

140. Line 133: *And merrily hent the stile-a*—*Hent*, meaning to take hold of, and so here, no doubt, to clear, occurs again in another sense still, in *Mensure for Measure*, iv. 6. 14, and, as a noun, in *Hamlet*, iii. 3. 88:

U. I. sword, and know that a more harmful hent

The word is from the Anglo-Saxon *heutan*. Compare Chaucer, *Prologue*, 686, 698.

He hent the fowle a gentel litle

Demetrius: But had he, when that he wente

U. I. The one, full fressh and him hent

Steevens quotes Spenser, *Fierle Queene*, bk. iii. canto vii. *Great lower for thy least then hent in hand*

In the 1729 edition of Beyer's French Dictionary the participle *hent* (meaning "caught") is given, but marked as obsolete.

141. Lines 134, 135:

*A merry hent goes all the day,
Four and fives in a mile-a*

Compare what seems like a reminiscence of this in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Knight of the Burning Pestle*, I. 4. "I may curse the time that e'er I knew my father; he hath spent all his own and mine too, and when I tell him of it, he laughs, and dances, and sings, and cries, 'A merry hent lives long-a!'"

ACT IV. SCENE 4.

142. Line 9: *a swain's wearing*. Compare *Othello*, iv. 3. 16: "my nightly wearing," the only other instance of the word.

143. Line 12: *Digest it*.—This word, which seems equally necessary for sense and for rhythm, was added in F. 2.

144. Lines 13, 11:

*sworn, I think,
To show myself a glass.*

This evidently means, as Malone took it, that the prince seems, by his rustic disguise, as if he had sworn to show her, as in a glass, how she herself ought to have been attired. Compare *Julius Cæsar*, i. 2. 67-70:

*And, since you know you cannot see yourself
So well as by reflection, I, your glass,
Will modestly discover to yourself
That of yourself which you yet know not of.*

Hammer changed *sworn* to *swain* (after a conjecture of Theobald's), a reading which, like many of Hammer's, produces an easy text at the cost of all its pith and character.

145. Lines 25, 26:

The gods themselves,

Humbling their deities to love, &c.

Compare *Dorastus and Fawnia*: "The Gods above disdain not to love women beneath. Phœbus liked Silla, Jupiter Io, and why not I Fawnia? one something inferior to those in birth, but faire superior to them in beaultie."

And yet *Dorastus* shame not at thy shepherds weeds: the heavenly gods have sometimes earthly thoughts: Neptune became a ram, Jupiter a Bul, Apollo a shepherd, &c." (Hazlitt, pp. 55, 52)

146. Line 46: *Be merry, gentle*. Compare *Antony and Cleopatra*, iv. 15. 47: "Gentle, hear me; and Measure for Measure, I. 4. 24.

Gentle and fair—with her kindly greets you

147. Lines 46-47:

her face a fire

*With labour, and the thing she took to quench it
She would to each one sip*

This is the punctuation of the FF. The Cambridge editors take away the poor woman's character by the simple transposition of a comma, thus:

her face a fire

*With labour or an 4 the thing she took to quench it,
She would to each one sip.*

The FF. are far from saying that her face was inflamed with drink; it is a trait of politeness that they emphasize. Where the character of a lady depends on a single comma, no gentleman can hesitate which reading to adopt.

148. Lines 74-76: *For you there's rosemary and rue*, &c. Compare *Hamlet*, iv. 5. 175, 176; and see the note on that passage.

149. Line 82: *gillyflowers*. That is, the flower commonly known as "gillyflower," the carnation. The word is from "caryophyllum," through the French "gérofle." Steevens supposes "gill dirt," a wanton, to be derived from *gilly-ror*, "which, though beautiful in its appearance, is apt, in the gardener's phrase, to run from its colours, and change as often as a fickle female." Hence reasonably infers that the bad character of gilly-flowers comes from their resemblance to a "painted woman." "The gilly-flower or carnation," he reminds us, "is streaked with white and red." In this respect it is a proper emblem of a painted or immodest woman, and therefore Perdita declines to meddle with it. She connects the gardener's art of varying the colours of the above flowers with the art of painting the face, a fashion very prevalent in Shakespeare's time. This conclusion is justified by what she says below (lines 101-103: "were I painted," &c.).

150. Lines 105, 106:

*The marigold, that goes to bed with the sun
And with him rises weeping.*

This, says Ellacombe, that Love of Shakespeare (cited by Rolfe), is probably the "*Tagetes marigold*" (*Calendula officinalis*), which was formerly much used in gardens. "It was the 'heliotrope' or 'solsequium' or 'turnsole' of our forefathers, and is often alluded to under these names." Grant White cites Coghlan, *The Hearer of Health*, 1584, p. 68: "*marigoldes* are hote and drye, an herbe well knownen and as used in the kitchen as in the hall: the nature of [?] them is to open at the Sunne rising, and to close up at the Sunne setting."

151. Lines 116-118:

O Proserpina,

*For the flowers now, that frighted thou leftst fall
From Dis's wagon!*

It is evident from Venus and Adonis that Shakespeare had read Ovid, probably both in the original when at school and afterwards in Arthur Golding's translation (1567). The lines here are an evident reminiscence of the passage in the 5th book of the *Metamorphoses*: