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The "Teaching of English" Series

General Editor—SIR HENRY NEWBOLT

SHAKESPEARE'S
CORIOLANUS

No. 99



THE ROMAN TOGA

SHAKESPEARE'S TRAGEDY
OF
CORIOLANUS

EDITED BY
EVELYN SMITH, B.A.

*"The reader acts the play
himself in the theatre of
his own mind"*

THOMAS NELSON & SONS, LTD.
LONDON AND EDINBURGH

First published October 1926

Accession No. 5815
Catalogue No. 814.. 117A
Date.... 7-10-36..
Price... - 10 -

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN AT
THE PRESS OF THE PUBLISHERS

GENERAL EDITOR'S PREFACE

THIS series is planned with one simple aim in view—to make the reading of Shakespeare's plays as easy and straightforward as possible.

Notes are reduced to the smallest compass. First, in order that the reader's imagination may have definite material to work with, the list of the *dramatis personæ* is followed by a suggestion of their dress and appearance; and when practicable, illustrations are given. Second, the text, which is presented without any further preliminary, is accompanied by footnotes which form a Glossary of obsolete or misleading words.

The play may therefore be read at first sight without let or hindrance—without even the delay and distraction which would be caused by turning to a later page for such merely necessary explanations. But there will be many for whom, if not at a first reading yet perhaps at a second, something further may be desirable—a bit of historical information, a paraphrase of a difficult passage, or the clearing up of a confused metaphor. To supply these, and to supply them at the right time, is the object of the brief notes placed immediately after the text.

Fourth, and last, comes a causerie in several divisions: offering, for any who are studiously inclined, a short commentary; marking the place of this particular drama in Shakespeare's career; tracing its importance in his poetic development; estimating its artistic value; and suggesting a number of other questions on which an intelligent student might reflect with pleasure.



ROMAN SOLDIER

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THE PERSONS OF THE PLAY

CAIUS MARCIUS, afterwards surnamed *Coriolanus*.

COMINIUS, consul of Rome, and general against the *Volscians*.

TITUS LARTIUS, in command against the *Volscians*.

MENENIUS AGRIPPA, an old patrician, friend to *Coriolanus*.

SICINIUS VELUTUS, }
JUNIUS BRUTUS, } tribunes of the people.

MARCIUS, son of *Coriolanus*.

A Roman Herald.

TULLUS AUFIDIUS, general of the *Volscians*.

Lieutenant to Aufidius.

Conspirators with Aufidius.

NICANOR, a Roman, acting as spy for the *Volscians*.

ADRIAN, a *Volscian*.

A Citizen of Antium.

Two *Volscian* Guards.

VOLUMNIA, mother to *Coriolanus*.

VIRGILIA, wife to *Coriolanus*.

VALERIA, friend to *Virgilia*.

Gentlewoman, attending on *Virgilia*.

Roman and *Volscian* Senators, Patricians, *Ædiles*,
Lictors, Soldiers, Citizens, Messengers, Servants to
Aufidius, and other Attendants.

Scene : Rome and the neighbourhood ; Corioli and
the neighbourhood ; Antium.

Time : 495-489 B.C.

INTRODUCTION

ENVIRONMENT AND COSTUME OF THE PERSONS OF THE PLAY

NOWADAYS a poet or artist, re-creating legend or history of the past, attempts, as far as possible, to reproduce the manners and appearance of the persons of another age, and to show their environment as it must actually have been. He carefully avoids anachronism, or the introduction of anything out of keeping with the period to which his play or picture belongs. This desire for accuracy is comparatively modern. When Shakespeare dramatizes former history or legend, he often alludes to matters unknown to the people of the time of his play. For instance, in *Coriolanus*, we hear of "graves i' the holy church-yard," of the herald following the great man's coffin at his funeral, and of "doublets that hangmen would bury with those that wore them." And although there was an occasional attempt at verisimilitude in costume, the stage manager of the Elizabethan theatre did not as a rule consider the demeanour and dress of the period when the events of the play were supposed to have taken place. For all this, the atmosphere of Shakespeare's plays varies with the story he tells and the age to which it belongs. No one could say that he saw the characters of *Macbeth*, *Lear*, and *Coriolanus* as men and women of the seventeenth century, and the environment in which they move as that of

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seventeenth-century England. There is much of the spirit of ancient Rome in *Coriolanus*, especially in the character of Volumnia, and the relationship between mother and son, and, when we see it in "the theatre of the mind," it is natural to picture it in a Roman setting.

The events the play describes took place very early—in fact, they belong to the legendary period of Roman history. Rome, at this time, was without many of the splendid buildings that are noticeable in the pictures of scenes enacted later in her past, and the creamy white and coloured marbles, later used for pavements and pillars, were rarely to be seen. The most usual building materials were "peperino," of volcanic origin, in colour brown flecked with black, and "tufa," the shades of which varied from reddish brown to grey and yellowish green. Dominating the city was the Capitoline Hill, with its two peaks, the Capitolium and the Arx, and on the summit of the Capitolium was the great triple temple dedicated in 509 B.C. to Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva, built of "peperino," stuccoed and painted, with a long, low front resting on six pillars set far apart, and containing statues of the deities to whom it was sacred, not made of marble but of painted terra cotta. Part of the Capitoline Hill was the Tarpeian rock, from which traitors were cast down. It took its name from the traitress Tarpeia, who, when Rome was besieged by the Sabines, consented to open the gates of the city to them on condition that they would give her what they wore on their left arms. She thought to receive their golden bracelets, but as they passed her into the city, they took their shields from their left arms and hurled them upon her, so that she was crushed to death. The hill also formed part of the boundary of the Forum, a space of open ground used as a market-place, and for public assemblies.

The streets, from the earliest times, were probably

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well paved and the houses well spaced, although lacking the magnificence of the period when the Emperor Augustus could boast that he "found Rome brick and left it marble." The front of the shops was open to the street. A Roman house had small outer windows as the inhabitants did not depend on the street for light and air. The rooms were built round a great atrium or hall, surrounded by columns, and open to the sky. The architecture of early Rome was influenced by the Etruscan style, with its widely spaced columns and decorations in gilt bronze and painted terra-cotta, and this style would have appeared in the Volscian city of Antium, "a goodly city," as Coriolanus calls it.

At this time the usual costume for both Roman man and woman was the toga, which was "a piece of woollen cloth in the form of the segment of a circle, the chord being about three times the height of the wearer, its height a little less than half of this length." One end was flung over the left shoulder and hung down in front; the rest was folded round the body, arranged to suit the taste of the wearer. Little Marcius would have worn the "toga prætexta," which had a purple border. This was the dress of boys till the age of sixteen, when they assumed the garb of manhood, the plain white "toga virilis." The toga prætexta was also worn by certain of the priests and higher magistrates. The characteristic dress of the consuls was the "trabea," a toga less voluminous than that of the ordinary citizen, and decorated with scarlet stripes. When a general was accorded a triumph he wore a purple toga with embroidery, and a gold-embroidered tunic. The usual foot gear was the calceus, a high shoe with slits at the side, through which were passed thongs of leather fastened in front. In battle a Roman soldier of this time wore a girt-up tunic, a cloak, and body armour consisting of breast and back plates fastened together with thongs, and

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greaves of pliant bronze, secured below the knee and at the back of the ankle. His chief weapons were a long spear and short bronze sword, and he carried a small round shield. The Roman wore either a plumed helmet or a simple steel cap; the Volscian a round helmet with leathern side pieces adorned with three bosses, and fastened under the chin.

At this early period of their history the Roman men wore beards, and let their hair grow long. Roman ladies dressed their hair in various ways—plaited, or twisted into a knot—and sometimes they covered their heads with a long veil.

HISTORICAL SETTING OF THE PLAY

At the time of the events which led to the death of Coriolanus, Rome was a republic, having freed herself from the tyranny of the last king, against whom the boy, Caius Marcius, had fought (see page 51). She was governed by two consuls, elected yearly, and, during war, by a specially appointed dictator—who seems, in the play of *Coriolanus*, to be the consul Cominius. The consuls were advised by the Senate, a body composed of the heads of the great houses of Rome, which, owing to its permanence, exercised much power. All classes of society had joined to overthrow the kingship, but as soon as that common danger was averted, a strong feeling of class hatred sprang up between the patricians and the plebeians. The latter, according to Plutarch, suffered from the "sore oppression of usurers, of whom they borrowed money," and from the dearth that followed the war. Two "seditions" resulted from these grievances, which Shakespeare combines into one, making the scarcity of corn its motive, and the creating of the tribunes of the people its result.

These tribunes had very distinct powers. They

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might withhold their assent to a law, and cancel the command of a magistrate, did they deem such a command to interfere with the liberties of the people. They might forbid the arrest of a debtor, until his case had been thoroughly investigated. They might call together and address the people; they might exempt any person bound to military service. They had certain judicial powers, and they claimed the right to arrest even a consul, and to sentence him. A tribune must always sleep in his own house at Rome, and his door must stand open night and day, so that all who sought help from him might find him ready to bestow it.

The ædiles were created in the same year as the tribunes, to act as assistants to them. Their persons were sacrosanct. They exercised certain police functions, and were empowered to inflict fines. Originally they were two in number; later, when the office increased in importance, patrician ædiles were appointed. The lictors attended the consuls, and carried before them the fasces, a bundle of rods containing an axe. In times of peace the axe was laid aside when the lictors were within the city, in deference to the power of the people. Each consul had twelve of these lictors, who walked before him in Indian file, cleared a way for him, saw that he was treated with proper deference, and punished delinquents. When the consul was within his house the lictors mounted guard outside, with their fasces propped against the outer wall.

So much for the internal affairs of Rome, and the discipline of the city. Without she was constantly beset by her enemies among the neighbouring tribes, one of the most important of which was that of the Volscians. At the opening of the play the news that these Volscians are in arms follows hot upon the granting of tribunes to the people, and the triumph and downfall of Caius Marcius are bound up with

INTRODUCTION

Rome's civil and foreign strife. His antagonists are the Volscian general and Roman tribunes, and, as always with the heroes of Shakespearean tragedy, a trait in his own character, which, though it has something of nobility in it, has more of weakness, and proves "most mortal to him."

THE TRAGEDY OF CORIOLANUS

ACT I

SCENE I

Rome. A street.

[*Enter a company of mutinous Citizens, with slaves, clubs, and other weapons.*]

First Cit. Before we proceed any further, hear me speak.

All. Speak, speak.

First Cit. You are all resolved rather to die than to famish ?

All. Resolved, resolved.

First Cit. First, you know Caius Marcius is chief enemy to the people.

All. We know't, we know't.

10 *First Cit.* Let us kill him, and we'll have corn at our own price. Is't a verdict ?

All. No more talking on't ; let it be done : away, away !

Sec. Cit. One word, good citizens.

First Cit. We are accounted poor citizens, the patricians good. What authority surfeits on would relieve us : if they would yield us but the superfluity, while it were wholesome, we might guess they relieved

16. *The patricians good, i.e. Wealthy.*

us humanely; but they think we are too dear: the
 20 ~~leanness~~ that afflicts us, the object of our misery, is as
 an inventory to particularize their abundance; our
 sufferance is a gain to them. Let us revenge this with
 our pikes, ere we become rakes: for the gods know
 I speak this in hunger for bread, not in thirst for
 revenge.

Sec. Cit. Would you proceed especially against
 Caius Marcius?

All. Against him first: he's a very dog to the
 commonalty.

30 *Sec. Cit.* Consider you what services he has done
 for his country?

First Cit. Very well; and could be content to give
 him good report for't, but that he pays himself with
 being proud.

Sec. Cit. Nay, but speak not maliciously.

First Cit. I say unto you, what he hath done
 famously, he did it to that end: though soft-con-
 scienced men can be content to say it was for his
 country, he did it to please his mother, and to be
 40 partly proud; which he is, even to the altitude of
 his virtue.

Sec. Cit. What he cannot help in his nature, you
 account a vice in him. You must in no way say he is
 covetous.

First Cit. If I must not, I need not be barren of
 accusations; he hath faults, with surplus, to tire in
 repetition. [*Shouts within.*] What shouts are these?
 The other side o' the city is risen: why stay we prating
 here? to the Capitol!

50 *All.* Come, come.

First Cit. Soft! who comes here?

[*Enter MENENIUS AGRIPPA.*]

20. *Object, Spectacle.*

22. *Sufferance, Suffering.*

28. *Dog, i.e. Savage and fierce, as a dog setting on another animal.*

40. *Altitude of his virtue, Height of his valour.*

CORIOLANUS

[ACT I, SCENE I

Sec. Cit. Worthy Menenius Agrippa ; one that hath always loved the people.

First Cit. He's one honest enough : would a the rest were so !

Men. What work's, my countrymen, in hand ? where go you With bats and clubs ? The matter ? speak, I pray you.

First Cit. Our business is not unknown to the senate ; they have had inkling this fortnight what we intend to do, which now we'll show 'em in deeds. They say poor suitors have strong breaths : they shall know we have strong arms too.

Men. Why, masters, my good friends, mine honest neighbours, Will you undo yourselves ?

First Cit. We cannot, sir, we are undone already.

Men. I tell you, friends, most charitable care Have the patricians of you. For your wants, Your suffering in this dearth, you may as well Strike at the heaven with your staves as lift them 70 Against the Roman state, whose course will on The way it takes, cracking ten thousand curbs Of more strong link asunder than can ever Appear in your impediment. For the dearth, The gods, not the patricians, make it, and Your knees to them, not arms, must help. Alack, You are transported by calamity Thither where more attends you, and you slander The helms o' the state, who care for you like fathers, When you curse them as enemies.

80 *First Cit.* Care for us ! True, indeed ! They ne'er cared for us yet : suffer us to famish, and their store-houses cramméd with grain ; make edicts for usury, to support usurers ; repeal daily any wholesome act established against the rich, and provide more piercing

64. Undo, Ruin.
(2,782)

57. Bats, Cudgels.

73. Impediment, Hindrance.

statutes daily, to chain up and restrain the poor. If the wars eat us not up, they will ; and there's all the love they bear us.

Men. Either you must
Confess yourselves wondrous malicious,
90 Or be accused of folly. I shall tell you
A pretty tale : it may be you have heard it ;
But, since it serves my purpose, I will venture
To stale't a little more.

First Cit. Well, I'll hear it, sir : yet you must not think to fob off our disgrace with a tale : but, an't please you, deliver.

Men. There was a time when all the body's members
Rebelled against the belly, thus accused it :
That only like a gulf it did remain
100 I' the midst o' the body, idle and unactive,
Still cupboarding the viand, never bearing
Like labour with the rest, where the other instruments
Did see and hear, devise, instruct, walk, feel,
And, mutually participate, did minister
Unto the appetite and affection common
Of the whole body. The belly answer'd—

First Cit. Well, sir, what answer made the belly ?

Men. Sir, I shall tell you. With a kind of smile,
Which ne'er came from the lungs, but even thus—
110 For, look you, I may make the belly smile
As well as speak—it tauntingly replied
To the discontented members, the mutinous parts
That envied his receipt ; even so most fitly
As you malign our senators for that
They are not such as you.

First Cit. Your belly's answer ! What !

95. *Fob*, Cheat, put off.

95. *Disgrace*, Shame, misery.

96. *Deliver*, Relate, tell.

99. *Gulf*, Whirlpool, into which all near objects are drawn.

101. *Still*, Always.

104. *Mutually participate*, Each sharing with the other the work of the body.

105. *Affection*, Inclination.

113. *His*, An older neuter possessive form than "its."

CORIOLANUS

[ACT I, SCENE I

The kingly-crowned head, the vigilant eye,
 The counsellor heart, the arm our soldier,
 Our steed the leg, the tongue our trumpeter,
 With other muniments and petty helps
 120 In this our fabric, if that they—

Men. What then ?

'Fore me, this fellow speaks ! What then ? what then ?

First Cit. Should by the cormorant belly be re-
 strain'd,

Who is the sink o' the body,—

Men. Well, what then ?

First Cit. The former agents, if they did complain,
 What could the belly answer ?

Men. I will tell you ;

If you'll bestow a small—of what you have little—
 Patience awhile, you'll hear the belly's answer.

First Cit. Ye're long about it.

Men. Note me this, good friend ;

Your most grave belly was deliberate,
 130 Not rash like his accusers, and thus answer'd :
 " True is it, my incorporate friends," quoth he,
 " That I receive the general food at first,
 Which you do live upon ; and fit it is,
 Because I am the store-house and the shop
 Of the whole body : but, if you do remember,
 I send it through the rivers of your blood,
 Even to the court, the heart, to the seat o' the brain ;
 And, through the cranks and offices of man,
 The strongest nerves and small inferior veins
 140 From me receive that natural competency
 Whereby they live : and though that all at once,
 You, my good friends,"—this says the belly, mark
 me,—

119. *Muniments*, Fortifications.

124. *Agents*, Organs or parts of the body.

138. *Cranks*, Winding passages.

138. *Offices*, Pantries, larders, kitchens, etc.

139. *Nerves*, Sinews.

140. *Competency*, Sufficient supply.

First Cit. Ay, sir ; well, well.

Men.

“ Though all at once cannot
See what I do deliver out to each,
Yet I can make my audit up, that all
From me do back receive the flour of all,
And leave me but the bran.” What say you to't ?

First Cit. It was an answer : how apply you this ?

Men. The senators of Rome are this good belly,
And you the mutinous members ; for examine
Their counsels and their cares, digest things rightly
Touching the weal o' the common, you shall find
No public benefit which you receive
But it proceeds or comes from them to you
And no way from yourselves. What do you think,
You, the great toe of this assembly ?

First Cit. I the great toe ! why the great toe ?

Men. For that, being one o' the lowest, basest,
poorest,
Of this most wise rebellion, thou go'st foremost :
160 Thou rascal, that art worst in blood to run,
Lead'st first to win some vantage.
But make you ready your stiff bats and clubs :
Rome and her rats are at the point of battle ;
The one side must have bale.

[Enter CAIUS MARCIUS.]

Hail, noble Marcius !

Mar. Thanks. What's the matter, you dissentious
rogues,
That, rubbing the poor itch of your opinion,
Make yourselves scabs ?

First Cit. We have ever your good word.

Mar. He that will give good words to thee will
flatter

145. *Make my audit up*, Balance my accounts.

160. *Rascal*, A deer not fit to be hunted.

160. *In blood*, In condition.

164. *Bale*, Harm, misfortune.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT I, SCENE I

170 Beneath abhorring. What would you have, you curs,
 That like nor peace nor war? the one affrights you,
 The other makes you proud. He that trusts to you,
 Where he should find you lions, finds you hares;
 Where foxes, geese: you are no surer, no,
 Than is the coal of fire upon the ice,
 Or hailstone in the sun. Your virtue is
 To make him worthy whose offence subdues him
 And curse that justice did it. Who deserves greatness
 Deserves your hate; and your affections are
 180 A sick man's appetite, who desires most that
 Which would increase his evil. He that depends
 Upon your favours swims with fins of lead
 And hews down oaks with rushes. Hang ye! Trust
 ye?

With every minute you do change a mind,
 And call him noble that was now your hate,
 Him vile that was your garland. What's the matter,
 That in these several places of the city
 You cry against the noble senate, who,
 Under the gods, keep you in awe, which else
 190 Would feed on one another? What's their seeking?

Men. For corn at their own rates; whereof, they
 say,

The city is well stored.

Mar. Hang 'em! They say!
 They'll sit by the fire, and presume to know
 What's done i' the Capitol; who's like to rise,
 Who thrives and who declines; side factions and give
 out
 Conjectural marriages; making parties strong
 And feebling such as stand not in their liking
 Below their cobbled shoes. They say there's grain
 enough!
 Would the nobility lay aside their ruth,

177. *Worthy, i.e.* Of honour and praise.

177. *Offence subdues him*, Evil behaviour brings him to ruin.

179. *Affections*, Inclinations.

199. *Ruth*, pity.

200 And let me use my sword, I'd make a quarry
With thousands of these quarter'd slaves, as high
As I could pick my lance.

Men. Nay, these are almost thoroughly persuaded ;
For though abundantly they lack discretion,
Yet are they passing cowardly. But, I beseech you,
What says the other troop ?

Mar. They are dissolved : hang 'em !
They said they were an-hungry ; sigh'd forth proverbs,
That hunger broke stone walls, that dogs must eat,
That meat was made for mouths, that the gods sent
not

210 Corn for the rich men only : with these shreds
They vented their complainings ; which being an-
swer'd,

And a petition granted them, a strange one—
To break the heart of generosity,
And make bold power look pale—they threw their caps²⁰⁵
As they would hang them on the horns o' the moon,
Shouting their emulation.

Men. What is granted them ?

Mar. Five tribunes to defend their vulgar wisdoms,
Of their own choice : one's Junius Brutus,
Sicinius Velutus, and I know not—'Sdeath !

220 The rabble should have first unroof'd the city,
Ere so prevail'd with me : it will in time
Win upon power and throw forth greater themes
For insurrection's arguing.

Men. This is strange.

Mar. Go, get you home, you fragments !

[Enter a Messenger, hastily.]

Mess. Where's Caius Marcius ?

200. Quarry, Heap of dead game. 201. Quarter'd, Cut to pieces.

202. Pick, pitch.

205. Passing, Surpassingly, extremely.

210. Shreds, i.e. Of popular wisdom.

216. Shouting their emulation. Each tries to shout louder than the other ; or emulation may refer to their envious rivalry of the patrician power, encouraged by the granting of tribunes.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT I, SCENE I

Mar. Here : what's the matter ?

Mess. The news is, sir, the Volsces are in arms.

Mar. I am glad on't : then we shall ha' means to vent

Our musty superfluity. See, ~~our~~ best elders.

[*Enter* COMINIUS, TITUS LARTIUS, and other Senators ;
JUNIUS BRUTUS and SICINIUS VELUTUS.]

First Sen. Marcius, 'tis true that you have lately told us ;

230 The Volsces are in arms.

Mar. They have a leader,
Tullus Aufidius, that will put you to't.
I sin in envying his nobility,
And were I any thing but what I am,
I would wish me only he.

Com. You have fought together.

Mar. Were half to half the world by the ears and he
Upon my party, I'd revolt, to make
Only my wars with him : he is a lion
That I am proud to hunt.

First Sen. Then, worthy Marcius,
Attend upon Cominius to these wars.

240 *Com.* It is your former promise.

Mar. Sir, it is ;
And I am constant. Titus Lartius, thou
Shalt see me once more strike at Tullus' face.
What, art thou stiff ? stand'st out ?

Tit. No, Caius Marcius ;
I'll lean upon one crutch and fight with t'other,
Ere stay behind this business.

Men. O, true-bred !

First Sen. Your company to the Capitol ; where, I
know,

227. *Vent*, Sell, get rid of.

228. *Musty*, Worthless ; gone bad, as it were.

231. *Put you to't*, Put you on your mettle, compel you to do your very best.

Our greatest friends attend us.

Tit. [To COMINIUS] Lead you on.
[To MARCIUS] Follow Cominius; we must follow you;
Right worthy you priority.

Com. Noble Marcius!

250 *First Sen.* [To the Citizens] Hence to your home;
be gone!

Mar. Nay, let them follow:
The Volsces have much corn; take these rats thither
To gnaw their garners. Worshipful mutiners,
Your valour puts well forth: pray, follow.

[Citizens *steal away.* *Exeunt all but*
SICINIUS and BRUTUS.]

Sic. Was ever man so proud as is this Marcius?

Bru. He has no equal.

Sic. When we were chosen tribunes for the people,—

Bru. Mark'd you his lip and eyes?

Sic. Nay, but his taunts.

Bru. Being moved, he will not spare to gird the gods:

Sic. Be-mock the modest moon.

260 *Bru.* The present wars devour him: he is grown
Too proud to be so valiant.

Sic. Such a nature,
Tickled with good success, disdains the shadow
Which he treads on at noon: but I do wonder
His insolence can brook to be commanded
Under Cominius.

Bru. Fame, at the which he aims,
In whom already he's well graced, can not
Better be held nor more attain'd than by
A place below the first: for what miscarries
Shall be the general's fault, though he perform
270 To the utmost of a man, and giddy censure
Will then cry out of Marcius "O, if he

253. *Puts well forth*, Makes a fine show. To *put forth* is to bud, to shoot out.

268. *Miscarries*, Goes wrong.

270. *Giddy censure*, Popular opinion, always changing and uncertain.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT I, SCENE ii]

Had borne the business ! ”

Sic. Besides, if things go well,
Opinion that so sticks on Marcius shall
Of his demerits rob Cominius.

Bru. Come :
Half all Cominius' honours are to Marcius,
Though Marcius earn'd them not, and all his faults
To Marcius shall be honours, though indeed
In aught he merit not.

Sic. Let's hence, and hear
How the dispatch is made, and in what fashion,
280 More than his singularity, he goes
Upon this present action.

Bru. Let's along. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II

Corioli. The Senate-house.

[Enter TULLUS AUFIDIUS with Senators of Corioli.]

First Sen. So, your opinion is, Aufidius,
That they of Rome are enter'd in our counsels
And know how we proceed.

Auf. Is it not yours ?
What ever have been thought on in this state,
That could be brought to bodily act ere Rome
Had circumvention ? 'Tis not four days gone
Since I heard thence ; these are the words : I think
I have the letter here ; yes, here it is.

[Reads.] “ They have press'd a power, but it is not
known
10 Whether for east or west : the dearth is great ;
The people mutinous ; and it is rumour'd,

274. *Demerits*, Deserts.280. *Singularity*, His own proud and impetuous way.6. *Circumvention*, Information enabling her to circumvent us, i.e. outwit our plans. 9. *Press'd a power*, Levied an army.

Cominius, Marcius your old enemy,
 Who is of Rome worse hated than of you,
 And Titus Lartius, a most valiant Roman,
 These three lead on this preparation
 Whither 'tis bent : most likely 'tis for you :
 Consider of it."

First Sen. Our army's in the field :
 We never yet made doubt but Rome was ready
 * To answer us.

Auf. Nor did you think it folly
 20 To keep your great pretences veil'd till when
 They needs must show themselves ; which in the
 hatching,
 It seem'd, appear'd to Rome. By the discovery
 We shall be shorten'd in our aim, which was
 To take in many towns ere almost Rome
 Should know we were afoot.

Sec. Sen. Noble Aufidius,
 Take your commission ; hie you to your bands :
 Let us alone to guard Corioli :
 If they set down before's, for the remove
 Bring up your army ; but, I think, you'll find
 30 They've not prepared for us.

Auf. O, doubt not that ;
 I speak from certainties. Nay, more,
 Some parcels of their power are forth already,
 And only hitherward. I leave your honours.
 If we and Caius Marcius chance to meet,
 'Tis sworn between us we shall ever strike
 Till one can do no more.

All. The gods assist you !

Auf. And keep your honours safe !

First Sen.

Farewell !

Sec. Sen.

Farewell.

All. Farewell.

[*Exeunt.*]

20. *Great pretences*, Important plans.

23. *Shorten'd*, Held up.

28. *Remove*, Raising of the siege.

32. *Parcels*, Small detachments of their army.

SCENE III

Rome. A room in MARCIUS' house.

[*Enter VOLUMNIA and VIRGILIA, mother and wife to MARCIUS. They set them down on two low stools, and sew.*]

Vol. I pray you, daughter, sing ; or express yourself in a more comfortable sort ; if my son were my husband, I should freelier rejoice in that absence wherein he won honour than in the embracements where he would show most love. When yet he was but tender-bodied and my only son, when youth with comeliness plucked all gaze his way, when for a day of kings' entreaties a mother should not sell him an hour from her beholding, I, considering how honour would become such a person, that it was no better than picture-like to hang by the wall, if renown made it not stir, was pleased to let him seek danger where he was like to find fame. To a cruel war I sent him ; from whence he returned, his brows bound with oak. I tell thee, daughter, I sprang not more in joy at first hearing he was a man-child than now in first seeing he had proved himself a man.

Vir. But had he died in the business, madam ; how then ?

Vol. Then his good report should have been my son ; I therein would have found issue. Hear me profess sincerely : had I a dozen sons, each in my love alike and none less dear than thine and my good

2. *Comfortable sort*, Comforting, cheerful way.

14. *Bound with oak*. The oaken garland was an honour given to a soldier who had saved the life of a Roman in battle and had slain his opponent.

20. *Good report*, Fame.

Marcus, I had rather had eleven die nobly for their country than one voluptuously surfeit out of action.

[Enter a Gentlewoman.]

Gent. Madam, the Lady Valeria is come to visit you.

Vir. Beseech you, give me leave to retire myself.

Vol. Indeed, you shall not.

Methinks I hear hither your husband's drum ;

30 See him pluck Aufidius down by the hair ;

As children from a bear, the Volsces shunning him :

Methinks I see him stamp thus, and call thus :

" Come on, you cowards ! you were got in fear,

Though you were born in Rome " : his bloody brow

With his mail'd hand then wiping, forth he goes,

Like to a harvest-man that's task'd to mow

Or all or lose his hire.

Vir. His bloody brow ! O Jupiter, no blood !

Vol. Away, you fool ! it more becomes a man

40 Than gilt his trophy : the breasts of Hecuba,

When she did suckle Hector, look'd not lovelier

Than Hector's forehead when it spit forth blood

At Grecian sword, contemning. Tell Valeria,

We are fit to bid her welcome. [Exit Gentlewoman.]

~~Vol.~~ Heavens bless my lord from fell Aufidius !

Vol. He'll beat Aufidius' head below his knee

And tread upon his neck.

[Enter VALERIA, with an Usher, and a Gentlewoman.]

Val. My ladies both, good day to you.

Vol. Sweet madam.

50 *Vir.* I am glad to see your ladyship.

Val. How do you both ? you are manifest house-

25. *Voluptuously surfeit*, Live a soft life of pleasure and over-indulgence.

40. *Hecuba*, Queen of Troy, and mother of Hector, one of the heroes of the war between Greece and Troy.

45. *Fell*, Fierce.

51. *Manifest*, Well-known.

51. *Housekeepers*, Stay-at-homes.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT I, SCENE iii]

keepers. What are you sewing here? A fine spot, in good faith. How does your little son?

Vir. I thank your ladyship; well, good madam.

Vol. He had rather see the swords, and hear a drum, than look upon his schoolmaster.

Val. O' my word, the father's son: I'll swear, 'tis a very pretty boy. O' my troth, I looked upon him o' Wednesday half an hour together: has such a confirmed countenance. I saw him run after a gilded butterfly; and when he caught it, he let it go again; and after it again; and over and over he comes, and up again; caught it again; or whether his fall enraged him, or how 'twas, he did so set his teeth and tear it; O, I warrant, how he mammoched it!

