of two conclusions alone would seem to be tenable: either that the poem is attributed to him by a publisher's error, or that, as so often happened, he shared the design with a collaborator of lesser genius.

W. H. HADOW.

Sept. 1907.

[\[Back to Table of Contents\]](#)

Note

The present edition of the *Sonnets* and *A Lover's Complaint* is a reprint of the quarto of 1609. The versions of Sonnets cxxxviii and cxliv, which are found in *The Passionate Pilgrim* (1599), are given in the notes.

The quarto is not a particularly good specimen of the printing of the period, and no attempt has been made to reproduce the special features of its typography; otherwise this edition follows the text, spelling, and punctuation of the Bodleian copy edited in facsimile by Dr. Sidney Lee (Oxford, 1905); changes have only been made in places where the text is obviously corrupt and the correction virtually certain. All changes not purely typographical are recorded in the notes.

SHAKE-SPEARES

SONNETS.

Neuer before Imprinted.

at london

By *G. Eld* for *T. T.* and are to be solde by *William Aspley*

1609.

TO.THE.ONLIE.BEGETTER.OF.THESE.INSVING.SONNETS.M^r.W.H.
ALL.HAPPINESSE.AND.THAT.ETERNITIE. PROMISED. BY. OVR.EVER-
LIVING.POET. WISHETH. THE.WELL-WISHING. ADVENTVRER.IN.
SETTING. FORTH.

T. T.

SHAKESPEARES *SONNETS*

1

FROM fairest creatures we desire increase,
That thereby beauties *Rose* might neuer die,
But as the riper should by time decease,
His tender heire might beare his memory:
But thou contracted to thine owne bright eyes,
Feed'st thy lights flame with selfe substantiall fewell,
Making a famine where abundance lies,
Thy selfe thy foe, to thy sweet selfe too cruell:
Thou that art now the worlds fresh ornament,

And only herauld to the gaudy spring,
Within thine owne bud buriest thy content,
And tender chorle makst wast in niggarding:
Pitty the world, or else this glutton be,
To eate the worlds due, by the graue and thee.

2

WHEN fortie Winters shall beseige thy brow,
And digge deep trenches in thy beauties field,
Thy youthes proud liuery so gaz'd on now,
Wil be a totter'd weed of smal worth held:
Then being askt, where all thy beautie lies,
Where all the treasure of thy lusty daies;
To say within thine owne deepe sunken eyes,
Were an all-eating shame, and thriftlesse praise.
How much more praise deseru'd thy beauties vse,
If thou couldst answer this faire child of mine
Shall sum my count, and make my old [excuse](#):
Proouing his beautie by succession thine.
This were to be new made when thou art ould,
And see thy blood warme when thou feel'st it [could](#).

3

LOOKE in thy glasse and tell the face thou vewest,
Now is the time that face should forme an other,
Whose fresh repaire if now thou not renewest,
Thou doo'st beguile the world, vnblesse some mother.
For where is she so faire whose vn-eard wombe
Disdaines the tillage of thy husbandry?
Or who is he so fond will be the tombe,
Of his selfe [loue](#), to stop posterity?
Thou art thy mothers glasse and she in thee
Calls backe the louely Aprill of her prime,
So thou through windowes of thine age shalt see,
Dispight of wrinkles this thy goulden time.
But if thou liue remembred not to be,
Die single and thine Image dies with thee.

4

VNTHRIFTY loueliness why dost thou spend,
Vpon thy selfe thy beauties legacy?
Natures bequest giues nothing but doth lend,
And being franck she lends to those are free:

Then beautiful niggard why dost thou abuse,
The bounteous largesse given thee to give?
Profitless usurer why dost thou use
So great a summe of summes yet can'st not live?
For having traffick with thy selfe alone,
Thou of thy selfe thy sweet selfe dost debase,
Then how when nature calls thee to be gone,
What acceptable *Audit* can'st thou leave?
Thy vnus'd beauty must be tomb'd with thee,
Which vsed liues th'executor to be.

5

THOSE flowers that with gentle worke did frame,
The lovely gaze where every eye doth dwell
Will play the tyrants to the very same,
And that vnfaire which fairely doth excell:
For neuer resting time leads Summer on,
To hideous winter and confounds him there,
Sap checkt with frost and lustie leau's quite [gone](#),
Beauty ore-snow'd and barenes every [where](#).
Then were not summers distillation left
A liquid prisoner pent in walls of glass,
Beauties effect with beauty were bereft,
Nor it nor noe remembrance what it was.
But flowers distil'd though they with winter meete,
Leese but their show, their substance still liues sweet.

6

THEN let not winters wragg'd hand deface,
In thee thy summer ere thou be distil'd:
Make sweet some viall; treasure thou some place,
With [beauties](#) treasure ere it be selfe kil'd:
That vse is not forbidden vsery,
Which happies those that pay the willing lone;
That's for thy selfe to breed an other thee,
Or ten times happier be it ten for one,
Ten times thy selfe were happier then thou art,
If ten of thine ten times refigur'd thee,
Then what could death doe if thou should'st depart,
Leauing thee liuing in posterity?
Be not selfe-wild for thou art much too faire,
To be death's conquest and make wormes thine heire.

7

LOE in the Orient when the gracious light,
Lifts vp his burning head, each vnder eye
Doth homage to his new appearing sight,
Seruing with lookes his sacred maiesty,
And hauing climb'd the [steepe-vp](#) heauenly hill,
Resembling strong youth in his middle age,
Yet mortall lookes adore his beauty still,
Attending on his goulden pilgrimage:
But when from high-most pich with wery car,
Like feeble age he reeleth from the day,
The eyes (fore dutious) now conuerted are
From his low tract and looke an other way:
So thou, thy selfe out-going in thy [noon](#),
Vnlok'd on diest vnlesse thou get a sonne.

8

MVSICK to heare, why hear'st thou musick sadly,
Sweets with sweets warre not, ioy delights in ioy:
Why lou'st thou that which thou receaust not gladly,
Or else receau'st with pleasure thine annoy?
If the true concord of well tuned sounds,
By vnions [married](#), do offend thine eare,
They do but sweetly chide thee, who confounds
In singlennesse the parts that thou should'st beare:
Marke how one string sweet husband to an other,
Strikes each in each by mutuall ordering;
Resembling sier, and child, and happy mother,
Who all in one, one pleasing note do sing:
Whose speechlesse song being many, seeming one,
Sings this to thee thou single wilt proue none.

9

IS it for feare to wet a widdowes eye,
That thou consum'st thy selfe in single life?
Ah; if thou issulesse shalt hap to die,
The world will waile thee like a makelesse wife,
The world wilbe thy widdow and still weepe,
That thou no forme of thee hast left behind,
When euery priuat widdow well may keepe,
By childrens eyes, her husbands shape in minde:
Looke what an vnthrift in the world doth spend
Shifts but his place, for still the world inioyes [it](#),

But beauties waste hath in the world an end,
And kept vnvsde the vser so destroyes it:
No loue toward others in that bosome sits
That on himselfe such murdrous shame commits.

10

[FOR shame](#) deny that thou bear'st loue to any
Who for thy selfe art so [vnprouident](#),
Graunt if thou wilt, thou art belou'd of many,
But that thou none lou'st is most euident:
For thou art so possest with murdrous hate,
That gainst thy selfe thou stickst not to conspire,
Seeking that beautious roofe to ruinate
Which to repaire should be thy chiefe desire:
O change thy thought, that I may change my minde,
Shall hate be fairer log'd then gentle loue?
Be as thy presence is gracious and kind,
Or to thy selfe at least kind harted proue,
Make thee an other selfe for loue of me,
That beauty still may liue in thine or thee.

11

AS fast as thou shalt wane so fast thou grow'st,
In one of thine, from that which thou departest,
And that fresh bloud which yongly thou bestow'st,
Thou maist call thine, when thou from youth conuertest,
Herein liues wisdom, beauty, and increase,
Without this follie, age, and could decay,
If all were minded so, the times should cease,
And threescoore yeare would make the world away:
Let those whom nature hath not made for store,
Harsh, featurelesse, and rude, barrenly perrish;
Looke whom she best indow'd, she gaue the more;
Which bountious guift thou shouldst in bounty [cherrish](#).
She caru'd thee for her seale, and ment therby,
Thou shouldst print more, not let that copy die.

12

WHEN I doe count the clock that tels the time,
And see the braue day sunck in hidious night,
When I behold the violet past prime,
And sable curls [all](#) siluer'd ore with white:
When lofty trees I see barren of leaues,

Which erst from heat did canopie the herd
And Sommers greene all girded vp in sheaues
Borne on the beare with white and bristly beard:
Then of thy beauty do I question make
That thou among the wastes of time must goe,
Since sweets and beauties do them-selues forsake,
And die as fast as they see others grow,
And nothing gainst Times sieth can make defence
Saue breed to braue him, when he takes thee hence.

