

**NEW READINGS IN
SHAKSPERE, OR
PROPOSED EMENDATIONS
OF THE TEXT**

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BY

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THESE New Readings are the product of pleasant evenings over Mr. DYCE'S Second Edition of Shakspeare. Should a few be accepted as genuine emendations, I shall feel I have joined the useful with the sweet, and not spent the time in vain :

"The fine's the crown."

ROBERT CARTWRIGHT, M.D.

November, 1865.



NEW READINGS IN SHAKSPERE.

The figures in the margin refer to the pages of Mr. Dyce's second edition.

THE TEMPEST.

VOL. I.

182. Now *I arise*. a. i.—2.
Read P. rises; a stage direction.

187. As *wicked* dew. a. i.—2.
Read cursed.

In Romeo and Juliet I have since dropt on a curious confirmation of this emendation: "O most *cursed* fiend!" "So in the first quarto alone," says Mr. Dyce; the common reading is "*wicked*," evidently a misprint,—"ancient damnation!"

192. *nor* this man's threats,
 To whom I am subdu'd, are *but* light to me,
 Might I but— a. i.—2.
Read and,—omit *but*.

207. Most *busiless* when I do it. a. iii.—1.

The folio has "most *busie* *lest*," the second folio "*least*." It does not fall within my plan to comment on vexed passages and disputed readings, or these slight pages might easily swell into a ponderous tome; but here we have a word, *busiless*, that is not even English, of base coinage, German silver, schein-geld; nor is it any amendment on the reading in the second folio, where the meaning is plain enough, and free from any violent or overstrained antithesis. A somewhat similar passage occurs in Romeo and Juliet, and also in the Sonnets:—

"I measuring his affections by my own,
 That most are busied when they are most alone."
 "To work my mind, when body's work's expired."

Hence perhaps it is advisable, till a better emendation be discovered, possibly a line may have dropt out, to retain, "Most busy—least when I do it."

222. Leave not a *wreck* behind. a. iv.—1.

The folio has *racke*; but, it appears, rack is absolutely inadmissible; and wreck by the same rule is equally so; for if rack cannot mean "a single small fleeting cloud," neither can wreck signify a fragment. By submitting to the hard, dry fact, that neither rack nor wreck can be used without vitiating the language, we are rewarded with the happy discovery of the true reading in the homely and expressive word *scrap*,—"Leave not a scrap behind."

223. There dancing up to the chins, that the foul lake
O'erstunk their feet. a. iv.—1.

Read *O'ersway'd*.

That Ariel made no such coarse remark we may infer from the words, "beat the ground for kissing of their feet;" "and I, thy Caliban, for aye thy footlicker."

229. After *summer* merrily. a. v.—1.

Read *sunset*.

Proposed by Theobald, and approved of by Hunter, and also by Macaulay. Thus writes the poet-historian:—"Who does not sympathise with the rapture of Ariel, flying after sunset on the wings of the bat?"—"Ariel riding through the twilight on the bat."—*Miscellaneous Writings*, vol. 1, pp. 64, 221.

229. Who'r thou be'st *he or no*. a. v.—1.

Read *Prospero*.

Further on we have, "If thou be'st Prospero."

230. Have lost my daughter.
Alon. A daughter! a. v.—1.

Possibly something has dropt out, *did you say?* and any addition, or none at all, a pause, is preferable to reading 'daughter' twice over as a trisyllable, and directly afterwards almost as a monosyllable. There is, I would say, a pause here expressive of Alonzo's astonishment, during which momentary pause the idea strikes him of the marriage. We have 'daughter' again proposed as a trisyllable in *Troilus and Cressida*:—

"With one of Priam's daughters.

Achil. Ha! known! a. iii.—3.

Read "*Ha, ha!* known!" Achilles, even in a prose passage, repeats the word, "Where, where,"—"O, tell, tell." "Tut, tut," says Benvolio, the second tut added in the second folio, and there are many similar slips. I shall show in some other instances, this trisyllabic theory, though valuable perhaps in some cases, has been, like the pause-theory, a little overworked.

THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA.

321. And, that my love may appear plain and free,
All that was mine in Silvia I *give* thee. a. v.—4.

Read *forgive* or *give*.

When Proteus says:—

"My shame and guilt confound me,—

Forgive me, Valentine;"

all his love or rather passion for Silvia vanished at the same moment. The words, "forgive me," ought to be received as evidence that *give* is a misprint. The strongest argument in favour of *give* is the fainting of Julia, but that this fainting, as well as the mistake in the rings, was one of love's tricks, is proved by:—

"And I will follow, more to cross that love,
Than hate for Silvia, that is gone for love."

THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR.

366. And your *bull-baiting* oaths. a. ii.—2.
Read bold-breathing.
 The folio has *bold-beating*.
374. A word, Monsieur *Mock-water*. a. ii.—3.
Read Make-water.
 The folio has *Mocke*,—the word itself, *or* for *a*.
 “*Caius. Mock-water! vat is dat!*
Host. Moks-water, in our English tongue, is valour, bully.”
 Every child knows it means cowardice, and he had just before called him “heart of elder,” also Bully Stale, and King Urinal.
416. Of disobedience or unduteous *wile*. a. v.—5.
Read will.
 ‘Wile’ and ‘guile’ are included in *craft*. The folio has *title*.

MEASURE FOR MEASURE

458. Some run *from* brakes of vice, and answer none.
Read through. a. ii.—1.
474. But in the *loss* of question. a. ii.—4.
Read loose; freedom of discussion, for argument’s sake.
480. To lie in cold *obstruction*, and to *rot*;
 In *thrilling* regions of thick-ribbed ice. a. iii.—1.
Read abstraction and chilling.
 “A chilling cold possesseth all my bones.” *Loarine*, a. i.—1.
 “Heat burns his rise, frost chills his setting beams,
 And vex the world with opposite extremes.” *Cresch.*
 “Cold abstraction” and “imagine howling” are also two extremes.
480. Die, perish! might but my bending down. a. iii.—1.
Read Die, perish, wretch!
 “O faithless coward! O dishonest wretch!”
481. Do not satisfy your *resolution* with hopes that are fallible. a. iii.—1.
Read irresolution; (satisfy—feed.)
504. How might she tongue me! Yet reason *dares her no*;
 For my authority *bears so* credent bulk. a. iv.—4.
Read “fears her not,” and “*her’s of a*,”—“my absolute power and place here in Vienna.”
 The folio has “bears of a credent bulk.”
520. Wherein have I *deserved so* of you.” a. v.—1.
Read Sir, so deserv’d.
 The folio has “so deserv’d.”