Vol. One on's father's moods.

Val. Indeed, la, 'tis a noble child.

Vir. A crack, madam.

Val. Come, lay aside your stitchery; I must have you play the idle huswife with me this afternoon.

Vir. No, good madam; I will not out of doors.

Val. Not out of doors!

Vol. She shall, she shall.

Vir. Indeed, no, by your patience; I'll not over the threshold till my lord return from the wars.

Val. Fie, you confine yourself most unreasonably: come, you must go visit the good lady that lies in.

Vir. I will wish her speedy strength, and visit her with my prayers; but I cannot go thither.

Val. Why, I pray you?

Vir. 'Tis not to save labour, nor that I want love.

Val. You would be another Penelope: yet, they

52. *Spot*, Pateen of embroidery.

60. *Confirmed*, Set, resolute.

65. *Mammoched*, Tore to pieces.

68. *Crack*, Forward little boy, used in a depreciating way.

82. *Penelope*, The wife of Ulysses. During his long absence at the siege of Troy, when no one knew if he were alive or dead, she was sought by many suitors, and promised to choose one of them when she had finished the web she wove. Every night she undid the work she had done during the daytime.

say, all the yarn she spun in Ulysses' absence did but fill Ithaca full of moths. Come ; I would your cambric were sensible as your finger, that you might leave pricking it for pity. Come, you shall go with us.

Vir. No, good madam, pardon me ; indeed, I will not forth.

Val. In truth, la, go with me ; and I'll tell you excellent news of your husband.

Vir. O, good madam, there can be none yet.

Val. Verily, I do not jest with you ; there came news from him last night.

Vir. Indeed, madam ?

Val. In earnest, it's true ; I heard a senator speak it. Thus it is : the Volsces have an army forth ; against whom Cominius the general is gone, with one part of our Roman power : your lord and Titus Lartius are set down before their city Corioli ; they
100 nothing doubt prevailing and to make it brief wars. This is true, on mine honour ; and so, I pray, go with us.

Vir. Give me excuse, good madam ; I will obey you in everything hereafter.

Val. Let her alone, lady : as she is now, she will but disease our better mirth.

Val. In troth, I think she would. Fare you well, then. Come, good sweet lady. Prithee, Virgilia, turn thy solemnness out o' door, and go along with us.

110 *Vir.* No, at a word, madam ; indeed, I must not. I wish you much mirth.

Val. Well, then, farewell. [*Exeunt.*

85. *Sensible, Sensitive.*

106. *Disease, Spoil.*

107. *In troth, In truth, really.*

SCENE IV

Before Corioli

[*Enter with drums and colours, MARCIUS, TITUS LARTIUS, Captains and Soldiers. To them a Messenger.*]

Mar. Yonder comes news. A wager they have met.

Lart. My horse to yours, no.

Mar. 'Tis done.

Lart. Agreed.

Mar. Say, has our general met the enemy?

Mess. They lie in view; but have not spoke as yet.

Lart. So, the good horse is mine.

Mar. I'll buy him off you.

Lart. No, I'll nor sell nor give him: lend you him
I will

For half a hundred years. Summon the town.

Mar. How far off lie these armies?

Mess. Within this mile and half.

Mar. Then shall we hear their *larum*, and they *ours*.

10 Now, Mars, I prithee, make us quick in work,
That we with smoking swords may march from hence,
To help our fielded friends! Come, blow thy blast.

[*They sound a parley. Enter two Senators with others on the walls of Corioli.*]

Tullus Aufidius, is he within your walls?

First Sen. No, nor a man that fears you less than he,
That's lesser than a little. [*Drums afar off.*] Hark!
our drums

Are bringing forth our youth. We'll break our walls,

4. *Spoke*, Encountered one another.

9. *Larum*, Alarum, call to arms.

10. *Mars*, Roman God of War.

Parley, Conference with an enemy in war.

Rather than they shall pound us up : our gates,
Which yet seem shut, we have but pinn'd with rushes ;
They'll open of themselves. [*Alarum afar off.*] Hark
you, far off !

20 There is Aufidius ; list, what work he makes
Amongst your cloven army.

Mar. O, they are at it !

Lart. Their noise be our instruction. Ladders, ho !

[*Enter the army of the Volsces.*]

Mar. They fear us not, but issue forth their city.
Now put your shields before your hearts, and fight
With hearts more proof than shields. Advance, brave

Titus :

They do disdain us much beyond our thoughts,
Which makes me sweat with wrath. Come on, my
fellows :

He that retires, I'll take him for a Volsce,
And he shall feel mine edge.

[*Alarum. The Romans are beat back to their trenches.*
Re-enter MARCIUS, cursing.]

30 *Mar.* All the contagion of the south light on you,
You shames of Rome ! you herd of—Boils and plagues
Plaster you o'er, that you may be abhorr'd
Further than seen and one infect another
Against the wind a mile ! You souls of geese,
That bear the shapes of men, how have you run
From slaves that apes would beat ! Pluto and hell !
All hurt behind ; backs red, and faces pale
With flight and agued fear ! Mend and charge home,

17. *Pound*, Confine as in a pound or pinfold, an enclosure in a village where stray animals were kept until claimed by their owners.

25. *Proof*, Impenetrable. Armour or weapons of proof have been subjected to a greater strain than that which they are likely to receive in use, and have not given way.

29. *Edge, i.e.* Of my sword. 36. *Pluto*, Ruler of the underworld.

38. *Ague*, Disease in which the patient suffers from shivering fits.

38. *Mend*, Improve, pull yourselves together.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT I, SCENE iv]

Or, by the fires of heaven, I'll leave the foe
 40 And make my wars on you : look to't : come on ;
 If you'll stand fast, we'll beat them to their wives,
 As they us to our trenches followed.

[*Another alarum. The Volsces fly, and MARCIUS follows them to the gates.*]

So, now the gates are ope : now prove good seconds :
 'Tis for the followers fortune widens them,
 Not for the fliers : mark me, and do the like.

[*Enters the gates.*]

First Sol. Fool-hardiness ; not I.

Sec. Sol.

NOR I.

[*MARCIUS is shut in.*]

First Sol. Sec, they have shut him in.

All.

To the pot, I warrant him.

[*Alarum continues.*]

[*Re-enter TITUS LARTIUS.*]

Lart. What is become of Marcius ?

All.

Slain, sir, doubtless.

First Sol. Following the fliers at the very heels,
 80 With them he enters ; who, upon the sudden,
 Clapp'd to their gates : he is himself alone,
 To answer all the city.

Lart.

O noble fellow !

Who sensibly outdares his senseless sword,

And, when it bows, stands up. Thou art left,
 Marcius :

A carbuncle entire, as big as thou art,

Were not so rich a jewel. Thou wast a soldier

Even to Cato's wish, not fierce and terrible

47. *To the pot.* Compare such expressions as "in the soup," "gone to pot."
 53. *Sensibly,* Sensitive to pain and fear.

53. *Outdares,* Surpasses in daring.

57. *Cato,* Cato the Censor, whose code was that of the sternest Roman moralist. He lived some time after the events of this play (234-149 B.C.).

ACT I, SCENE v]

SHAKESPEARE'S

Only in strokes ; but, with thy grim looks and
 The thunder-like percussion of thy sounds,
 60 Thou madest thine enemies shake, as if the world
 Were feverous and did tremble.

[*Re-enter* MARCIUS, *bleeding, assaulted by the enemy.*]

First Sol.

Look, sir.

Lart.

O, 'tis Marcius !

Let's fetch him off, or make remain alike.

[*They fight, and all enter the city.*]

SCENE V

Corioli. A street.

[*Enter certain Romans, with spoils.*]

First Rom. This will I carry to Rome.

Sec. Rom. And I this.

Third Rom. A murrain on't ! I took this for silver.

[*Alarum continues still afar off.*]

[*Enter* MARCIUS *and* TITUS LARTIUS *with a trumpet.*]

Mar. See here these movers that do prize their hours
 At a crack'd drachma ! Cushions, leaden spoons,
 Irons of a doit, doublets that hangmen would
 Bury with those that wore them, these base slaves,
 Ere yet the fight be done, pack up : down with them !
 And hark, what noise the general makes ! To him !
 10 There is the man of my soul's hate, Aufidius,
 Piercing our Romans : then, valiant Titus, take
 Convenient numbers to make good the city ;

62. *Fetch him off*, Rescue him. 3. *Murrain*, Plague, cattle disease.

4. *Movers*, Looters. 5. *Crack'd*, And therefore uncurrent, no use.

5. *Drachma*, Greek coin worth about a shilling.

6. *Doit*, A small Dutch coin, worth about half a farthing.

6. *Doublets*, In England the hangman received the clothes of the condemned man.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT I, SCENE vi]

Whilst I, with those that have the spirit, will haste
To help Cominius.

Lart. Worthy sir, thou bleed'st ;
Thy exercise hath been too violent
For a second course of fight.

Mar. Sir, praise me not ;
My work hath yet not warm'd me : fare you well :
The blood I drop is rather physical
Than dangerous to me : to Aufidius thus
20 I will appear, and fight.

Lart. Now the fair goddess, Fortune,
Fall deep in love with thee ; and her great charms
Misguide thy opposers' swords ! Bold gentleman,
Prosperity be thy page !

Mar. Thy friend no less
Than those she placeth highest ! So, farewell.

[Exit MARCIUS.]

Lart. Thou worthiest Marcius !
Go sound thy trumpet in the market-place ;
Call thither all the officers o' the town,
Where they shall know our mind : away ! [Exeunt.]

SCENE VI

Near the camp of COMINIUS.

[Enter COMINIUS, as it were in retire, with soldiers.]

Com. Breathe you, my friends : well fought ; we
are come off
Like Romans, neither foolish in our stands,
Nor cowardly in retire : believe me, sirs,
We shall be charged again. Whiles we have struck,
By interims and conveying gusts we have heard

18. *Physical*, Restorative, good for the body.5. *Interims*, Intervals.5. *Conveying gusts*, Winds blowing in this direction, carrying the sound of the conflict.

The charges of our friends. Ye Roman gods !
 Lead their successes as we wish our own,
 That both our powers, with smiling fronts encounter-
 ing,
 May give you thankful sacrifice.

[Enter a Messenger.]

Thy news ?

10 *Mess.* The citizens of Corioli have issued,
 And given to Lartius and to Marcius battle :
 I saw our party to their trenches driven,
 And then I came away.

Com. Though thou speak'st truth,
 Methinks thou speak'st not well. How long is't since ?

Mess. Above an hour, my lord.

Com. 'Tis not a mile ; briefly we heard their drums :
 How couldst thou in a mile confound an hour,
 And bring thy news so late ?

Mess. Spies of the Volsces
 Held me in chase, that I was forced to wheel
 20 Three or four miles about, else had I, sir,
 Half an hour since brought my report.

Com. Who's yonder,
 That does appear as he were flay'd ? O gods !
 He has the stamp of Marcius ; and I have
 Before-time seen him thus.

Mar. [Within.] Come I too late ?

Com. The shepherd knows not thunder from a tabor
 More than I know the sound of Marcius' tongue
 From every meaner man.

[Enter MARCIUS.]

Mar. Come I too late ?

Com. Ay, if you come not in the blood of others,

7. *Successes*, Issues of the conflict. 16. *Briefly*, A short time ago.

17. *Confound*, Waste.

25. *Tabor*, A small drum, often used for music on festive occasions.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT I, SCENE vi]

But mantled in your own.

Mar. O, let me clip ye
80 In arms as sound as when I woo'd, in heart
As merry as when our nuptial day was done,
And tapers burn'd to bedward !

Com. Flower of warriors,
How is't with Titus Lartius ?

Mar. As with a man busied about decrees :
Condemning some to death and some to exile ;
Ransoming him, or pitying, threatening the other ;
Holding Corioli in the name of Rome,
Even like a fawning greyhound in the leash,
To let him slip at will.

Com. Where is that slave
40 Which told me they had beat you to your trenches ?
Where is he ? call him hither.

Mar. Let him alone ;
He did inform the truth : but for our gentlemen,
The common file—a plague ! tribunes for them !—
The mouse ne'er shunn'd the cat as they did budge
From rascals worse than they.

Com. But how prevail'd you ?

Mar. Will the time serve to tell ? I do not think.
Where is the enemy ? are you lords o' the field ?
If not, why cease you till you are so ?

Com. Marcus,
We have at disadvantage fought and did
50 Retire to win our purpose.

Mar. How lies their battle ? know you on which
side
They have placed their men of trust ?

Com. As I guess, Marcus,
Their bands i' the vaward are the Antiates,
Of their best trust ; o'er them Aufidius,
Their very heart of hope.

Mar. I do beseech you,

29. *Clip*, Embrace.51. *Battle*, Army.53. *Vaward*, Vanguard, front of the advancing army.

By all the battles wherein we have fought,
 By the blood we have shed together, by the vows
 We have made to endure friends, that you directly
 Set me against Aufidius and his Antiates ;
 60 And that you not delay the present, but,
 Filling the air with swords advanced and darts,
 We prove this very hour.

Com. Though I could wish
 You were conducted to a gentle bath
 And balms applied to you, yet dare I never
 Deny your asking : take your choice of those
 That best can aid your action.

Mar. Those are they
 That most are willing. If any such be here—
 As it were sin to doubt—that love this painting
 Wherein you see me smear'd ; if any fear
 70 Lesser his person than an ill report ;
 If any think brave death outweighs bad life
 And that his country's dearer than himself ;
 Let him alone, or so many so minded,
 Wave thus, to express his disposition,
 And follow Marcius.

*[They all shout and wave their swords, take him up
 in their arms, and cast up their caps.*

O, me alone ? make you a sword of me ?
 If these shows be not outward, which of you
 But is four Volsces ? none of you but is
 Able to bear against the great Aufidius
 80 A shield as hard as his. A certain number,
 Though thanks to all, must I select from all : the rest
 Shall bear the business in some other fight,
 As cause will be obey'd. Please you to march ;
 And four shall quickly draw out my command,
 Which men are best inclined.

Com. March on, my fellows :
 Make good this ostentation, and you shall
 Divide in all with us. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE VII

The gates of Corioli.

[TITUS LARTIUS, *having set a guard upon Corioli, going with drum and trumpet toward COMINIUS and CAIUS MARCIUS, enters with a Lieutenant, other Soldiers, and a Scout.*]

Lart. So, let the ports be guarded : keep your duties,

As I have set them down. If I do send, dispatch
Those centuries to our aid ; the rest will serve
For a short holding : if we lose the field,
We cannot keep the town.

Lieu. Fear not our care, sir.

Lart. Hence, and shut your gates upon's.
Our guider, come ; to the Roman camp conduct us.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VIII

A field of battle.

[*Alarum as in battle. Enter, from opposite sides, MARCIUS and AUFIDIUS.*]

Mar. I'll fight with none but thee ; for I do hate
thee
Worse than a promise-breaker.

Auf. We hate alike :
Not Afric owns a serpent I abhor
More than thy fame and envy. Fix thy foot.

Mar. Let the first budger die the other's slave,

1. *Ports, Gates.*

3. *Centuries, Bands of a hundred men each.*

ACT I, SCENE ix]

SHAKESPEARE'S

And the gods doom him after !

Auf. If I fly, Marcius,
Holloa me like a hare.

Mar. Within these three hours, Tullus,
Alone I fought in your Corioli walls,
And made what work I pleased : 'tis not my blood
10 Wherein thou seest me mask'd ; for thy revenge
Wrench up thy power to the highest.

Auf. Wert thou the Hector
That was the whip of your bragg'd progeny,
Thou shouldst not 'scape me here.

*[They fight, and certain Volsces come in the aid
of AUFIDIUS. MARCIUS fights till they be
driven in breathless.]*

Officious, and not valiant, you have shamed me
In your condemned seconds. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE IX

The Roman camp.

*[Flourish. Alarum. A retreat is sounded. Flourish.
Enter, from one side, COMINIUS with the Romans ;
from the other side, MARCIUS, with his arm in a
scarf.]*

Com. If I should tell thee o'er this thy day's work,
Thou'dst not believe thy deeds : but I'll report it
Where senators shall mingle tears with smiles,
Where great patricians shall attend and shrug,
I' the end admire, where ladies shall be frighted,

6. *Doom, i.e.* To perdition. 7. *Holloa me*, Pursue me with cries.
12. *Progeny*. Here progenitors. The Romans claimed the Trojans
as their progenitors, or forefathers, and Hector, one of the
chief leaders in the Trojan War, is evidently regarded as the
whip with which the Trojans scourged their enemies.
5. *Admire*, Wonder.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT I, SCENE ix

And, gladly quaked, hear more ; where the dull
tribunes,

That, with the fusty plebeians, hate thine honours,
Shall say against their hearts, " We thank the gods
Our Rome hath such a soldier."

¹⁰ Yet camest thou to a morsel of this feast,
Having fully dined before.

[*Enter* TITUS LARTIUS, *with his power, from the pursuit.*]

Lart. O general,
Here is the steed, we the caparison :
Hadst thou beheld—

Mar. Pray now, no more : my mother,
Who has a charter to extol her blood,
When she does praise me grieves me. I have done
As you have done ; that's what I can ; induced
As you have been ; that's for my country :
He that has but effected his good will
Hath overta'en mine act.

Com. You shall not be
²⁰ The grave of your deserving ; Rome must know
The value of her own : 'twere a concealment
Worse than a theft, no less than a traducement,
To hide your doings ; and to silence that,
Which, to the spire and top of praises vouch'd,
Would seem but modest : therefore, I beseech you—
In sign of what you are, not to reward
What you have done—before our army hear me.

Mar. I have some wounds upon me, and they
smart
To hear themselves remembered.

Com. Should they not,
³⁰ Well might they fester 'gainst ingratitude,
And tent themselves with death. Of all the horses,

^{12.} *We the caparison,* We the mere trappings. The caparison
was the cover of the horse.

^{14.} *Charter,* the right.
^{31.} *Tent,* To probe a wound with a " tent " or roll of lint to clean it
and discover its extent.

Whereof we have ta'en good and good store, of all
 The treasure in this field achieved and city,
 We render you the tenth, to be ta'en forth,
 Before the common distribution, at
 Your only choice.

Mar. I thank you, general ;
 But cannot make my heart consent to take
 A bribe to pay my sword : I do refuse it ;
 And stand upon my common part with those
 40 That have beheld the doing.

[*A long flourish. They all cry " Marcus !
 Marcus ! " cast up their caps and lances :
 COMINIUS and LARTIUS stand bare.*]

Mar. May these same instruments, which you pro-
 fane,
 Never sound more ! when drums and trumpets shall
 I' the field prove flatterers, let courts and cities be
 Made all of false-faced soothing !
 When steel grows soft as the parasite's silk,
 Let him be made a coverture for the wars !
 No more, I say !
 44 For that I have not wash'd my nose that bled,
 Or foil'd some debile wretch,—which, without note,
 50 Here's many else have done,—you shout me forth
 In acclamations hyperbolical ;
 As if I loved my little should be dieted
 In praises sauced with lies.

Com. Too modest are you ;
 More cruel to your good report than grateful
 To us that give you truly : by your patience,
 If 'gainst yourself you be incensed, we'll put you,
 Like one that means his proper harm, in manacles,
 Then reason safely with you. Therefore, be it known,
 As to us, to all the world, that Caius Marcius
 60 Wears this war's garland : in token of the which,

44. *Soothing, Flattery.*

46. *Coverture* (the Folio reading is *overture*), Disclosure, communication.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT I, SCENE IX

My noble steed, known to the camp, I give him,
 With all his trim belonging ; and from this time,
 For what he did before Corioli, call him,
 With all the applause and clamour of the host,
 CAIUS MARCIUS CORIOLANUS ! Bear
 The addition nobly ever !

[*Flourish. Trumpets sound, and drums.*

All. Caius Marcius Coriolanus !

Cor. I will go wash ;

And when my face is fair, you shall perceive
 70 Whether I blush or no : howbeit, I thank you.
 I mean to stride your steed, and at all times
 To undercrest your good addition
 To the fairness of my power.

Com. So, to our tent ;
 Where, ere we do repose us, we will write
 To Rome of our success. You, Titus Lartius,
 Must to Corioli back : send us to Rome
 The best, with whom we may articulate,
 For their own good and ours.

Lart. I shall, my lord.

Cor. The gods begin to mock me. I, that now
 80 Refused most princely gifts, am bound to beg
 Of my lord general.

Com. Take't ; 'tis yours. What is't ?

Cor. I sometime lay here in Corioli
 At a poor man's house ; he used me kindly :
 He cried to me ; I saw him prisoner ;
 But then Aufidius was within my view,
 And wrath o'erwhelm'd my pity : I request you
 To give my poor host freedom.

Com. O, well begg'd !
 Were he the butcher of my son, he should

62. *Trim belonging*, Trappings, etc.

70. *Howbeit*, However, all the same.

72. *Undercrest*, Wear it as a crest, live up to it.

73. *To the fairness of my power*, As well as ever I can.

77. *Articulate*, Negotiate, an *article* being a clause in a treaty or agreement.

66. *Addition*, Title.

82. *Sometime*, For a time.

ACT I, SCENE X]

SHAKESPEARE'S

Be free as is the wind. Deliver him, Titus.

90 *Lart.* Marcius, his name?

Cor. By Jupiter! forgot
I am weary; yea, my memory is tired.

Have we no wine here?

Com. Go we to our tent:

The blood upon your visage dries; 'tis time

It should be look'd to: come.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE X

The camp of the Volsces.

*[A flourish. Cornets. Enter TULLUS AUFIDIUS
bloody, with two or three Soldiers.]*

Auf. The town is ta'en!

First Sol. 'Twill be delivered back on good condition.

Auf. Condition!

I would I were a Roman; for I cannot,

Being a Volscce, be that I am. Condition!

What good condition can a treaty find

I' the part that is at mercy? Five times, Marcius,

I have fought with thee; so often hast thou beat me,

And wouldst do so, I think, should we encounter

10 As often as we eat. By the elements,

If e'er again I meet him beard to beard,

He's mine, or I am his: mine emulation

Hath not that honour in't it had; for where

I thought to crush him in an equal force,

True sword to sword, I'll potch at him some way

Or wrath or craft may get him.

First Sol.

He's the devil.

12. *Emulation*, Rivalry.

15. *Potch*, Thrust (a form of *poke*).

CORIOLANUS

[ACT I, SCENE X

Auf. Bolder, though not so subtle. My valour's
poison'd

With only suffering stain by him : for him
Shall fly out of itself : nor ~~see~~ nor sanctuary,
20 Being naked, sick, nor fane, nor Capitol,
The prayers of priests nor times of sacrifice,
Embarquements all of fury, shall lift up
Their rotten privilege and custom 'gainst
My hate to Marcius : where I find him, were it
At home, upon my brother's guard, even there,
Against the hospitable canon, would I
Wash my fierce hand in's heart. Go you to the city ;
Learn how 'tis held ; and what they are that must
Be hostages for Rome.

First Sol.

Will not you go ?

30 *Auf.* I am attended at the cypress grove : I pray
you—

'Tis south the city mills—bring me word thither
How the world goes, that to the pace of it
I may spur on my journey.

First Sol.

I shall, sir.

[*Exeunt.*

20. *Fane*, Temple. 22. *Embarquements*, Hindrances.
26. *Hospitable canon*, Law of hospitality.

ACT II

SCENE I

Rome. A public place.

[*Enter MENENIUS, with the two Tribunes of the people, SICINIUS and BRUTUS.*]

Men. The augurer tells me we shall have news to-night.

Bru. Good or bad ?

Men. Not according to the prayer of the people, for they love not Marcius.

Sic. Nature teaches beasts to know their friends.

Men. Pray you, who does the wolf love ?

Sic. The lamb.

Men. Ay, to devour him ; as the hungry plebeians
10 would the noble Marcius.

Bru. He's a lamb indeed, that baes like a bear.

Men. He's a bear indeed, that lives like a lamb. You two are old men : tell me one thing that I shall ask you.

Both. Well, sir.

Men. In what enormity is Marcius poor in, that you two have not in abundance ?

Bru. He's poor in no one fault, but stored with all¹.

Sic. Especially in pride.

1. *Augurer*, or augur, a priest at Rome who interpreted the will of the gods through the song and flight of birds, or the appearance of the entrails of a slaughtered beast.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT II, SCENE I

20 *Bru.* And topping all others in boasting.

Men. This is strange now: do you two know how you are censured here in the city, I mean of us o' the right-hand file? do you?

Both. Why, how are we censured?

Men. Because you talk of pride now,—will you not be angry?

Both. Well, well, sir, well.

Men. Why, 'tis no great matter; for a very little thief of occasion will rob you of a great deal of
30 patience: give your dispositions the reins, and be angry at your pleasures; at the least, if you take it as a pleasure to you in being so. You blame Marcius for being proud?

Bru. We do it not alone, sir.

Men. I know you can do very little alone; for your helps are many, or else your actions would grow wondrous single: your abilities are too infant-like for doing much alone. You talk of pride: O that you could turn your eyes toward the napes of your necks,
40 and make but an interior survey of your good selves! O that you could!

Bru. What then, sir?

Men. Why, then you should discover a brace of unmeriting, proud, violent, testy magistrates, alias fools, as any in Rome.

Sic. Menenius, you are known well enough too.

Men. I am known to be a humorous patrician, and one that loves a cup of hot wine with not a drop of allaying Tiber in't; said to be something imperfect
50 in favouring the first complaint; hasty and tinder-

22. *Censured*, Estimated.

22. *O' the right-hand file*, Aristocrats. There is probably an allusion to the fact that the Government party sits on the right hand of the Speaker in the House of Commons.

29. *Thief of occasion*. "Occasion" is the thief.

37. *Single*, In two senses (a) one, (b) foolish.

44. *Testy*, Headstrong.

47. *Humorous*, Full of whims and fancies.

like upon too trivial motion ; one that converses more with the buttock of the night than with the forehead of the morning : what I think I utter, and spend my malice in my breath. Meeting two such wealsmen as you are—I cannot call you Lycurguses—if the drink you give me touch my palate adversely, I make a crooked face at it. I can't say your worships have delivered the matter well, when I find the ass in compound with the major part of your syllables : and though I must be content to bear with those that say you are reverend grave men, yet they lie deadly that tell you you have good faces. If you see this in the map of my microcosm, follows it that I am known well enough too ? what harm can your bisson conspectuities glean out of his character, if I be known well enough too ?

Bri. Come, sir, come, we know you well enough.

Men. You know neither me, yourselves, nor any thing. You are ambitious for poor knaves' caps and 70 legs : you wear out a good wholesome forenoon in hearing a cause between an orange-wife and a forset-seller ; and then rejourn the controversy of three pence to a second day of audience. When you are hearing a matter between party and party, if you chance to be pinched with the colic, you make faces like mummers ; set up the bloody flag against all patience ; and dismiss the controversy bleeding, the more entangled by your hearing : all the peace you make in their cause is, calling both the parties knaves. 80 You are a pair of strange ones.

55. *Lycurgus*, The famous Spartan law-giver.

58. *Delivered*, Related.

58. *The ass . . . syllables*, So much downright stupidity in most of your conversation.

63. *Microcosm*, The little world of man, as opposed to *macrocosm*, the great material world. A man's face is "the map of his microcosm."

64. *Conspectuities*, Visions.

64. *Bisson*, Purblind.

76. *Mummers*, Masquers, buffoons.

71. *Forset*, A little casket.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT II, SCENE I

Bru. Come, come, you are well understood to be a perfecter giber for the table than a necessary bencher in the Capitōl.

Men. Our very priests must become mockers, if they shall encounter such ridiculous subjects as you are. When you speak best unto the purpose, it is not worth the wagging of your beards; and your beards deserve not so honourable a grave as to stuff a botcher's cushion, or to be entombed in an ass's
 80 pack-saddle. Yet you must be saying, Marcius is proud; who, in a cheap estimation, is worth all your predecessors since Deucalion, though peradventure some of the best of 'em were hereditary hangmen. God-den to your worships: more of your conversation would infect my brain, being the herdsmen of the beastly plebeians: I will be bold to take my leave of you.
 [BRUTUS and SICINIUS go aside.]

[Enter VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, and VALERIA.]

How now, my as fair as noble ladies,—and the moon, were she earthly, no nobler,—whither do you follow
 100 your eyes so fast?

Vol. Honourable Menenius, my boy Marcius approaches; for the love of Juno, let's go.

Men. Ha! Marcius coming home!

Vol. Ay, worthy Menenius; and with most prosperous approbation.

Men. Take my cap, Jupiter, and I thank thee. Hoo! Marcius coming home!

Vol. Vir. Nay, 'tis true.

Vol. Look, here's a letter from him: the state hath

89. *Botcher*, A patcher of old clothes.

91. *In a cheap estimation*, Setting his worth at its very lowest value; to say the least of it.

92. *Deucalion*. Deucalion and his wife Pyrrha were the only two mortals to escape when Jupiter, angered with their evil ways, sent a great flood to destroy all those who dwelt in the world.

94. *God-den*, literally, God give you good even.

102, 106, *Jupiter, Juno*, King and queen of heaven and earth.

110 another, his wife another ; and, I think, there's one at home for you.

Men. I will make my very house reel to-night : a letter for me !

Vir. Yes, certain, there's a letter for you : I saw't.

Men. A letter for me ! it gives me an estate of seven years' health ; in which time I will make a lip at the physician : the most sovereign prescription in Galen is but empiricitic, and, to this preservative, of no better report than a horse-drench. Is he not
120 wounded ? he was wont to come home wounded.

Vir. O, no, no, no.

Vol. O, he is wounded ; I thank the gods for't.

Men. So do I too, if it be not too much : brings a' victory in his pocket ? the wounds become him.

Vol. On's brows : Menenius, he comes the third time home with the oaken garland.

Men. Has he disciplined Aufidius soundly ?

Vol. Titus Lartius writes, they fought together, but Aufidius got off.

130 *Men.* And 'twas time for him too, I'll warrant him that : an he had stayed by him, I would not have been so fidiused for all the chests in Corioli, and the gold that's in them. Is the senate possessed of this ?

Vol. Good ladies, let's go. Yes, yes, yes ; the senate has letters from the general, wherein he gives my son the whole name of the war : he hath in this action outdone his former deeds doubly.

Val. In troth, there's wondrous things spoke of him.