13

O THAT you were your selfe, but loue you are
No longer yours, then you your selfe here liue,
Against this cumming end you should prepare,
And your sweet semblance to some other giue.
So should that beauty which you hold in lease
Find no determination, then you were
[Your selfe](#) again after your selves decease,
When your sweet issue your sweet forme should beare.
Who lets so faire a house fall to decay,
Which husbandry in honour might vphold,
Against the stormy gusts of winters day
And barren rage of deaths eternall cold?
O none but vnthrifts, deare my loue you know,
You had a Father, let your Son say so.

14

NOT from the stars do I my iudgement plucke,
And yet me thinkes I haue Astronomy,
But not to tell of good, or euil lucke,
Of plagues, of dearths, or seasons [quality](#);
Nor can I fortune to breefe mynuits [tell](#),
Pointing to each his thunder, raine and winde,
Or say with Princes if it shal go wel
By oft predict that I in heauen finde.
But from thine eies my knowledge I deriue,
And constant stars in them I read such art
As truth and beautie shal together thriue
If from thy selfe, to store thou wouldst conuert:
Or else of thee this I prognosticate,
Thy end is Truthes and Beauties doome and date.

15

WHEN I consider euery thing that growes
Holds in perfection but a little [moment](#):
That this huge stage presenteth nought but shoves
Whereon the Stars in secret influence comment.
When I perceiue that men as plants increase,
Cheared and checkt euen by the selfe-same skie:
Vaunt in their youthfull sap, at height decrease,
And were their braue state out of memory.
Then the conceit of this inconstant stay,
Sets you most rich in youth before my sight,
Where wastfull time debateth with decay
To change your day of youth to sullied night,
And all in war with Time for loue of you
As he takes from you, I ingraft you new.

16

BVT wherefore do not you a mightier waie
Make warre vpon this bloudie tirant time?
And fortifie your selfe in your decay
With meanes more blessed then my barren rime?
Now stand you on the top of happie houres,
And many maiden gardens yet vnset,
With vertuous wish would beare your liuing flowers,
Much liker then your painted counterfeit:
So should the lines of life that life repaire
Which this (Times pensel or my pupill pen)
Neither in inward worth nor outward faire
Can make you liue your selfe in eies of men,
To giue away your selfe, keeps your selfe still,
And you must liue drawne by your owne sweet [skill](#).

17

WHO will beleeeue my verse in time to come
If it were fild with your most high deserts?
Though yet heauen knowes it is but as a tombe
Which hides your life, and shewes not halfe your parts:
If I could write the beauty of your eyes,
And in fresh numbers number all your graces,
The age to come would say this Poet lies,
Such heauenly touches nere toucht earthly faces.
So should my papers (yellowed with their age)
Be scorn'd, like old men of lesse truth then tongue,

And your true rights be term'd a Poets rage,
And stretched miter of an Antique song.
But were some childe of yours aliue that time,
You should liue [twise](#), in [it](#) and in my rime.

18

SHALL I compare thee to a Summers day?
Thou art more louely and more temperate:
Rough windes do shake the darling buds of Maie,
And Sommers lease hath all too short a date:
Sometime too hot the eye of heauen shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd,
And euery faire from faire some-time declines,
By chance, or natures changing course vntrim'd:
But thy eternall Sommer shall not fade,
Nor loose possession of that faire thou ow'st,
Nor shall death brag thou wandr'st in his shade,
When in eternall lines to time thou grow'st,
So long as men can breath or eyes can see,
So long liues this, and this giues life to [thee](#).

19

DEVOVRING time blunt thou the Lyons pawes,
And make the earth deuoure her owne sweet brood,
Plucke the keene teeth from the fierce Tygers yawes,
And burne the long liu'd Phænix in her blood,
Make glad and sorry seasons as thou [fleet'st](#),
And do what ere thou wilt swift-footed time
To the wide world and all her fading sweets:
But I forbid thee one most hainous crime,
O carue not with thy howers my loues faire brow,
Nor draw noe lines there with thine antique pen,
Him in thy course vntainted doe allow,
For beauties patterne to succeeding men.
Yet doe thy worst ould [Time](#), dispight thy wrong,
My loue shall in my verse euer liue young.

20

A WOMANS face with natures owne hand painted,
Haste thou the Master Mistris of my passion,
A womans gentle hart but not acquainted
With shifting change as is false womens fashion,
An eye more bright then theirs, lesse false in [rowling](#),

Gilding the object where-vpon it [gazeth](#):
A man in hew all *Hews* in his controwling,
Which steales mens eyes and womens soules amaseth.
And for a woman wert thou first created,
Till nature as she wrought thee fell a dotinge,
And by addition me of thee defeated,
By adding one thing to my purpose nothing.
But since she prickt thee out for womens pleasure,
Mine be thy loue and thy loues vse their treasure.

21

SO it is not with me as with that Muse,
Stird by a painted beauty to his verse,
Who heauen it selfe for ornament doth vse,
And eury faire with his faire doth reherse,
Making a coopelment of proud compare
With Sunne and Moone, with earth and seas rich [gems](#),
With Aprills first borne flowers and all things rare,
That heauens ayre in this huge rondure [hems](#).
O let me true in loue but truly write,
And then beleeue me, my loue is as faire,
As any mothers childe, though not so bright
As those Gould candells fixt in heauens ayer:
Let them say more that like of heare-say well,
I will not prayse that purpose not to sell.

22

MY glasse shall not perswade me I am ould,
So long as youth and thou are of one date,
But when in thee times forrwes I behould,
Then look I death my daies should expiate.
For all that beauty that doth couer thee,
Is but the seemely rayment of my heart,
Which in thy brest doth liue, as thine in me,
How can I then be elder then thou art?
O therefore loue be of thy selfe so wary,
As I not for my selfe, but for thee will,
Bearing thy heart which I will keepe so chary
As tender nurse her babe from faring ill,
Presume not on thy heart when mine is slaine,
Thou gau'st me thine not to giue backe againe.

23

AS an vnperfect actor on the stage,
Who with his feare is put besides his part,
Or some fierce thing repleat with too much rage,
Whose strengths abondance weakens his owne heart;
So I for feare of trust, forget to say,
The perfect ceremony of loues right,
And in mine owne loues strength seeme to decay,
Ore-charg'd with burthen of mine owne loues might:
O let my [books](#) be then the eloquence,
And domb presagers of my speaking brest,
Who pleade for loue, and look for recompence,
More then that tonge that more hath more exprest.
O learne to read what silent loue hath writ,
To heare [with](#) eies belongs to loues fine wit.

24

MINE eye hath play'd the painter and hath [steeld](#),
Thy beauties forme in table of my heart,
My body is the frame wherein ['tis](#) held,
And perspectiue it is best Painters art.
For through the Painter must you see his skill,
To finde where your true Image pictur'd lies,
Which in my bosomes shop is hanging stil,
That hath his windowes glazed with thine eyes:
Now see what good-turnes eyes for eies haue done,
Mine eyes haue drawne thy shape, and thine for me
Are windowes to my brest, where-through the Sun
Delights to peepe, to gaze therein on [thee](#).
Yet eyes this cunning want to grace their [art](#),
They draw but what they see, know not the hart.

25

LET those who are in fauor with their stars,
Of publike honour and proud titles bost,
Whilst I whome fortune of such tryumph bars
Vnlookt for ioy in that I honour most;
Great Princes fauorites their faire leaues spread,
But as the Marygold at the suns eye,
And in them-selues their pride lies buried,
For at a frowne they in their glory die.
The painefull warrier famosed for [worth](#),
After a thousand victories once foild,

Is from the booke of honour rased [quite](#),
And all the rest forgot for which he toild:
Then happy I that loue and am beloued
Where I may not remoue, nor be remoued.

26

LORD of my loue, to whome in vassalage
Thy merrit hath my dutie strongly knit;
To thee I send this written ambassage
To witnesse duty, not to shew my wit.
Duty so great, which wit so poore as mine
May make seeme bare, in wanting words to shew it;
But that I hope some good conceipt of thine
In thy soules thought (all naked) will bestow it:
Til whatsoeuer star that guides my mouing,
Points on me graciously with faire aspect,
And puts apparrell on my tottered louing,
To show me worthy of [thy](#) sweet respect,
Then may I dare to boast how I doe loue thee,
Til then, not show my head where thou maist proue [me](#).

27

WEARY with toyle, I hast me to my bed,
The deare repose for lims with trauaill tired,
But then begins a iourney in my head
To worke my mind, when boddies work's expired.
For then my thoughts (from far where I abide)
Intend a zelous pilgrimage to thee,
And keepe my drooping eye-lids open wide,
Looking on darknes which the blind doe see.
Saeue that my soules imaginary sight
Presents [thy](#) shaddoe to my sightles view,
Which like a iewell (hunge in gastly night)
Makes blacke night beautious, and her old face new.
Loe thus by day my lims, by night my mind,
For thee, and for my selfe, noe quiet finde.

28

HOW can I then returne in happy plight
That am debarred the benifit of rest?
When daies oppression is not eazd by night,
But day by night and night by day oprest.
And each (though enimes to ethers raigne)

Doe in consent shake hands to torture me,
The one by toyle, the other to complaine
How far I toyle, still farther off from thee.
I tell the Day to please him thou art bright,
And do'st him grace when clouds doe blot the heauen:
So flatter I the swart complexiond night,
When sparkling stars twire not thou [guild'st the eauen](#).
But day doth daily draw my sorrowes longer,
And night doth nightly make greefes [length](#) seeme stronger.

