

er over him and she decided to use it to strike at Duncan on the first favorable occasion. On receiving a letter from Macbeth in which he tells her of the Weird Sisters' greeting him as "King that shalt be" she thus soliloquizes on his good nature and her chance of corrupting it.

"Thou shalt be King !

Yet do I fear thy nature ;
It is *too full of the milk of human kindness*
To catch the *nearest way*.
Thou art not without ambition
But without that illness should attend it.
(Thou) wouldst not play me false . . .
That I may pour my spirits into thy ear,
And chastise with the valor of *my tongue*
All that impedes *thee* from this golden round."

Such words as those reveal the true Lady Macbeth to us,---a crafty, cunning woman, careful in planning, yet bold in execution. They show what a close study she has made of her husband's character that her attack on its good side may be successful. While the worthy lady's mind is filled with these thoughts, messengers arrive with news that her lord is near at hand and that the King himself will sleep that night beneath their roof. The opportunity she has so long desired has come at last. Her feelings find vent in expressions that fill us with disgust and horror :

"The raven himself is hoarse,

That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan,
Under my battlements. *Come, you spirits*
That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,
And fill me, from the crown to the toe, top-full
Of direst cruelty ! make thick my blood
Stoop up the access and passage of remorse
. *Come, thick night*
And pall me in the dunest smoke of hell
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,
Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,
To cry "Hold, Hold !"

For such utterances it is impossible to find any excuse. When Lady Macbeth expresses them she is alone,---a position in which one is disposed to speak one's true, though hidden, thoughts. Can we compare her words with any of Macbeth's and not feel pity for the soldier in his misalliance ? What possible chance has he, ac-