140 *Men.* Wondrous ! ay, I warrant you, and not without his true purchasing.

Vir. The gods grant them true !

Vol. True ! pow, wow.

117. *Galen*, A famous physician (second century A.D.).

118. *Empiricitic*, Empiric, quack.

119. *Horse-drench*, Medicine for horses.

133. *Possessed*, Informed.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT II, SCENE I

Men. True ! I'll be sworn they are true. Where is he wounded ? [*To the Tribunes*] God save your good worships ! Marcius is coming home : he has more cause to be proud. Where is he wounded ?

Vol. I' the shoulder and i' the left arm : there will be large cicatrices to show the people, when he shall
150 stand for his place. He received in the repulse of Tarquin seven hurts i' the body.

Men. One i' the neck, and two i' the thigh,—there's nine that I know.

Vol. He had, before this last expedition, twenty-five wounds upon him.

Men. Now it's twenty-seven : every gash was an enemy's grave. [*A shout and flourish.*] Hark ! the trumpets.

Vol. These are the ushers of Marcius : before him
160 he carries noise, and behind him he leaves tears :
Death, that dark spirit, in's nervy arm doth lie ;
Which, being advanced, declines, and then men die.

[*A sennet. Trumpets sound. Enter COMINIUS the general, and TITUS LARTIUS ; between them CORIOLANUS, crowned with an oaken garland ; with Captains and Soldiers, and a Herald.*]

Her. Know, Rome, that all alone Marcius did fight
Within Corioli gates : where he hath won,
With fame, a name to Caius Marcius ; these
In honour follows Coriolanus.

Welcome to Rome, renowned Coriolanus ! [*Flourish.*]

All. Welcome to Rome, renowned Coriolanus !

Cor. No more of this ; it does offend my heart :
170 Pray now, no more.

149. *Cicatrices, Scars.*

150. *The repulse of Tarquin.* Tarquinius Superbus, the last king of Rome, was expelled on account of his despotism. He attempted to regain his power, and was defeated by the supporters of the Republic at the battle of Lake Regillus.

161. *Nervy, Sinewy.*

Com.

Look, sir, your mother !

Cor.

O,

You have, I know, petition'd all the gods

For my prosperity !

[*Kneels.*]*Vol.*

Nay, my good soldier, up ;

My gentle Marcius, worthy Caius, and

By deed-achieving honour newly named,—

What is it ?—Coriolanus must I call thee ?—

But, O, thy wife !

Cor.

My gracious silence, hail !

Wouldst thou have laugh'd had I come coffin'd home,

That weep'st to see me triumph ? Ah, my dear,

Such eyes the widows in Corioli wear,

140 And mothers that lack sons.

Men.

Now, the gods crown thee !

Cor. And live you yet ? [To VALERIA] O my sweet lady, pardon.*Vol.* I know not where to turn : O, welcome home :
And welcome, general : and ye're welcome all.*Men.* A hundred thousand welcomes. I could
weep

And I could laugh, I am light and heavy. Welcome.

A curse begin at very root on's heart,

That is not glad to see thee ! You are three

That Rome should dote on : yet, by the faith of men,

We have some old crab-trees here at home that will
not

150 Be grafted to your relish. Yet welcome, warriors :

We call a nettle but a nettle and

The faults of fools but folly.

Com.

Ever right.

Cor. Menenius, ever, ever.*Herald.* Give way there, and go on !*Cor.* [To VOLUMNIA and VIRGILIA] Your hand,
and yours :

Ere in our own house I do shade my head,

176. *Gracious, Lovely.*190. *To your relish, i.e.* To produce fruit that will please your taste.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT II, SCENE I

The good patricians must be visited ;
 From whom I have received not only greetings,
 But with them change of honours.

Vol.

I have lived

To see inherited my very wishes
 200 And the buildings of my fancy : only
 There's one thing wanting, which I doubt not but
 Our Rome will cast upon thee.

Cor.

Know, good mother,
 I had rather be their servant in my way,
 Than sway with them in theirs.

Com.

On, to the Capitol !

[*Flourish. Cornets. Exeunt in state, as before.*

BRUTUS and SICINIUS come forward.

Bru. All tongues speak of him, and the bleared
 sights

Are spectacl'd to see him : your prattling nurse
 Into a rapture lets her baby cry
 While she chats of him : the kitchen malkin pins
 Her richest lockram 'bout her reechy neck,
 210 Clambering the walls to eye him : stalls, bulks, win-
 dows,

Are smother'd up, leads fill'd, and ridges horsed
 With variable complexions, all agreeing
 In earnestness to see him : seld-shown flamens
 Do press among the popular throngs and puff
 To win a vulgar station : our veil'd dames
 Commit the war of white and damask in
 Their nicely-gawd'd cheeks to the wanton spoil
 Of Phœbus' burning kisses : such a pother

199. *Inherited*, Possessed, enjoyed.208. *Malkin*, Kitchen wench ; diminutive of Mal, Mary.209. *Lockram*, Cheap linen.209. *Reechy*, Grimed with reek, or smoke.210. *Bulks*, Stalls outside shops. 212. *Complexions*, Characters.213. *Seld-shown*, Seldom shown. 213. *Flamens*, Priests.215. *Vulgar station*, A standing-place among the ordinary crowd.217. *Nicely-gawd'd*, Carefully adorned or "made up."218. *Phœbus*, God of the sun.

SCENE II

The same. The Capitol.

[*Enter two Officers, to lay cushions.*]

First Off. Come, come, they are almost here. How many stand for consulships ?

Sec. Off. Three, they say : but 'tis thought of every one Coriolanus will carry it.

First Off. That's a brave fellow ; but he's vengeance proud, and loves not the common people.

Sec. Off. Faith, there have been many great men that have flattered the people, who ne'er loved them ; and there be many that they have loved, they know
10 not wherefore : so that, if they love they know not why, they hate upon no better a ground : therefore, for Coriolanus neither to care whether they love or hate him manifests the true knowledge he has in their disposition ; and out of his noble carelessness lets them plainly see't.

First Off. If he did not care whether he had their love or no, he waved indifferently 'twixt doing them neither good nor harm : but he seeks their hate with greater devotion than they can render it him ; and
20 leaves nothing undone that may fully discover him their opposite. Now, to seem to affect the malice and displeasure of the people is as bad as that which he dislikes, to flatter them for their love.

Sec. Off. He hath deserved worthily of his country : and his ascent is not by such easy degrees as those who, having been supple and courteous to the people, bonneted, without any further need to have them at all into their estimation and report : but he hath so

Officers, Persons entrusted with some public duty.

27. *Bonneted, Took off their caps.*

CORIOLANUS

[ACT II, SCENE II

planted his honours in their eyes, and his actions in
 30 their hearts, that for their tongues to be silent, and
 not confess so much, were a kind of ingrateful injury :
 to report otherwise were a malice that, giving itself
 the lie, would pluck reproof and rebuke from every
 ear that heard it.

First Off. No more of him ; he's a worthy man :
 make way, they are coming.

[*A sennet. Enter, with Lictors before them, COMINIUS
 the consul, MENENIUS, CORIOLANUS, Senators,
 SICINIUS, and BRUTUS. The Senators take their
 places ; the Tribunes take their places by them-
 selves. CORIOLANUS stands.*]

Men. Having determined of the Volsces and
 To send for Titus Lartius, it remains,
 As the main point of this our after-meeting,
 40 To gratify his noble service that
 Hath thus stood for his country : therefore, please you,
 Most reverend and grave elders, to desire
 The present consul, and last general
 In our well-found successes, to report
 A little of that worthy work perform'd
 By Caius Marcius Coriolanus, whom
 We meet here both to thank and to remember
 With honours like himself.

First Sen. Speak, good Cominius :
 Leave nothing out for length, and make us think
 50 Rather our state's defective for requital
 Than we to stretch it out. [*To the Tribunes.*] Masters
 o' the people,
 We do request your kindest ears, and after,
 Your loving motion toward the common body,
 To yield what passes here.

Sennet, Set of notes on a trumpet.

39. *Of,* Concerning.

50. *State,* Resources of the state.

53. *Motion,* Proposal made in an assembly.

Lictors. See page 13.

40. *Gratify,* Reward.

50. *Requital,* Reward.

54. *Yield,* Sanction.

Sic. We are convented
Upon a pleasing treaty, and have hearts
Inclinable to honour and advance
The theme of our assembly.

Bru. Which the rather
We shall be blest to do, if he remember
A kinder value of the people than
80 He hath hereto prized them at.

Men. That's off, that's off ;
I would you rather had been silent. Please you
To hear Cominius speak ?

Bru. Most willingly ;
But yet my caution was more pertinent
Than the rebuke you give it.

Men. He loves your people ,
But tie him not to be their bedfellow.
Worthy Cominius, speak. [*CORIOLANUS offers to go
away.*] Nay, keep your place.

First Sen. Sit, Coriolanus ; never shame to hear
What you have nobly done.

Cor. Your honours' pardon :
I had rather have my wounds to heal again
70 Than hear say how I got them.

Bru. Sir, I hope
My words disbench'd you not.

Cor. No, sir : yet oft,
When blows have made me stay, I fled from words.
You soothed not, therefore hurt not : but your people,
I love them as they weigh.

Men. Pray now, sit down.

Cor. I had rather have one scratch my head i' the
sun
When the alarum were struck than idly sit
To hear my nothings monster'd. [*Exit.*]

Men. Masters of the people,
Your multiplying spawn how can he flatter—

CORIOLANUS

[ACT II, SCENE II]

That's thousand to one good one—when you now see
 80 He had rather venture all his limbs for honour
 Than one on's ears to hear it? Proceed, Cominius.

Com. I shall lack voice; the deeds of Coriolanus
 Should not be utter'd feebly. It is held
 That valour is the chiefest virtue, and
 Most dignifies the haver: if it be
 The man I speak of cannot in the world
 Be singly counterpoised. At sixteen years,
 When Tarquin made a head for Rome, he fought
 Beyond the mark of others: our then dictator,
 90 Whom with all praise I point at, saw him fight,
 When with his Amazonian chin he drove
 The bristled lips before him: he bestrid
 An o'er-press'd Roman and i' the consul's view
 Slew three opposers: Tarquin's self he met,
 And struck him on his knee: in that day's feats,
 When he might act the woman in the scene,
 He proved best man i' the field, and for his meed
 Was brow-bound with the oak. His pupil age
 Man-enter'd thus, he waxed like a sea,
 100 And in the brunt of seventeen battles since
 He lurch'd all swords of the garland. For this last,
 Before and in Corioli, let me say,
 I cannot speak him home: he stopp'd the fliers;
 And by his rare example made the coward
 Turn terror into sport: as weeds before
 A vessel under sail, so men obey'd
 And fell below his stem: his sword, death's stamp,
 Where it did mark, it took; from face to foot
 He was a thing of blood, whose every motion

87. *Singly counterpoised*, Equalled by any one man.

91. *Amazonian*, i.e. Beardless, like that of an Amazon, one of the race of warlike women who devoted themselves to hunting and fighting.

93. *O'er-press'd*, Attacked by more assailants than he could deal with.

97. *Meed*, Reward.

98. *Pupil age*, Minority.

101. *Lurch'd . . of*, Easily deprived . . of.

103. *Home*. Compare in the phrase "strike home."

110 Was timed with dying cries : alone he enter'd
 The mortal gate of the city, which he painted
 With shunless destiny ; aidless came off,
 And with a sudden re-inforcement struck
 Corioli like a planet : now all's his :
 When, by and by, the din of war 'gan pierce
 His ready sense ; then straight his doubled spirit
 Re-quick'n'd what in flesh was fatigate,
 And to the field came he ; where he did
 Run re-quick'n'd for the lives of men, as if
 120 'Twere but a trivial spoil : and till we call'd
 Both field and city ours, he never stood
 To ease his breast with panting.

Men. Worthy man !

First Sen. He cannot but with measure fit the
 honours

Which we devise him.

Com. Our spoils he kick'd at,
 And look'd upon things precious as they were
 The common muck of the world : he covets less
 Than misery itself would give ; rewards
 His deeds with doing them, and is content
 To spend the time to end it.

Men. He's right noble :

130 Let him be call'd for.

First Sen. Call Coriolanus.

Off. He doth appear.

[*Re-enter* CORIOLANUS.]

Men. The senate, Coriolanus, are well pleased
 To make thee consul.

Cor. I do owe them still
 My life and services.

Men. It then remains
 That you do speak to the people.

Cor. I do beseech you,
 Let me o'erleap that custom, for I cannot
 Put on the gown, stand naked and entreat them,

CORIOLANUS

[ACT II, SCENE II

For my wound's sake, to give their suffrage : please
you

That I may pass this doing.

Sic. Sir, the people
140 Must have their voices ; neither will they bate
One jot of ceremony.

Men. Put them not
Pray you, go fit you to the custom and
Take to you, as your predecessors have
Your honour with your form.

Cor. It is a
That I shall blush in acting, and might well
Be taken from the people.

Bru. Mark you that ?

Cor. To brag unto them, thus I did, and thus ,
Show them the unaching scars which I should hide,
As if I had received them for the hire
150 Of their breath only !

Men. Do not stand upon't.
We recommend to you, tribunes of the people,
Our purpose to them : and to our noble consul
Wish we all joy and honour.

Senators. To Coriolanus come all joy and honour !
[Flourish of cornets. *Exeunt all but SICINIUS
and BRUTUS.*

Bru. You see how he intends to use the people.

Sic. May they perceive's intent ! He will require
them,
As if he did contemn what he requested
Should be in them to give.

Bru. Come, we'll inform them
Of our proceedings here : on the market-place
160 I know they do attend us. [Exeunt.

140. *Bate*, Abate, forgo.

150. *Breath*, Vote.

150. *Do not stand upon't*, Do not be obstinate about it.

156. *Require*, Request.

SCENE III

The same. The Forum.

[*Enter seven or eight Citizens.*]

First Cit. Once, if he do require our voices, we ought not to deny him.

Sec. Cit. We may, sir, if we will.

Third Cit. We have power in ourselves to do it, but it is a power that we have no power to do ; for if he show us his wounds and tell us his deeds, we are to put our tongues into those wounds and speak for them ; so, if he tells us his noble deeds, we must also tell him our noble acceptance of them. Ingratitude is monstrous, and for the multitude to be ingrateful, were to make a monster of the multitude ; of the which we being members, should bring ourselves to be monstrous members.

First Cit. And to make us no better thought of, a little help will serve ; for once we stood up about the corn, he himself stuck not to call us the many-headed multitude.

Third Cit. We have been called so of many ; not that our heads are some brown, some black, some auburn, some bald, but that our wits are so diversely coloured : and truly I think if all our wits were to issue out of one skull, they would fly east, west, north, south, and their consent of one direct way should be at once to all the points o' the compass.

Sec. Cit. Think you so ? Which way do you judge my wit would fly ?

Third Cit. Nay, your wit will not so soon out as another man's will : 'tis strongly wedged up in a block-head, but if it were at liberty, 'twould, sure, southward.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT II, SCENE iii]

Sec. Cit. Why that way ?

Third Cit. To lose itself in a fog, where being three parts melted away with rotten dews, the fourth would return for conscience' sake, to help to get thee a wife.

Sec. Cit. You are never without your tricks : you may, you may.

Third Cit. Are you all resolved to give your voices ? But that's no matter, the greater part carries it. I say, if he would incline to the people, there was never
40 a worthier man.

[Enter CORIOLANUS in a gown of humility,
with MENENIUS.]

Here he comes, and in the gown of humility : mark his behaviour. We are not to stay altogether, but to come by him where he stands, by ones, by twos, and by threes. He's to make his requests by particulars ; wherein every one of us has a single honour, in giving him our own voices with our own tongues : therefore follow me, and I'll direct you how you shall go by him.

All. Content, content.

[*Exeunt* Citizens.]

Men. O sir, you are not right : have you not known
50 The worthiest men have done't ?

Cor.

What must I say ?

" I pray, sir,"—Plague upon't ! I cannot bring My tongue to such a pace :—" Look, sir, my wounds ! I got them in my country's service, when Some certain of your brethren roar'd and ran From the noise of our own drums."

Men.

O me, the gods !

You must not speak of that : you must desire them To think upon you.

Cor.

Think upon me ! hang 'em ! I would they would forget me, like the virtues Which our divines lose by 'em.

Men.

You'll mar all :

36. *You may, you may, i.e.* Have your joke.

46. *Voices, Votes.*

60 I'll leave you : pray you, speak to 'em, I pray you,
In wholesome manner. [Exit.

Cor. Bid them wash their faces
And keep their teeth clean.

[Re-enter two of the Citizens.

So, here comes a brace.

[Re-enter a third Citizen.

You know the cause, sir, of my standing here.

Third Cit. We do, sir ; tell us what hath brought
you to't.

Cor. Mine own desert.

Sec. Cit. Your own desert ;

Cor. Ay, not mine own desire.

Third Cit. How ! not your own desire ?

Cor. No, sir, 'twas never my desire yet to trouble
70 the poor with begging.

Third Cit. You must think, if we give you any-
thing, we hope to gain by you.

Cor. Well, then, I pray, your price o' the consul-
ship ?

First Cit. The price is to ask it kindly.

Cor. Kindly ! Sir, I pray, let me ha't : I have
wounds to show you, which shall be yours in private.
Your good voice, sir ; what say you ?

Sec. Cit. You shall ha't, worthy sir.

80 *Cor.* A match, sir. There's in all two worthy voices
begged. I have your alms : adieu.

Third Cit. But this is something odd.

Sec. Cit. An 'twere to give me again,—but 'tis no
matter. [Exeunt the three Citizens.

[Re-enter two other Citizens.]

Cor. Pray you now, if it may stand with the tune of
your voices that I may be consul, I have here the
customary gown.

Fourth Cit. You have deserved nobly of your
country, and you have not deserved nobly.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT II, SCENE iii]

90 *Cor.* Your enigma ?

Fourth Cit. You have been a scourge to her enemies, you have been a rod to her friends ; you have not indeed loved the common people.

Cor. You should account me the more virtuous that I have not been common in my love. I will, sir, flatter my sworn brother, the people, to earn a dearer estimation of them ; 'tis a condition they account gentle : and since the wisdom of their choice rather to have my hat than my heart, I will practise the insinuating
100 nod and be off to them most counterfeitly ; that is, sir, I will counterfeit the bewitchment of some popular man and give it bountiful to the desirers. Therefore, beseech you, I may be consul.

Fifth Cit. We hope to find you our friend ; and therefore give you our voices heartily.

Fourth Cit. You have received many wounds for your country.

Cor. I will not seal your knowledge with showing them. I will make much of your voices, and so trouble
110 you no further.

Both Cit. The gods give you joy, sir, heartily !

[*Exeunt.*]

Cor. Most sweet voices !

Better it is to die, better to starve,
Than crave the hire which first we do deserve.
Why in this woolvish toge should I stand here,
To beg of Hob and Dick, that do appear,
Their needless vouches ? Custom calls me to't :
What custom wills, in all things should we do't,
The dust on antique time would lie unswept,
120 And mountainous error be too highly heapt
For truth to o'er-peer. Rather than fool it so,

96. *Sworn brother.* In the days of chivalry two knights would bind themselves as "sworn brothers" to share the fortunes of war.

96. *Dearer estimation,* More precious esteem, better opinion.

97. *Condition,* Disposition.

115. *Woolvish,* He thinks of the fable of the wolf in sheep's clothing.

121. *Rather than fool it so,* Rather than play the fool in this way.

ACT II, SCENE iii]

SHAKESPEARE'S

Let the high office and the honour go
To one that would do thus. I am half through ;
The one part suffer'd, the other will I do.

[*Re-enter three Citizens more.*]

Here come ~~my~~ voices.

Your voices ; your voices I have fought ;
Watch'd for your voices ; for your voices bear
Of wounds two dozen odd ; battles thrice six
I have seen and heard of ; for your voices have
130 Done many things, some less, some more : your voices :
Indeed, I would be consul.

Sixth Cit. He has done nobly, and cannot go with-
out any honest man's voice.

Seventh Cit. Therefore let him be consul : the gods
give him joy, and make him good friend to the people !

All Cit. Amen, amen. God save thee, noble con-
sul ! [Exeunt.]

Cor. Worthy voices !

[*Re-enter MENENIUS, with BRUTUS and SICINIUS.*]

Men. You have stood your limitation ; and the
tribunes

140 Endue you with the people's voice : remains
That, in the official marks invested, you
Anon do meet the senate.

Cor. Is this done ?

Sic. The custom of request you have discharged :
The people do admit you, and are summon'd
To meet anon, upon your approbation.

Cor. Where ? at the senate-house ?

Sic. There, Coriolanus.

Cor. May I change these garments ?

Sic. You may, sir.

Cor. That I'll straight do ; and, knowing myself
again,

125. *Mos, More.*

139. *Limitation, Limited or appointed time.*

CORIOLANUS

[ACT II, SCENE iii]

Repair to the senate-house.

150 *Men.* I'll keep you company. Will you along?*Bru.* We stay here for the people.*Sic.*

Fare you well.

[*Exeunt* CORIOLANUS and MENENIUS.]

He has it now, and by his looks methinks

'Tis warm at's heart.

Bru. With a proud heart he wore his humble weeds.

Will you dismiss the people?

[*Re-enter* Citizens.]*Sic.* How now, my masters! have you chose this man?*First Cit.* He has our voices, sir.*Bru.* We pray the gods he may deserve your loves.*Sec. Cit.* Amen, sir: to my poor unworthy notice,
160 He mock'd us when he begg'd our voices.*Third Cit*

Certainly

He flouted us downright.

First Cit. No, 'tis his kind of speech: he did not mock us.*Sec. Cit.* Not one amongst us, save yourself, but says

He used us scornfully: he should have show'd us His marks of merit, wounds received for's country.

Sic. Why, so he did, I am sure.*Citizens.*

No, no; no man saw 'em.

Third Cit. He said he had wounds, which he could show in private;

And with his hat, thus waving it in scorn,

"I would be consul," says he: "aged custom,

170 But by your voices, will not so permit me;

Your voices therefore." When we granted that,

Here was "I thank you for your voices: thank you:

Your most sweet voices: now you have left your voices,

152. *Methinks*, It seems to me.154. *Weeds*, Garments.

I have no further with you." Was not this mockery ?

Sic. Why either were you ignorant to see't,
Or, seeing it, of such childish friendliness
To yield your voices ?

Bru. Could you not have told him

As you were lesson'd, when he had no power,
But was a petty servant to the state,

280 He was your enemy, ever spake against
Your liberties and the charters that you bear
I' the body of the weal ; and now, arriving
A place of potency and sway o' the state,
If he should still malignantly remain
Fast foe to the plebeii, your voices might
Be curses to yourselves ? You should have said
That as his worthy deeds did claim no less
Than what he stood for, so his gracious nature
Would think upon you for your voices and
190 Translate his malice towards you into love,
Standing your friendly lord.

Sic. Thus to have said,

As you were fore-advised, had touch'd his spirit
And tried his inclination ; from him pluck'd
Either his gracious promise, which you might
As cause had call'd you up, have held him to ;
Or else it would have gall'd his surly nature,
Which easily endures not article
Tying him to aught ; so putting him to rage,
You should have ta'en the advantage of his choler
200 And pass'd him unelected.

Bru.

Did you perceive

He did solicit you in free contempt
When he did need your loves, and do you think
That his contempt shall not be bruising to you
When he hath power to crush ? Why, had your
bodies

No heart among you ? or had you tongues to cry

182. *I' the body of the weal*, In the body of the commonwealth, of which you are members.

190. *Translate*, Transform.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT II, SCENE iii]

Against the rectorship of judgment ?

Sic.

Have you

Ere now denied the asker ? and now again
Of him that did not ask, but mock, bestow
Your sued-for tongues ?

210 *Third Cit.* He's not confirm'd ; we may deny him
yet.

Sec. Cit. And will deny him :

I'll have five hundred voices of that sound.

First Cit. I twice five hundred and their friends to
piece 'em.

Bru. Get you hence instantly, and tell those friends,
They have chose a consul that will from them take
Their liberties : make them of no more voice
Than dogs that are as often beat for barking
As therefore kept to do so.

Sic.

Let them assemble,

And on a safer judgment all revoke

220 Your ignorant election ; enforce his pride,
And his old hate upon you : besides, forget not
With what contempt he wore the humble weed,
How in his suit he scorn'd you ; but your loves,
Thinking upon his services, took from you
The apprehension of his present portance,
Which most gibingly, ungravely, he did fashion
After the inveterate hate he bears you.

Bru.

Lay

A fault on us, your tribunes ; that we labour'd,
No impediment between, but that you must

230 Cast your election on him.

Sic.

Say, you chose him

More after our commandment than as guided
By your own true affections, and that your minds,
Pre-occupied with what you rather must do
Than what you should, made you against the grain

206. *Against the rectorship of judgment*, Against all the dictates of
wisdom.

220. *Election*, Choice.

225. *Portance*, Bearing.

226. *Ungravely*, Without any dignity.

To voice him consul : lay the fault on us.

Bru. Ay, spare us not. Say we read lectures to you,

How youngly he began to serve his country,
How long continued, and what stock he springs of,
The noble house o' the Marcians, from whence
came

240 That Ancus **Marcus**, Numa's daughter's son,
Who, after great **Hostilius**, here was king ;
Of the same house **Publius** and **Quintus** were
That our best water brought by conduits hither ;
And [**Censorinus**], nobly named so,
Twice being [by the people chosen] censor,
Was his great ancestor.

Sic. One thus descended,
That hath beside well in his person wrought
To be set high in place, we did commend
To your remembrances : but you have found,
250 **Scalping** his present bearing with his past,
That he's your fixed enemy, and revoke
Your sudden approbation.

Bru. Say, you ne'er had done't—
Harp on that still—but by our putting on :
And presently, when you have drawn your number,
Repair to the Capitol.

All. We will so : almost all
Repent in their election. [*Exeunt Citizens.*]

Bru. Let them go on :
This mutiny were better put in hazard,
Than stay, past doubt, for greater :
If, as his nature is, he fall in rage

239. *Noble house o' the Marcians.* Shakespeare includes among the ancestors of Coriolanus, **Publius**, who lived three hundred years, and **Censorinus**, who lived two hundred years after him.

245. *Censor*, An officer who kept account of the property of the citizens, imposed taxes upon them, and superintended their morals. (See page 191.)

250. *Scalping, Weighing.*
257. *Put in hazard, Risked.* "Hazard" is a gaming term.

CORIO LANUS

[ACT II, SCENE iii

260 With their refusal, both observe and answer
The vantage of his anger.

Sic. To the Capitol, come :
We will be there before the stream o' the people ;
And this shall seem, as partly 'tis, their own,
Which we have goaded onward. [*Exeunt.*

260. *Observe . . . anger,* Watch for and at ~~once seize~~ upon the opportunity his anger will give you.

ACT III

SCENE I

Rome. A street.

Cornets. Enter CORIOLANUS, MENENIUS, all the Gentry, COMINIUS, TITUS LARTIUS, and other Senators.

Cor. Tullus Aufidius then had made new head ?

Lart. He had, my lord ; and that it was which caused

Our swifter composition.

Cor. So then the Volsces stand but as at first,
Ready, when time shall prompt them, to make road
Upon's again.

Com. They are worn, lord consul, so,
That we shall hardly in our ages see
Their banners wave again.

Cor. Saw you Aufidius ?

Lart. On safe-guard he came to me ; and did curse
10 Against the Volsces, for they had so vilely
Yielded the town : he is retired to Antium.

Cor. Spoke he of me ?

Lart. He did, my lord.

Cor. How ? what ?

Lart. How often he had met you, sword to sword ;

CORIOLANUS

[ACT III, SCENE I]

That of all things upon the earth he hated
Your person most ; that he would pawn his fortunes
To hopeless restitution, so he might
Be call'd your vanquisher.

Cor. At Antium lives he ?

Lart. At Antium.

Cor. I wish I had a cause to seek him there,
20 To oppose his hatred fully. Welcome home.

[Enter SICINIUS and BRUTUS.]

Behold, these are the tribunes of the people,
The tongues o' the common mouth : I do despise
them ;

For they do prank them in authority,
Against all noble sufferance.

Sic. Pass no further.

Cor. Ha ! what is that ?

Bru. It will be dangerous to go on : no further.

Cor. What makes this change ?

Men. The matter ?

Com. Hath he not pass'd the noble and the com-
mon ?

30 *Bru.* Cominius, no.

Cor. Have I had children's voices ?

First Sen. Tribunes, give way ; he shall to the
market-place.

Bru. The people are incensed against him.

Sic. Stop

Or all will fall in broil.

Cor. Are these your herd ?

Must these have voices, that can yield them now
And straight disclaim their tongues ? What are your
offices ?

You being their mouths, why rule you not their
teeth ?

16. *Hopeless restitution*, Beyond all hope of regaining (them).

23. *Prank*, Dress out.

24. *Sufferance*, Endurance.

Have you not set them on ?

Men.

Be calm, be calm.

Cor. It is a purposed thing, and grows by plot,
To curb the will of the nobility :

40 Suffer't, and live with such as cannot rule
Nor ever will be ruled.

Bru.

Call't not a plot :

The people cry you mock'd them, and of late,
When corn was given them gratis, you repined ;
Scandal'd the suppliants for the people, call'd them
Time-pleasers, flatterers, foes to nobleness.

Cor. Why, this was known before.

Bru.

Not to them all.

Cor. Have you inform'd them sithence ?

Bru.

How ! I inform them !

Com. You are like to do such business.

Bru.

Not unlike,

Each way, to better yours.

60 *Cor.* Why then should I be consul ? By yond
clouds,

Let me deserve so ill of you, and make me
Your fellow tribune.

Sic.

You show too much of that

For which the people stir : if you will pass
To where you are bound, you must inquire your way,
Which you are out of, with a gentler spirit,
Or never be so noble as a consul,
Nor yoke with him for tribune.

Men.

Let's be calm.

Com. The people are abused ; set on. This palter-
ing

Becomes not Rome, nor has Coriolanus

60 Deserved this so dishonour'd rub, laid falsely

43. *Repined*, Deplored (it).

44. *Scandal'd*, Reviled.

47. *Sithence*, Since.

58. *Abused*, Deceived.

60. *Rub*, Obstacle. Originally used in the game of bowls for any irregularity in the green which diverted the bowl from its course.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT III, SCENE i

I' the plain way of his merit.

Cor. Tell me of corn !