29

WHEN in disgrace with Fortune and mens eyes,
I all alone beweepe my out-cast state,
And trouble deafe heauen with my bootlesse cries,
And looke vpon my selfe and curse my [fate](#),
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featur'd like him, like him with friends possest,
Desiring this mans art, and that mans skope,
With what I most inioy contented least,
Yet in these thoughts my selfe almost despising,
Haplye I thinke on thee, and then my state,
(Like to the Larke at breake of daye arising)
From sullen earth sings himns at Heauens gate,
For thy sweet loue remembred such welth brings,
That then I skorne to change my state with Kings.

30

WHEN to the Sessions of sweet silent thought,
I sommon vp remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lacke of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new waile my deare times waste:
Then can I drowne an eye (vn-vs'd to flow)
For precious friends hid in deaths dateles night,
And weepe a fresh loues long since canceld woe,
And mone th' expence of many a vannisht sight.
Then can I greeue at greeuances fore-gon,
And heuily from woe to woe tell ore
The sad account of fore-bemoned mone,
Which I new pay as if not payd before.
But if the while I thinke on thee (deare friend)
All losses are restord, and sorrowes end.

31

THY bosome is indeared with all hearts,
Which I by lacking haue supposed dead,
And there raignes Loue and all Loues louing parts,
And all those friends which I thought buried.
How many a holy and obsequious teare
Hath deare religious loue stolne from mine eye,
As interest of the dead, which now appeare,
But things remou'd that hidden in [there](#) lie.
Thou art the graue where buried loue doth liue,
Hung with the tropheis of my louers gon,
Who all their parts of me to thee did giue,
That due of many, now is thine alone.
Their images I lou'd, I view in thee,
And thou (all they) hast all the all of me.

32

IF thou suruiue my well contented daie
When that churle death my bones with dust shall [couer](#):
And shalt by fortune once more [re-suruay](#)
These poore rude lines of thy deceased Louer:
Compare them with the bett'ring of the time,
And though they be out-stript by euery pen,
Reserue them for my loue, not for their rime,
Exceeded by the hight of happier men.
Oh then voutsafe me but this louing thought,
Had my friends Muse growne with this growing age,
A dearer birth then this his loue had brought
To march in ranckes of better equipage:
But since he died and Poets better proue,
Theirs for their stile ile read, his for his loue.

33

FVLL many a glorious morning haue I seene,
Flatter the mountaine tops with soueraine eie,
Kissing with golden face the meddowes [greene](#).
Guiliding pale streames with heauenly alcumy:
Anon permit the basest cloudes to ride,
With ougly rack on his celestially face,
And from the for-lorne world his visage hide
Stealing vnseene to west with this disgrace:
Euen so my Sunne one early morne did shine,
With all triumphant splendor on my brow,

But out alack, he was but one houre mine,
The region cloude hath mask'd him from me now.
Yet him for this, my loue no whit disdaineth,
Suns of the world may staine, when heauens sun [staineth](#).

34

WHY didst thou promise such a beautiful day,
And make me trauaile forth without my cloake,
To let base cloudes ore-take me in my way,
Hiding thy brau'ry in their rotten smoke.
Tis not enough that through the cloude thou breake,
To dry the raine on my storme-beaten face,
For no man well of such a salue can speake,
That heales the wound, and cures not the disgrace:
Nor can thy shame giue phisicke to my grieffe,
Though thou repent, yet I haue still the losse,
Th' offenders sorrow lends but weake reliefe
To him that beares the strong offenses [crosse](#).
Ah but those teares are pearle which thy loue sheeds,
And they are ritch, and ransome all ill deeds.

35

NO more bee greeu'd at that which thou hast done,
Roses haue thornes, and siluer fountaines mud,
Cloudes and eclipses staine both Moone and Sunne,
And loathsome canker liues in sweetest bud.
All men make faults, and euen I in this,
Authorizing thy trespas with compare,
My selfe corrupting saluing thy amisse,
Excusing their sins more then their sins are:
For to thy sensuall fault I bring in sence,
Thy aduerse party is thy Aduocate,
And gainst my selfe a lawfull plea [commence](#):
Such ciuill war is in my loue and hate,
That I an accessary needs must be,
To that sweet theefe which sourely robs from [me](#).

36

LET me confesse that we two must be twaine,
Although our vndeuided loues are one:
So shall those blots that do with me remaine,
Without thy helpe, by me be borne alone.
In our two loues there is but one respect,

Though in our liues a seperable spight,
Which though it alter not loues sole effect,
Yet doth it steale sweet houres from loues [delight](#).
I may not euer-more acknowledge thee,
Least my bewailed guilt should do thee shame,
Nor thou with publike kindnesse honour me,
Vnlesse thou take that honour from thy name:
But doe not so, I loue thee in such sort,
As thou being mine, mine is thy good report.

37

AS a decrepit father takes delight,
To see his actiue childe do deeds of youth,
So I, made lame by Fortunes dearest spight
Take all my comfort of thy worth and truth.
For whether beauty, birth, or wealth, or wit,
Or any of these all, or all, or more
Intituled in [their](#) parts, do crowned sit,
I make my loue ingrafted to this store:
So then I am not lame, poore, nor dispis'd,
Whilst that this shadow doth such substance giue,
That I in thy abundance am suffic'd,
And by a part of all thy glory liue:
Looke what is best, that best I wish in thee,
This wish I haue, then ten times happy me.

38

HOW can my Muse want subiect to inuent
While thou dost breath that poor'st into my verse,
Thine owne sweet argument, to excellent,
For euery vulgar paper to rehearse:
Oh giue thy selfe the thanks if ought in me,
Worthy perusal stand against thy sight,
For who's so dumbe that cannot write to thee,
When thou thy selfe dost giue inuention light?
Be thou the tenth Muse, ten times more in worth
Then those old nine which rimers inuocate,
And he that calls on thee, let him bring forth
Eternal numbers to out-liue long date.
If my slight Muse doe please these curious daies,
The paine be mine, but thine shal be the praise.

39

OH how thy worth with manners may I singe,
When thou art all the better part of me?
What can mine owne praise to mine owne selfe [bring?](#)
And what is't but mine owne when I praise [thee?](#)
Euen for this, let vs deuided liue,
And our deare loue loose name of single one,
That by this seperation I may [giue](#)
That due to thee which thou deseru'st alone:
Oh absence what a torment wouldst thou proue,
Were it not thy soure leisure gaue sweet leaue,
To entertaine the time with thoughts of loue,
Which time and thoughts so sweetly [dost](#) deceiue.
And that thou teachest how to make one twaine,
By praising him here who doth hence remaine.

40

TAKE all my loues, my loue, yea take them all,
What hast thou then more then thou hadst before?
No loue, my loue, that thou maist true loue call,
All mine was thine, before thou hadst this more:
Then if for my loue, thou my loue receiuest,
I cannot blame thee, for my loue thou vset,
But yet be blam'd, if thou [this](#) selfe deceauest
By wilfull taste of what thy selfe refuseth.
I doe forgieue thy robb'rie gentle theefe
Although thou steale thee all my pouerty:
And yet loue knowes it is a greater grieffe
To beare loues wrong, then hates knowne iniury.
Lasciuious grace, in whom all il wel showes,
Kill me with [spights](#), yet we must not be foes.

41

THOSE pretty wrongs that liberty commits,
When I am some-time absent from thy heart.
Thy beautie, and thy yeares full well befits,
For still temptation followes where thou art.
Gentle thou art, and therefore to be wonne,
Beautious thou art, therefore to be assailed.
And when a woman woes, what womans sonne,
Will sourely leaue her till [he](#) haue [preuailed?](#)
Aye me, but yet thou [might](#) my seate forbear,
And chide thy beauty, and thy straying youth,

Who lead thee in their ryot euen there
Where thou art forst to breake a two-fold truth:
Hers by thy beauty tempting her to thee,
Thine by thy beautie beeing false to me.

42

THAT thou hast her it is not all my griefe,
And yet it may be said I lou'd her deerely,
That she hath thee is of my wayling cheefe,
A losse in loue that touches me more neerely.
Louing offenders thus I will excuse yee,
Thou doost loue her, because thou knowst I loue her,
And for my sake euen so doth she abuse me,
Suffring my friend for my sake to aprooue [her](#).
If I loose thee, my losse is my loues gaine,
And loosing her, my friend hath found that losse,
Both finde each other, and I loose both twaine,
And both for my sake lay on me this crosse,
But here's the ioy, my friend and I are one,
Sweete flattery, then she loues but me alone.

43

WHEN most I winke then doe mine eyes best see,
For all the day they view things vnrespected,
But when I sleepe, in dreames they looke on thee,
And darkely bright, are bright in darke directed.
Then thou whose shaddow shaddowes doth make bright,
How would thy shadowes forme, forme happy show,
To the cleere day with thy much cleerer light,
When to vn-seeing eyes thy shade shines so?
How would (I say) mine eyes be blessed made,
By looking on thee in the liuing day?
When in dead night [thy](#) faire imperfect shade,
Through heauy sleepe on sightlesse eyes doth stay?
All dayes are nights to see till I see thee,
And nights bright daies when dreams do shew thee me.

