

ACT II. SCENE III.

47

Banquo.

Look to the lady:

[*Lady Macbeth is carried out.*]

And when we have our naked frailties hid,
That suffer in exposure, let us meet,
And question this most bloody piece of work,
To know it further. Fears and scruples shake us :
In the great hand of God I stand, and thence
Against the undivulged pretence I fight
Of treasonous malice.

110

Macduff,

And so do I.

All.

So all.

Macbeth. Let's briefly put on manly readiness,
And meet i' the hall together.

All.

Well contented.

[*Exeunt all but Malcolm and Donalbain.*]

Malcolm. What will you do ? Let's not consort with them :
To show an unfelt sorrow is an office
Which the false man does easy. I'll to England.

Donalbain. To Ireland, I ; our separated fortune
Shall keep us both the safer : where we are,
There 's daggers in men's smiles : the near in blood,
The nearer bloody.

120

Malcolm. This murderous shaft that 's shot
Hath not yet lighted, and our safest way
Is to avoid the aim. I therefore to horse ;
And let us not be dainty of leave-taking,
But shift away : there 's warrant in that theft
Which steals itself when there's no mercy left.

[*Exeunt.*]

112-113. *In the great hand of God I stand and thence I fight against the undivulged pretence of treasonous malice.* This is as near as Banquo can come to declaring in public what he feels so certain of in Scene I, Act III., where he says, "I fear thou playdst most foully for it." In that same damning speech he hopes he may prosper from foul means, himself.

This speech fixes the hate of Macbeth upon him irrevocably.

Banquo committed treason enough in the name of God, yet he could not equivocate to Heaven.