

**PROPOSED EMENDATIONS  
OF THE TEXT OF  
SHAKSPEARE'S PLAYS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649231898

Proposed Emendations of the Text of Shakspeare's Plays by Swynfen Jervis

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OF THE  
TEXT OF SHAKSPEARE'S PLAYS

WITH CONFIRMATORY AND  
ILLUSTRATIVE PASSAGES FROM THE POET'S WORKS AND THOSE  
OF HIS CONTEMPORARIES

BY

SWYNFEN JERVIS

LONDON  
LONGMAN, GREEN, LONGMAN, AND ROBERTS

1860

## PREFACE.

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It is a fact too notorious to be disputed that the first edition of Shakspeare's Plays, the Folio of 1623, is disfigured throughout, whatever may have been the cause, by the grossest and most perplexing errors. Much has since been done no doubt to rectify and improve the text, but numerous passages, it is equally certain, remain, even in the best modern editions, in all their original obscurity. The emendations to be found in the following pages are for the most part, I believe, new, referring exclusively to difficult and doubtful passages which former editors and commentators have either left untouched, or have touched without improving. Whether I have been more or less successful than my predecessors, time will show, but if only a very small number of the new readings here proposed are thought worthy of acceptance, I shall consider my self-imposed labours amply rewarded.

There is an evident tendency in many of the great poet's admirers to undervalue and decry all attempts of this kind, to look upon all further change as unnecessary, and every new emendation, however reasonable, "flat burglary as ever was committed." What! say these critical Dogberrys, do you pretend to know what Shakspeare wrote better than those who had the original manuscripts before their eyes? We pretend

to no such superior wisdom. We merely doubt whether the printers of the first Folio had the originals before them at all. In several instances it is most certain they had not. We know, from internal evidence, that "Romeo and Juliet," "A Midsummer Night's Dream," and "Much Ado about Nothing," were not printed from the original manuscripts, but were copied, errors and all, from the Quarto Editions of those plays.

It is certainly possible that the plays which appeared in print for the first time in the Folio of 1623, may have been printed from the author's manuscripts, but, judging from the state in which those plays appear in that edition, it is, to say the least, highly improbable. The probability is that the original manuscripts had perished before the year 1623, and that the printers of the first Folio had no better guides to follow than the Prompter's Books, or other copies equally fallible. The allusion to the hand-writing of Shakspeare, in the Preface to that Edition, goes for nothing, or but little, as we are not sure who wrote it. It evidently does not apply to three of the plays, and it may be equally inapplicable to all. How many it does apply to, we have now no means of knowing.

SWYNFEN JERVIS.

October 1860.



PROPOSED EMENDATIONS  
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THE TEMPEST.

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ACT IV.

Page  
49.\* Thy banks with pionèd and *twilled* brims. *Scene 1.*  
*Read* Thy banks with pionèd and *willow'd* brims.

ACT V.

58. *Wher* thou beest he *or no*, *Scene 1.*  
Or some enchanted trife to abuse me.  
*Read* *Whether* thou beest he,  
Or some enchanted trife to abuse me.  
"Whether this be  
Or be not, I'll not swear."—*Tempest*, Act v. Sc. 1.

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MEASURE FOR MEASURE.

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ACT III.

299. How may *likeness*, made in crimes,  
Making practice on the times.  
*Read* How may *weakness wade* in crimes,  
Making practice on the times!

\* The figures in the margin refer to the pages of Dyce's edition of the "Works of Shakspeare," 6 vols. 8vo. 1857, which has been made the groundwork generally of these emendations.

"Else let my brother die,  
If, not a fedary, but only he,  
Owe and succeed thy weakness."

*Measure for Measure*, Act II. Sc. 4.

## ACT IV.

Page

302. Our corn's to reap, for *yet* our tilth's to sow. *Scene 1.*

*Read For that* our tilth's to sow.

307. Shave the head, and tie the beard. *Scene 2.*

*Read Shave* the head, and *trim* the beard.

"Clip and trim those tender strings like a beard."—*Brown*.

## ACT V.

318. To make the truth appear where it seems hid,  
And *hide* the false seems true. *Scene 1.*

*Read And chide* the false seems true.

"Do you not come your tardy son to chide?"

*Hamlet*, Act III. Sc. 4.

"But I'll not chide thee."—*King Lear*, Act II. Sc. 4.

"Most mischievous, foul sin, in chiding sin."

*As you Like it*, Act II. Sc. 7.

318. One Lucio  
*As* then the messenger.

*Read Was* then the messenger.

## THE COMEDY OF ERRORS.

## ACT I.

356. Our *helpful* ship was splitted in the midst. *Scene 1.*

*Read Our hopeful* ship was splitted in the midst.

"She is the hopeful lady of my earth."

*Romeo and Juliet*, Act I. Sc. 2.

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"The mother to a hopeful prince."

*Winter's Tale*, Act III. Sc. 2.

"His hopeful son's, his babe's, betrays to slander."

*Winter's Tale*, Act II. Sc. 3.Page  
357.To seek thy *help* by beneficial help. *Scene 1.**Read* To seek thy *weal* by beneficial help."Which for our good we do no further ask,  
Than whereupon our weal, on you depending,  
Counts it your weal he have his liberty."*King John*, Act IV. Sc. 2.

"But much more

That spirit upon whose weal depend and rest  
The lives of many."—*Hamlet*, Act III. Sc. 3."But I, who see the poyse that weigheth down  
Thy weal, my wish, and all the willing means,  
Wherewith thy fortune and thy fame should mount."*The Troublesome Reign of King John*, Pt. I. 1591.

358.

Soon at five o'clock, *Scene 2.*

Please you, I'll meet with you upon the mart.

*Read* Soon at five o'clock.

ACT IV.

385.

The man, sir, that when gentlemen are tired  
gives them a *fob*, and 'rests them. *Scene 3.**Read* Gives them a *bob*, and 'rests them."He that a fool doth very wisely hit  
Doth very foolishly, although he smart,  
Not to seem senseless of the bob."*As you Like it*, Act II. Sc. 7.

## MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

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ACT III.

Page  
33.No, *not* to be so odd, and from all fashions,  
As Beatrice is, cannot be commendable. *Scene 1.**Read* No; *nor* to be so odd, and from all fashions,  
As Beatrice is, cannot be commendable.