44

IF the dull substance of my flesh were thought,
Iniurious distance should not stop my way,
For then dispight of space I would be brought,
From limits farre remote, where thou doost [stay](#).
No matter then although my foote did stand

Vpon the farthest earth remoou'd from thee,
For nimble thought can iumpe both sea and land,
As soone as thinke the place where he would be.
But ah, thought kills me that I am not thought
To leape large lengths of miles when thou art gone,
But that so much of earth and water wrought,
I must [attend](#) times leasure with my mone.
Receiuing [naught](#) by elements so sloe,
But heaueie teares, badges of eithers woe.

45

THE other two, slight ayre, and purging fire,
Are both with thee, where euer I abide,
The first my thought, the other my desire,
These present absent with swift motion slide.
For when these quicker Elements are gone
In tender Embassie of loue to thee,
My life being made of foure, with two alone,
Sinkes downe to death, opprest with melancholie.
Vntill liues composition be recured,
By those swift messengers return'd from thee,
Who euen but now come back againe assured,
Of [thy](#) faire health, recounting it to me.
This told, I ioy, but then no longer glad,
I send them back againe and straight grow sad.

46

MINE eye and heart are at a morrall warre,
How to deuide the conquest of thy sight,
Mine eye, my heart [thy](#) pictures sight would barre,
My heart, mine eye the [freedome](#) of that right,
My heart doth plead that thou in him doost lye,
(A closet neuer pearst with christall eyes)
But the defendand doth that plea deny,
And sayes in him [thy](#) faire appearance lyes.
To side this title is impannelled
A quest of thoughts, all tennants to the heart,
And by their verdict is determined
The cleere eyes moyitie, and the deare hearts part.
As thus, mine eyes due is [thy](#) outward part,
And my hearts right, [thy](#) inward loue of heart.

47

BETWIXT mine eye and heart a league is tooke,
And each doth good turnes now vnto the other,
When that mine eye is famisht for a looke,
Or heart in loue with sighes himselfe doth smother;
With my loues picture then my eye doth feast,
And to the painted banquet bids my heart:
An other time mine eye is my hearts guest,
And in his thoughts of loue doth share a part.
So either by thy picture or my loue,
Thy selfe away, [are](#) present still with me,
For thou [nor](#) farther then my thoughts canst moue,
And I am still with them, and they with thee.
Or if they sleepe, thy picture in my sight
Awakes my heart, to hearts and eyes delight.

48

HOW carefull was I when I tooke my way,
Each trifle vnder truest barres to thrust,
That to my vse it might vn-vsed stay
From hands of falsehood, in sure wards of trust?
But thou, to whom my iewels trifles are,
Most worthy comfort, now my greatest griefe,
Thou best of deerest, and mine onely care,
Art left the prey of euery vulgar theefe.
Thee haue I not lockt vp in any chest,
Saue where thou art not though I feele thou art,
Within the gentle closure of my brest,
From whence at pleasure thou maist come and part,
And euen thence thou wilt be stolne I feare,
For truth prooues theeuish for a prize so deare.

49

AGAINST that time (if euer that time come)
When I shall see thee frowne on my defects,
When as thy loue hath cast his vtmost summe,
Cauld to that audite by aduis'd respects,
Against that time when thou shalt strangely passe,
And scarcely greeete me with that sunne thine eye,
When loue conuerted from the thing it was
Shall reasons finde of setled grauitie.
Against that time do I insconce me here
Within the knowledge of mine owne desart,

And this my hand, against my selfe vpreare,
To guard the lawfull reasons on thy [part](#).
To leaue poore me, thou hast the strength of lawes,
Since why to loue, I can alledge no cause.

50

HOW heauie doe I iourney on the way,
When what I seeke (my wearie trauels end)
Doth teach that ease and that repose to say
Thus farre the miles are measurde from thy friend.
The beast that beares me, tired with my woe,
Plods duly on, to beare that waight in me,
As if by some instinct the wretch did know
His rider lou'd not speed being made from thee:
The bloody spurre cannot prouoke him on,
That some-times anger thrusts into his hide,
Which heauily he answers with a grone,
More sharpe to me then spurring to his side,
For that same grone doth put this in my mind,
My greefe lies onward and my ioy behind.

51

THVS can my loue excuse the slow offence,
Of my dull bearer, when from thee I speed,
From where thou art, why [should](#) I hast me thence,
Till I returne of posting is noe need.
O what excuse will my poore beast then find,
When swift extremity can seeme but [slow](#)?
Then should I spurre though mounted on the wind,
In winged speed no motion shall I know,
Then can no horse with my desire keepe pace,
Therefore desire (of [perfect](#) loue being made)
Shall naigh noe dull flesh in his fiery race,
But loue, for loue, thus shall excuse my iade,
Since from thee going, he went wilfull slow,
Towards thee ile run, and giue him leaue to goe.

52

SO am I as the rich whose blessed key,
Can bring him to his sweet vp-locked treasure,
The which he will not eu'ry hower suruay,
For blunting the fine point of seldome pleasure.
Therefore are feasts so sollemne and so rare,

Since sildom comming in the long yeare set,
Like stones of worth they thinly placed are,
Or captaine Iewells in the carconet.
So is the time that keepes you as my chest,
Or as the ward-robe which the robe doth hide,
To make some speciall instant speciall blest,
By new vnfoulding his imprison'd pride.
Blessed are you whose worthinesse giues skope,
Being had to tryumph, being lackt to hope.

53

WHAT is your substance, whereof are you made,
That millions of strange shaddowes on you tend?
Since euery one, hath euery one, one shade,
And you but one, can euery shaddow lend:
Describe *Adonis* and the counterfet,
Is poorely immitated after you,
On *Hellens* cheeke all art of beautie set,
And you in *Grecian* tires are painted new:
Speake of the spring, and foyzon of the yeare,
The one doth shaddow of your beautie show,
The other as your bountie doth appeare,
And you in euery blessed shape we know.
In all externall grace you haue some part,
But you like none, none you for constant heart.

54

OH how much more doth beautie beautious seeme,
By that sweet ornament which truth doth giue,
The Rose lookes faire, but fairer we it deeme
For that sweet odor, which doth in it liue:
The Canker bloomes haue full as deepe a die,
As the perfumed tincture of the Roses,
Hang on such thornes, and play as wantonly,
When sommers breath their masked buds discloses:
But, for their virtue only is their show,
They liue vnwoo'd, and vnrespected fade,
Die to themselues. Sweet Roses doe not so,
Of their sweet deathes, are sweetest odors made:
And so of you, beautious and louely youth,
When that shall vade, [by](#) verse distils your truth.

55

NOT marble, nor the gilded [monuments](#),
Of Princes shall out-lie this powrefull rime,
But you shall shine more bright in these contents
Then vnswept stone, besmeer'd with sluttish time.
When wastefull warre shall *Statues* ouer-turne,
And broiles roote out the worke of masonry,
Nor *Mars* his sword, nor warres quick fire shall [burne](#)
The liuing record of your memory.
Gainst death, and [all-obliuiousenmity](#)
Shall you pace forth, your praise shall stil finde roome,
Euen in the eyes of all posterity
That weare this world out to the ending doome.
So til the iudgement that your selfe arise,
You liue in this, and dwell in louers eies.

56

SWEET loue renew thy force, be it not said
Thy edge should blunter be then apete,
Which but too daie by feeding is alaied,
To morrow sharpned in his former might.
So loue be thou, although too daie thou fill
Thy hungrie eies, euen till they winck with fulnesse,
Too morrow see againe, and doe not kill
The spirit of Loue, with a perpetual dulnesse:
Let this sad *Intrim* like the Ocean be
Which parts the shore, where two contracted new,
Come daily to the banckes, that when they [see](#)
Returne of loue, more blest may be the view.
[As](#) cal it Winter, which being ful of care,
Makes Sommers welcome, thrice more wish'd, more rare.

57

BEING your slaue what should I doe but tend,
Vpon the houres, and times of your desire?
I haue no precious time at al to spend;
Nor seruices to doe til you require.
Nor dare I chide the world without end houre,
Whilst I (my soueraine) watch the clock for you,
Nor thinke the bitternesse of absence sowre,
When you haue bid your seruant once adieue.
Nor dare I question with my iealious thought,
Where you may be, or your affaires suppose,

But like a sad slaue stay and thinke of nought
[Saue](#), where you are, how happy you make those.
So true a foole is loue, that in your Will,
(Though you doe any thing) he thinkes no ill.

58

THAT God forbid, that made me first your slaue,
I should in thought controule your times of pleasure,
Or at your hand th' account of houres to craue,
Being your vassail bound to staie your leisure.
Oh let me suffer (being at your beck)
Th' imprison'd absence of your libertie,
And patience [tame](#) to sufferance bide each check,
Without accusing you of iniury.
Be where you list, your charter is so strong,
That you your selfe may priuiledge your time
To what you will, to you it doth belong,
Your selfe to pardon of selfe-doing crime.
I am to waite, though waiting so be hell,
Not blame your pleasure be it ill or well.

