

who rejoicest in the baying of dogs, and spilt blood; who wandereth in the midst of shades among the tombs; who longest for blood and bringest terror to mortals; Gorgo, Mormo, thousand-faced moon, look favorably on our sacrifices!" Shakespeare himself, in many passages, shews how universally Hecate was looked upon as the High Priestess of witchcraft. Macbeth says:

"Wicked dreams abuse
The curtain'd sleep; witchcraft celebrates
Pale Hecate's offerings,"—

offerings made with solemn and secret rites, hence the use of the word "celebrates."

In Hamlet we find:—

"Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds
collected,
With Hecate's ban thrice blasted, thrice
infected."

Lear says:

"Let it be so: thy truth, then, be thy dower:
For by the sacred radiance of the sun,
The mysteries of Hecate, and the night;
* * * * *
Here I disclaim all my paternal care."

I may remark in parenthesis that Professor Wright in his note to this passage shows that Shakespeare used Hecate as a dissyllable in every play except the 1st part of Henry VI., which he looks upon as a significant fact as regards Shakespeare's share in that play. Professor Murray has suggested to me, with his usual originality and ingenuity, that Shakespeare made Hecate a dissyllable to bring the sound nearer to Hell Cat, a suggestion which when we consider Shakespeare's love for play upon words, is by no means without probability.

In Jonson's the "Sad Shepherd," Maudlin, the witch, calls Hecate, the mistress of witches, "our Dame Hecate," and as their queen and mistress, the hags of Shakespeare regard her.

In reply to the greeting of the first witch,

"Why, how now, Hecate! you look angerly," she soundly berates them for presumption, gives them strict instructions for

their future conduct, and waits for no reply.

"Come, let's make haste; she'll soon be back again,"

is all the terror-stricken first witch dares to say.

Expediently and well they perform Hecate's behest, and the fruit of their labors is shewn in the marvellous caldron scene. Its concentrated power is as remarkable as its detail. Every line contains one or more of the ingredients common to every witch's formula, ingredients which Shakespeare knew, not from any extended study of mythology, Scandinavian or other, but from the folk lore of the people, and which were as well known to his audience as to himself. But with what rare and almost incredible genius he uses his material!

"Liver of blaspheming Jew,
Gall of goat, and slips of yew
Slivered in the moon's eclipse,
Nose of Turk and Tartar's lips,
Finger of birth-strangled babe,
Ditch-delivered by a drab,
Make the gruel thick and slab:
Add thereto a tiger's chaudron,
For the ingredients of our caldron."

What a feat, to use the very naked elements of the grotesquely horrible without once approaching the absurd!

I must again call attention to the intense terseness of the witches' invocation. These lyrics might be examined with a literary microscope, and no line, no phrase, no word, discovered that could be omitted without damaging the flawless perfection of the whole. The rhymes are almost without exception monosyllables, a curious and instructive instance of perhaps almost unconscious perfection of workmanship.

Apparitions, or what modern spiritualists would call physical materializations, did not absolutely fall within the scope of witchcraft. True, the witch of Endor is reputed to have operated successfully for Saul, and witches may have been believed to possess the power, but only under exceptional circumstances. Certainly