This was my speech, and I will speak' again—

Men. Not now, not now.

First Sen. Not in this heat, sir, now.

Cor. Now, as I live, I will. My nobler friends,

I crave their pardons :

For the mutable, rank-scented many, let them

Regard me as I do not flatter, and

Therein behold themselves : I say again,

In soothing them, we nourish 'gainst our senate

⁷⁰ The cockle of rebellion, insolence, sedition,

Which we ourselves have plough'd for, sow'd, and
scatter'd,

By mingling them with us, the honour'd number,

Who lack not virtue, no, nor power, but that

Which they have given to beggars.

Men. Well, no more.

First Sen. No more words, we beseech you.

Cor. How ! no more !

As for my country I have shed my blood,

Not fearing outward force, so shall my lungs

Coin words till their decay against those measles,

Which we disdain should tetter us, yet sought

⁸⁰ The very way to catch them.

Bru. You speak o' the people,

As if you were a god to punish, not

A man of their infirmity.

Sic. 'Twere well

We let the people know't.

Men. What, what ? his choler ?

Cor. Cholera !

Were I as patient as the midnight sleep,

By Jove, 'twould be my mind !

Sic. It is a mind

That shall remain a poison where it is,

^{70.} *Cockle*, A common weed that grows among corn, with large purple flowers.

^{79.} *Tetter*, Infect.

Not poison any further.

Cor.

Shall remain !

Hear you this Triton of the minnows ? mark you

90 His absolute " shall " ?

Com.

'Twas from the canon.

Cor.

" Shall ! "

O good but most unwise patricians ! why,

You grave but reckless senators, have you thus

100 Given Hydra here to choose an officer,

That with his peremptory " shall," being but

The horn and noise o' the monster's, wants not spirit

To say he'll turn your current in a ditch,

And make your channel his ? If he have power,

Then veil your ignorance ; if none, awake

Your dangerous lenity. If you are learn'd,

100 Be not as common fools ; if you are not,

Let them have cushions by you. You are plebeians,

If they be senators : and they are no less,

When, both your voices blended, the great'st taste

Most palates theirs. They choose their magistrate,

And such a one as he, who puts his " shall,"

His popular " shall," against a graver bench

Than ever frown'd in Greece. By Jove himself !

It makes the consuls base : and my soul aches

To know, when two authorities are up,

110 Neither supreme, how soon confusion

May enter 'twixt the gap of both and take

The one by the other.

Com.

Well, on to the market-place

Cor. Whoever gave that counsel, to give forth

The corn o' the storehouse gratis, as 'twas used

89. *Triton*, A sea-god, son of Neptune, who had the power to stir or calm the waves by the blast of his sea-shell trumpet.

90. *Canon*, Law of authority.

93. *Hydra*, A serpent with nine heads, one of which was immortal.

When a head was struck off, two more grew in its place.

Hercules burned off the eight mortal heads, and buried the

immortal one under a rock.

98. *Vail*, Lower, bow down.

110. *Confusion*, Ruin.

111. *Take*, Destroy.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT III, SCENE I

Sometime in Greece,—

Men. Well, well, no more of that.

Cor. Though there the people had more absolute power,

I say, they nourish'd disobedience, fed
The ruin of the state.

Bru. Why, shall the people give
One that speaks thus their voice?

Cor. I'll give my reasons,¹²¹
120 More worthier than their voices. They know the
corn

Was not our recompense, resting well assured
They ne'er did service for't : being press'd to the war,
Even when the navel of the state was touch'd,
They would not thread the gates. This kind of
service

Did not deserve corn gratis. Being i' the war,¹²²
Their mutinies and revolts, wherein they show'd
Most valour, spoke not for them : the accusation
Which they have often made against the senate,
All cause unborn, could never be the native
130 Of our so frank donation. Well, what then ?
How shall this bosom multiplied digest
The senate's courtesy ? Let deeds express
What's like to be their words : " We did request it ;
We are the greater poll, and in true fear
They gave us our demands." Thus we debase
The nature of our seats and make the rabble
Call our cares fears ; which will in time
Break ope the locks o' the senate and bring in
The crows to peck the eagles.

Men. Come, enough.

140 *Bru.* Enough, with over-measure.

Cor. No, take more :

What may be sworn by, both divine and human,
Seal what I end withal ! This double worship,

121. *Recompense*, Reward (for anything they had done).

129. *Native*, Natural source. 142. *Withal*, Emphatic form of with.

Where one part does disdain with cause, the other
 Insult without all reason ; where gentry, title, wisdom,
 Cannot conclude but by the yea and no
 Of general ignorance,—it must omit
 Real necessities, and give way the while
 To unstable slightness : purpose so barr'd, it follows,
 Nothing is done to purpose. Therefore, beseech you,—
 150 **You that** will be less fearful than discreet,
 That love the fundamental part of state
 More than you doubt the change on't, that prefer
 A noble life before a long, and wish
 To jump a body with a dangerous physic
 That's sure of death without it, at once pluck out
 The multitudinous tongue ; let them not lick
 The sweet which is their poison : your dishonour
 Mangles true judgment and bereaves the state
 Of that integrity which should become't,
 160 Not having the power to do the good it would,
 For the ill which doth control't.

Bru. Has said enough.

Sic. Has spoken like a traitor, and shall answer
 As traitors do.

Cor. Thou wretch, despite o'erwhelm thee !
 What should the people do with these bald tribunes ?
 On whom depending, their obedience fails
 To the greater bench : in a rebellion,
 When what's not meet, but what must be, was law,
 Then were they chosen : in a better hour,
 170 Let what is meet be said it must be meet,
 And throw their power i' the dust.

Bru. Manifest treason !

Sic. This a consul ? no.

Bru. The ædiles, ho !

[*Enter an Ædile.*]

Let him be apprehended.

154. *Jump*, Expose to risk.

165. *Bald*, Senseless.

164. *Despite*, Contemptuous hatred.

173. *Ædiles*. See page 13.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT III, SCENE I

Sic. Go, call the people : [*Exit Ædile*] in whose name myself

Attach thee as a traitorous innovator,
A foe to the public weal : obey, I charge thee,
And follow to thine answer.

Cor. Hence, old goat !

Senators, etc. We'll surety him.

Com. Aged sir, hands off,

Cor. Hence, rotten thing ! or I shall shake thy bones¹
180 Out of thy garments.

Sic. Help, ye citizens !

[*Enter a rabble of Citizens (Plebeians), with the Ædiles.*]

Men. On both sides more respect.

Sic. Here's he that would take from you all your power.

Bru. Seize him, ædiles !

Citizens. Down with him ! down with him !

Senators, etc. Weapons, weapons, weapons !

[*They all bustle about CORIOLANUS, crying.*

" Tribunes ! " " Patricians ! " " Citizens ! " " What, ho ! "

" Sicinius ! " " Brutus ! " " Coriolanus ! " " Citizens ! "

" Peace, peace, peace ! " " Stay, hold, peace ! "

Men. What is about to be ? I am out of breath ;

190 Confusion's near ; I cannot speak. You, tribunes,

To the people ! Coriolanus, patience !

Speak, good Sicinius.

Sic. Hear me, people ; peace !

Citizens. Let's hear our tribune : peace ! Speak speak, speak.

Sic. You are at point to lose your liberties :

Marcus would have all from you ; Marcus,

Whom late you have named for consul.

Men. Fie, fie, fie !

175. *Attach, Arrest.*

175. *Innovator, One who would make a change for the worse.*

SHAKESPEARE'S

the way is kindle, not to quench.
 To build the city and to lay all flat.
 The city but the people?
 True,

200 Thus the city.

Brutus. By the consent of all, we were establish'd
 The people's magistrates.

Citizens. You so remain.

Men. And so we like to do.

Com. That is the way to lay the city flat ;
 To bring the roof to the foundation,
 And bury all, which yet distinctly ranges,
 In heaps and piles of ruin.

Sic. This deserves death.

Brutus. Or let us stand to our authority,
 Or let us lose it. We do here pronounce,
 210 Upon the part o' the people, in whose power
 We were elected theirs, Marcius is worthy
 Of present death.

Sic. Therefore, lay hold of him ;
 Bear him to the rock Tarpeian, and from thence
 Into destruction cast him.

Brutus. Ædiles, seize him !

Citizens. Yield, Marcius, yield !

Men. Hear me one word ;
 Beseech you, tribunes, hear me but a word.

Æd. Peace, peace !

Men. [To BRUTUS] Be that you seem, truly your
 country's friend,
 And temperately proceed to what you would
 220 Thus violently redress.

Brutus. Sir, those cold ways,
 That seem like prudent helps, are very poisonous
 Where the disease is violent. Lay hands upon him,
 And bear him to the rock.

Cor. No, I'll die here. [Drawing his sword.]

206. *Distinctly ranges*, Stands in clear orderly arrangement.
 208. *Or . . . or*, Either . . . or. 213. *The rock Tarpeian*. See page 10.

CORIOLANUS

GENE: i

There's some among you have
Come, try upon yourselves what

Men. Down with that sword
awhile.

Bru. Lay hands upon him.

Men. Help, help,

You that be noble ; help him, young

Citizens. Down with him, down with him !

[*In this mutiny, the Tribunes, the Ædiles, and
the People, are beat in.*]

30 *Men.* Go, get you to your house ; be gone, away !
All will be naught else.

Sec. Sen. Get you gone.

Com. Stand fast ;

We have as many friends as enemies.

Men. Shall it be put to that ?

First Sen. The gods forbid !

I prithee, noble friend, home to thy house ;

Leave us to cure this cause.

Men. For 'tis a sore upon us

You cannot tent yourself ; be gone, beseech you.

Com. Come, sir, along with us.

Cor. I would they were barbarians—as they are,
Though in Rome litter'd—not Romans—as they are
not,

40 Though calved i' the porch o' the Capitol—

Men. Be gone ;

Put not your worthy rage into your tongue ;

One time will owe another.

Cor. On fair ground

I could beat forty of them.

Men. I could myself

Take up a brace o' the best of them ; yea, the two
tribunes.

Com. But now 'tis odds beyond arithmetic ;
And manhood is call'd foolery, when it stands

ACT III, SCENE i]

SHAKESPEARE'S

Against a falling fabric. Will you hence,
 Before the tag return ? whose rage doth rend
 Like interrupted waters and o'erbear

250 What they used to bear.

Men. Pray you, be gone :
 I'll try when my old wit be in request
 With those that have but little : this must be patch'd
 With cloth of any colour.

Com. Nay, come away.

[*Exeunt CORIOLANUS, COMINIUS, and others.*]

A Patrician. This man has marr'd his fortune.

Men. His nature is too noble for the world :
 He would not flatter Neptune for his trident,
 Or Jove for's power to thunder. His heart's his
 mouth :

What his breast forges, that his tongue must vent ;
 And, being angry, does forget that ever

260 He heard the name of death. [A noise within.]

Here's goodly work !

Sec. Pat. I would they were a-bed !

Men. I would they were in Tiber ! What the venge-
 ance !

Could he not speak 'em fair ?

[*Re-enter BRUTUS and SICINIUS, with the rabble.*]

Sic. Where is this viper
 That would depopulate the city and
 Be every man himself ?

Men. You worthy tribunes,—

Sic. He shall be thrown down the Tarpeian rock
 With rigorous hands : he hath resisted law,
 And therefore law shall scorn him further trial
 Than the severity of the public power

270 Which he so sets at nought.

First Cit. He shall well know
 The noble tribunes are the people's mouths,

CORIOLANUS

[ACT III, SCENE I

And we their hands.

Citizens. He shall, sure on't.

Men.

Sic. Peace!

Men. Do not cry havoc, where you should but hunt
With modest warrant.

Sic. Sir, how comes't that you
Have help to make this rescue?

Men. Hear me speak;
As I do know the consul's worthiness,
So can I name his faults.—

Sic. Consul! what consul?

280 *Men.* The consul Coriolanus.

Bru.

He consul!

Citizens. No, no, no, no, no.

Men. If, by the tribunes' leave, and your good
people,

I may be heard, I would crave a word or two;
The which shall turn you to no further harm
Than so much loss of time.

Sic. Speak briefly then;
For we are peremptory to dispatch
This viperous traitor: to eject him hence
Were but our danger, and to keep him here
Our certain death: therefore it is decreed

290 He dies to-night.

Men. Now the good gods forbid
That our renowned Rome, whose gratitude
Towards her deserved children is enroll'd
In Jove's own book, like an unnatural dam
Should now eat up her own!

Sic. He's a disease that must be cut away.

Men. O, he's a limb that has but a disease;
Mortal, to cut it off; to cure it, easy.
What has he done to Rome that's worthy death?
Killing our enemies, the blood he hath lost,—

275. *Cry havoc*, Give the signal for general slaughter.

276. *Modest, Moderate.* 286. *Peremptory*, Firmly resolved.

300 Which, I dare vouch, is more than that he hath,
By many an ounce—he dropp'd it for his country,
And what is left, to lose it by his country,
Were to us all, that do't and suffer it,
A brand to the end o' the world.

Sic. This is clean kam.

Bru. Merely awry : when he did love his country
It honour'd him.

Sic. The service of the foot
Being once gangrened, is not then respected
For what before it was.

Bru. We'll hear no more.

Pursue him to his house, and pluck him thence :
310 Lest his infection, being of catching nature,
Spread further.

Men. One word more, one word.
This tiger-footed rage, when it shall find
The harm of unscann'd swiftmess, will too late
Tie leaden pounds to's heels. Proceed by process ;
Lest parties, as he is beloved, break out,
And sack great Rome with Romans.

Bru. If it were so,—

Sic. What do ye talk ?
Have we not had a taste of his obedience ?
Our ædiles smote ? ourselves resisted ? Come.

320 *Men.* Consider this : he has been bred i' the wars
Since he could draw a sword, and is ill school'd
In bolted language ; meal and bran together
He throws without distinction. Give me leave,
I'll go to him, and undertake to bring him
Where he shall answer, by a lawful form,
In peace, to his utmost peril.

First Sen. Noble tribunes
It is the humane way : the other course
Will prove too bloody, and the end of it

304. *Kam*, Crooked.

322. *Bolted*, Finely chosen, carefully considered ; literally, sifted.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT III, SCENE ii

Unknown to the beginning.

Sic. Noble Menenius,

880 Be you then as the people's officer.

Masters, lay down your weapons.

Bru. Go not home.*Sic.* Meet on the market-place. We'll attend you there :

Where, if you bring not Marcius, we'll proceed

In our first way.

Men. I'll bring him to you.[*To the Senators*] Let me desire your company : he must come,

Or what is worst will follow.

First Sen. Pray you, let's to him. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II

A room in CORIOLANUS'S house.[*Enter CORIOLANUS with Patricians.*]*Cor.* Let them pull all about mine ears, present me

Death on the wheel or at wild horses' heels,

Or pile ten hills on the Tarpeian rock,

That the precipitation might down stretch

Below the beam of sight, yet will I still

Be thus to them.

A Patrician. You do the nobler.*Cor.* I muse my mother

Does not approve me further, who was wont

10 To call them woollen vassals, things created

To buy and sell with groats, to show bare heads

In congregations, to yawn, be still and wonder,

When one but of my ordinance stood up

8. *Muse*, Wonder.9. *Further*, More.10. *Woollen*, Clad in coarse woollen clothing.12. *Congregations*, Public assemblies.13. *Ordinance*, Rank.

To speak of peace or war.

[Enter VOLUMNIA.]

I talk of you.

Why did you wish me milder ? would you have me
False to my nature ? Rather say I play
The man I am.

Vol. O, sir, sir, sir,
I would have had you put your power well on,
Before you had worn it out.

Cor. Let go.

²⁰ *Vol.* You might have been enough the man you are,
With striving less to be so : lesser had been
The thwartings of your dispositions, if
You had not show'd them how ye were disposed
Ere they lack'd power to cross you.

Cor. Let them hang.

Vol. Ay, and burn too.

[Enter MENENIUS and Senators.]

Men. Come, come, you have been too rough, some-
thing too rough ;
You must return and mend it.

First Sen. There's no remedy ;
Unless, by not so doing, our good city
Cleave in the midst, and perish.

Vol. Pray, be counsell'd :
³⁰ I have a heart as little apt as yours,
But yet a brain that leads my use of anger
To better vantage.

Men. Well said, noble woman !
Before he should thus stoop to the herd, but that
The violent fit o' the times craves it as physic
For the whole state, I would put mine armour on,

22. *Dispositions*, Inclinations.

30. *Apt*, Ready, amenable.

32. *Vantage*, Advantage, account.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT III, SCENE II]

Which I can scarcely bear.

Cor. What must I do ?

Men. Return to the tribunes.

Cor. Well, what then ? what then ?

Men. Repent what you have spoke.

Cor. For them ! I cannot do it to the gods ;

40 Must I then do't to them ?

Vol. You are too absolute ;

Though therein you can never be too noble,

But when extremities speak. I have heard you say,

Honour and policy, like unsever'd friends,

I' the war do grow together : grant that, and tell
me,

In peace what each of them by the other lose,

That they combine not there.

Cor. Tush, tush !

Men. A good demand.

Vol. If it be honour in your wars to seem

The same you are not, which, for your best ends,

You adopt your policy, how is it less or worse,

60 That it shall hold companionship in peace

With honour, as in war, since that to both

It stands in like request ?

Cor. Why force you this ?

Vol. Because that now it lies you on to speak

To the people ; not by your own instruction,

Nor by the matter which your heart prompts you,

But with such words that are but roted in

Your tongue, though but bastards and syllables

Of no allowance to your bosom's truth.

Now, this no more dishonours you at all

60 Than to take in a town with gentle words,

Which else would put you to your fortune and

The hazard of much blood.

I would dissemble with my nature where

My fortunes and my friends at stake required

I should do so in honour : I am in this,
 Your wife, your son, these senators, the nobles ;
 And you will rather show our general louts
 How you can frown than spend a fawn upon 'em,
 For the inheritance of their loves and safeguard
 70 Of what that want might ruin.

Men. Noble lady !
 Come, go with us ; speak fair : you may salve so.
 Not what is dangerous present, but the loss
 Of what is past.

Vol. I prithee now, my son,
 Go to them, with this bonnet in thy hand ;
 And thus far having stretch'd it—here be with them—
 Thy knee bussing the stones—for in such business
 Action is eloquence, and the eyes of the ignorant
 More learned than the ears—waving thy head,
 Which often, thus, correcting thy stout heart,
 80 Now humble as the ripest mulberry
 That will not hold the handling : or say to them,
 Thou art their soldier, and being bred in broils
 Hast not the soft way which, thou dost confess,
 Were fit for thee to use as they to claim,
 In asking their good loves, but thou wilt frame
 Thyself, forsooth, hereafter theirs, so far
 As thou hast power and person.

Men. This but done,
 Even as she speaks, why, their hearts were yours ;
 For they have pardons, being ask'd, as free
 90 As words to little purpose.

Vol. Prithee now,
 Go, and be ruled : although I know thou hadst rather
 Follow thine enemy in a fiery gulf
 Than flatter him in a bower. Here is Cominius.

[Enter COMINIUS.]

74. *Bonnet*, Cap.

75. *Stretch'd it*. She rehearses his salutation to them. But see
 page 193.

76. *Bussing*, Kissing.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT III, SCENE I]

Com. I have been i' the market-place; and, sir, 'tis fit

You make strong party, or defend yourself
By calmness or by absence: all's in anger.

Men. Only fair speech.

Com. I think 'twill serve, if he
Can thereto frame his spirit.

Vol. He must, and will.

Prithee now, say you will, and go about it.

100 *Cor.* Must I go show them my unbarb'd sconce?
Must I

With my base tongue give to my noble heart
A lie that it must bear? Well, I will do't:
Yet, were there but this single plot to lose,
This mould of Marcius, they to dust should grind it
And throw't against the wind. To the market-place!
You have put me now to such a part which never
I shall discharge to the life.

Com. Come, come, we'll prompt you.

Vol. I prithee now, sweet son, as thou hast said
My praises made thee first a soldier, so,
110 To have my praise for this, perform a part
That hast not done before.

Cor. Well, I must do't:
Away, my disposition, and possess me
Some woman's spirit! my throat of war be turn'd,
Which quired with my drum, into a pipe
Small as an eunuch's, or the virgin voice
That babies lulls asleep! the smiles of knaves
Tent in my cheeks, and schoolboys' tears take up
The glasses of my sight! a beggar's tongue
Make motion through my lips, and my arm'd knees,
120 Who bow'd but in my stirrup, bend like his
That hath received an alms! I will not do't,

100. *Unbarb'd sconce*, Bare head. A horse protected by the trappings of war was said to be *barbed*. *Sconce* is literally a small fort, and is also used for the helmet, and the head itself.

117. *Tent*, Encamp.

Lest I surcease to honour mine own truth
 And by my body's action teach my mind
 A most inherent baseness.

Vol. At thy choice, then :

To beg of thee, it is my more dishonour
 Than thou of them. Come all to ruin ; let
 Thy mother rather feel thy pride than fear
 Thy dangerous stoutness, for I mock at death
 With as big heart as thou. Do as thou list.

130 Thy valiantness was mine, thou suck'dst it from me,
 But owe thy pride thyself.

Cor. Pray, be content :

Mother, I am going to the market-place ;
 Chide me no more. I'll mountebank their loves,
 Cog their hearts from them, and come home beloved
 Of all the trades in Rome. Look, I am going :
 Commend me to my wife. I'll return consul ;
 Or never trust to what my tongue can do
 I' the way of flattery further.

Vol. Do your will. [*Exit.*

Com. Away ! the tribunes do attend you : arm
 yourself

140 To answer mildly ; for they are prepared
 With accusations, as I hear, more strong
 Than are upon you yet.

Cor. The word is " mildly." Pray you, let us go :
 Let them accuse me by invention, I
 Will answer in mine honour.

Men. Ay, but mildly.

Cor. Well, mildly be it then. Mildly ! [*Exeunt.*

122. *Surcease, Cease.*

128. *Stoutness, Stubborn pride.*

134. *Cog, Cheat.*

SCENE III

The same. The Forum.

[*Enter SICINIUS and BRUTUS.*]

Bru. In this point charge him home, ~~that~~ he affects
Tyrannical power : if he evade us there,
Enforce him with his envy to the people,
And that the spoil got on the Antiates
Was ne'er distributed.

[*Enter an Ædile.*]

What, will he come ?

Æd. He's coming.

Bru. How accompanied ?

Æd. With old Menenius, and those senators
That always favour'd him.

Sic. Have you a catalogue
Of all the voices that we have procured
10 Set down by the poll ?

Æd. I have ; 'tis ready.

Sic. Have you collected them by tribes ?

Æd. I have.

Sic. Assemble presently the people hither ;
And when they hear me say " It shall be so
I' the right and strength o' the commons," be it
either

For death, for fine, or banishment, then let them,
If I say fine, cry " Fine " ; if death, cry " Death."
Insisting on the old prerogative

3. *Enforce, Urge, press hard.*

3. *Envy, Malice.*

4. *Antiates.* " They charged him that he had not made the common distinction of the spoil he had gotten in invading the territories of the Antiates : but had of his own authority divided it among them who were with him in that journey" (Plutarch).

12. *Presently, Instantly.*

And power i' the truth o' the cause.

Æd. I shall inform them.

Bru. And when such time they have begun to cry,
 20 Let them not cease, but with a din confused
 Enforce the present execution
 Of what we chance to sentence.

Æd. Very well.

Sic. Make them be strong and ready for this hint,
 When we shall hap to give't them.

Bru. Go about it. [*Exit Ædile.*]
 Put him to choler straight : he hath been used
 Ever to conquer, and to have his worth
 Of contradiction : being once chafed, he cannot
 Be rein'd again to temperance ; then he speaks
 What's in his heart ; and that is there which looks
 30 With us to break his neck.

Sic. Well, here he comes.

[*Enter CORIOLANUS, MENENIUS, and COMINIUS,
 with Senators and Patricians.*]

Men. Calmly, I do beseech you.

Cor. Ay, as an ostler, that for the poorest piece
 Will bear the knave by the volume. The honour'd
 gods

Keep Rome in safety, and the chairs of justice
 Supplied with worthy men ! plant love among's !
 Throng our large temples with the shows of peace,
 And not our streets with war !

First Sen. Amen, amen.

Men. A noble wish.

[*Re-enter Ædile, with Citizens.*]

Sic. Draw near, ye people.

40 *Æd.* List to your tribunes. Audience ! peace,
 say !

Cor. First, hear me speak.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT III, SCENE iii]

Both Tri.

Well, say, Peace, ho!

Cor. Shall I be charged no further than this present?

Must all determine here?

Sic.

I do demand,

If you submit you to the people's voices,

Allow their officers and are content

To suffer lawful censure for such faults

As shall be proved upon you?

Cor.

I am content.

Men. Lo, citizens, he says he is content:

The warlike service he has done, consider; think

50 Upon the wounds his body bears, which show

Like graves i' the holy churchyard.

Cor.

Scratches with briers,

Scars to move laughter only.

Men.

Consider further,

That when he speaks not like a citizen,

You find him like a soldier: do not take

His rougher accents for malicious sounds,

But, as I say, such as become a soldier,

Rather than envy you.

Com.

Well, well, no more.

Cor. What is the matter

That being pass'd for consul with full voice,

60 I am so dishonour'd that the very hour

You take it off again?

Sic.

Answer to us.

Cor. Say, then: 'tis true, I ought so.

Sic. We charge you, that you have contrived to take

From Rome all season'd office and to wind

Yourself into a power tyrannical;

For which you are a traitor to the people.

Cor. How! traitor!

Men.

Nay, temperately; your promise.

43. *Determine*, Come to an end.

45. *Allow*, Approve of, acknowledge.

63. *Contrived*, Plotted.

Cor. The fires i' the lowest hell fold-in the people !
 Call me their traitor ! Thou injurious tribune !
 70 Within this eyes sat twenty thousand deaths,
 In thy hands clutch'd as many millions, in
 Thy lying tongue both numbers, I would say
 " Thou liest " unto thee with a voice as free
 As I do pray the gods.

Sic. Mark you this, people ?

Citizens. To the rock, to the rock with him !

Sic. Peace !

We need not put new matter to his charge :
 What you have seen him do and heard him speak,
 Beating your officers, cursing yourselves,
 Opposing laws with strokes and here defying
 80 Those whose great power must try him ; even this,
 So criminal and in such capital kind,
 Deserves the extremest death.

Bru. But since he hath
 Served well for Rome,—

Cor. What do you prate of service ?

Bru. I talk of that, that know it.

Cor. You ?

Men. Is this the promise that you made your
 mother ?

Com. Know, I pray you,—

Cor. I'll know no further :

Let them pronounce the steep Tarpeian death,
 Vagabond exile, flaying, pent to linger
 90 But with a grain a day, I would not buy
 Their mercy at the price of one fair word ;
 Nor check my courage for what they can give,
 To have't with saying " Good morrow."

Sic. For that he has,

As much as in him lies, from time to time
 Envied against the people, seeking means
 To pluck away their power, as now at last

CORIOLANUS

[ACT III, SCENE iii]

Given hostile strokes, and that not in the presence
 Of dreaded justice, but on the ministers
 That do distribute it ; in the name o' the people
 100 And in the power of us the tribunes, we,
 Even from this instant, banish him our city,
 In peril of precipitation
 From off the rock Tarpeian never more
 To enter our Rome gates : i' the people's name.
 I say it shall be so.

Citizens. It shall be so, it shall be so ; let him away :
 He's banish'd, and it shall be so.

Com. Hear me, my masters, and my common
 friends,—

Sic. He's sentenced ; no more hearing.

Com. Let me speak :

110 I have been consul, and can show for Rome
 Her enemies' marks upon me. I do love
 My country's good with a respect more tender,
 More holy and profound, than mine own life,
 My dear wife's estimate, her womb's increase,
 And treasure of my loins ; then if I would
 Speak that,—

Sic. We know your drift : speak what ?

Bru. There's no more to be said, but he is banish'd,
 As enemy to the people and his country :
 It shall be so.

120 *Citizens.* It shall be so, it shall be so.

Cor. You common cry of curs ! whose breath I hate
 As reek o' the rotten fens, whose loves I prize
 As the dead carcasses of unburied men
 That do corrupt my air, I banish you ;
 And here remain with your uncertainty !
 Let every feeble rumour shake your hearts !
 Your enemies, with nodding of their plumes,
 Fan you into despair ! Have the power still
 To banish your defenders ; till at length

132 *For ignorance, which finds not till it feels,
 Making no reservation of yourselves,
 Still your own foes, deliver you as most
 Abated captives to some nation
 That won you without blows ! Despising
 For you, the city, thus I turn my back :
 There is a world elsewhere.*

*[Exeunt CORIOLANUS, COMINIUS, MENENIUS,
 Senators, and Patricians.]*

Æd. The people's enemy is gone, is gone !

Citizens. Our enemy is banish'd ! he is gone ! Hoo !
 hoo ! *[They all shout, and throw up their caps.]*

Sic. Go, see him out at gates, and follow him,
 140 *As he hath follow'd you, with all despite ;
 Give him deserved vexation. Let a guard
 Attend us through the city.*

Citizens. Come, come ; let's see him out at gates ;
 come.

The gods preserve our noble tribunes ! Come.

[Exeunt.]

133. *Abated*, Humbled and dejected.

ACT IV

SCENE I

Rome. Before a gate of the city.

[Enter CORIOLANUS, VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, MENENIUS, COMINIUS, with the young Nobility of Rome.]

Cor. Come, leave your tears : a brief farewell : the
beast

With many heads butts me away. Nay, mother,
Where is your ancient courage ? you were used
To say extremity was the trier of spirits ;
Common chances common men could bear ;
When the sea was calm all boats alike
Show'd mastership in floating ; fortune's blows,
When most struck home, being gentle wounded, craves
A noble cunning : you were used to load me
10 With precepts that would make invincible
The heart that conn'd them.

Vir. O heavens ! O heavens !

Cor. Nay, I prithee, woman,—

Vol. Now the red pestilence strike all trades in
Rome,

And occupations perish !

Cor. What, what, what !

I shall be loved when I am lack'd. Nay, mother,

3. *Used*, Accustomed. 4. *Extremity*, The greatest misfortune.

8. *Being gentle wounded*, Bearing one's hurt like a gentleman.

9. *Cunning*, Skill, knowledge.

