

Banquet scene proclaims him the third murderer; while there is no advantage to the play in supposing Macbeth to have been the assassin, it would complete the character of Ross to assign him that place. Moreover, the fact that the two murderers did not recognize Macbeth seems fatal to Mr. Paton's contention.

11. The sixth Scene of Act III. is designed to show how slowly honourable men became acquainted with the character of Macbeth. It is highly probable that the conjecture that the other lord of this Scene was Angus, is correct, and that the Scene accentuates the character of Angus and increases the probability that he was duped by Ross in Scenes 2 and 3 of Act I.

12. Ross's relation to Lady Macduff is mysterious in the last degree, and by design. The situation is such as to lead one to suspect him of the foulest motives in visiting the castle of Macduff in his absence. But it is impossible to say more than this in cool judgment. This state of things harmonizes perfectly with the shady character of his conduct throughout the play.

The Prima Facie Case.—It will of course be said that the *prima facie* case against Cawdor is conclusive. That it has been so taken for so many years certainly makes any other view of the matter somewhat temerarious. Yet what are the facts of the case on the face of it? Ross had strong motives for ruining Cawdor in Macbeth's interest, as he plainly shows us, when in the face of Macduff's sneers (Sc. 4, Act II.) he goes to Macbeth's court to claim his reward. The sole ground of Cawdor's ruin is an ambiguous speech by Ross, which contains a reference to Cawdor of a line and a half. Macbeth plainly states, first, that the Thane of Cawdor lives a prosperous gentleman; and second, that the Thane of Cawdor lives, omitting the mention of his prosperity because the witches and Ross agreed so well, and because it was so greatly to Macbeth's interest that