59

IF their bee nothing new, but that which is,
Hath beene before, how are our braines beguild,
Which laboring for inuention beare amisse
The second burthen of a former child?
Oh that record could with a back-ward looke,
Euen of fiue hundreth courses of the Sunne,
Show me your image in some antique booke,
Since minde at first in carrecter was done.
That I might see what the old world could say,
To this composed wonder of your frame,
Whether we are mended, or [where](#) better they,
Or whether reuolution be the same.
Oh sure I am the wits of former daies,
To subiects worse haue giuen admiring praise.

60

LIKE as the waues make towards the pibled shore,
So do our minuites hasten to their end,
Each changing place with that which goes before,
In sequent toile all forwards do contend.
Natiuity once in the maine of [light](#),

Crawles to maturity, wherewith being crown'd,
Crooked eclipses gainst his glory fight,
And time that gaue, doth now his gift confound.
Time doth transfix the florish set on youth,
And delues the paralels in beauties brow,
Feedes on the rarities of natures truth,
And nothing stands but for his sieth to mow.
And yet to times in hope, my verse shall stand
Praising thy worth, dispight his cruell hand.

61

IS it thy wil, thy Image should keepe open
My heauy eielids to the weary night?
Dost thou desire my slumbers should be broken,
While shadowes like to thee do mocke my sight?
Is it thy spirit that thou send'st from thee
So farre from home into my deeds to pry,
To find out shames and idle houres in me,
The skope and tenure of thy Ielousie?
O no, thy loue though much, is not so great,
It is my loue that keepes mine eie awake,
Mine owne true loue that doth my rest defeat,
To plaie the watch-man euer for thy sake.
For thee watch I, whilst thou dost wake elsewhere,
From me farre of, with others all to neere.

62

SINNE of selfe-loue possesseth al mine eie,
And all my soule, and al my euery part;
And for this sinne there is no remedie,
It is so grounded inward in my heart.
Me thinkes no face so gracious is as mine,
No shape so true, no truth of such account,
And for my selfe mine owne worth do define,
As I all other in all worths surmount.
But when my glasse shewes me my selfe indeed
Beated and chopt with tand antiquitie,
Mine owne selfe loue quite contrary I [read](#),
Selfe, so selfe [louing](#), were [iniquity](#).
'Tis thee (my selfe) that for my selfe I praise,
Painting my age with beauty of thy daies.

63

AGAINST my loue shall be as I am now
With times iniurious hand chrusht and ore-worne,
When houres haue dreind his blood and fild his brow
With lines and wrinces, when his youthfull morne
Hath trauaild on to Ages steepie night,
And all those beauties whereof now he's King
Are vanishing, or vanisht out of sight,
Stealing away the treasure of his Spring.
For such a time do I now fortifie
Against confounding Ages cruell knife,
That he shall neuer cut from memory
My sweet loues beauty, though my louers life.
His beautie shall in these blacke lines be seene,
And they shall liue, and he in them still greene.

64

WHEN I haue seene by times fell hand defaced
The rich proud cost of outworne buried age,
When sometime loftie towers I see downe rased,
And brasse eternall slaue to mortall rage.
When I haue seene the hungry Ocean gaine
Aduantage on the Kingdome of the shoare,
And the firme soile win of the watry maine,
Increasing store with losse, and losse with store.
When I haue seene such interchange of state,
Or state it selfe confounded, to decay,
Ruine hath taught me thus to ruminare
That Time will come and take my loue away.
This thought is as a death which cannot choose
But weepe to haue, that which it feares to loose.

65

SINCE brasse, nor stone, nor earth nor boundlesse sea,
But sad mortallity ore-swaies their power,
How with this rage shall beautie hold a plea,
Whose action is no stronger then a flower?
O how shall summers hunny breath hold out,
Against the wrackfull siede of battring dayes,
When rocks impregnable are not so stoute,
Nor gates of steele so strong but time decayes?
O fearefull meditation, where alack,
Shall times best Iewell from times chest lie hid?

Or what strong hand can hold his swift foote back,
[Or](#) who his spoile [of](#) beautie can forbid?
O none, vnlesse this miracle haue might,
That in black inck my loue may still shine bright.

66

TYR'D with all these for restfull death I cry,
As to behold desert a begger borne,
And needie Nothing trimd in iollitie,
And purest faith vnhappily forsworne,
And gilded honor shamefully misplast,
And maiden vertue rudely strumpeted,
And right perfection wrongfully disgrac'd,
And strength by limping sway disabled,
And arte made tung-tide by authoritie,
And Folly (Doctor-like) controuling skill,
And [simple Truth](#) miscalde Simplicitie,
And [captiue good](#) attending Captaine ill.
Tyr'd with all these, from these would I be gone,
Saue that to dye, I leaue my loue alone.

67

AH wherefore with infection should he liue,
And with his presence grace impietie,
A LOVERS COMPLAINT

*BY*William Shakespeare

FROM off a hill whose concaue wombe reworted,
A plaintfull story from a sistring vae
My spirrits t'attend this doble voyce accorded,
And downe I laid to list the sad tun'd tale,
Ere long espied a fickle maid full pale
Tearing of papers breaking rings a twaine,
Storming her world with [sorrowes](#), wind and raine.
Vpon her head a plattid hiue of straw,
Which fortified her visage from the Sunne,
Whereon the thought might thinke sometime it saw
The carkas of a beauty spent and donne,
Time had not sithed all that youth begun,
Nor youth all quit, but spight of heauens fell rage,
Some beauty peept, through lettice of sear'd age.
Oft did she heaue her Napkin to her eyne,
Which on it had conceited characters:
Laundryng the silken figures in the brine,

That seasoned woe had pelleted in teares,
And often reading what contents it beares:
As often shriking vndistinguisht wo,
In clamours of all size both high and low.
Some-times her leueld eyes their carriage ride,
As they did battry to the spheres intend:
Sometime diuerted their poore balls are tide,
To th'orbed earth; sometimes they do extend,
Their view right on, anon their gases lend,
To euery place at once and no where fixt,
The mind and sight distractedly [commixt](#) .
Her haire nor loose nor ti'd in formall plat,
Proclaimd in her a carelesse hand of pride;
For some vntuck'd descended her sheu'd hat,
Hanging her pale and pined cheeke beside,
Some in her threedden fillet still did bide,
And trew to bondage would not breake from thence,
Though slackly braided in loose negligence.
A thousand faouours from a maund she drew,
Of amber christall and of bedded Iet,
Which one by one she in a riuer threw,
Vpon whose weeping margent she was set,
Like vsery applying wet to wet,
Or Monarches hands that lets not bounty fall,
Where want cries some; but where excesse begs all.
Of folded schedulls had she many a one,
Which she perus'd, sighd, tore and gaue the flud,
Crackt many a ring of Posied gold and bone,
Bidding them find their Sepulchers in mud,
Found yet mo letters sadly pend in blood,
With sleided silke, feate and affectedly
Enswath'd and seald to curious secrecy.
These often bath'd she in her fluxiuie eies,
And often kist, and often gaue to teare,
Cried O false blood thou register of lies,
What vnapproued witnes doost thou beare!
Inke would haue seem'd more blacke and damned
heare!
This said in top of rage the lines she rents,
Big discontent, so breaking their contents.
A reuerend man that graz'd his catell ny,
Sometime a blusterer that the ruffle knew
Of Court of Cittie, and had let go by
The swiftest houres obserued as they flew,
Towards this afflicted fancy fastly drew:
And priuiledg'd by age desires to know
In breefe the grounds and motiues of her wo.
So slides he downe vppon his greyned bat;

And comely distant sits he by her side,
When hee againe desires her, being satte,
Her greuance with his hearing to deuide:
If that from him there may be ought applied
Which may her suffering extasie asswage
Tis promist in the charitie of age.
Father she saies, though in mee you behold
The iniury of many a blasting houre;
Let it not tell your Iudgement I am old,
Not age, but sorrow, ouer me hath power;
I might as yet haue bene a spreading flower
Fresh to my selfe, if I had selfe applyed
Loue to my selfe, and to no Loue beside.
But wo is mee, too early I [attended](#)
A youthfull [suit](#), it was to gaine my grace;
O one by natures outwards so commended,
That maidens eyes stucke ouer all his face,
Loue lackt a dwelling and made him her place.
And when in his faire parts shee didde abide,
Shee was new lodg'd and newly Deified.
His browny locks did hang in crooked curles,
And euery light occasion of the wind
Vpon his lippes their silken parcels hurles,
Whats sweet to do, to do wil aptly find,
Each eye that saw him did inchaunt the minde:
For on his visage was in little drawne,
What largenesse thinkes in parradise was sawne.
Smal shew of man was yet vpon his chinne,
His phenix downe began but to appeare
Like vnshorne veluet, on that termlesse skin
Whose bare out-brag'd the web it seem'd to were.
Yet shewed his visage by that cost more deare,
And nice affections wauering stood in doubt
If best were as it was, or best without.
His qualities were beautious as his forme,
For maiden tongu'd he was and thereof free;
Yet if men mou'd him, was he such a storme
As oft twixt May and Aprill is to see,
When windes breath sweet, vnruely though they bee.
His rudenesse so with his autoriz'd youth,
Did liuery falsenesse in a pride of truth.
Wel could hee ride, and often men would say
That horse his mettell from his rider takes
Proud of subiection, noble by the swaie,
What rounds, what bounds, what [course](#), what stop
he makes!
And controuersie hence a question takes,
Whether the horse by him became his deed,