Respect that spirit, when you were wont to say,
 If you had been the wife of Hercules,
 Six of his labours you'd have done, and saved
 Your husband so much sweat. Cominius,
 20 Droop not ; adieu. Farewell, my wife, my mother :
 I'll do well yet. Thou old and true Menenius,
 Thy tears are salter than a younger man's,
 And venomous to thine eyes. My sometime general,
 I have seen thee stern, and thou hast oft beheld
 Heart-hardening spectacles ; tell these sad women
 'Tis fond to wail inevitable strokes,
 As 'tis to laugh at 'em. My mother, you wot well
 My hazards still have been your solace : and
 Believe't not lightly—though I go alone,
 30 Like to a lonely dragon, that his fen
 Makes fear'd and talk'd of more than seen—your son
 Will or exceed the common or be caught
 With cautelous baits and practice.

Vol.

My first son,

Whither wilt thou go ? Take good Cominius
 With thee awhile : determine on some course,
 More than a wild exposure to each chance
 That starts i' the way before thee.

Cor.

O the gods !

Com. I'll follow thee a month, devise with thee
 Where thou shalt rest, that thou mayst hear of us
 40 And we of thee : so if the time thrust forth
 A cause for thy repeal, we shall not send
 O'er the vast world to seek a single man,
 And lose advantage, which doth ever cool
 I' the absence of the needer.

17. *Hercules*, The Greek hero famous for his enormous strength.
 At the command of his cousin, king Eurystheus, he per-
 formed twelve tasks of surprising difficulty—the labours of
 Hercules.
- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 27. <i>Wot</i> , Know. | 26. <i>Fond</i> , Foolish. |
| 28. <i>Still</i> , Always. | 28. <i>Hazards</i> , Risks. |
| 33. <i>Practice</i> , Plot. | 33. <i>Cautelous</i> , Crafty. |
| 43. <i>Advantage</i> , Favourable opportunity. | 41. <i>Repeal</i> , Recall. |

CORIOLANUS

[ACT IV, SCENE ii]

Cor.

Fare ye well :

Thou hast years upon thee ; and thou art too full
Of the wars' surfeits, to go rove with one

That's yet unbruised : bring me but out at gate.

Come, my sweet wife, my dearest mother, and

My friends of noble touch, when I am forth,

⁵⁰ Bid me farewell, and smile. I pray you, come.

While I remain above the ground, you shall

Hear from me still, and never of me aught

But what is like me formerly.

Men.

That's worthily

As any ear can hear. Come, let's not weep.

If I could shake off but one seven years

From these old arms and legs, by the good gods,

I'd with thee every foot.

Cor.

Give me thy hand :

Come.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II

The same. A street near the gate.[*Enter SICINIUS, BRUTUS, and an Ædile.*]

Sic. Bid them all home ; he's gone, and we'll no
further.

The nobility are vex'd, whom we see have sided
In his behalf.

Bru. Now we have shown our power,

Let us seem humbler after it is done

Than when it was a-doing.

Sic.

Bid them home :

Say their great enemy is gone, and they

Stand in their ancient strength.

*Bru.*Dismiss them home. [*Exit Ædile.*]

49. *Noble touch*, Tested nobility. There is an allusion to the touch-stone used, to test precious metals.

Here is his mother.

Sic. Let's not meet her.

Bru. Why?

Sic. They say she's mad.

10 *Bru.* They have ta'en note of us : keep on your way.

[Enter VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, and MENENIUS.]

Vol. O, ye're well met : the hoarded plague o' the gods

Requite your love !

Men. Peace, peace ; be not so loud.

Vol. If that I could for weeping, you should hear, —
Nay, and you shall hear some. [To BRUTUS] Will you be gone ?

Vir. [To SICINIUS] You shall stay too : I would I had the power

To say so to my husband.

Sic. Are you mankind ?

Vol. Ay, fool ; is that a shame ? Note but this fool.

Was not a man my father ? Hadst thou foxship
To banish him that struck more blows for Rome
20 Than thou hast spoken words ?

Sic. O blessed heavens !

Vol. Moe noble blows than ever thou wise words ;
And for Rome's good. I'll tell thee what ; yet go :
Nay, but thou shalt stay too : I would my son
Were in Arabia, and thy tribe before him,
His good sword in his hand.

Sic. What then ?

Vir. What then ?

He'd make an end of thy posterity.

Vol. Bastards and all.

Good man, the wounds that he does bear for Rome !

Men. Come, come, peace.

18. *Foxship.* The sight of the tribune's face and the thought of his careful cunning suggest the term to Volumnia.

21. *Moe, More.*

CORIOLANUS

[ACT IV, SCENE II]

30 *Sic.* I would he had continued to his country
As he began, and not unknit himself
The noble knot he made.

Bru.

I would he had.

Vol. "I would he had!" 'Twas you incensed the
rabble:

Cats, that can judge as fitly of his worth
As I can of those mysteries which heaven
Will not have earth to know.

Bru.

Pray, let us go.

Vol. Now, pray, sir, get you gone:

You have done a brave deed. Ere you go, hear this—
As far as doth the Capitol exceed

40 The meanest house in Rome, so far my son—
This lady's husband here, this, do you see—

Whom you have banish'd, does exceed you all.

Bru. Well, well, we'll leave you.*Sic.*

Why stay we to be baited

With one that wants her wits?

Vol.

Take my prayers with you.

[*Exeunt* Tribunes.]

I would the gods had nothing else to do
But to confirm my curses! Could I meet 'em
But once a-day, it would unclog my heart
Of what lies heavy to't.

Men.

You have told them home;

And, by my troth, you have cause. You'll sup with
me?

50 *Vol.* Anger's my meat; I sup upon myself,
And so shall starve with feeding. Come, let's go:
Leave this faint puling and lament as I do,
In anger, Juno-like. Come, come, come.

Men. Fie, fie, fie![*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III

A highway between Rome and Antium.

[Enter a Roman and a Volsce, meeting.]

Rom. I know you well, sir, and you know me :
your name, I think, is Adrian.

Vols. It is so, sir : truly, I have forgot you.

Rom. I am a Roman ; and my services are, as you
are, against 'em : know you me yet ?

Vols. Nicanor ? no.

Rom. The same, sir.

Vols. You had more beard when I last saw you ;
but your favour is well approved by your tongue.
10 What's the news in Rome ? I have a note from the
Volscian state, to find you out there : you have well
saved me a day's journey.

Rom. There hath been in Rome strange insurrec-
tions ; the people against the senators, patricians,
and nobles.

Vols. Hath been ! is it ended, then ? Our state
thinks not so : they are in a most warlike preparation,
and hope to come upon them in the heat of their
division.

20 *Rom.* The main blaze of it is past, but a small thing
would make it flame again : for the nobles receive so
to heart the banishment of that worthy Coriolanus,
that they are in a ripe aptness to take all power from
the people and to pluck from them their tribunes for
ever. This lies glowing, I can tell you, and is almost
mature for the violent breaking out.

Vols. Coriolanus banished !

Rom. Banished, sir.

9. *Favour*, Appearance, identity.

9. *Approved*, Proved.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT IV, SCENE IV

Vols. You will be welcome with this intelligence,
 30 Nicanor.

Rom. The day serves well for them — Your noble Tullus Aufidius will appear well in these wars, his great opposer, Coriolanus, being now in no request of his country.

Vols. He cannot choose. I am most fortunate, thus accidentally to encounter you : you have ended my business, and I will merrily accompany you home.

Rom. I shall, between this and supper, tell you most strange things from Rome ; all tending to the
 40 good of their adversaries. Have you an army ready, say you ?

Vols. A most royal one ; the centurions and their charges, distinctly billeted, already in the entertainment, and to be on foot at an hour's warning.

Rom. I am joyful to hear of their readiness, and am the man, I think, that shall set them in present action. So, sir, heartily well met, and most glad of your company.

Vols. You take my part from me, sir ; I have the
 50 most cause to be glad of yours.

Rom. Well, let us go together. [Exeunt.]

SCENE IV

Antium. Before AUFIDIUS'S house.

[Enter CORIOLANUS in mean apparel, disguised and muffled.]

Cor. A goodly city is this Antium. City,
 'Tis I that made thy widows : many an heir
 Of these fair edifices 'fore my wars
 Have I heard groan and drop : then know me not,

43. *Distinctly, Separately.* 43. *Entertainment, Service.*

ACT IV, [REDACTED] iv]

SHAKESPEARE'S

Lest that my wives with spits and boys with stones
In punishment slay me.

[Enter a Citizen.]

Save you, sir.

Cit. And you.

Cor. Direct me, if it be your will,
Where great Aufidius lies : is he in Antium ?

Cit. He is, and feasts the nobles of the state

19 At his house this night.

Cor. Which is his house, beseech you ?

Cit. This, here before you.

Cor. Thank you, sir ; farewell.

[Exit Citizen.]

O world, thy slippery turns ! Friends now fast sworn,
Whose double bosoms seem to wear one heart,
Whose hours, whose bed, whose meal, and exercise,
Are still together, who twin, as 'twere, in love
Unseparable, shall within this hour,
On a dissension of a doit, break out
To bitterest enmity ; so, fellest foes,
Whose passions and whose plots have broke their sleep
20 To take the one the other, by some chance,
Some trick not worth an egg, shall grow dear friends
And interjoin their issues. So with me :
My birthplace hate I, and my love's upon
This enemy town. I'll enter : if he slay me,
He does fair justice ; if he give me way,
I'll do his country service.

[Exit.]

17. *Doit*, A Dutch coin worth half a farthing.

18. *Fellest*, Fiercest.

20. *Take*, Destroy.

SCENE V

The same. A hall in AUFIDIUS'S house.

[*Music plays. Enter a Servingman*]

First Serv. Wine, wine, wine! What service is here! I think our fellows are asleep. [Exit.

[*Enter a second Servingman.*]

Sec. Serv. Where's Cotus? my master calls for him. Cotus! [Exit.

[*Enter CORIOLANUS.*]

Cor. A goodly house: the feast smells well; but I appear not like a guest.

[*Re-enter the first Servingman.*]

First Serv. What would you have, friend? whence are you?
Here's no place for you: pray, go to the door. [Exit.

Cor. I have deserved no better entertainment,
10 In being Coriolanus.

[*Re-enter second Servingman.*]

Sec. Serv. Whence are you, sir? Has the porter his eyes in his head, that he gives entrance to such companions? Pray, get you out.

Cor. Away!

Sec. Serv. Away! get you away.

Cor. Now thou'rt troublesome.

Sec. Serv. Are you so brave? I'll have you talked with anon.

[*Enter a third Servingman. The first meets him.*]

Third Serv. What fellow's this?

30 *First Serv.* A strange one as ever I looked on: I cannot get him out o' the house: prithee, call my master to him. [*Retires.*]

Third Serv. What have you to do here, fellow? Pray you, avoid the house.

Cor. Let me but stand; I will not hurt your hearth.

Third Serv. What are you?

Cor. A gentleman.

Third Serv. A marvellous poor one.

Cor. True, so I am.

30 *Third Serv.* Pray you, poor gentleman, take up some other station; here's no place for you; pray you, avoid: come.

Cor. Follow your function, go, and batten on cold bits. [*Pushes him away.*]

Third Serv. What, you will not? Prithee, tell my master what a strange guest he has here.

Sec. Serv. And I shall. [*Exit.*]

Third Serv. Where dwellest thou?

Cor. Under the canopy.

40 *Third Serv.* Under the canopy!

Cor. Ay.

Third Serv. Where's that?

Cor. I' the city of kites and crows.

Third Serv. I' the city of kites and crows! What an ass it is. Then thou dwellest with daws too?

Cor. No, I serve not thy master.

Third Serv. How, sir? do you meddle with my master?

Cor. Ay; 'tis an honest service than to meddle
60 with thy mistress.

33. *Function*, Usual occupation.

33. *Batten*, Grow fat on.

39. *Canopy*, The open sky.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT SCENE V

Thou pratest, and pratest ; serve with thy trencher,
hence !

[Beats him away.

[Exit third Servingman.

[Enter AUFIDIUS with the second Servingman.]

Auf. Where is this fellow ?

Sec. Serv. Here, sir : I'd have beaten him like a
dog, but for disturbing the lords within. [Retires.

Auf. Whence comest thou ? what wouldst thou ?
thy name ?

Why speak'st not ? speak, man : what's thy name ?

Cor. [Unmuffling] If, Tullus,

Not yet thou knowest me, and, seeing me, dost not ;
Think me for the man I am, necessity

60 Commands me name myself.

Auf. What is thy name ?

Cor. A name unmusical to the Volscians' ears,
And harsh in sound to thine.

Auf. Say, what's thy name ?

Thou hast a grim appearance, and thy face
Bears a command in't ; though thy tackle's torn,
Thou show'st a noble vessel : what's thy name ?

Cor. Prepare thy brow to frown : know'st thou me
yet ?

Auf. I know thee not : thy name ?

Cor. My name is Caius Marcius, who hath done
To thee particularly and to all the Volsces
70 Great hurt and mischief ; thereto witness may
My surname, Coriolanus : the painful service,
The extreme dangers and the drops of blood
Shed for my thankless country are requited
But with that surname ; a good memory,
And witness of the malice and displeasure
Which thou shouldst bear me : only that name
remains ;

The cruelty and envy of the people,

74. A good memory, A good memorial, one that will serve to remind
you who I am and what you should feel about me.

Permitted by our dastard nobles, who
 Have all forsook me, hath devour'd the rest ;
 80 And suffer'd me by the voice of slaves to be
 Whoop'd out of Rome. Now this extremity
 Hath brought me to thy hearth ; not out of hope—
 Mistake me not—to save my life, for if
 I had fear'd death, of all the men i' the world
 I would have 'voided thee, but in mere spite,
 To be full quit of those my banishers,
 Stand I before thee here. Then if thou hast
 A heart of wreak in thee, that wilt revenge
 Thine own particular wrongs and stop those maims
 90 Of shame seen through thy country, speed thee
 straight,

And make my misery serve thy turn : so use it
 That my revengeful services may prove
 As benefits to thee, for I will fight
 Against my canker'd country with the spleen
 Of all the under fiends. But if so be
 Thou darest not this and that to prove more fortunes
 Thou'rt tired, then, in a word, I also am
 Longer to live most weary, and present
 My throat to thee and to thy ancient malice ;
 100 Which not to cut would show thee but a fool,
 Since I have ever follow'd thee with hate,
 Drawn tuns of blood out of thy country's breast,
 And cannot live but to thy shame, unless
 It be to do thee service.

Auf.

O Marcius, Marcius !

Each word thou hast spoke hath weeded from my
 heart

A root of ancient envy. If Jupiter
 Should from yond cloud speak divine things,
 And say " 'Tis true," I'd not believe them more
 Than thee, all noble Marcius. Let me twine
 110 Mine arms about thy body, where against

86. *To be full quit*, To revenge myself fully.

88. *Of wreak*, Desiring revenge.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT V SCENE V

My grained ash an hundred times hath broke,
 And scarr'd the moon with splinters : here I clip
 The anvil of my sword, and do contest
 As hotly and as nobly with thy love
 As ever in ambitious strength I did
 Contend against thy valour. Know thou first,
 I loved the maid I married ; never man
 Sigh'd truer breath ; but that I see thee here,
 Thou noble thing ! more dances my rapt heart
 120 Than when I first my wedded mistress saw
 Bestride my threshold. Why, thou Mars ! I tell thee,
 We have a power on foot ; and I had purpose
 Once more to hew thy target from thy brawn,
 Or lose mine arm for't : thou hast beat me out
 Twelve several times, and I have nightly since
 Dreamt of encounters 'twixt thyself and me ;
 We have been down together in my sleep,
 Unbuckling helms, fisting each other's throat,
 And waked half dead with nothing. Worthy Marcius,
 130 Had we no quarrel else to Rome, but that
 Thou are thence banish'd, we would muster all
 From twelve to seventy, and pouring war
 Into the bowels of ungrateful Rome,
 Like a bold flood o'er-beat. O, come, go in,
 And take our friendly senators by the hands ;
 Who now are here, taking their leaves of me,
 Who am prepared against your territories,
 Though not for Rome itself.

Cor.

You bless me, gods !

Auf. Therefore, most absolute sir, if thou wilt have
 140 The leading of thine own revenges, take
 The one half of my commission ; and set down—
 As best thou art experienced, since thou know'st
 Thy country's strength and weakness,—thine own
 ways ;

112. *Clip*, Embrace.124. *Out*, Out and out, thoroughly.125. *Several*, Separate.134. *O'er-beat*, Overwhelm (her).139. *Absolute*, Perfect and complete, incomparable.

Whether to knock against the gates of Rome,
Or rudely visit them in parts remote,
To fright them, ere destroy. But come in :
Let me commend thee first to those that shall
Say yea to thy desires. A thousand welcomes !
And more a friend than e'er an enemy ;

150 Yet, Marcius, that was much. Your hand : most
welcome !

[*Exeunt CORIOLANUS and AUFIDIUS. The two
Servingsmen come forward.*]

First Serv. Here's a strange alteration !

Sec. Serv. By my hand, I had thought to have
struck him with a cudgel ; and yet my mind gave
me his clothes made a false report of him.

First Serv. What an arm he has ! he turned me
about with his finger and his thumb, as one would set
up a top.

Sec. Serv. Nay, I knew by his face that there was
something in him : he had, sir, a kind of face, me-
160 thought,—I cannot tell how to term it.

First Serv. He had so ; looking as it were—would I
were hanged, but I thought there was more in him
than I could think.

Sec. Serv. So did I, I'll be sworn : he is simply the
rarest man i' the world.

First Serv. I think he is : but a greater soldier than
he, you wot one.

Sec. Serv. Who, my master ?

First Serv. Nay, it's no matter for that.

170 *Sec. Serv.* Worth six on him.

First Serv. Nay, not so neither : but I take him to
be the greater soldier.

Sec. Serv. Faith, look you, one cannot tell how to
say that : for the defence of a town, our general is
excellent.

147. *Commend thee, Present thee, with commendation.*

153. *My mind gave me, I had a misgiving, a suspicion.*

169. *It's no matter for that, It doesn't matter whom I mean.*

First Serv. Ay, and for an assault too.

[*Re-enter third Servingman.*]

Third Serv. O slaves, I can tell you news,—news, you rascals!

First and Sec. Serv. What, what, what? let's par-
180 take.

Third Serv. I would not be a Roman, of all nations; I had as lieve be a condemned man.

First and Sec. Serv. Wherefore? wherefore?

Third Serv. Why, here's he that was wont to thwack our general, Caius Marcius.

First Serv. Why do you say "thwack our general"?

Third Serv. I do not say "thwack our general"; but he was always good enough for him.

Sec. Serv. Come, we are fellows and friends: he was
190 ever too hard for him; I have heard him say so himself.

First Serv. He was too hard for him directly, to say the troth on't: before Coriolanus he scotched him and notched him like a carbonado.

Sec. Serv. An he had been cannibally given, he might have broiled and eaten him too.

First Serv. But, more of thy news?

Third Serv. Why he is so made on here within, as if he were son and heir to Mars; set at upper end o' the
200 table; no question asked him by any of the senators, but they stand bald before him: our general himself makes a mistress of him; sanctifies himself with's hand and turns up the white o' the eye to his discourse. But the bottom of the news is, our general is cut i' the middle and but one half of what he was yesterday; for the other has half, by the entreaty and grant of the whole table. He'll go, he says, and sowl

193. *Scotched*, Cut.

194. *Carbonado*, A piece of meat cut for grilling.

207. *Sowl*, Seize.

the *porter* of Rome gates by the ears : he will mow all down before him, and leave his passage polled.

210 *Sec. Serv.* And he's as like to do't as any man I can imagine.

Third Serv. Do't ! he will do't ; for, look you, sir, he has as many friends as enemies ; which friends, sir, as it were, durst not, look you, sir, show themselves, as we term it, his friends whilst he's in directitude.

First Serv. Directitude ! what's that ?

Third Serv. But when they shall see, sir, his crest up again, and the man in blood, they will out of their burrows, like conies after rain, and revel all with him.

220 *First Serv.* But when goes this forward ?

Third Serv. To-morrow ; to-day ; presently ; you shall have the drum struck up this afternoon ; 'tis, as it were, a parcel of their feast, and to be executed ere they wipe their lips.

Sec. Serv. Why, then we shall have a stirring world again. This peace is nothing, but to rust iron, increase tailors, and breed ballad-makers.

First Serv. Let me have war, say I ; it exceeds peace as far as day does night ; it's spritely, waking, 230 audible, and full of vent. Peace is a very apoplexy, lethargy ; mulled, deaf, sleepy, insensible.

Sec. Serv. 'Tis so : and it makes men hate one another.

Third Serv. Reason ; because they then less need one another. The wars for my money. I hope to see Romans as cheap as Volscians. They are rising, they are rising.

All. In, in, in, in !

[*Exeunt.*]

209. *Polled*, Cropped, swept clear.

223. *Parcel*, Small part.

230. *Audible*, Able to hear.

230. *Full of vent*, Full of outlets for energy.

231. *Mulled* (of wine), Spiced and sweetened and warmed.

219. *Conies*, Rabbits.

229. *Spritely*, Full of spirit.

SCENE VI

Rome. A public place.

[Enter SICINIUS and BRUTUS.]

Sic. We hear not of him, neither need we fear him ;
His remedies are tame i' the present peace
And quietness of the people, which before
Were in wild hurry. Here do we make his friends
Blush that the world goes well, who rather had,
Though they themselves did suffer by't, behold
Dissentious numbers pestering streets than see
Our tradesmen singing in their shops and going
About their functions friendly.

10 *Bru.* We stood to't in good time. [Enter MENE-
NIUS.] Is this Menenius ?

Sic. 'Tis he, 'tis he : O, he is grown most kind of
late.

Both Tri. Hail, sir !

Men. Hail to you both !

Sic. Your Coriolanus

Is not much miss'd, but with his friends :
The commonwealth doth stand, and so would do,
Were he more angry at it.

Men. All's well ; and might have been much better,
if
He could have temporized.

Sic. Where is he, hear you ?

Men. Nay, I hear nothing : his mother and his
wife
Hear nothing from him.

2. *His remedies*, The attempts made by his friends to remedy the wrong done him. 7. *Pestering*, Crowding uncomfortably.

10. *Stood to't*, Made a stand for it.

17. *Temporized*, Adapted his behaviour to the times.

[Enter three or four Citizens.]

20 *Citizens.* The gods preserve you both !

Sic. God-den, our neighbours.

Bru. God-den to you all, god-den to you all.

First Cit. Ourselves, our wives, and children, on our
Knees,

Are bound to pray for you both.

Sic. Live, and thrive !

Bru. Farewell, kind neighbours : we wish'd Corio-
lanus

Had loved you as we did.

Citizens. Now the gods keep you !

Both Tri. Farewell, farewell. [Exit Citizens.]

Sic. This is a happier and more comely time
Than when these fellows ran about the streets,
Crying confusion.

Bru. Caius Marcius was
30 A worthy officer i' the war ; but insolent,
O'ercome with pride, ambitious past all thinking,
Self-loving,—

Sic. And affecting one sole throne,
Without assistance.

Men. I think not so.

Sic. We should by this, to all our lamentation,
If he had gone forth consul, found it so.

Bru. The gods have well prevented it, and Rome
Sits safe and still without him.

[Enter an Ædile.]

Æd. Worthy tribunes,
There is a slave, whom we have put in prison,
Reports, the Volsces with two several powers
40 Are enter'd in the Roman territories,
And with the deepest malice of the war

29. *Confusion, Destruction.*

32. *Affecting one sole throne, Desiring a despotism.*

CORIOLANUS

[ACT IV, SCENE VI

Destroy what lies before 'em.

Men.

'Tis Aufidius,
Who, hearing of our Marcius' banishment,
Thrusts forth his horns again into the world ;
Which were inshell'd when Marcius stood for Rome,
And durst not once peep out.

Sic.
Of Marcius ?

Come, what talk you

Bru. Go see this rumourer whipp'd. It cannot be
The Volsces dare break with us.

Men.

Cannot be !

50 We have record that very well it can,
And three examples of the like hath been
Within my age. But reason with the fellow,
Before you punish him, where he heard this,
Lest you shall chance to whip your information
And beat the messenger who bids beware
Of what is to be dreaded.

Sic.
I know this cannot be.

Tell not me :

Bru.

Not possible.

[*Enter a Messenger.*]

Mess. The nobles in great earnestness are going
All to the senate-house : some news is come
60 That turns their countenances.

Sic.

'Tis this slave ;—
Go whip him 'fore the people's eyes :—his raising ;
Nothing but his report.

Mess.

Yes, worthy sir,
The slave's report is seconded ; and more,
More fearful, is deliver'd.

Sic.

What more fearful ?

Mess. It is spoke freely out of many mouths—
How probable I do not know—that Marcius,

58. *Earnestness*, Seriousness, anxiety.

60. *Turns*, Changes, makes them look sour.

Join'd with Aufidius, leads a power 'gainst Rome,
 And vows revenge as spacious as between
 The young'st and oldest thing.

Sic. This is most likely !
 70 *Bru.* Raised only, that the weaker sort may wish
 Good Marcius home again.

Sic. The very trick on't.

Men. This is unlikely :
 He and Aufidius can no more atone
 Than violentest contrariety.

[*Enter a second Messenger.*]

Sec. Mess. You are sent for to the senate :
 A fearful army, led by Caius Marcius
 Associated with Aufidius, rages
 Upon our territories ; and have already
 O'erborne their way, consumed with fire, and took
 80 What lay before them.

[*Enter COMINIUS.*]

Com. O, you have made good work !

Men. What news ? what news ?—

Com. You have help
 To melt the city leads upon your pates,
 To see your wives dishonour'd to your noses,—

Men. What's the news ? what's the news ?

Com. Your temples burned in their cement, and
 Your franchises, whereon you stood, confined
 Into an auger's bore.

Men. Pray now, your news ?—
 You have made fair work, I fear me.—Pray, your
 news ?—

73. *Atone*, Be made one.

79. *O'erborne their way*, Carried all before them.

83. *Leads*, Roofs covered with lead.

87. *Whereon you stood*, About which you were so stubborn.

88. *An auger's bore*, The tiny hole made by an auger, or awl.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT IV., SCENE vi.]

90 If Marcius should be join'd with Volscians,

Com.

He is their god : he leads them like a thing
 Made by some other deity than nature,
 That shapes man better ; and they follow him,
 Against us brats, with no less confidence
 Than boys pursuing summer butterflies,
 Or butchers killing flies.

Men.

You have made good work,
 You and your apron-men ; you that stood so much
 Upon the voice of occupation and
 The breath of garlic-eaters !

Com.

He will shake

100 Your Rome about your ears.

Men.

As Hercules

Did shake down mellow fruit. You have made fair
 work !

Bru. But is this true, sir ?

Com.

Ay ; and you'll look pale

Before you find it other. All the regions
 Do smilingly revolt ; and who resist
 Are mock'd for valiant ignorance,
 And perish constant fools. Who is't can blame him ?
 Your enemies and his find something in him.

Men. We are all undone, unless

The noble man have mercy.

Com.

Who shall ask it ?

110 The tribunes cannot do't for shame ; the people
 Deserve such pity of him as the wolf
 Does of the shepherds : for his best friends, if they
 Should say " Be good to Rome," they charged him
 even

As those should do that had deserved his hate,
 And therein show'd like enemies.

Men.

'Tis true :

101. *Mellow fruit.* One of the labours of Hercules was the plucking of the golden apples from the garden of the Hesperides, guarded by a dragon.

If he were putting to my house the brand
 That should consume it, I have not the face
 To say "Beseech you, cease." You have made fair
 hands,

You and your crafts ! you have crafted fair !

Com. You have brought

120 A trembling upon Rome, such as was never
 So incapable of help.

Both Tri. Say not we brought it.

Men. How ! Was it we ? we loved him ; but, like
 beasts

And cowardly nobles, gave way unto your clusters,
 Who did hoot him out o' the city.

Com. But I fear

They'll roar him in again. Tullus Aufidius,
 The second name of men, obeys his points
 As if he were his officer : desperation
 Is all the policy, strength and defence,
 That Rome can make against them.

[Enter a troop of Citizens.]

Men. Here come the clusters.

130 And is Aufidius with him ? You are they
 That made the air unwholesome, when you cast
 Your stinking greasy caps in hooting at
 Coriolanus' exile. Now he's coming ;
 And not a hair upon a soldier's head
 Which will not prove a whip : as many coxcombs
 As you threw caps up will he tumble down,
 And pay you for your voices. 'Tis no matter ;
 If he could burn us all into one coal,
 We have deserved it.

140 *Citizens.* Faith, we hear fearful news.

First Cit. For mine own part,
 When I said, banish him, I said, 'twas pity.

126. *Obeys his points*, Follows his instructions. A "point" of war
 was literally a signal given by the blast of a trumpet.

135. *Coxcombs*, Heads.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT IV, SCENE VI.]

Sec. Cit. And so did I.

Third Cit. And so did I ; and, to say the truth, so did very many of us : that we did, we did for the best ; and though we willingly consented to his banishment, yet it was against our will.

Com. Ye're goodly things, you voices !

Men. You have made
Good work, you and your cry ! Shall's to the Capitol ?

Com. O, ay, what else ?

[*Exeunt* COMINIUS and MENENIUS.]

150 *Sic.* Go, masters, get you home ; be not dismay'd :
These are a side that would be glad to have
This true which they so seem to fear. Go home,
And show no sign of fear.

First Cit. The gods be good to us ! Come, masters,
let's home. I ever said we were i' the wrong when we
banished him.

Sec. Cit. So did we all. But, come, let's home.

[*Exeunt* Citizens.]

Bru. I do not like this news.

Sic. Nor I.

160 *Bru.* Let's to the Capitol. Would half my wealth
Would buy this for a lie !

Sic. Pray, let us go. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VII

A camp, at a small distance from Rome.

[*Enter* AUFIDIUS and his Lieutenant.]

Auf. Do they still fly to the Roman ?

Lieu. I do not know what witchcraft's in him, but
Your soldiers use him as the grace 'fore meat,
Their talk at table, and their thanks at end ;

And you are darken'd in this action, sir,
 Eye by your own.

Ans. I cannot help it now,
 Unless, by using means, I lame the foot
 Of our design. He bears himself more proudlier,
 Even to my person, than I thought he would
 10 When first I did embrace him : yet his nature
 In that's no changeling ; and I must excuse
 What cannot be amended.

Lieu. Yet I wish, sir,—
 I mean for your particular,—you had not
 Join'd in commission with him ; but either
 Had borne the action of yourself, or else
 To him had left it solely.

