

ACT IV, Scene 1.

green; F. 3, *undigeneration*, and same word, spelled *undigeneration*, occurs in a 2. s. which makes it right, or that it is or *kindred* etc.

represents symbolically to Malcolm by an untimely ripped crown with a crown on the royal Malcolm; down a hough and upon, critical Ob- 1705, p. 53).

is born

is contained in lines

be undigeneration

the witch, whom he should never be slain or vanquished till the day of Dunsinane" (Re-

word is only used by Troilus and Cressida,

crisulous girl

se never.—The Ft. have the text is Hammer's, Malcolm's. (On referring to First Edn. 1726) I find it never," adding in (Appendix p. 187). We find it only comma after insert one, although it is the sense of the enclitic.

Kings.—Holinshed gives an account of how Banquo's descendants of Scotland, Fleance, the son of his father, took refuge in that country, by whose daughter a natural son, Walter, (land, etc.) having distinguished himself as Lord Steward of the *Steward* (which afterwards). His great-grandson had a son John, who married. This John was killed at the battle of Bannockburn, by whom he was killed Walter, who married Robert Bruce, by whom he was killed the throne as King Robert of the eight kings, the next

being Robert III. and the last James the Sixth of Scotland and First of England; and it is the latter that shows a glass to Macbeth, and not Banquo, as it says in the stage-direction of F. 1. Marle Stuart is omitted, for any allusion to that ill-fated queen would have been no less unpleasant to her son than it would have been to her late "dear friend and cousin," Queen Elizabeth. It is rather curious to think what Macbeth might have seen in the glass, had Shakespeare been endowed with any prophetic powers. Could it have shown Macbeth the ultimate fate of the *Steward* or *Stuart* family, he might have been consoled by the reflection that in Banquo's case, as in his own, "royal honours" proved not to be an unmitigated blessing.—F. A. M.

200. Line 119: *And yet the eighth appears, who bears a glass*.—Compare Measure for Measure, II. 2. 95, and see note 78.

201. Line 123: *For the blood-bolter'd Banquo smiles upon me*.—Stevens and Malone both say that *bolter'd* is a word well known in Warwickshire, meaning to besmear, befoul. Compare Arden of Feversham, III. 1. p. 44 (ed. Bullen):

Me thinks I see them with their *bolter'd* hair,  
Staring and grinning in thy gentle face;

where *bolter'd* apparently means, as *bolter'd* here, "matted with sweat or blood." Stevens quotes Holland's *Play*, xii. 17, where, speaking of a goat's head, he says: "Now by reason of dust getting among it, *boltereth* and cluttereth into knobs and balls."

202. Line 155: *But no more sights!* Collier, on the authority of his MS. Corrector, altered *sights* to *flights*, a very intelligible error of typography, but no improvement, that I can see, to the sense of the passage. At any wonder that Macbeth has had enough of *sights* for the present?

## ACT IV. SCENE 2.

203. Line 9: *the poor wren*.—Harting (*Ornithology of Shakespeare*, p. 143) says: "There are three statements here which are likely to be criticised by the ornithologist. First, that the wren is the smallest of birds, which is evidently an oversight. Secondly, that the wren has sufficient courage to fight against a bird of prey in defence of its young, which is doubtful. Thirdly, that the owl will take young birds from the nest."

[I think that Mr. Harting is a little hypercritical here. The common wren, *Troglodytes vulgaris*, is indeed not a particularly the smallest of British birds, for the golden-crested *Regulus* (otherwise called the golden-crested wren, a smaller bird) gives as the length of the common wren four inches, and as the length of the golden-crested *Regulus* three inches and a half. The smallest of the tits is slightly larger than the wren.

The little wren is very bold and very familiar; but it is the common blue tit or Billy Biter, as the small boys call him, which is most especially vigorous in the defence of its nest. As to the accusation against the barn-door owl of taking young birds from the nest, Mr. Harting gives, on pp. 91-94, a most interesting summary of the evidence for and against the accused. It must be confessed that the circumstantial evidence is rather against the owl; though

he has found a vigorous defender in the late Charles Waterton. The wren has been the small centre of many traditions. For some unknown reason Jenny Wren was married to Cock Robin; and I believe, with due deference to the translator, that the *Zawankowig* (hedge-king) of the Tales, numbered 162 and 171 respectively, in Grimm's collection (see Margaret Hunt's Translation of Household Tales, vol. II.) was intended to be the common wren, to be seen in every hedge-row, and not the willow-wren or willow-warbler, a member of the family of the Sylviidae, and no relation to our friend Jenny.—F. A. M.]

204. Lines 19-22:

*When we hold rumour  
From what we fear, yet know not what we fear,  
But float upon a wild and violent sea;  
Each way and move.*

This is one of the many obscure and difficult passages in this play which only scarcely knows how to treat; for one cannot make them clear and intelligible without such a radical alteration of the text, as the most cautious commentator may fear to perpetrate. It is much safer to retain the text of the Folio, in spite of its apparent obscurity, if by the aid of that text we can make any sense of the passage in question. Ross is trying to excuse to Lady Macbeth the apparent cowardice of her husband in flying from his country, and leaving her and her children to the mercy of Macbeth. He says:

But the cruel are the times, when we are traitors,  
And do not know ourselves;

the meaning of which is generally taken to be "When we are traitors and do not know ourselves to be traitors;" in which case we should have expected that the text would have been, as Hammer printed it, "and *know* 't ourselves." It may be that the meaning of these words is "When we are,"—that is to say, "act as if we were—traitors, and do not know ourselves, i. e. the exact motive or effect of our own actions." This meaning seems to coincide with what follows. He continues "when we hold rumour, that is to say "entertain or believe rumour, *from what we fear*, i. e. "interpreting it by the aid of our fears," or "giving it the shape of our fears," *yet know not what we fear*, but float upon a wild and violent sea; being tossed up and down and driven each way without any control over our own movements." The words *each way and move* are those in which the chief difficulty lies. Shakespeare never uses *move* as a substantive, but always as a verb; and, if we understand it here as equivalent to "move up and down with the chopping action of the waves," it makes very good sense. However elliptical the expression may appear, we have a similar use of the verb in *Cymbeline*, III. 1. 26-29:

and his shipping—  
Poor ignorant baubles!—on our terrible seas,  
Like eggs-shells *mov'd* upon their surges, crack'd  
As easily 'gainst our rocks.

Ross's meaning may be thus paraphrased. "The times are cruel when such is the uncertainty and agitation of men's minds, that they play the part of traitors to their own duties, and lose the power of perceiving the effect of their own actions; or, when they are set down as traitors to their ruler, without any consciousness of having done anything to deserve it. At such times, when the