Or he his [mannadg](#) , by th' wel doing Steed.
But quickly on this side the verdict went,
His reall habitude gaue life and grace
To appertainings and to ornament,
Accomplisht in him-selfe not in his case:
All ayds them-selues made fairer by their place,
Can for addicions, yet their purpos'd trimme
Peec'd not his grace but were al grac'd by him.
So on the tip of his subduing tongue
All kinde of arguments and question deepe,
Al replication prompt, and reason strong
For his aduantage still did wake and sleep,
To make the weeper laugh, the laugher weepe:
He had the dialect and different skil,
Catching al passions in his craft of will.
That hee didde in the general bosome raigne
Of young, of old, and sexes both enchanted,
To dwel with him in thoughts, or to remaine
In personal duty, following where he haunted,
Consent's bewicht, ere he desire haue granted,
And dialogu'd for him what he would say,
Askt their own wils and made their wils obey.
Many there were that did his picture gette
To serue their eies, and in it put their mind,
Like fooles that in th' imagination set
The goodly obiects which abroad they find
Of lands and mansions, theirs in thought assign'd,
And labouring in moe pleasures to bestow them,
Then the true gouty Land-lord which doth owe them.
So many haue that neuer toucht his hand
Sweetly suppos'd them mistresse of his heart:
My wofull selfe that did in freedome stand,
And was my owne fee simple (not in part)
What with his art in youth and youth in art
Threw my affections in his charmed power,
Reseru'd the stalke and gaue him al my flower.
Yet did I not as some my equals did
Demaund of him, nor being desired yeilded,
Finding my selfe in honour so forbidde,
With safest distance I mine honour sheelded,
Experience for me many bulwarkes builded
Of proofs new bleeding which remaind the foile
Of this false Iewell, and his amorous spoile.
But ah who euer shun'd by precedent,
The destin'd ill she must her selfe assay,
Or forc'd examples gainst her owne content
To put the by-past perrils in her way?
Counsaile may stop a while what will not stay:

For when we rage, aduise is often seene
By blunting vs to make our wits more keene.
Nor giues it satisfaction to our blood,
That wee must curbe it vppon others prooffe,
To be forbod the sweets that seemes so good,
For feare of harmes that preach in our behoofe;
O appetite from iudgement stand aloofe!
The one a pallate hath that needs will taste,
Though reason weepe and cry it is thy last.
For further I could say this mans vntrue,
And knew the patternes of his foule beguiling,
Heard where his plants in others Orchards grew,
Saw how deceits were guilded in his smiling,
Knew [vowes](#) were euer brokers to defiling,
Thought Characters and words meerly but art,
And bastards of his foule adulterat heart.
And long vpon these termes I held my Citty,
Till thus hee gan besiege me: Gentle maid
Haue of my suffering youth some feeling pittie
And be not of my holy vowes affraid,
Thats to ye sworne to none was euer said,
For feasts of loue I haue bene call'd vnto
Till now did nere inuite nor neuer [vow](#) .
All my offences that abroad you see
Are errors of the blood none of the mind:
Loue made them not, with acture they may be,
Where neither Party is nor trew nor kind,
They sought their shame that so their shame did find,
And so much lesse of shame in me remaines,
By how much of me their reproch [containes](#) .
Among the many that mine eyes haue seene,
Not one whose flame my hart so much as warmed,
Or my affection put to [th'](#) smallest teene,
Or any of my leisures euer Charmed,
Harme haue I done to them but nere was harmed,
Kept hearts in liueries, but mine owne was free,
And raignd commaunding in his monarchy.
Looke heare what tributes wounded fancies sent me,
Of palyd pearles and rubies red as blood:
Figuring that they their passions likewise lent me
Of greefe and blushes, aptly vnderstood
In bloodlesse white, and the encrimson'd mood,
Effects of terror and deare modesty,
Encampt in hearts but fighting outwardly.
And Lo behold these tallents of their heir,
With twisted mettle amorously empleacht
I haue receau'd from many a seueral faire,
Their kind acceptance, wepingly beseecht,

With [th'](#) annexions of faire gems inricht,
And deepe brain'd sonnets that did amplifie
Each stones deare Nature, worth and quallity.
The Diamond? why twas beautifull and hard,
Whereto his inuis'd properties did tend,
The deepe greene Emrald in whose fresh regard,
Weake sights their sickly radience do amend.
The heauen hewd Saphir and the Opall blend
With obiects manyfold; each seuerall stone,
With wit well blazond smil'd or made some mone.
Lo all these trophies of affections hot,
Of pensiu'd and subdew'd desires the tender,
Nature hath chargd me that I hoord them not,
But yeeld them vp where I my selfe must render:
That is to you my origin and ender:
For these of force must your oblations be,
Since I their Aulter, you enpatrone me.
Oh then aduance (of yours) that phraseeles hand,
Whose white weighes downe the airy scale of praise,
Take all these similies to your owne command,
Hollowed with sighes that burning lunges did raise:
What me your minister for you obaies
Workes vnder you, and to your audit comes
Their distract parcells, in combined summes.
Lo this deuce was sent me from a Nun,
Or Sister sanctified of holiest note,
Which late her noble suit in court did shun,
Whose rarest hauings made the blossoms dote,
For she was sought by spirits of ritchest cote,
But kept cold distance, and did thence remoue,
To spend her liuing in eternall loue.
But oh my sweet what labour ist to leaue,
The thing we haue not, mastring what not striues,
Playing the Place which did no forme receiue,
Playing patient sports in vnconstrai'd giues,
She that her fame so to her selfe contriues,
The scarres of battaile scapeth by the flight,
And makes her absence valiant, not her might.
Oh pardon me in that my boast is true,
The accident which brought me to her eie,
Vpon the moment did her force subdewe,
And now she would the caged cloister flie:
Religious loue put out religions eye:
Not to be tempted would she be [emur'd](#) ,
And now to tempt all liberty [procur'd](#) .
How mightie then you are, Oh heare me tell,
The broken bosoms that to me belong,
Haue emptied all their fountaines in my well:

And mine I powre your Ocean all amonge:
I strong ore them and you ore me being strong,
Must for your victorie vs all congest,
As compound loue to phisick your cold brest.
My parts had powre to charme a sacred [Sunne](#) ,
Who disciplin'd I dieted in grace,
Beleue'd her eies, when they t' assaile begun,
All vowes and consecrations giuing place:
O most potentiall loue, vowe, bond, nor space
In thee hath neither sting, knot, nor confine
For thou art all and all things els are thine.
When thou impresses what are precepts worth
Of stale example? when thou wilt inflame,
How coldly those impediments stand forth
Of wealth of filliall feare, lawe, kindred fame,
Loues armes are peace, gainst rule, gainst fence,
gainst shame
And sweetens in the suffring pangues it beares,
The *Alloes* of all forces, shockes and feares.
Now all these hearts that doe on mine depend,
Feeling it breake, with bleeding groanes they pine,
And supplicant their sighes to you extend
To leaue the battrie that you make gainst mine,
Lending soft audience, to my sweet designe,
And credent soule, to that strong bonded oth,
That shall preferre and vndertake my troth.
This said, his watrie eies he did dismount,
Whose sightes till then were leaueld on my face,
Each cheeke a riuier running from a fount,
With brynish currant downe-ward flowed a pace:
Oh how the channell to the streame gaue grace!
Who glaz'd with Christall gate the glowing Roses,
That flame through water which their hew incloses.
Oh father, what a hell of witch-craft lies,
In the small orb of one perticular teare?
[But](#) with the invndation of the [eies](#),
What rocky heart to water will not weare?
What brest so cold that is not warmed heare,
[O](#) cleft effect, cold modesty hot wrath:
Both fire from hence, and chill extincture hath.
For loe his passion but an art of craft,
Euen there resolu'd my reason into teares,
There my white stole of chastity I daft,
Shooke off my sober gardes, and ciuill feares,
Appaere to him as he to me appaeres:
All melting, though our drops this diffrence bore,
His poison'd me, and mine did him restore
In him a plenitude of subtile matter,

Applied to Cautills, all straining formes receiues,
Of burning blushes, or of weeping water,
Or sounding paleness: and he takes and leaues,
In eithers aptnesse as it best deceiues:
To blush at speeches ranck, to weepe at woes
Or to turne white and sound at tragick shewes.
That not a heart which in his leuell came,
Could scape the haile of his all hurting ayme,
Shewing faire Nature is both kinde and tame:
And vaild in them did winne whom he would
maime,
Against the thing he sought, he would exclaime,
When he most burnt in hart-wisht luxurie,
He preacht pure maide, and praisd cold chastitie.
Thus meerely with the garment of a grace,
The naked and concealed feind he couerd,
That th'vnexperient gaue the tempter place,
Which like a Cherubin about them houer'd,
Who young and simple would not be so louerd.
Aye me I fell, and yet do question make,
What I should doe againe for such a sake.
O that infected moisture of his eye,
O that false fire which in his cheek so glowd:
O that forc'd thunder from his heart did flye,
O that sad breath his spungie lungs bestowed,
O all that borrowed motion seeming owed,
Would yet againe betray the fore-betrayed,
And new peruert a reconciled Maide.

finis.