Ans. I understand thee well ; and be thou sure,
 When he shall come to his account, he knows not
 What I can urge against him. Although it seems,
 20 And so he thinks, and is no less apparent
 To the vulgar eye, that he bears all things fairly,
 And shows good husbandry for the Volscian state,
 Fights dragon-like, and does achieve as soon
 As draw his sword ; yet he hath left undone
 That which shall break his neck or hazard mine,
 Whene'er we come to our account.

Lieu. Sir, I beseech you, think you he'll carry
 Rome ?

Auf. All places yield to him ere he sits down ;
 And the nobility of Rome are his :
 30 The senators and patricians love him too :
 The tribunes are no soldiers ; and their people
 Will be as rash in the repeal, as hasty
 To expel him thence. I think he'll be to Rome
 As is the osprey to the fish, who takes it
 By sovereignty of nature. First he was

6. *Your own*, i.e. Your own troops.

13. *For your particular*, For your own reputation.

34. *Osprey*. This bird was supposed to have the power of fascinating
 the fish on which it preyed.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT IV, SCENE

A noble servant to them ; but he could not
 Carry his honours even : whether 'twas pride,
 Which out of daily fortune ever taints
 The happy man ; whether defect of judgment,
 40 To fail in the disposing of those chances
 Which he was lord of ; or whether nature,
 Not to be other than one thing, not moving
 From the casque to the cushion, but commanding
 peace

Even with the same austerity and garb
 As he controll'd the war ; but one of these—
 As he hath spices of them all, not all,
 For I dare so far free him—made him fear'd,
 So hated, and so banish'd : but he has a merit,
 To choke it in the utterance. So our virtues
 50 Lie in the interpretation of the time :
 And power, unto itself most commendable,
 Hath not a tomb so evident as a chair
 To extol what it hath done.
 One fire drives out one fire ; one nail, one nail ;
 Rights by rights falter, strengths by strengths do fail.
 Come, let's away. When, Caius, Rome is thine,
 Thou art poor'st of all ; then shortly art thou mine.

[*Exeunt.*

38. *Out of daily fortune*, Arising from constant good fortune.

48. *He has a merit . . . utterance*, He has a greatness which makes that sentence of banishment seem as nothing. But see page 192.

50. *Lie in . . . time*, Depend on what those of our own time happen to think of them.

51. *And power . . . done*. The powerful—worthy of the highest commendation in their own opinion—may not be praised after death by others as in lifetime by themselves. See pages 192, 193.

ACT V

SCENE I

Rome. A public place.

[*Enter* MENENIUS, COMINIUS, SICINIUS, BRUTUS,
and others.]

Men. No, I'll not go : you hear what he hath said
Which was sometime his general ; who loved him
In a most dear particular. He call'd me father :
But what o' that ? Go, you that banish'd him
A mile before his tent fall down, and knee
The way into his mercy : nay, if he coy'd
To hear Cominius speak, I'll keep at home.

Com. He would not seem to know me.

Men. Do you hear ?

Com. Yet one time he did call me by my name :

¹⁰ I urged our old acquaintance, and the drops
That we have bled together. Coriolanus
He would not answer to : forbad all names ;
He was a kind of nothing, titleless,
Till he had forged himself a name o' the fire
Of burning Rome.

Men. Why, so : you have made good work !
A pair of tribunes that have rack'd for fair Rome,
To make coals cheap,—a noble memory !

6. *Coy'd*, Disdained. 16. *Rack'd*, Made great efforts for.

CORIOLANUS

ACT V, SCENE

Com. I minded him how royal 'twas to pardon
 When it was less expected : he replied,
 20 It was a bare petition of a state
 To one whom they had punish'd.

Men. Very well :
 Could he say less ?

Com. I offer'd to awaken his regard
 For's private friends : his answer to me was
 He could not stay to pick them in a pile
 Of noisome musty chaff : he said 'twas folly,
 For one poor grain or two, to leave unburnt,
 And still to nose the offence.

Men. For one poor grain or two !
 I am one of those ; his mother, wife, his child,
 30 And this brave fellow too, we are the grains :
 You are the musty chaff ; and you are smelt
 Above the moon : we must be burnt for you.

Sic. Nay, pray, be patient : if you refuse your aid
 In this so never-needed help, yet do not
 Upbraid's with our distress. But, sure, if you
 Would be your country's pleader, your good tongue,
 More than the instant army we can make,
 Might stop our countryman.

Men. No, I'll not meddle.

Sic. Pray you, go to him.

Men. What should I do ?

40 *Bru.* Only make trial what your love can do
 For Rome, towards Marcius.

Men. Well, and say that Marcius
 Return me, as Cominius is return'd,
 Unheard ; what then ?
 But as a discontented friend, grief-shot
 With his unkindness ? say't be so ?

Sic. Yet your good will

20. *Bare petition*, Barefaced ; or bare of any of the explanations
 and apologies the Romans might have been expected to
 make to the man they had banished.

23. *Offer'd*, Tried.

44. *Grief-shot*, Grief-stricken.

Must have that thanks from Rome, after the measure
As you attended well.

Men.

I'll undertake't :

I think he'll hear me. Yet, to bite his lip

And hum at good Cominius, much unhearts me.

60 He was not taken well ; he had not dined :

The veins unfill'd, our blood is cold, and then

We put upon the morning, are unapt

To give or to forgive ; but when we have stuff'd

These pipes and these conveyances of our blood

With wine and feeding, we have suppler souls

Than in our priest-like fasts : therefore I'll watch him

Till he be dieted to my request,

And then I'll set upon him.

Bru. You know the very road into his kindness,

60 And cannot lose your way.

Men.

Good faith, I'll prove him,

Speed how it will. I shall ere long have knowledge

Of my success.

[*Exit.*

Com.

He'll never hear him.

Sic.

Not ?

Com. I tell you, he does sit in gold, his eye

Red as 'twould burn Rome ; and his injury

The gaoler to his pity. I kneel'd before him ;

'Twas very faintly he said " Rise " ; dismiss'd me

Thus, with his speechless hand : what he would do,

He sent in writing after me ; what he would not ;

Bound with an oath to yield to his conditions :

70 So that all hope is vain,

Unless his noble mother, and his wife ;

Who, as I hear, mean to solicit him

For mercy to his country. Therefore, let's hence,

And with our fair entreaties haste them on.

[*Exeunt.*

62. *My success*, The result of my endeavours.

SCENE II

*Entrance of the Volscian camp before Rome. Two
Sentinels on guard.*

[*Enter to them MENENIUS.*]

First Sen. Stay : whence are you ?

Sec. Sen. Stand, and go back.

Men. You guard like men ; 'tis well : but, by your
leave,

I am an officer of state, and come
To speak with Coriolanus.

First Sen. From whence ?

Men. From Rome.

First Sen. You may not pass, you must return : our
general

Will no more hear from thence.

Sec. Sen. You'll see your Rome embraced with fire
before

You'll speak with Coriolanus.

Men. Good my friends,

If you have heard your general talk of Rome,

10 And of his friends there, it is lots to blanks,

My name hath touch'd your ears : it is Menenius.

First Sen. Be it so ; go back : the virtue of your
name

Is not here passable.

Men. I tell thee, fellow,

Thy general is my lover : I have been

The book of his good acts, whence men have read

His fame unparallel'd, haply amplified ;

For I have ever magnified my friends,

Of whom he's chief, with all the size that verity

Would without lapsing suffer : nay, sometimes,

20 *Le* *g* *bowl* upon a subtle ground,
I have tumbled past the throw ; and in his praise
Have almost stamp'd the leasing : therefore, fellow,
I must have leave to pass.

First Sen. Faith, sir, if you had told as many lies in his behalf as you have uttered words in your own, you should not pass here ; no, though it were as virtuous to lie as to live chastely. Therefore, go back.

Men. Prithee, fellow, remember my name is Mene-nius, always factionary on the party of your general.

30 *Sec. Sen.* Howsoever you have been his liar, as you say you have, I am one that, telling true under him, must say, you cannot pass. Therefore, go back.

Men. Has he dined, canst thou tell ? for I would not speak with him till after dinner.

First Sen. You are a Roman, are you ?

Men. I am, as thy general is.

First Sen. Then you should hate Rome, as he does. Can you, when you have pushed out your gates the very defender of them, and, in a violent popular igno-
40 rance given your enemy your shield, think to front his revenges with the easy groans of old women, the virginal palms of your daughters, or with the palsied intercession of such a decayed dotant as you seem to be ? Can you think to blow out the intended fire your city is ready to flame in, with such weak breath as this ? No, you are deceived ; therefore, back to Rome, and prepare for your execution : you are con-demned, our general has sworn you out of reprieve and pardon.

50 *Men.* Sirrah, if thy captain knew I were here, he would use me with estimation.

First Sen. Come, my captain knows you not.

Men. I mean, thy general.

First Sen. My general cares not for you. Back, I

20. *Subtle*, Smooth and deceptive.

22. *Stamp'd the leasing*, Given untruth the stamp of truth.

51. *Estimation*, Respect.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT V, SCENE II]

say, go ; lest I let forth your half-pint of blood back,
—that's the utmost of your having : back.

Men. Nay, but, fellow, fellow,—

[*Enter CORIOLANUS and AUFIDIUS.*]

Cor. What's the matter ?

Men. Now, you companion, I'll say an **C**rand for
60 you : you shall know now that I am in estimation ;
you shall perceive that a Jack guardant cannot office
me from my son Coriolanus : guess, but by my enter-
tainment with him, if thou standest not i' the state of
hanging, or of some death more long in spectatorship,
and crueller in suffering ; behold now presently, and
swoon for what's to come upon thee. [*To COR.*] The
glorious gods sit in hourly synod about thy particular
prosperity, and love thee no worse than thy old
father Menenius does ! O my son, my son ! thou art
70 preparing fire for us ; look thee, here's water to
quench it. I was hardly moved to come to thee ; but
being assured none but myself could move thee, I
have been blown out of your gates with sighs ; and
conjure thee to pardon Rome, and thy petitionary
countrymen. The good gods assuage thy wrath, and
turn the dregs of it upon this varlet here,—this, who,
like a block, hath denied my access to thee.

Cor. Away !

Men. How ! away !

80 *Cor.* Wife, mother, child, I know not. My affairs
Are servanted to others : though I owe
My revenge properly, my remission lies
In Volscian breasts. That we have been familiar,
Ingrate forgetfulness shall poison, rather
Than pity note how much. Therefore, be gone.
Mine ears against your suits are stronger than
Your gates against my force. Yet, for I loved thee.

71. *Hardly*, With difficulty.

82. *Properly*, My own self, personally.

Take this along ; I writ it for thy sake, [*Gives a letter.*
 And would have sent it. Another word, Menenius,
 I will not hear thee speak. This man, Aufidius,
 Was my beloved in Rome : yet thou behold'st !

Auf. You keep a constant temper.

[*Exeunt* CORIOLANUS and AUFIDIUS.]

First Sen. Now, sir, is your name Menenius ?

Sec. Sen. 'Tis a spell, you see, of much power : you
 know the way home again.

First Sen. Do you hear how we are shent for keeping
 your greatness back ?

Sec. Sen. What cause, do you think, I have to
 swoon ?

Men. I neither care for the world nor your general :
 for such things as you, I can scarce think there's any,
 ye're so slight. He that hath a will to die by himself
 fears it not from another : let your general do his
 worst. For you, be that you are, long ; and your
 misery increase with your age ! I say to you, as I was
 said to, Away ! [*Exit.*

First Sen. A noble fellow, I warrant him.

Sec. Sen. The worthy fellow is our general : he's
 the rock, the oak not to be wind-shaken. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

The tent of CORIOLANUS.

[*Enter* CORIOLANUS, AUFIDIUS, and others.]

Cor. We will before the walls of Rome to-morrow
 Set down our host. My partner in this action,
 You must report to the Volscian lords, how plainly
 I have borne this business.

Auf. Only their ends

96. *Shent*, Scolded, rebuked.

3. *How plainly*, In what a straightforward way.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT V, SCENE I]

You have respected ; stopp'd your ears against
 The general suit of Rome ; never admitted
 A private whisper, no, not with such friends
 That thought them sure of you.

Cor.

This last old man,

Whom with a crack'd heart I have sent to Rome,
 10 Loved me above the measure of a father ;
 Nay, godded me, indeed. Their latest refuge
 Was to send him ; for whose old love I have,
 Though I show'd sourly to him, once more offer'd
 The first conditions, which they did refuse
 And cannot now accept ; to grace him only
 That thought he could do more, a very little
 I have yielded to : fresh embassies and suits,
 Nor from the state nor private friends, hereafter
 Will I lend ear to. Ha ! what shout is this ?

[Shout within.]

20 Shall I be tempted to infringe my vow
 In the same time 'tis made ? I will not.

[Enter, in mourning habits, VIRGILIA, VOLUMNIA, leading young MARCIUS, VALERIA, and Attendants.]

My wife comes foremost ; then the honour'd mould
 Wherein this trunk was framed, and in her hand
 The grandchild to her blood. But, out, affection !
 All bond and privilege of nature, break !
 Let it be virtuous to be obstinate.

What is that curt'sy worth ? or those doves' eyes,
 Which can make gods forsworn ? I melt, and am not
 Of stronger earth than others. My mother bows ;
 30 As if Olympus to a molehill should
 In supplication nod : and my young boy
 Hath an aspect of intercession, which
 Great nature cries " Deny not." Let the Volsces
 Plough Rome, and harrow Italy : I'll never
 Be such a gosling to obey instinct, but stand,

30. *Olympus*, The mountain fabled to be the abode of the gods.
 (2,782)

As if a man were author of himself
 And knew no other kin.

My lord and husband !

Cor. These eyes are not the same I wore in Rome.

Vir. The sorrow that delivers us thus changed

40 Makes you think so.

Cor. Like a dull actor now,

I have forgot my part, and I am out,

Even to a full disgrace. Best of my flesh,

Forgive my tyranny ; but do not say

For that " Forgive our Romans." O, a kiss

Long as my exile, sweet as my revenge !

Now, by the jealous queen of heaven, that kiss

45 I carried from thee, dear ; and my true lip

Hath virgin'd it e'er since. You gods ! I prate,

And the most noble mother of the world

50 Leave unsaluted : sink, my knee, i' the earth ;

[*Kneels.*]

Of thy deep duty more impression show

Than that of common sons.

Vol.

O, stand up blest !

Whilst, with no softer cushion than the flint,

I kneel before thee ; and improperly

Show duty, as mistaken all this while

Between the child and parent.

[*Kneels.*]

Cor.

What is this ?

Your knees to me ? to your corrected son ?

Then let the pebbles on the hungry beach

Fillip the stars ; then let the mutinous winds

60 Strike the proud cedars 'gainst the fiery sun ;

Murdering impossibility, to make

What cannot be, slight work.

Vol.

Thou art my warrior ;

I help to frame thee. Do you know this lady ?

Cor. The noble sister of Publicola,

The moon of Rome, chaste as the icicle

CORIOLANUS

[ACT V, SCENE II]

That's curdied by the frost from purest snow
And hangs on Dian's temple : dear Valeria !

Vol. This is a poor epitome of yours,
Which by the interpretation of full time
70 May show like all yourself.

Cor. The god of soldiers,
With the consent of supreme Jove, inform
Thy thoughts with nobleness ; that thou may prove
To shame invulnerable, and stick i' the wars
Like a great sea-mark, standing every flaw,
And saving those that eye thee !

Vol. Your knee, sirrah.

Cor. That's my brave boy !

Vol. Even he, your wife, this lady, and myself
Are suitors to you.

Cor. I beseech you, peace :
Or, if you'd ask, remember this before :
80 The thing I have forsworn to grant may never
Be held by you denials. Do not bid me
Dismiss my soldiers, or capitulate
Again with Rome's mechanics : tell me not
Wherein I seem unnatural : desire not
To allay my rages and revenges with
Your colder reasons.

Vol. O, no more, no more !
You have said you will not grant us anything ;
For we have nothing else to ask, but that
Which you deny already : yet we will ask ;
90 That, if you fail in our request, the blame
May hang upon your hardness : therefore hear us.

Cor. Aufidius, and you Volsces, mark ; for we'll
Hear nought from Rome in private. Your request ?

Vol. Should we be silent and not speak, our raiment
And state of bodies would bewray what life
We have led since thy exile. Think with thyself

68. *Epitome*, A short summary—little Marcius is a small version of his father.

74. *Flaw*, A sudden gust of wind.

95. *Bewray*, Reveal.

100 *Cor.* more unfortunate than all living women
 Above come hither : since that thy sight, which should
 Make our eyes flow with joy, hearts dance with com-
 forts,
 Constrains them weep and shake with fear and sorrow ;
 Making the mother, wife and child to see
 The son, the husband and the father tearing
 His country's bowels out. And to poor we
 Thine enmity's most capital : thou barr'st us
 Our prayers to the gods, which is a comfort
 That all but we enjoy ; for how can we,
 Alas, how can we for our country pray,
 Whereto we are bound, together with thy victory,
 Whereto we are bound ? alack, or we must lose
 110 The country, our dear nurse, or else thy person,
 Our comfort in the country. We must find
 An evident calamity, though we had
 Our wish, which side should win : for either thou
 Must, as a foreign recreant, be led
 With manacles thorough our streets, or else
 Triumphantly tread on thy country's ruin,
 And bear the palm for having bravely shed
 Thy wife and children's blood. For myself, son,
 I purpose not to wait on fortune till
 120 These wars determine : if I cannot persuade thee
 Rather to show a noble grace to both parts
 Than seek the end of one, thou shalt no sooner
 March to assault thy country than to tread—
 Trust to't, thou shalt not—on thy mother's womb,
 That brought thee to this world.

Vir. Ay, and mine,
 That brought you forth this boy, to keep your name
 Living to time.

Young Mar. A' shall not tread on me ;
 I'll run away till I am bigger, but then I'll fight.

130 *Cor.* Not of a woman's tenderness to be,
 Requires nor child nor woman's face to see.
 I have sat too long.

[*Rising.*]

CORIOLANUS

[ACT V, SCENE II]

Vol.

Nay, go not from us thus.

If it were so that our request did tend
 To save the Romans, thereby to destroy
 The Volsces whom you serve, you might condemn us,
 As poisonous of your honour : no ; our suit
 Is, that you reconcile them : while the Volsces
 May say " This mercy we have show'd " ; the Romans,
 " This we received " ; and each in either side
 140 Give the all-hail to thee, and cry " Be blest
 For making up this peace ! " Thou know'st, great
 son,

The end of war's uncertain, but this certain,
 That, if thou conquer Rome, the benefit
 Which thou shalt thereby reap is such a name,
 Whose repetition will be dogg'd with curses ;
 Whose chronicle thus writ : " The man was noble,
 But with his last attempt he wiped it out ;
 Destroy'd his country, and his name remains
 To the ensuing age abhorr'd." Speak to me, son :
 150 Thou hast affected the fine strains of honour,
 To imitate the graces of the gods ;
 To tear with thunder the wide cheeks o' the air,
 And yet to charge thy sulphur with a bolt
 That should but rive an oak. Why dost not speak ?
 Think'st thou it honourable for a noble man
 Still to remember wrongs ? Daughter, speak you :
 He cares not for your weeping. Speak thou, boy :
 Perhaps thy childishness will move him more
 Than can our reasons. There's no man in the world
 160 More bound to's mother ; yet here he lets me prate
 Like one i' the stocks. Thou hast never in thy life
 Show'd thy dear mother any courtesy,
 When she, poor hen, fond of no second brood,
 Has cluck'd thee to the wars, and safely home,
 Loaden with honour. Say my request's unjust,
 And spurn me back : but if it be not so,

153. Charge . . . oak, The metaphor is from loading a cannon.

Thou art not honest ; and the gods will plague thee,
 That thou restrain'st from me the duty which
 To a mother's part belongs. He turns away :
 170 Down, ladies ; let us shame him with our knees.
 To his surname Coriolanus 'longs more pride
 Than pity to our prayers. Down : an end ;
 This is the last : so we will home to Rome,
 And die among our neighbours. Nay, behold's :
 This boy, that cannot tell what he would have,
 But kneels and holds up hands for fellowship,
 Does reason our petition with more strength
 Than thou hast to deny't. Come, let us go :
 This fellow had a Volscian to his mother ;
 180 His wife is in Corioli and his child—
 Like him by chance. Yet give us our dispatch :
 I am hush'd until our city be afire,
 And then I'll speak a little.

[*He holds her by the hand, silent.*]

Cor. O mother, mother !
 What have you done ? Behold the heavens do ope,
 The gods look down, and this unnatural scene
 They laugh at. O my mother, mother ! O !
 You have won a happy victory to Rome ;
 But, for your son,—believe it, O, believe it,
 Most dangerously you have with him prevail'd,
 190 If not most mortal to him. But, let it come.
 Aufidius, though I cannot make true wars,
 I'll frame convenient peace. Now, good Aufidius,
 Were you in my stead, would you have heard
 A mother less ? or granted less, Aufidius ?

Auf. I was moved withal.

Cor. I dare be sworn you were :
 And, sir, it is no little thing to make
 Mine eyes to sweat compassion. But, good sir,
 What peace you'll make, advise me : for my part,
 I'll not to Rome, I'll back with you ; and pray you,

177. *Reason*, Argue in support of.

192. *Convenient*, Suitable.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT V, SCENE I]

200 Stand to me in this cause. O mother! wife!

Auf. [*Aside*] I am glad thou hast set thy mercy and thy honour

At difference in thee: out of that I'll work
Myself a former fortune.

[*The Ladies make signs to* CORIOLANUS.]

Cor.

Ay, by and by;

[*To* VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, *etc.*]

But we will drink together; and you shall bear
A better witness back than words, which we,
On like conditions, will have counter-seal'd.
Come, enter with us. Ladies, you deserve
To have a temple built you: all the swords
In Italy, and her confederate arms,

210 Could not have made this peace.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV

Rome. A public place.

[*Enter* MENENIUS *and* SICINIUS.]

Men. See you yond coign o' the Capitol, yond
corner-stone?

Sic. Why, what of that?

Men. If it be possible for you to displace it with
your little finger, there is some hope the ladies of
Rome, especially his mother, may prevail with him.
But I say there is no hope in't: our throats are
sentenced and stay upon execution.

Sic. Is't possible that so short a time can alter the
10 condition of a man?

Men. There is differency between a grub and a
butterfly; yet your butterfly was a grub. This

1. Coign, Corner.

10. Condition, Disposition.

Marcus is grown from man to dragon : he has wings ;
 he's more than a creeping thing.

Sic. He loved his mother dearly.

Men. So did he me : and he no more remembers his
 mother now than an eight-year-old horse. The tart-
 ness of his face sours ripe grapes : when he walks, he
 moves like an engine, and the ground shrinks before
 his treading : he is able to pierce a corslet with his
 eye ; talks like a knell, and his hum is a battery.
 He sits in his state, as a thing made for Alexander.
 What he bids be done is finished with his bidding.
 He wants nothing of a god but eternity and a heaven
 to throne in.

Sic. Yes, mercy, if you report him truly.

Men. I paint him in the character. Mark what
 mercy his mother shall bring from him : there is no
 more mercy in him than there is milk in a male tiger ;
 that shall our poor city find : and all this is long
 of you.

Sic. The gods be good unto us !

Men. No, in such a case the gods will not be good
 unto us. When we banished him, we respected not
 them ; and, he returning to break our necks, they
 respect not us.

[Enter a Messenger.]

Mess. Sir, if you'd save your life, fly to your house :
 The plebeians have got your fellow-tribune
 And hale him up and down, all swearing, if
 The Roman ladies bring not comfort home,
 They'll give him death by inches.

[Enter a second Messenger.]

Sic.

What's the news ?

22. *Made for, Made to represent.*

22. *Alexander.* Alexander the Great of Macedon (356-323 B.C.),
 who claimed to have subdued the whole world, and is always
 regarded as the type of the mighty conqueror.

CORIOLANUS [ACT V, SCENE IV

Sec. Mess. Good news, good news ; the ladies have prevail'd,

The Volscians are dislodged, and Marcius gone :
A merrier day did never yet greet Rome,
No, not the expulsion of the Tarquins.

Sic. Friend,
Art thou certain this is true ? is it most certain ?

Sec. Mess. As certain as I know the sun is fire :
Where have you lurk'd, that you make doubt of it ?
Ne'er through an arch so hurried the blown tide,
60 As the recomforted through the gates. Why, hark
you !

[*Trumpets ; hautboys ; drums beat ; all together.*
The trumpets, sackbuts, psalteries and fifes,
Tabors and cymbals and the shouting Romans,
Make the sun dance. Hark you ! [*A shout within.*

Men. This is good news :
I will go meet the ladies. This Volumnia
Is worth of consuls, senators, patricians,
A city full ; of tribunes, such as you,
A sea and land full. You have pray'd well to-day :
This morning for ten thousand of your throats
I'd not have given a doit. Hark, how they joy !

[*Music still, with shouts.*
60 *Sic.* First, the gods bless you for your tidings ;
next,

Accept my thankfulness.

Sec. Mess. Sir, we have all
Great cause to give great thanks.

Sic. They are near the city ?

Sec. Mess. Almost at point to enter.

Sic. We will meet them,
And help the joy. [*Exeunt.*

45. *The Tarquins.* See page 51.

49. *Blown,* Swollen and lashed by the wind.

51. *Sackbut,* An instrument resembling the modern trombone.

51. *Psaltery,* A stringed instrument.

SCENE V

The same. A street near the gate

[*Enter two Senators with VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, VALERIA, etc., passing over the stage, followed by Patricians, and others.*]

First Sen. Behold our patroness, the life of Rome !
Call all your tribes together, praise the gods,
And make triumphant fires ; strew flowers before
them :

Unshout the noise that banish'd Marcius,
Repeal him with the welcome of his mother ;
Cry " Welcome, ladies, welcome ! "

All. Welcome, ladies,
Welcome !

[*A flourish with drums and trumpets. Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI

Antium. A public place.

[*Enter TULLUS AUFIDIUS, with Attendants.*]

Auf. Go tell the lords o' the city I am here :
Deliver them this paper : having read it,
Bid them repair to the market-place ; where I,
Even in theirs and in the commons' ears,
Will vouch the truth of it. Him I accuse
The city ports by this hath enter'd and
Intends to appear before the people, hoping
To purge himself with words : dispatch.

[*Exeunt Attendants.*]

[Enter three or four Conspirators of AUFIDIUS' faction.]

Most welcome !

10 *First Con.* How is it with our general ?

Auf.

Even so

As with a man by his own alms empoison'd,
And with his charity slain.

Sec. Con.

Most noble sir,

If you do hold the same intent wherein
You wish'd us parties, we'll deliver you
Of your great danger.

Auf.

Sir, I cannot tell :

We must proceed as we do find the people.

Third Con. The people will remain uncertain whilst
'Twixt you there's difference ; but the fall of either
Makes the survivor heir of all.

Auf.

I know it ;

20 And my pretext to strike at him admits

A good construction. I raised him, and I pawn'd
Mine honour for his truth : who being so heighten'd,
He water'd his new plants with dews of flattery,
Seducing so many friends ; and, to this end,
He bow'd his nature, never known before
But to be rough, unswayable and free.

Third Con. Sir, his stoutness

When he did stand for consul, which he lost
By lack of stooping,—

Auf.

That I would have spoke of :

30 Being banish'd for't, he came unto my hearth ;
Presented to my knife his throat : I took him ;
Made him joint-servant with me ; gave him way
In all his own desires ; nay, let him choose
Out of my files, his project to accomplish,
My best and freshest men ; served his designments
In mine own person ; help to reap the fame

Which he did end all his ; and took some pride
 To do myself this wrong : till, at the last,
 I seem'd his follower, not partner, and
 40 He waged me with his countenance, as if
 I had been mercenary.

First Con. So he did, my lord :
 The army marvell'd at it, and, in the last,
 When he had carried Rome and that we look'd
 For no less spoil than glory,—

Auf. There was it,
 For which my sinews shall be stretch'd upon him.
 At a few drops of women's rheum, which are
 As cheap as lies, he sold the blood and labour
 Of our great action : therefore shall he die,
 And I'll renew me in his fall. But, hark !

[*Drums and trumpets sound, with great shouts of
 the people.*]

50 *First Con.* Your native town you enter'd like a
 post,
 And had no welcomes home ; but he returns,
 Splitting the air with noise.

Sec. Con. And patient fools,
 Whose children he hath slain, their base throats tear
 With giving him glory.

Third Con. Therefore, at your vantage,
 Ere he express himself, or move the people
 With what he would say, let him feel your sword,
 Which we will second. When he lies along,
 After your way his tale pronounced shall bury
 His reasons with his body.

Auf. Say no more :
 60 Here come the lords.

[*Enter the Lords of the city.*]

All the Lords. You are most welcome home.

Auf. I have not deserved it.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT V, SCENE VI

But, worthy lords, have you with heed perused
What I have written to you ?

Lords. We have.

First Lord. And grieve to hear't.

What faults he made before the last, I think
Might have found easy fines : but there to end
Where he was to begin and give away
The benefit of our levies, answering us
With our own charge, making a treaty where
There was a yielding,—this admits no excuse.

70 *Auf.* He approaches : you shall hear him.

[*Enter CORIOLANUS, marching with drum and colours ;
the Commoners being with him.*]

Cor. Hail, lords ! I am return'd your soldier,
No more infected with my country's love
Than when I parted hence, but still subsisting
Under your great command. You are to know
That prosperously I have attempted and
With bloody passage led your wars even to
The gates of Rome. Our spoils we have brought
home

Do more than counterpoise a full third part
The charges of the action. We have made peace
80 With no less honour to the Antiates
Than shame to the Romans : and we here deliver,
Subscribed by the consuls and patricians,
Together with the seal o' the senate, what
We have compounded on.

Auf. Read it not, noble lords :
But tell the traitor, in the high'st degree
He hath abused your powers.

Cor. Traitor ! how now !

Auf. Ay, traitor, Marcius !

Cor. Marcius !

Auf. Ay, Marcius, Caius Marcius : dost thou think

82. *Subscribed, Signed.*

84. *Compounded, Agreed.*

I'll grace thee with that robbery, thy stol'n name

90 Complanus in Corioli ?

You lords and heads o' the state, perfidiously

He has betray'd your business, and given up,

For certain drops of salt, your city Rome,

I say " your city," to his wife and mother ;

Breaking his oath and resolution like

A twist of rotten silk, never admitting

Counsel o' the war, but at his nurse's tears

He whined and roar'd away your victory,

That pages blush'd at him and men of heart

100 Look'd wondering each at other.

Cor.

Hear'st thou, Mars ?

Auf. Name not the god, thou boy of tears !

Cor.

Ha !

Auf. No more.

Cor. Measureless liar, thou hast made my heart

Too great for what contains it. " Boy ! " O slave !

Pardon me, lords, 'tis the first time that ever

I was forced to scold. Your judgments, my brave

lords,

Must give this cur the lie : and his own notion—

Who wears my stripes impress'd upon him ; that

Must bear my beating to his grave—shall join

110 To thrust the lie unto him.

First Lord. Peace, both, and hear me speak.

Cor. Cut me to pieces, Volscies ; men and lads,

Stain all your edges on me. " Boy ! " false hound !

If you have writ your annals true, 'tis there,

That, like an eagle in a dove-cote, I

Flutter'd your Volscians in Corioli :

Alone I did it. " Boy ! "

Auf.

Why, noble lords,

Will you be put in mind of his blind fortune,

Which was your shame, by this unholy braggart,

120 'Fore your own eyes and ears ?

99. *Men of heart*, Brave men.

113. *Edges*, Swords.

CORIOLANUS

[ACT V, SCENE, VI

All Consp.

Let him die for't.

All the people. "Tear him to pieces." "Do it presently."

"He killed my son." "My daughter." "He killed my cousin

Marcus." "He killed my father."

Sec. Lord. Peace, ho! no outrage: peace!
The man is noble and his fame folds-in
This orb o' the earth. His last offences to us
Shall have judicious hearing. Stand, Aufidius,
And trouble not the peace.*Cor.* O that I had him,
With six Aufidiuses, or more, his tribe,
130 To use my lawful sword!*Auf.* Insolent villain!*All Consp.* Kill, kill, kill, kill, kill him![*The Conspirators draw, and kill CORIOLANUS,
who falls: AUFIDIUS stands on his body.*]*Lords.* Hold, hold, hold, hold!*Auf.* My noble masters, hear me speak.*First Lord.* O Tullus,—*Sec. Lord.* Thou hast done a deed whereat valour
will weep.*Third Lord.* Tread not upon him. Masters all, be
quiet;

Put up your swords.

Auf. My lords, when you shall know—as in this
rage,

Provoked by him, you cannot—the great danger

Which this man's life did owe you, you'll rejoice

That he is thus cut off. Please it your honours

140 To call me to your senate, I'll deliver

Myself your loyal servant, or endure

Your heaviest censure.

First Lord. Bear from hence his body;
And mourn you for him: let him be regarded

As the most noble corse that ever herald
Did follow to his urn.

Sec. Lord. His own impatience
Takes from Aufidius a great part of blame.
Let's make the best of it.

Auf. My rage is gone ;
And I am struck with sorrow. Take him up.
Help, three o' the chiefest soldiers ; I'll be one.
150 Beat thou the drum, that it speak mournfully :
Trail your steel pikes. Though in this city he
Hath widow'd and unchilded many a one,
Which to this hour bewail the injury,
Yet he shall have a noble memory.

Ass't.

*[Exeunt, bearing the body of CORIOLANUS. A
dead march sounded.]*

144. *Herald . . . urn.* The presence of the herald at a royal or noble funeral, where he proclaimed the titles of the dead man, was an old English custom ; the "urn" alludes to the way in which the Romans preserved the ashes of their dead, after cremation.

154. *Memory, Memorial.*

CORIOLANUS

HELPS TO FURTHER STUDY

THE LATER LIFE OF SHAKESPEARE

Coriolanus is the last of Shakespeare's great tragedies and among the latest of his plays. Two years after it was written he left London for his native place, Stratford-on-Avon, where, to quote Nicholas Rowe, his first eighteenth-century editor, "the latter part of his life was spent, as all men of good sense will wish theirs may be, in ease, retirement, and the conversation of his friends."

As soon as his financial position was secure, and the success of his career certain, Shakespeare had set about the formation of his estate at Stratford, buying one of the most important dwellings of the town, the "Great House" of Sir Hugh Clopton, which he renamed New Place, repairing it, planting a fruit orchard, acquiring plough land and pasture land. All records of his business dealings show him to have had much shrewd good sense in the practical affairs of life, knowing how to make money and how to spend it, allowing no man to cheat him with impunity.

As a boy of eighteen, Shakespeare had married Ann Hathaway, the daughter of a farmer of Shottery, a little village near Stratford, and his wife was still living when, after his long absence in London, he returned to Stratford. His eldest child, Susanna, whose epitaph describes her as "witty above her

CORIOLANUS

sex," was married to a physician, Dr. John Hall, and had one little girl, Elizabeth, the only grandchild Shakespeare lived to see. It was to Susanna that he left New Place, and practically all his estate. His son Hamnet had died in boyhood; his other daughter, Judith, married the son of one of his old Warwickshire friends, Thomas Quiney, in 1616.

Although he settled at New Place in 1611, Shakespeare did not completely sever his connection with his old life. He made frequent visits to London, and the actors Burbage, Heming, and Condell remained his close friends until the end. In his Sonnets he had complained of his lot as an actor :



" Alas, 'tis true I have gone here and there,
And made myself a motley to the view,"

and reproached Fortune :

" That did not better for my life provide
Than public means which public manners breeds.
Thence comes it that my name receives a brand,
And almost thence my nature is subdued
To what it works in, like the dyer's hand—"

But, even if he was glad to leave the stage, his mind must have dwelt on the place where his art was made manifest, and his magic held men spell-bound. Much forced allegory has been read into his last play, *The Tempest*, but the vision Prospero the enchanter dismisses may be the poet's thought of his own work and his life:

" Our revels now are ended. These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits and
Are melted into air, into thin air :
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,

HELPS TO FURTHER STUDY

The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep."

Prospero is an old man, and Shakespeare was forty-seven when he left London ; but age is not measured by years, and the end of the achievement of his genius is the end of a life crowded with experience, whatever its events, lived by a spirit not only alive to every delight of the world, but familiar with the extremities of human suffering and the depths of human evil.

Some biographers of Shakespeare say that, in this sense, we know little of him from his work, which is like that of every great dramatist, is "objective"—that is, his men and women speak, as it were, in their own voices, from their own minds and hearts, expressing their characters and opinions, not those of their creator. And yet the dramatist is every one of his characters : to a certain extent his heart must have experienced their emotions, his mind must have thought their thoughts. You cannot read half a dozen plays of Shakespeare and profess ignorance of "Shakespeare the man."

As far as the record of his contemporaries goes, the personality of Shakespeare seems to have been gentle and attractive, his character one worthy of respect. When he was a young man the publisher, Chettle, spoke of his "civil demeanour" and "his uprightness of dealing." After his death, his friend and rival, Ben Jonson, declared, "I loved the man, and do honour his memory, on this side idolatry, as much as any. He was, indeed, honest, and of an open and free nature." Heming and Condell, two of his fellow-actors, who published his plays, speak, in their Preface to the First Folio, of keeping alive the memory of "so worthy a friend and fellow as was our Shakespeare."

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CHIEF RECORDED EVENTS OF THE LIFE OF SHAKESPEARE

(For Reference.)

1564. On 26th April William Shakespeare is baptized at the parish church of Stratford-on-Avon. He is the first son and third child of *John Shakespeare*, a trader in agricultural produce, and holder of various important municipal offices in Stratford (four years after the poet's birth he was high bailiff, or mayor, of the town), and of *Mary Arden*, who came of good yeoman stock.
1582. At the age of eighteen Shakespeare marries* *Ann Hathaway*, eight years older than himself, daughter of a farmer of Shottery. It is generally supposed that the marriage was not a happy one. Much has been made of a passage in *Twelfth Night*, where the Duke gives advice to his page—

“ Then let thy love be younger than thyself
Or thy affection cannot hold the bent ;
For women are as roses, whose fair flower
Being once displayed, doth fall that very hour—”

and of the fact that Shakespeare's sole bequest to his wife in his will is the “ second best bed with its furniture.” †

1583. Birth of Shakespeare's daughter Susanna.

* There is no existing record of Shakespeare's marriage, but a deed is extant wherein two husbandmen of Stratford bind themselves to stand surety for the validity of the marriage in contemplation between William Shakespeare and Ann Hathaway.

† Others say, however, that this was a sign of affection, as the bed would be his own, the best bed being kept for guests.

HELPS TO FURTHER STUDY

1584. Birth of his twin children, Judith and Hamnet. The boy died at the age of eleven.
1592. The poet and dramatist, Robert Greene, in a pamphlet called *A Groatsworth of Wit bought with a Million of Repentance*, attacks a young actor as "an upstart crow, beautified with our feathers, that with his tiger's heart wrapped in a player's hide supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blank verse as the best of you; and being an absolute Johannes factotum is, in his own conceit, the only Shakescene in the country." Obviously Shakespeare is meant, and, by this time, he must have left Stratford for London and the theatre. Later, the publisher of this pamphlet apologizes for Greene's ill-natured attack, and speaks of Shakespeare as "excellent in the quality * he professes."
- 1593-1594. Publication of the poems, *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece*, both dedicated to the Earl of Southampton.
1594. Shakespeare mentioned as one of the actors in the Lord Chamberlain's company. He plays before the Queen at Greenwich.
1596. The College of Heralds grants John Shakespeare a coat of arms, obtained three years later. He is known to have been in financial difficulties before this date. It is thought likely that his son returned to Stratford in this year, and established the fortunes of the family on a firmer basis.
1597. Shakespeare buys New Place at Stratford.
1598. Francis Meres, a schoolmaster and divine, publishes his *Palladis Tamia* (Treasury of Wit), in which he praises Shakespeare as the greatest dramatist of the time. He mentions his narrative poems, his sonnets, six comedies (*Two*

* *Quality*, Technical term for the actor's profession.

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Gentlemen of Verona, Errors, Love's Labour's Lost, Love's Labour's Won, Midsummer Night's Dream, and Merchant of Venice*), and six tragedies (*Richard II., Richard III., Henry IV., King John, Titus, Romeo and Juliet*).

1599. Globe Theatre built. Shakespeare becomes a shareholder in the receipts of this theatre.
1601. Death of John Shakespeare, from whom his son inherits the houses in Henley Street now known as "Shakespeare's House."
1602. Shakespeare purchases arable land near Stratford.
1603. The Lord Chamberlain's company receives its licence from James I., and is henceforth known as the King's Company or the King's Servants. Theatres closed on account of the plague, and the Court leaves London.
1604. Shakespeare is one of the actors chosen to walk in the procession accompanying the King on his entry into London.
1605. He buys a moiety (portion) of the tithes of Stratford, but this investment does not prove a very satisfactory one.
1607. His elder daughter, Susanna, marries Dr. John Hall. Their daughter Elizabeth was the only grandchild Shakespeare lived to see. She was the last surviving direct descendant of the poet.
1609. The Burbages, who had leased the Blackfriars Theatre, bought out the lessee. Shakespeare is one of the players to obtain shares (profits much less than at the Globe).
1610. Shakespeare purchases pastoral land, to add to that bought in 1602.
1611. He settles at Stratford.
1616. His younger daughter, Judith, marries Thomas

* Perhaps *All's Well that Ends Well*.

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Quiney, son of one of his old friends. Of their three sons one died in infancy, the other two in young manhood.

1616. Death of Shakespeare (23rd April). He is buried in Stratford parish church, and over his grave are inscribed these lines :

“ Good friend, for Jesus’ sake forbear
To dig the dust enclosed here ;
Blest be the man that spares these stones,
And curst be he that moves these bones.”

THE WORK OF SHAKESPEARE

- c. 1590–1600. Plays :—*Love’s Labour’s Lost* ; *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* ; *The Comedy of Errors* ; *Romeo and Juliet* ; *Henry VI.* ; *Richard III.* ; *Richard II.* ; *Titus Andronicus* ; *The Merchant of Venice* ; *King John* ; *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* ; *All’s Well that Ends Well* ; *The Taming of the Shrew* ; *Henry IV.* ; *The Merry Wives of Windsor* ; *Henry V.* ; *Much Ado About Nothing* ; *As You Like It* ; *Twelfth Night*.

Poems :—*Venus and Adonis* ; *Lucrece* ; *The Sonnets*.

- 1600–1610. *Julius Caesar* ; *Hamlet* ; *Troilus and Cressida* ; *Othello* ; *Measure for Measure* ; *Macbeth* ; *King Lear* ; *Timon of Athens* ; *Pericles* ; *Antony and Cleopatra* ; *Coriolanus*.

- 1610–1611. *Cymbeline* ; *The Winter’s Tale* ; *The Tempest* ; *Henry VIII*.

THE ELIZABETHAN THEATRE

When Shakespeare first came to London only two playhouses were in existence—the *Theatre* and the

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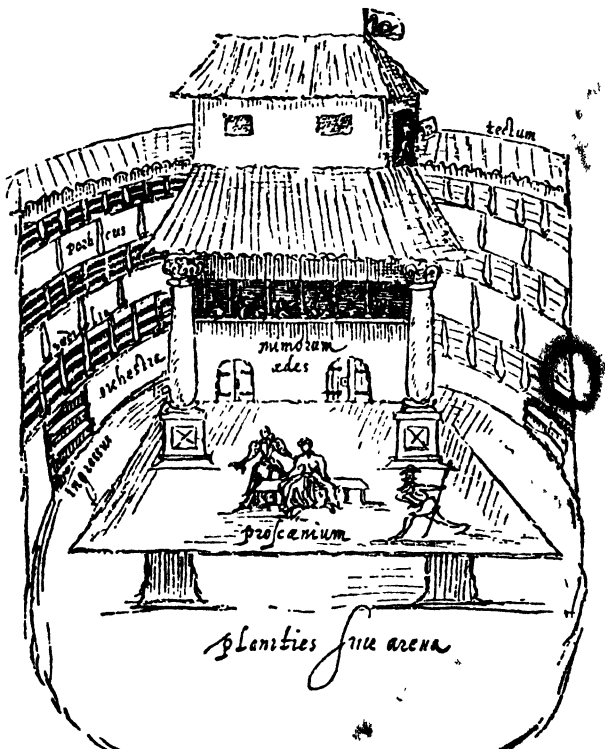
Curtain, both belonging to James Burbage ; in 1609, the probable date of the production of *Coriolanus*, there were at least half a dozen : the *Curtain*, the *Swan*, the *Red Bull*, the *Globe*, *Blackfriars*, and *Whitefriars*. The famous *Rose*, which seems to have rivalled the *Theatre* in importance, fell into disuse early in the seventeenth century. Of the public theatres, the most prominent was the *Globe*, which had been built in 1599 from the fabric of the old *Theatre*, demolished late in the previous year by the two sons of James Burbage, Richard and Cuthbert. It was situated in Bankside, and its sign showed Hercules bearing the burden of Atlas, the world, on his shoulders. Shakespeare alludes to it in the first Prologue of *Henry V.* :



• May we cram
Within this wooden O the very casques
That did affright the air at Agincourt."

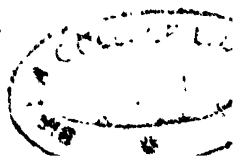
Here the company to which he belonged, and for which he wrote, acted many of his plays, and here, though no record exists of its actual performance, *Coriolanus* was almost certainly staged, with Richard Burbage, the greatest tragedian of the time, as the hero.

The theatre for which Shakespeare wrote was a very simple structure, reminiscent of the inn-yard, where, before they had their own playing-places, actors would bring their "pageant," or movable wooden stage, and give their performance to the spectators thronging around them, or gathered at the windows or the balconies above. The old names for the different parts of the playhouse indicate its origin : the pit is the "yard," and the boxes are the "rooms." The theatre was only partially roofed, the spectators who stood in the rush-strewn pit being exposed to the weather. An hour or two before the performance, a flag, bearing the symbol of the theatre, was run up from a turret



quantum sit profectus fuerit, nec latere, non potest
 omni destinatum, in quo multi orbi lauri, et bustide
 hinc multitudine rantes, diffusis cantibus et festis ablatas, qui

THE SWAN THEATRE.
 (From an old drawing.)



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on the roof, and three trumpet blasts were sounded from this same point of vantage just as the play was about to begin. The afternoon was the time for dramatic entertainment, and it was fashionable for young gallants to go by way of the river to the theatres on the Bankside—the *Globe*, the *Swan*, and *Blackfriars*.

The stage, or "scaffold," was what is called an *apron* or a *platform* stage, differing from the *picture* stage common in present-day theatres in that it projected into the pit. Such a stage allows of no curtain (the "Curtain" theatre was named after the piece of ground on which it stood). There was no scenery in the modern sense, though a "painted cloth," or piece of arras, was occasionally used, and for a tragedy the stage was hung with black. At the rear of the stage was a wooden erection, hollowed out so that it might serve the purpose of a bed, or an arbour, or a prison, or a tomb, while its upper part might be a balcony, or the city walls (as in *Coriolanus*, I. iv.), or any place for which the direction "aloft" is given. An interesting indication of the structure of the stage occurs in the directions in the First Folio text of *Coriolanus*—"Enter Martius and Aufidius at several doors"; "Enter at one door Cominius with the Romans: at another door Martius, with his arm in a scarf." These doors are shown in the drawing of the *Swan* Theatre on page 153. There was a musicians' gallery in the rear of the stage, but its exact position is uncertain. Furniture, though not elaborate, was sufficient: thrones, benches, tables, mossy banks, cauldrons, chariots, and so on, seem to have been easily available. Little or no attempt was made to dress the play according to period, but the costume worn was magnificent, and fine effects were obtained in scenes where masques and torchlight processions are introduced. There was much music, and there was no lack of realistic noise—the clang of the

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weapons of warfare, the firing of cannon, the galloping of horses' hoofs, the peal of thunder. The Elizabethan stage manager was ready to gratify the taste for the sensational to the best of his power. He would take much trouble to produce a thunderstorm, which the audience enjoyed, though Ben Jonson decided it.

“ Nor nimble squib is seen, to make afeard
The gentlewomen, nor rolled bullet heard
To say it thunders ; nor tempestuous drum
Rumbles, to tell you when the storm doth come—”

he warns those who are to watch his *Every Man in His Humour*. And stage directions such as those in *Coriolanus*: “ Enter Martius bleeding, assaulted by the enemy,” and “ Enter Tullus Aufidius, bloody,” were carried out as realistically as might be.

No actresses appeared on the stage before the Restoration, and all Shakespeare's women's parts were played by boys with their voices yet unbroken.

Although they would seem uncomfortable, barn-like structures to a modern audience, the first public playhouses excited great admiration among Elizabethan Londoners for their “ beauty ” and “ gorgeousness.” There was a marked difference between the public and the private theatres, of which Blackfriars was one. The latter were more comfortable, being entirely roofed, while every part contained seating accommodation. Their prices of admission were naturally higher, ranging, as a general rule, from sixpence to half a crown, while those of the public theatres were from a penny to a shilling. At Blackfriars it was possible, for sixpence, to obtain a stool on the stage itself. In his *Gull's * Horn-book*, † Thomas

* *Gull*, Simpleton.

† *Horn-book*, ABC—formerly one page in a frame, with a sheet of transparent horn before it.

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Dekker has an amusing description of how the would-be gallant should behave at the theatre :

“ Present not yourself on the stage—especially at a new play—until the quaking Prologue hath by rubbing got colour into his cheeks, and is ready to give the trumpets their cue that he’s upon point to enter : for then it is time, as though you were one of the properties, or that you dropped out of the hangings, to creep from behind the arras with your tripods, or three-footed stool, in one hand and a teston* mounted between a forefinger and a thumb in the other.” When the acting begins he must do what he can to attract the attention of the audience and to distract the “ mimics ”—mewing, blaring, laughing, talking, and, if possible, he should leave in the middle of the play, “ with a screwed and discontented face,” taking his friends with him. Dekker writes satirically, and his account must not be taken as entirely accurate, but there is small doubt that the custom was a tiresome and inconvenient one, and it is strange that it was ever tolerated in the theatre.

Each company of actors was licensed to perform in the name of some royal or noble person. Thus we hear of Leicester’s men, the Earl of Oxford’s men, Nottingham’s men, the Queen’s players, and so on. From time to time a company would change its designation. The players to whose band Shakespeare belonged were called successively Leicester’s, Lord Strange’s, the Lord Chamberlain’s, and the King’s men. With the growth of the popularity of the theatre the salaries of actors and their social importance increased. Their Puritan enemies would have it that they were “ rogues and vagabonds,” but they seem to have been “ glorious vagabonds,” with money enough to bring them “ dignity and reputation ” if they chose to save it and spend it wisely.

* Sixpence, the price of his place.

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Shakespeare was evidently a good actor. He was called "excellent in the quality he professes" (see page 149); and he acted before Queen Elizabeth at Greenwich, and King James I. at Wilton. The parts he is said to have taken—Adam in *As You Like It*, and the Ghost in *Hamlet*—are not big ones, but they are parts that demand imaginative rendering, and would not be entrusted to an indifferent actor. There are many allusions in his plays to actors and to their art, and in *Hamlet* he gives a definite criticism and exposition of this art (III. ii.), and shows how moving the power of the player may be (II. ii.).

EARLY EDITIONS OF SHAKESPEARE PLAYS

In Shakespeare's time it was not fashionable for a dramatist to publish his own works. It was not until seven years after his death, in 1623, that two of his fellow-actors, Heming and Condell, collected the plays in one volume, called, from its size, the *Folio* edition. During his life, however, many of the plays were piratically published by booksellers, in what are known as *Quarto* editions. It has been suggested that these were taken down in the theatre word for word as they were acted; but such a method could not prove very satisfactory, and probably the publisher-book-seller (there was then no distinction between these trades) would bribe an actor to let him see a copy of the play. These quartos were sold for sixpence in St. Paul's Churchyard, then famous for its bookshops.

There are certain differences between these old editions of Shakespeare and the modern ones. Stage directions occur in folios and quartos, but no list of *dramatis personæ* and no preliminary indications of scene are given. Occasionally a passage of blank

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verse is printed as prose, or vice versa. Sometimes the meaning of a passage is obscure, but with the correction of a more or less obvious misprint it becomes clear. Other quarto and folio editions of Shakespeare's plays were published during the seventeenth century. In the eighteenth century the work of editing the text began. Rowe, Pope, Hanmer, Capell, Theobald, Dr. Johnson, brought out editions which contain lists of *dramatis personæ*, indications of where the scene is supposed to take place, and emendations of passages where certain words or phrases appear to be corrupt. Some of these emendations have been found unnecessary, others have been accepted or supplemented by later scholars and critics. For the chief ones made in the first folio version of *Coriolanus* (there is no quarto of the play) see pages 189-193. Students who are sufficiently advanced to be interested in text questions should examine this version at first hand where possible. There is a facsimile in the library of every big town.

DATE OF THE COMPOSITION OF "CORIOLANUS"

Most scholars date *Coriolanus* 1609 or 1610. There is practically no evidence as to the time of its composition but that of style and metre, which are those of Shakespeare's latest work. It was not published until it appeared in the First Folio in 1623. Various points have been brought forward to define its date exactly—for instance, it has been said that the mulberry simile in III. ii. (page 88), was suggested by the planting of several young mulberry trees in England in 1609, to promote the breeding of silkworms; that the "coal of fire upon the ice" (page 21), alludes to the great frost of 1607-1608, when the Thames was frozen and fires

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lighted upon it; and that the expression "lurched all swords of the garland" (page 59) resembles one in a play of Ben Jonson's, acted in 1609. These discoveries are not of much significance, but they certainly support the evidence of style in suggesting the close of the first decade of the seventeenth century as the probable date of the composition of the tragedy.

SOURCE OF THE PLAY

For the history of *Coriolanus* Shakespeare used Sir Thomas North's translation of Plutarch's *Parallel Lives*. Plutarch (c. A.D. 46-120) was a Greek biographer whose method was to describe the lives and careers of famous Greeks and Romans in pairs—Theseus and Romulus, Alexander and Cæsar, etc.—and to draw a comparison between them. The life of Coriolanus is set against that of Alcibiades.

These *Lives* were translated into French by Jaques Amyot in the sixteenth century, and from French into English, as *The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans*, by Sir Thomas North, the first edition of whose book appeared in 1579. His translation is ranked with the finest prose work of Tudor times, and sometimes Shakespeare borrows his actual phraseology. But what gives the drama its vitality and significance is of Shakespeare's own creation.

The outline of the events in the life of Coriolanus, as described by Plutarch, is as follows:

1. Description of the family of Caius Marcius, and the valiant deeds he did in his youth.

2. Secession of the plebeians to the Mons Sacer, on account of the hardships they suffered from the strict laws as to usury and military service. Menenius Agrippa and others negotiate with them, and they consent to return to Rome, on condition that they

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They choose five tribunes every year whose duty it shall be to defend them from violence and oppression.

3. Conquest of Corioli. Marcius receives the title of Coriolanus.

4. Second insurrection of the plebeians, on account of the scarcity of corn. An unpopular colonization scheme is carried out, mainly by the action of Coriolanus, who then, with a voluntary army, raids the dominion of the Antiates and obtains such rich spoils that he compels the admiration of most of the Romans, and the "home-tarriers and house-doves" wish they had accompanied him, and their envy towards him increases.

5. Coriolanus stands for the consulship, but is rejected by the people, who fear lest he should take away their liberty.

6. Corn is brought to Rome from Italy and Sicily. Coriolanus opposes its free distribution, and recommends that the tribunate be abolished.

7. The tribunes, reporting this matter, stir up rebellion, and Coriolanus appears before the people to answer the charge against him. He is condemned to death from the Tarpeian rock, but some of the supporters of the tribunes protest against the severity of this punishment, and his trial is adjourned.

8. A short war with the Antiates.

9. Trial and banishment of Coriolanus.

10. Coriolanus goes to Antium and joins the Volscians.

11. Provar and discord at Rome—account of strange omens and visions.

12. How the new war between the Volscians and the Romans is provoked.

13. Victorious progress of Coriolanus—consternation at Rome.

14. Embassies sent from Rome to the Volscians—their failure.

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15. The embassy of the women, prompted Valeria.

16. Triumphant return of the women to Rome.

17. Plot of Aufidius. Coriolanus called upon to give an account of his charge and government. The conspirators, fearing lest he should prove his innocence to the people, fall upon him and kill him. His honourable funeral.

The chief scenes which are entirely Shakespeare's own are Act I., Scenes ii., iii., x. ; Act II., Scene i. ; Act III., Scene ii. ; Act IV., Scene ii. ; Act V., Scene iv.—but throughout the play, with the development and creation of character, there is much that has no equivalent in Plutarch.

This is what Shakespeare read of the characters of his tragedy in Plutarch's life of Coriolanus.

Menenius is described as one of "the pleasantest old men, and the most acceptable to the people" among the senators. Sicinius and Brutus are "two seditious tribunes," flatterers of the people, and Sicinius is "the cruellest and the stoutest" * of the two. Aufidius is honoured among the Volscians for his "nobility and valiantness," and is "a man of great mind." There is a "marvellous private hate" between him and Coriolanus, and finally, when his rival is his associate in Antium, "the common fault and imperfection of man's nature wrought in him, and it grieved him to see his own reputation blemished through Marcius's great fame and honour, and so himself to be less esteemed of the Volsces than he was before." Valeria, who suggests the embassy to Coriolanus, Publicola's own sister, is "greatly honoured and revered among all the Romans: and did so modestly and wisely behave herself that she did not shame nor dishonour the house she came of." Coriolanus is thus described. "Martius's natural

* Most stubborn.

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And great heart did marvelously stir up his courage to do and attempt notable deeds. But on the other side, for lack of education, he was so choleric and impatient, that he would yield to no living creature: which made him churlish, uncivil, and altogether unfit for any man's conversation. Yet men marvelling much at his constancy, that he was never overcome with pleasure nor money, and how he would endure easily all manner of pains and travails: thereupon they well liked and commended his stoutness * and temperancy. But for all that, they could not be acquainted with him, as one citizen useth to be with another in the city. His behaviour was so unpleasant to them by reason of a certain insolent and stern manner he had, which, because it was too lordly, was disliked." . . . "He was a man too full of passion and choler, and too much given to over self-will and opinion, as one of a high mind and great courage, that lacked the gravity and affability that is gotten with judgment of learning and reason, which only is to be looked for in a governor of State." He "never yielded in any respect, as one thinking that to overcome always and to have the upper hand in all matters was a token of magnanimity and of no base and faint courage." His mind was "haughty and fierce." Answering the accusations of the people, "he began not only to use his wonted boldness of speaking (which of itself was very rough and unpleasant, and did more aggravate his accusation than purge his innocency) but also gave himself in his words to thunder, and look therewithal so grimly, as though he made no reckoning of the matter." An account is given of the attitude of Coriolanus towards Volumnia. "Touching Martius, the only thing that made him to love honour was the joy he saw his mother did take of him. For he thought nothing made him so happy

* Obstinate courage.

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and honourable, as that his mother might hear every-body praise and commend him, that she might see him return with a crown upon his head, and that she might still embrace him with tears running down her cheeks for joy."

The following passages from Plutarch's *Life* are appended for comparison with the parallel scenes in Shakespeare's play :

THE HONOUR OF CORIOLANUS.

The next morning betimes, Martius went to the Consul, and the other Romans with him. There the Consul Cominius going up to his chair of state, in the presence of the whole army, gave thanks to the gods for so great, glorious, and prosperous a victory : then he spake to Martius, whose valiantness he commended above the moon, both for that he himself saw him do with his eyes, as also for that Martius had reported unto him. So in the end he willed Martius, that he should choose out of all the horses they had taken of their enemies, and of all the goods they had won (whereof there was great store) ten of every sort which he liked best, before any distribution should be made to other. Besides this great honourable offer he had made him, he gave him, in testimony that he had won that day the price of prowess above all other, a goodly horse with a caparison, and all furniture to him ; which the whole army beholding did marvellously praise and commend. But Martius, stepping forth, told the Consul he most thankfully accepted the gift of his horse, and was a glad man besides, that his service had deserved his General's commendation : and as for his other offer, which was rather a mercenary reward than an honourable recompense, he would have none of it, but was contented to have his equal part with other soldiers. " Only, this grace," said he, " I crave and beseech you to grant me. Among the Volsces there is an old friend and host of mine, an honest wealthy man and now a prisoner ; who, living before in great wealth in his own country, liveth now a poor prisoner, in the hands of his enemies : and yet notwith-

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standing all this his misery and misfortune, it would do me great pleasure if I could save him from this one danger, to keep him from being sold as a slave." The soldiers hearing Martius's words, made a marvellous great shout among them, and they were more that wondered at his great contentation and abstinence, when they saw so little covetousness in him, than they were that highly praised and extolled his valiantness. For even they themselves that did somewhat malice and envy his glory, to see him thus honoured and passingly praised, did think him so much the more worthy of an honourable recompense for his valiant service, as the more carelessly he refused the great offer made him for his profit ; and they esteemed more the virtue that was in him, that made him refuse such rewards, than that which made them to be offered, to him, as unto a worthy person. For it is far more commendable, to use riches well, than to be valiant ; and yet it is better not to desire them than to use them well. After this shout and noise of the assembly was somewhat appeased, the Consul Cominius began to speak in this sort : " We cannot compel Martius to take those gifts we offer him if he will not receive them, but we will give him such a reward for the noble service he hath done, as he cannot refuse. Therefore we do order and decree, that henceforth he be called Coriolanus, unless his valiant acts have won him that name before our nomination. And so ever since, he still bare the third name of Coriolanus."