Notes

Shakespeares Sonnets

A Lover'S Complaint

Oxford

Printed at the Clarendon Press

By Horace Hart, M.A.

Printer to the University

[1]She was certainly acquainted with some members of
Shakespeare's company, for Kempe dedicated to her his *Morris to*

Norwiche. See Mr. Wyndham's Introduction, p. xliv, and Mr. Tyler's Introduction, ch. viii.

[2] On this question see Professor Dowden's Introduction, pp. xl-xlv, and Mr. Beeching's Essay in the 'Shakespeare Head' Edition, vol. x, pp 368-71. See on the other side Mr. Sidney Lee's *Life of Shakespeare*, pp. 85-7.

[1] The whole duration of the story is said in civ to be three years, which would fit the hypothesis 1597-9.

[1] Compare, at this point, Sonnets cxxxiii, cxxxiv, where the fear for his friend is even more poignantly expressed.

[1] Critics who press into detail the view that the Sonnets are autobiographical have asserted these favourites to be Daniel and Chapman, both of whom were patronised by the Earl of Pembroke.

[1] cxxvi is a stanza of six couplets which seems to be intended as an Envoy to the group. It is inferior in value to the rest and may possibly be an interpolation.

[1] Sonnets cliii and cliv, two variant adaptations of a Greek epigram, are evidently occasional pieces which do not belong to this collection.

[1] *Love's Labour's Lost*, iv. iii, beginning 'That like a rude and savage man of Inde': *Comedy of Errors*, iii. ii.

[2] *Much Ado about Nothing*, iii. i. For a burlesque parallel see the prologue to the Clowns' Play in *Midsummer Night's Dream*.

[3] *All's Well that Ends Well*, iii. iv.

[4] The three 'letters' and two passages of dialogue in i. i. For further extensions of the pattern, in which the final couplet is preceded by four and five quatrains respectively, see v. ii. of the same play.

[[]] 2 l. 11 excuse:] excuse Q

[[]] 1. 14 could.] could, Q

[[]] 3 l. 8 loue,] loue Q

[[]] 5 l. 7 gon,] gon. Q (*us vid.*)

[[]] 1. 8 where.] where, Q (*us vid.*)

[[]] 6 l. 4 beauties] beautits Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)7 l. 5 steepe-vp] steepe vp Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)l. 13 noon,] noon: Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)8 l. 6 married,] married Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)9 l. 10 it,] it Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)10 l. 1 For shame] *It is usual to put a point after shame, but is is not certain that this is not to corrupt the sense.*

[\[\[\]\]](#)l. 2 vnprouident,] vnprouident Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)11 l. 12 cherrish.] cherrish, Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)12 l. 4 all] or Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)13 l. 7 Your selfe] You selfe Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)14 l. 4 quallity;] quallity, Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)l. 5 tell,] tell; Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)15 l. 2 moment:] moment. Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)16 l. 14 skill.] skill, Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)17 l. 14 twise,] twise Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)it] it, Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)18 l. 14 thee.] thee, Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)19 l. 5 fleet'st] fleets *conj. Dyce*

[\[\[\]\]](#)l. 13 Time,] Time Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)20 l. 5 rowling,] rowling: Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)l. 6 gazeth:] gazeth, Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)21 l. 6 gems,] gems: Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)l. 8 hems.] hems, Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)23 l. 9 books] looks *conj. Sewell*

[\[\[\]\]](#)l. 14 with . . . wit] wit . . . wiht Q

[]24 l. 1 steeld] *usually corrected to stelled. Cf. Lucrece 1444, Venus and Adonis 376, and Mr. Wyndham's notes.*

[]l. 3 'tis] ti's Q (*The practice is not consistent; cf. 62 l. 13, T'is; 97 l. 13, 114 ll. 9, 13, 121 l. 1, tis; 85 l. 9, 'tis.*)

[]l. 12 thee.] thee Q

[]l. 13 art,] art Q

[]25 ll. 9, 11 worth . . . quite Q: *Theobald proposed to read fight . . . quite or worth . . . forth The former emendation has been universally accepted; but neither can be regarded as certain.*

[]26 l. 12 thy] their Q

[]l. 14 me.] me Q

[]27 l. 10 thy] their Q

[]28 l. 12 guild'st the eauen] guil'st th' eauen Q (*gildest th' eauen seems less likely*).

[]l. 14 length] strength *Capell MS. stronger.*] stronger Q

[]29 l. 4 fate,] fate. Q

ll. 11, 12 *Most editors remove the parensheses and punctuate after earth; but the text is defensible. Brackets are often used in Q to guard against a grammatical ambiguity (cf. 30 l. 5).*

[]31 l. 8 there Q: *usually corrected to thee*

[]32 l. 2 couer:] couer Q

[]l. 3 re-suruay] re-suruay: Q

[]33 l. 3 greene,] greene Q

[]l. 14 staineth] stainteh Q

[]34 l. 12 crosse. *Capell MS.:* losse. Q

[]35 l. 11 commence:] commence, Q

[]l. 14 me.] me, Q

[]36 l. 8 delight.] delight, Q

[\[\]](#)37 l. 7 their] thy *Capell MS., and so most editors. The authority of Q on this particular point is extremely slight; but Mr. Wyndham shows that their may be right here; see his note.*

[\[\]](#)39 l. 3 bring?] bring; Q (*us vid.*)

[\[\]](#)l. 4 thee?] thee, Q

[\[\]](#)l. 7 giue] giue: Q

[\[\]](#)l. 12 dost] doth *conj. Malone*

[\[\]](#)40 l. 7 this] thy *edd.*

[\[\]](#)l. 14 spights,] spights Q

[\[\]](#)41 l. 8 he] she *conj. Malone*

[\[\]](#)preuailed?] preuailed. Q

[\[\]](#)l. 9 mighst] *cf. 96 l. 11 mighst, 100 l. 14 preuenst.*

[\[\]](#)42 l. 8 her.] her, Q

[\[\]](#)43 l. 11 thy] their Q

[\[\]](#)44 l. 4 stay.] stay, Q

[\[\]](#)l. 12 attend] attend, Q

[\[\]](#)l. 13 naught] naughts Q

[\[\]](#)45 l. 12 thy] their Q

[\[\]](#)46 l. 3 thy] their Q

[\[\]](#)l. 4 freedome] freedome Q

[\[\]](#)l. 8 thy] their Q

[\[\]](#)l. 13 thy] their Q

[\[\]](#)l. 14 thy] their Q

[\[\]](#)47 l. 10 are] *perhaps a printer's error for art*

[\[\]](#)l. 11 nor] *usually corrected to not or no; the change is gratuitous.*

[\[\]](#)49 l. 12 part.] part, Q

[\[\]](#)51 l. 3 should] should Q

[\[\]](#)l. 6 slow?] slow, Q

[\[\]](#)l. 10 perfect] perfects Q: perfect'st *is also possible*.

[\[\]](#)54 l. 14 by] my *Capell MS., followed by modern editors; but there seems no reason why distils should not be used intransitively*.

[\[\]](#)55 l. 1 monuments,] monument, Q

[\[\]](#)55 l. 7 burne] burne: Q

[\[\]](#)l. 9 all-obliuious] all obliuious Q

[\[\]](#)enmity] emnity Q

[\[\]](#)56 l. 11 see] see: Q

[\[\]](#)l. 13 As] Or *conj. Malone: Else conj. Palgrave; the text is probably corrupt, but can be made to yield a meaning*.

[\[\]](#)57 l. 11 Saue,] Saue Q

[\[\]](#)58 l. 7 tame] tame, Q

[\[\]](#)59 l. 11 where] *scil.* whether

[\[\]](#)60 l. 5 light,] light. Q

[\[\]](#)62 l. 11 read,] read Q

[\[\]](#)l. 12 louing,] louing Q

[\[\]](#)iniquity.] iniquity Q

[\[\]](#)l. 13 'Tis] T'is Q (*cf. on 24 l. 3*)

[\[\]](#)65 l. 12 of *conj. Malone: or* Q (*it is just possible that or = ore = o'er*)

[\[\]](#)66 l. 11 simple Truth] simple-Truth Q

[\[\]](#)l. 12 captiue good] captiue-good Q

[\[\]](#)68 l. 7 a second] a scond Q

[\[\]](#)head,] head, Q

[\[\]](#)69 l. 3 due *Tyrwhitt*: end Q

[\[\]](#)l. 4 commend] Commend Q

[\[\]](#)l. 5 Thy] Their Q

[\[\]](#)l. 12 weeds.] weeds, Q

[\[\]](#)l. 14 soyle] solye Q. *The usual reading is solve; but soyle (which has the same sense, see quotations in Mr. Wyndham's note) is the simpler change.*

[\[\]](#)70 l. 6 Thy] Their Q

[\[\]](#)l. 12 inlarged.] inlarged, Q

[\[\]](#)71 l. 1 longer] Longer Q

[\[\]](#)72 l. 2 loue,] loue Q

[\[\]](#)73 l. 4 ruin'd] rn'wd Q

[\[\]](#)74 l. 1 contented:] contented Q

[\[\]](#)l. 12 remembred.] remembred, Q

[\[\]](#)75 l. 14 away.] away, Q

[\[\]](#)76 l. 7 tel] fel Q: spell *conj. Nicholson.*

[\[\]](#)l. 14 told.] told, Q

[\[\]](#)77 l. 3 The] These *Capell MS.*

[\[\]](#)l. 10 blancks] blacks Q

[\[\]](#)79 l. 14 pay.] pay, Q

[\[\]](#)80 l. 13 if] If Q

[\[\]](#)81 l. 8 lye.] lye, Q

[\[\]](#)82 l. 14 blood:] blood, Q

[\[\]](#)83 l. 8 grow.] grow, Q

[\[\]](#)84 ll. 1-2 *Many editors insert a mark of interrogation after most in l. 1; but this gives the wrong sense.*

[\[\[\]\]](#)l. 2 you?] you, Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)l. 4 grew.] grew, Q (*often punctuated grew? But whose in l. 3 is relative not interrogative*)

[\[\[\]\]](#)85 l. 12 before.] before, Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)88 l. 1 disposde] dispode Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)l. 8 shall] *The correction shalt seems unnecessary.*

[\[\[\]\]](#)89 l. 7 disgrace;] disgrace, Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)l. 9 walkes;] walkes Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)90 l. 3 bow,] bow. Q (*ut vid.*)

[\[\[\]\]](#)l. 11 shall] stall Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)91 l. 9 better] bitter Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)92 l. 13 blot?] blot, Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)93 l. 2 husband:] husband Q (*ut vid.*)

[\[\[\]\]](#)95 l. 3 name!] name? Q (*but cf. ll. 4, 12*)

[\[\[\]\]](#)96 l. 11 mighst] *See on 41 l. 9*

[\[\[\]\]](#)l. 12 state!] state? Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)97 ll. 2-4 yeare! . . . seene! . . . where!] yeare? . . . seene? . . . where? Q (! *seems to be normal in Q, though sometimes replaced by?*)

[\[\[\]\]](#)99 l. 3 breath? The] breath, the Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)l. 5 died.] died, Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)l. 9 One] Our Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)100 l. 4 light?] light. Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)l. 14 preuenst] *See on 41 l. 9*

[\[\[\]\]](#)102 l. 1 seeming,] seeming Q

[\[\[\]\]](#)l. 8 his] her *conj. Housman (1835)*

[[]]106 l. 12 still] skill *Capell MS.; the emendation has been almost universally accepted; but the text may be sound; see Mr. Wyndham's note.*

[[]]108 l. 3 now] *perhaps a printer's error for new*

[[]]109 l. 5 loue;] loue, Q

[[]]l 8 staine.] staine, Q

[[]]110 l. 8 loue.] loue, Q

[[]]l. 10 grinde] grin'de Q

[[]]111 l. 1 with] wish Q

[[]]l. 8 renu'de.] renu'de, Q

[[]]112 l. 14 *is usually corrected to methinks are dead or the like; but the result is not very satisfactory, and the text of Q may be right.*

[[]]113 l. 6 latch *conj. Malone: lack Q (cf. Macbeth, iv. iii. 195)*

[[]]l. 10 sweet sauor] sweet-sauor Q

[[]]l. 13 more, repleat] more repleat Q

[[]]117 l. 10 surmise] surmise, Q

[[]]l. 14 loue.] loue Q

[[]]118 l. 4 purge:] purge. Q

[[]]l. 10 were not,] were, not Q

[[]]119 l. 10 is] is, Q

[[]]better,] better. Q

[[]]121 l. 11 beuel,] beuel Q

[[]]122 l. 1 THY] T Thy Q (*repeating T after the initial*)

[[]]125 l. 6 more,] more Q

[[]]l. 7 sweet; Forgoing] sweet forgoing *most editors; there seems no sufficient reason for altering the text.*

[[]]126 *after* l. 12 Q *has double brackets, as if to indicate the omission of a couplet.*

[[]]l. 2 sickle, hower] *variously emended, but with no great success.*

[[]]126 l. 7 skill,] skill. Q

[[]]l. 8 time,] time Q

[[]]mynuits] mynuit Q

[[]]127 l. 4 shame:] shame, Q

[[]]l. 9 Mistresse] Mistersse Q

[[]]ll. 9-10 eyes . . . eyes] hairs, wires, brows, *etc. have been conjectured for eyes in l. 9 or in l. 10.*

[[]]128 l. 11 thy] their Q

[[]]l. 11 thy fingers] their fingers Q

[[]]129 l. 3 blouddy,] blouddy Q

[[]]l. 9 Madde] Made Q

[[]]in pursut] In pursut Q

[[]]l. 11 proud a] proud and Q

[[]]l. 12 dreame.] dreame, Q

[[]]132 l. 2 torments 1640: torment Q

[[]]l. 6 the East] th' East Q

[[]]136 l. 6 I] *scil.* Ay

[[]]137 l. 11 not,] not Q

[[]]l. 12 face?] face, Q

[[]]138 *The version in The Passionate Pilgrim is as follows:—*

When my Loue swears that she is made of truth,
I doe beleue her (though I know she lies)
That she might thinke me some vntutor'd youth,
Vnskilfull in the worlds false forgeries.
Thus vainly thinking that she thinkes me young,

Although I know my yeares be past the best:
I smiling, credite her false speaking tounge,
Out facing faults in Loue, with loues ill rest.
But wherefore sayes my Loue that she is young:
And wherefore say not I, that I am old:
O, Loues best habite is a soothing tounge,
And Age (in Loue) loues not [to haue](#) yeares told.
Therefore Ile lye with Loue, and Loue with me,
Since that our faults in Loue thus smother'd be.

[\[\]](#)138 l. 12 to haue 1599: t' haue Q

[\[\]](#)140 l. 4 pittie-wanting] pittie wanting Q

[\[\]](#)l. 13 belyde] be lyde Q

[\[\]](#)143 l. 12 part,] part Q

[\[\]](#)144 *The version in The Passionate Pilgrim is as follows:—*

TWO loues I haue, of Comfort, and Despaire,
That like two Spirits, do suggest me [still](#):
My better Angell is a man (right [faire](#))
My worser spirite a Woman (colour'd ill.)
To winne me soone to hell, my Female euill
Tempteth my better Angell from my [side](#) ,
And would corrupt my Saint to be a Diuell,
Wooing his purity with her faire pride.
And whether that my Angell be turnde feend,
Suspect I may (yet not directly tell:
For being both to me: both, to each friend,
I ghesse one Angell in anothers hell:
The truth I shall not know, but liue in doubt,
Till my bad Angell fire my good one out.

[\[\]](#)l. 2 still:] still, Q

[\[\]](#)l. 3 faire,] faire; Q

[\[\]](#)l. 6 side 1599: sight Q

[\[\]](#)146 ll. 1-2 *cannot be restored with certainty; most editors regard My sinfull earth in l. 2 as due to dittography; supplying the gap with some such words as Fool'd by (Malone), Foil'd by (Palgrave), etc. Massey, followed by Wyndham, reads My sinful earth these rebel powers array. See Mr. Dowden's note.*

[\[\]](#)149 l. 12 eyes?] eyes. Q

[[]]151 l. 2 loue?] loue, Q

[[]]152 l. 13 eye] *usually corrected to I; but Q may possibly be right, cf. ll. 11, 12.*

[[]]153 l. 14 eyes] eye Q

[[]]154 l. 4 by;] by, Q

[[]]l. 12 diseasd;] diseasd, Q

[[]]p. 83 l 7 sorrowes (*scil.* sorrow's)] sorrowes, Q

[[]]p. 84 l. 7 commixt] commxit Q

[[]]p. 86 l. 1 attended] attended Q

[[]]l. 2 suit,] suit Q

[[]]p. 87 l. 4 course,] course Q

[[]]l. 7 mannadg (*scil.* manege)] mannad'g Q th'] 'th Q makes!] makes Q

[[]]p. 89 l. 12 vowes] vowes, Q

[[]]l. 21 vow (vovv) Q: woo *conj.* Dyce

[[]]l. 28 containes.] containes, Q

[[]]p. 90 l. 3 th'] th, Q

[[]]l. 19 the] th' Q

[[]]p. 92 ll 6, 7 emur'd . . . procur'd] enur'd . . . procure Q. *For the form emure (=immure, Sildon's conjecture) cf. Love's Labour's Lost, iii. i. 18.*

[[]]l. 15 Sunne] nun *conj.* Malone

[[]]p. 93 l. 17 But] Put Q (*ut vid.*)

[[]]eyes,] eyes: Q

[[]]l. 20 O] Or Q