CORIOLANUS IN THE HOUSE OF HIS ENEMY

It was even twilight when he entered the city of Antium, and many people met him in the streets, but no man knew him. So he went directly to Tullus Aufidius's house, and when he came thither, he got him up straight to the chimney-hearth, and sat him down, and spake not a word to any man, his face all muffled over. They of the house spying him, wondered what he should be, and yet they durst not bid him rise. For ill-favouredly muffled and disguised as he was, yet there appeared a certain majesty in his countenance and in his silence : whereupon they went to Tullus, who was at supper, to

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tell him of the strange disguising of this man. Tullus rose presently from the board, and coming toward him, asked him what he was, and wherefore he came. Martius unmuffled himself, and after he had paused awhile, making no answer, he said unto him: "If thou knowest me not yet, Tullus, and, seeing me, dost not perhaps believe me to be the man I am indeed, I must of necessity bewray * myself to be that I am. I am Caius Martius, who hath done to thyself particularly, and to all the Volsces generally, great hurt and mischief, which I cannot deny for my surname of Coriolanus that I bear. For I never had other benefit or recompense of the true and painful service I have done, and the extreme dangers I have been in, but this only surname—a good memory and witness of the malice and displeasure thou shouldst bear me. Indeed the name only remaineth with me: for the rest the envy and cruelty of the people of Rome have taken from me, by the sufferance of the dastardly nobility and magistrates, who have forsaken me, and let me be banished by the people. This extremity hath now driven me to come as a poor suitor, to take thy chimney-hearth, not of any hope I have to save my life thereby: for if I had feared death, I would not have come thither to have put my life in hazard: but pricked forward with spite and desire I have to be revenged of them that thus have banished me; whom now I begin to be avenged on, putting my person between thy enemies. Wherefore, if thou hast any heart to be wrecked † of the injuries thy enemies have done thee, speed thee now, and let my misery serve thy turn, and so use it as my service may be a benefit to the Volsces: promising thee, that I will fight with better goodwill for you than ever I did when I was against you, knowing that they fight more valiantly who know the force of the enemy, than such as have never proved it. And if it be so that thou dare not, and that thou art weary to prove fortune any more, then art I also weary to live any longer. And it were no wisdom in thee, to save the life of him, who hath been heretofore thy mortal enemy, and whose service now can nothing help nor pleasure thee." Tullus, hearing what he said, was a marvellous glad man, and taking him by the hand, he

* Reveal.

† Same as "wreaked."

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said unto him, "Stand up, O Martius, and be of good cheer, for in proffering thyself thou hast us great honour: this means thou mayest hope also of greater things at all the Volsces' hands." So he feasted him for that time, and entertained him in the honourablest manner he could, talking with him in no other matters at that present: but within a few days after they fell to consultation together in what sort they should begin their wars.

VOLUMNIA'S APPEAL TO HER SON

Now was Martius set then in his chair of state, with all the honours of a general, and when he had spied the women coming afar off, he marvelled what the matter meant. But afterwards, knowing his wife which came foremost, he determined at the first to persist in his obstinate and inflexible rancour. But overcome in the end with natural affection, and being altogether altered to see them, his heart would not serve him to tarry their coming to his chair, but coming down in haste he went to meet them, and first he kissed his mother, and embraced her a pretty while, then his wife and little children. And nature so wrought with him that the tears fell from his eyes, and he could not keep himself from making much of them, but yielded to the affection of his blood, as if he had been violently carried with the fury of a most swift running stream. After he had thus lovingly received them, and perceiving that his mother Volurnia would begin to speak to him, he called the chiefest of the council of the Volsces to hear what she would say. Then she spake in this sort: "If we held our peace, my son, and determined not to speak, the state of our poor bodies, and present sight of our raiment, would easily bewray to thee what life we have led at home, since thy exile and abode abroad; but think now with thyself, how much more unfortunately than all the women living, we are come hither, considering that the sight which should be most pleasant to all other to behold, spiteful fortune hath made most fearful to us: making myself to see my son, and my daughter here her husband, besieging the walls of his native country: so as that which is the only comfort

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to all other in their adversity and misery, to pray unto the gods and to call to them for aid, is the only thing which plungeth us into most deep perplexity. For we cannot, alas! together pray both for victory of our country and for safety of thy life also: but a world of grievous curses, yea, more than any mortal enemy can heap upon us, are forcibly wrapt up in our prayers. For the bitter sop of most hard choice is offered thy wife and children, to forgo one of the two; either to lose the person of thyself, or the nurse of their native country. For myself, my son, I am determin'd not to tarry till fortune, in my lifetime, do make an end of this war. For if I cannot persuade thee, rather to do good unto both parties than to overthrow and destroy the one, preferring love and nature before the malice and calamity of wars, thou shalt see, my son, and trust unto it, thou shalt no sooner march forward to assault thy country, but thy foot shall tread upon thy mother's womb, that brought thee first into this world. And I may not defer to see the day, either that my son be led prisoner in triumph by his natural countrymen, or that he himself do triumph of them, and of his natural country. For if it were so, that my request tended to save thy country, in destroying the Volsces, I must confess, thou wouldest hardly and doubtfully resolve on that. For as, to destroy thy natural country, it is altogether unmeet and unlawful, so were it not just, and less honourable, to betray those that put their trust in thee. But my only demand consisteth, to make a gaol-delivery of all evils, which delivereth equal benefit and safety both to the one and the other, but most honourable for the Volsces. For it shall appear, that, having victory in their hands, they have of special favour granted us singular graces, peace, and amity, albeit themselves have no less part of both than we. Of which good, if so it came to pass, thyself is the only author, and so thou hast the only honour. But if it fall and fall out contrary, thyself alone deservedly shall carry the shameful reproach and burthen of either party. So, though the end of war be uncertain, yet this notwithstanding is most certain, that, if it be thy chance to conquer, this benefit shalt thou reap of thy goodly conquest, to be chronicled the plague and destroyer of thy country. And if fortune also overthrow thee, then the world will

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say, that through desire to revenge thy private injuries, thou hast for ever undone thy good friends, who did most lovingly and courteously receive thee." Martius gave unto his mother's words, without interrupting her speech at all, and after she had said what she would, he held his peace a pretty while, and answered not a word. Hereupon she began again to speak unto him, and said, "My son, why dost thou not answer me? Dost thou think it good altogether to give place unto thy choler and desire of revenge, and thinkest thou it not honesty for thee to grant thy mother's request, in so weighty a cause? Dost thou take it honourable for a noble man to remember the wrongs and injuries done him, and dost not in like case think it an honest noble man's part, to be thankful for the goodness that parents do show to their children, acknowledging the duty and reverence they ought to bear unto them? No man living is more bound to show himself thankful in all parts and respects than thyself: who so unnaturally showest all ingratitude. Moreover, my son, thou hast sorely taken of thy country, exacting grievous payments upon them, in revenge of the injuries offered thee; besides, thou hast not hitherto showed thy poor mother any courtesy. And therefore it is not only honest, but due unto me, that without compulsion I should obtain my so just and reasonable request of thee. But since by reason I cannot persuade thee to it, to what purpose do I defer my last hope?" And with these words, herself, his wife, and children fell down upon their knees before him. Martius, seeing that, could refrain no longer, but went straight and lifted her up, crying out, "O mother, what have you done to me?" And holding her hard by the right hand, "O mother," said he, "you have won a happy victory for your country, but mortal and unhappy for your son: for I see myself vanquished by you alone." These words being spoken openly, he spake a little part with his mother and wife, and then let them return again to Rome, for so they did request him; and so remaining in camp that night, the next morning he dislodged, and marched homeward into the Volsces' country again.

ON THINKING IT OVER

ON THINKING IT OVER

FOR YOUNGER BOYS AND GIRLS

I

SHAKESPEARE often begins a play with a scene of **stir** and excitement, at once holding the attention of the audience. Describe in a **few** lines what is happening at the opening of *Coriolanus*. Sometimes interest is aroused in the hero before he actually appears on the stage—thus we hear of Macbeth's valour on the battle-field, and know that he is the man the witches plan to meet; and the soldiers who see the ghost on the battlements of the castle say that, though it is dumb to them, it will speak to Hamlet. What do you know of Caius Marcius **before** he comes in? What are his first words? **Contrast** his attitude towards the people with that of **Menenius**. Describe the fable Menenius tells the citizens, and its application to Rome. How much truth is there in Marcius's opinion of the people, and what seems unjust? What concession is made by the patricians to the people? Discuss the opinions of Marcius expressed by Brutus and Sicinius. News that the Volscians are in arms comes as soon as the rebellion in Rome is quieted. What does Marcius say of Aufidius, the Volscian leader?

Volumnia is a type of the noble Roman matron, in whom appear the sterner virtues; Virgilia is gentle

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and still—"my gracious silence" Coriolanus calls her. Describe the characters of the two women as they are suggested in I. iii., and notice the amusing affectation

Describe the valour of Marcius in war. Compare his attitude towards his soldiers with that of Cominius towards his. How do they regard him? How does Shakespeare represent the behaviour of the rank and file on the field of battle? Why is Marcius given the title of Coriolanus? Contrast his estimation of the spoils of warfare with that of his soldiers. What one favour does he ask of Cominius, and why is Cominius, though eager to grant it, unable to do so? What is the attitude of the vanquished Aufidius towards Coriolanus?

Learn by heart :

I. i., page 20. "He that will give good words to thee."

I. x., page 45. "My valour's poisoned."

Try to express in good modern English Menenius's speech, "I tell you, friends," on page 17. Read over your version to yourself when you have finished it, and see if it sounds as if it might be spoken by a modern statesman to a mob with a grievance.

Learn by heart the meaning of these words as used by Shakespeare, and notice those that are still used to-day, but with a change of meaning: Affection, nerves, rascal, quarry, censure, demerits, power, parcels, fell (adj.), pounded, proof, sensibly, murrain, doit, success, battle, admire, tent (verb), addition.

II

At the beginning of Act I. Menenius talks with the citizens; at the beginning of Act II. with the tribunes. Coriolanus overwhelms both the people and their leaders with abuse from their conversation with

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Menenius, although he has little sympathy with them, one is able to hear both sides of the question. How does he characterize the tribunes, and what do they say of him? Describe the way in which Volumnia and Virgilia talk of the tribunes of Coriolanus, and their reception of him. Up to this point Coriolanus and his mother have been at one, delighting in the exercise of his valour, and the fame it brings him. Now Volumnia says "there's one thing wanting" to fulfil her ambition for her son. What is this? How does Coriolanus answer her? What reasons have the tribunes for their enmity towards Coriolanus? What measures do they plan to take? What custom, hateful to Coriolanus, is he forced to undergo? Describe the demeanour of the citizens when with him, and when with their tribunes. How do the tribunes make them willing to revoke their decision that Coriolanus shall be consul? Notice how cunningly they try to escape the responsibility of what they suggest.

What opinions about Coriolanus are expressed in this Act by Sicinius, the officers, Menenius, Cominius?

Learn by heart:

II. i., page 53. "All tongues speak of him."

II. ii., page 59. "I shall lack voice."

What are the meanings of these words as used by Shakespeare: Censured, humorous, botcher, lockram, nicely, gawded, abram, voice, flouted?

What is meant by: Map of my microcosm, the most sovereign prescription in Galen, Amazonian chin, sworn brother?

Describe in your own words (a) Brutus's account of the offences of Coriolanus against the people (II. i., page 55, "We must suggest the people" to "sinking under them"); (b) Coriolanus's explanation to the citizen of his "flattery" of the people (II. iii., page 65, "I will, sir, flatter my sworn brother" to "consul").

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III

What is said of the Volscians by the Roman leaders at the beginning of this Act? What message is brought to Coriolanus and his friends by the tribunes, and how is it received? How does Coriolanus comment on the policy of the patricians, and how does he justify his attitude towards the people? What do you think of his opinions? Compare the behaviour of the other patricians towards the people and their tribunes with that of Coriolanus.

Sicinius says of Coriolanus, "He's a disease that must be cut away." Menenius answers, "O, he's a limb that has but a disease; Mortal, to cut it off; to cure it, easy." Who do you think is right? (Prove the worth of your opinion by reference to the play.) How far do you think Volumnia is responsible for the character of her son? (Study III. ii.) Is she right when she says, (a) "I have a heart as little apt as yours, But yet a brain that leads my use of anger To better vantage"; (b) "I mock at death with as big heart as thou"; (c) "Thy valiantness was mine, thou suck'dst it from me, But owe thy pride thyself"? What does Coriolanus consent to do? What charges do the tribunes arrange to bring against him? How long does his resolution to conduct himself "mildly" endure? What sentence is passed upon him, and how does he receive it?

Learn by heart:

III. i., page 76. "O good but most unwise patricians."

III. iii., page 95. "You common cry of curs."

Learn the meanings of the following words as used by Shakespeare, and notice those that are still of common occurrence, though with a slight change of meaning: Composition, prank (verb), repine, abused,

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rub (noun), confusion, take, tag, peremptory, kam, bolted, apt, vantage, policy, sounce, co presently, determined, contrive, abated.

Who says the following, and on what occasions?—

- (a) This must be patched
With cloth of any colour.
- (b) There is a world elsewhere.
- (c) What is the city but the people?
- (d) Bring in the crows
To peck the eagles.

Express in your own words the meaning of :

- (a) They do prank them in authority
Against all noble sufferance.
- (b) This paltering
Becomes not Rome, nor has Coriolanus
Deserved this so dishonoured rub, laid falsely
I' the plain way of his merit.
- (c) But now 'tis odds beyond arithmetic,
And manhood is called folly, when it stands
Against a falling fabric.

IV

What further idea of the training of Coriolanus in his boyhood do you gather from his words to his mother in IV. i. ? Does she at this crisis pay attention to her own precepts ? What is the emotion she first expresses—by what thought is it followed ? How does Coriolanus dissuade Cominius from accompanying him, and why is his friend Menenius unable to do so ? What do you think of the demeanour of the tribunes in IV. ii. and IV. vi., and of that of the servants of Aufidius in IV. v. ? What information about affairs in Antium is given in IV. iii. ? Is the emotion with which Aufidius receives Coriolanus feigned or genuine ? When does his old jealousy of Coriolanus assert itself ? Do you think

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that it was inevitable that this should happen? Describe the way in which the news that Marcius and Aufidius led an army against Rome is received by Cominius, Menenius, the tribunes, and the people.

Learn by heart :

IV. i., page 97. "Come, leave your tears."

IV. iv., page 104. "O world, thy slippery turns."

IV. v., page 107. "My name is Caius Marcius."

IV. v., page 108. "O Marcius, Marcius."

IV. vii., page 120. "All places yield to him."

Learn by heart the meanings of the following words as used in Act IV. : Extremity, used, cunning, fond, wot, still, cautelous, practice, repeal, advantage, moe, companions, batter, memory, clip, scotched, car-bonado, coxcombs.

V

What account does Cominius give of his visit to Coriolanus? Menenius is at last prevailed upon to go. To what does he think the failure of Cominius may have been due? Describe his attempt to pass the sentinels, and his interview with Coriolanus. The sentinels taunt him with his failure: how does he answer them, and what tribute does one of them pay him? Describe as vividly as you can the visit of the women to the Volscian camp, and the plea of Volumnia for Rome. What resolution does Aufidius make when Coriolanus yields to his mother's entreaty? In Act I. Coriolanus reproached the Roman people for their fickleness (see page 21). Who now suffers from it? What reasons does Aufidius give for his determination that Coriolanus shall die? Does he make any false accusation against him? For the second time Coriolanus is called "traitor." How does he receive the charge? Do all the Volscians turn against him? Describe the behaviour of Aufidius after his death.

ON THINKING IT OVER

Learn by heart :

V. i., page 124. "I tell you, he does so in gold."

V. iii., page 131. "Should I be silent?"

V. iii., page 133. "Nay, go not from us."

V. vi., pages 142-3. "Ay, Marcius, Caius Marcius."

Learn the meanings of the following words as used by Shakespeare in Act V. of this play: Offered, success, leasing, shent, fillip, epitome, flaw, bewray, reason, condition, coign, stoutness, subscribed, compounded, edges.

Who speaks the following passages? Shortly explain their meaning:

- (a) It is lots to blanks
My name has touched your ears.
- (b) Like a dull actor now,
I have forgot my part, and I am out,
Even to a full disgrace.
- (c) Ne'er through an arch so hurried the blown tide
As the recomforted through the gates.
- (d) He waged me with his countenance, as if
I had been mercenary.
- (e) If you have writ your annals true, 'tis there
That, like an eagle in a dovecote, I
Fluttered your Volscians in Corioles:
Alone I did it.

FOR OLDER STUDENTS

1. Tragedy shows the ruin of a great soul through some characteristic developed to excess, the "tragic trait." Macbeth's ambition, Lear's rashness, Antony's love of pleasure—these qualities lead those who possess them to actions which prove fatal to them. In what does the greatness of Coriolanus lie? What is his fault, and how does this undermine his character, and finally bring him to destruction?

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2. Read the following description of the "centre of the tragic impression" in Shakespearean tragedy, and, if you know any of the tragedies of Shakespeare, consider it with regard to them as well as to *Coriolanus* :

"A Shakespearean tragedy is never, like some mis-called tragedies, depressing. No one ever closes the book with the feeling that man is a poor mean creature. He may be wretched and he may be awful, but he is not small. His lot may be heart-rending and mysterious, but it is not contemptible. The most confirmed of cynics ceases to be a cynic when he reads these plays. And with this greatness of the tragic hero (which is not always confined to him) is connected what I venture to describe as the centre of the tragic impression. This central feeling is the impression of waste. With Shakespeare, at any rate, the pity and fear which are stirred by the tragic story seem to unite with, and even to merge in, a profound sense of sadness and mystery, which is due to this impression of waste." (Bradley.)

3. What the Greek philosopher Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) said of Greek tragedy has been, and probably will be, discussed in any theory of tragedy put forward by any critic of drama in the western world. This is his "definition," as translated by the English poet Dryden in the seventeenth century :

"Tragedy is the imitation of one entire, great, and probable action, not told but represented, which, by moving in us fear and pity, is conducive to the purging of those two passions in our mind."

This description is comprehensible, but perhaps a good deal of experience of life and in the various emotions excited by the dramatic representation of the tragedy of life is necessary before it is realized. Bear it in mind if you are interested in the substance of tragedy—and in the fact that its representation, whether in the "theatre of the mind" or that of reality, gives pleasure.

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4. Briefly describe the political issues in *Coriolanus*. Is it the primary interest of the play?

5. "*Coriolanus*" is a store-house of political commonplaces. Any one who studies it may save himself the trouble of reading Burke's *Reflections*, or Paine's *Rights of Man*, or the Debates in both Houses of Parliament since the French Revolution or our own.* The arguments for and against aristocracy or democracy, on the privileges of the few and the claims of the many, on liberty and slavery, power and the abuse of it, peace and war, are here very ably handled, with the spirit of a poet and the acuteness of a philosopher." (Hazlitt.)

Make a collection of the "arguments" to which Hazlitt alludes. Do you feel that Shakespeare shows a bias towards the patricians?

6. Hazlitt, discussing the treatment of the "cause of the people" in poetry, declares, "A lion hunting a flock of sheep or a herd of wild asses is a more poetical object than they; and we even take part with the lordly beast, because our vanity or some other feeling makes us disposed to place ourselves in the situation of the strongest party. . . . The insolence of power is stronger than the plea of necessity. The tame submission to usurped authority or even the natural resistance to it has nothing to excite or flatter the imagination: it is the assumption of a right to insult or oppress others that carries an imposing air of superiority with it. We had rather be the oppressor than the oppressed. The love of power in ourselves and the admiration of it in others are both natural to man: the one makes him a tyrant, the other a slave."

What do you think of this estimate of human nature? Have you read or seen any other play in which the cause of the people is represented—Gals-

* Of our own. This was written in 1817.

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worthy's *Strife* for instance? It is interesting to compare a modern "labour question" play with the political part of *Coriolanus*, and to study the representation of the leaders of the people in such a play in connection with Shakespeare's tribunes, Brutus and Sicinius.

7. Discuss Shakespeare's representation of the people, barring Sicinius and Brutus, and of the patricians, barring Coriolanus.

8. "He's vengeance proud, and loves not the common people." . . . And out of his noble carelessness lets them plainly see't. . . . He seeks their hate with greater devotion than they can render it him, and leaves nothing undone that may fully discover him their opposer. . . . Now, to seem to affect the malice and displeasure of the people is as bad as that which he dislikes, to flatter them for their love." (Conversation between the two "officers," *Coriolanus*, II.)

"Owen had the insidious modern disease of tolerance. He must tolerate everything, even a thing that revolted him." (D. H. Lawrence.)

"Man prospers in the struggle for life above all other creatures because he is able, rarely and with great difficulty, to see things not in a relation of use to himself." (Clutton Brock.)

Discuss the virtues and possible vices of tolerance.

9. Pride is placed first of the "seven deadly sins" that may destroy the soul of man; it is the "sin by which the angels fell." And yet the phrases "proper pride," "to take a pride in," denote a virtue, something akin to self-respect. Write a short essay on the quality of pride, making reference to Shakespeare's analysis of it in *Coriolanus*, and to any other treatment of it in literature. Show how far pride and egoism are related.

10. In Shakespeare's plays one often finds what is known as "dramatic irony." Some saying has, or proves to have, a second significance, unknown to the

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speaker. For instance, King Duncan tells Macbeth, in his admiration and gratitude, "More is thy due than more than all can pay," little dreaming that he is to pay him with "more than all," with life itself.

Notice instances of this "dramatic irony" as you are reading the play of *Coriolanus*.

11. Of the characters in Shakespeare's plays Coleridge says :

"The characters of the *dramatis personæ*, like those in real life, are to be inferred by the reader—they are not told to him. And it is well worth remarking that Shakespeare's characters, like those in real life, are very commonly misunderstood, and almost always understood by different persons in different ways. The causes are the same in either case. If you take only what the friends of the character say, you may be deceived, and still more so, if that which his enemies say; nay, even the character himself sees himself through the medium of his character, and not exactly as he is. Take all together . . . and perhaps your impression will be right; and you may know whether you have in fact discovered the poet's own idea, by all the speeches receiving light from it."

Collect the various opinions of Coriolanus expressed by the different persons of the play, and describe the impression of his character they give.

12. Like Lady Macbeth, Volumnia is a hero-worshipper, and, as Lady Macbeth sees her husband as king above men, wearing

"The golden round
Which fate and metaphysical aid doth seem
To have thee crowned withal,"

she sees her son as the mightiest of warriors, a human god of war. Evidently he is a man of grim and splendid mien—not only do his friends testify to this

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(read what Titus Lartius says, and Cominius, and Menenius, on pages 33-34, 36, and 135-136), but the tribunes acknowledge it in their complaint (page 54), and Aufidius. When he sees the stranger in his hall (page 107). But Volumnia has dreamed of him and pictured his prowess on the battlefields until there seems something superhuman in his appearance and achievements. (Read page 51, "These are the ushers of Marcius" to "and then men die.") Does Coriolanus see himself in the same way? (Read pages 89, 98, 130, etc.)

13. *Virgilia* plays a small part in the tragedy—"my gracious silence" Coriolanus calls her—but it is a part which it would be impossible to cut. A modern critic declares that she is the true heroine of the play—Volumnia being a thoroughly disagreeable woman. This may seem true to some critics, but an attempt to prove that Shakespeare intended to represent Volumnia in this light, and to make *Virgilia* the significant figure among the women, is not convincing. But it is interesting to see how *Virgilia*, a mere name in Plutarch's *Life*, has become a personality in Shakespeare's tragedy. Describe the contrast in the thoughts of Volumnia and *Virgilia* of Coriolanus on the field of battle (I. iii.). *Virgilia* is gentle, but she is not weak. Neither Volumnia nor Valeria can persuade her to alter her mind when it is made up (see I. iii.), and she is not afraid to tackle the tribunes after her husband is banished (see IV. ii.). In Plutarch's *Life* it is Volumnia who first addresses Coriolanus when the women visit him in the Volscian camp; in Shakespeare's play it is *Virgilia*. You will have felt the tenderness and beauty of his words to her—notice the change when he breaks from his wife to salute his mother, from love to love mingled with self-love, or self-admiration, which shows itself in those lines, "Sink, my knee, i' the earth" to "common sons."

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14. In Plutarch's *Life Valeria* is indeed "the noble sister of Publicola" and it is she who inspires the women to visit Coriolanus and plead for mercy. Is there any trace of this conception of her character in Shakespeare's play? Describe the impression of her personality in I. iii. It is interesting to find that when Nahum Tate remodelled *Coriolanus* for the Restoration (see page 195), he further developed Shakespeare's idea of Valeria, and she becomes in his version "an affected, talkative, fantastical lady" of the court of Charles II.

15. It has been said that this play is the tragedy of Volumnia rather than of Coriolanus. Discuss this point of view.

16. Describe the character of Menenius. Why is his part in the play an important one?

17. Make a study of the characters of Brutus and Sicinius. They have many traits in common—in what respects do they differ from one another?

18. The character of Aufidius, with its mingling of jealousy and of admiration for his rival, is an interesting one. Describe it, and consider Coleridge's criticisms of two of his speeches, which are as follows: (a) Of I. x., "Mine emulation" to "my hate to Marcius." "I have such deep faith in Shakespeare's heart-love, that I take for granted that this is in nature, and not as a mere anomaly; although I cannot in myself discover any germ of possible feeling, which could wax and unfold itself into such sentiment as this. However, I perceive that in this speech is meant to be contained a prevention of shock at the after-change in Aufidius's character." (b) Of IV. vii., "All places yield to him." "I have always thought this, in itself so beautiful speech, the least explicable from the mood and full intention of the speaker than any in the whole works of Shakespeare. I cherish the hope that I am mistaken, and that, becoming wiser, I shall discover some profound excellence

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in that, in which I now appear to detect an imperfection."

19. Describe the author characters in the play of *Coriolanus*.

20. Plutarch speaks of the children of Coriolanus, but no description is given of them; little Marcius is very much alive. Have you read any other plays in which Shakespeare introduces children?—*King John* (Prince Arthur), *Macbeth* (little Macduff), *A Winter's Tale* (Mamillius), *Richard III.* (the young Prince of Wales and his brother the Duke of York). If so, make a study of the small boys among his characters.

21. If you have studied the various plays mentioned in the following passage, discuss it fully; and if you have considered the nature of comedy, and the type of character with which it deals, justify or criticize Shaw's opinion of *Coriolanus*: "Falconbridge, Coriolanus, Leontes, are admirable descriptions of instinctive temperaments: indeed, the play of *Coriolanus* is the greatest of Shakespeare's comedies; but description is not philosophy, and comedy neither compromises the author nor reveals him. He must be judged by those characters into which he puts what he knows of himself, his Hamlets and Macbeths, and Lears and Prosperos."

22. A play, like a story, must have its beginning, middle, and end. The technical terms for these, with regard to a tragedy, are the *exposition*, the *conflict* (which rises to a *crisis*), and the *catastrophe*. Sometimes that part of the play between the crisis and the catastrophe is called the *counteraction*.

The exposition introduces the chief personages of the play, suggests their dominant characteristics and their relation to one another, and conveys enough of their history to make what is to come intelligible. Some conflict is foreshadowed. Coleridge points out that the first scene strikes a keynote, suggesting the "atmosphere" of the play.

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Illustrate this from the early scenes of *Coriolanus*.

The conflict is in many ways the most interesting part of the tragedy. It is this which differentiates a great tragedy from a mere sordid story of bloodshed and horror. The central figure of the tragedy, the "protagonist," is brought into contact with some enemy—sometimes, as in the case of *Othello*, so subtly that he does not realize it until defenceless against him. This "external conflict," as it is technically called, is sometimes accompanied by another conflict, that within the soul of the hero. *Hamlet* and *Brutus* are men at war with themselves. There is little, if any, of this soul-conflict in *Coriolanus*. Who are his enemies? Trace his conflict with them to the catastrophe of the play.

Where do you think the crisis, or turning-point, of the play occurs? After it, in tragedy, the fortunes of the hero are broken. You know that he will be unable to prevail, to build the fabric of his life firmly again, to achieve "success."

23. What are the difficulties of representing a battle on the stage? Notice that Shakespeare's way is to give a series of dramatic episodes; he does not, of course, attempt to show the charges of the older kind of warfare—which the modern kinema can do and the stage cannot. Describe these episodes so as to bring out their movement and variety.

24. Show on a sketch map of ancient Rome and the neighbouring tribes where the various events of the play are supposed to have taken place.

25. What scenes of this play are written in prose? If you have read other plays by Shakespeare, look at them again, and notice for what type of scene prose is invariably used. In his later plays, of which *Coriolanus* is one, Shakespeare uses rhyme to achieve certain definite effects. Consider the use of rhyme in *Coriolanus*.

26. The simplest form of blank verse, unrhymed

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iambic pentameter, is that in which the accent falls on every second syllable.

“Ye blocks, ye stones, ye worse than senseless things.”

It would, of course, be impossible for any one with an ear for the rhythm of words to use the same type of line over and over again without variation, unless to obtain some particular effect of monotony. There are many variations in the tune of iambic pentameter. These should be studied, and from time to time a verse passage set down as prose should be rewritten in its blank verse lines. Those who have a good ear for poetry read at once with observance of the harmony of blank verse; a slight over-emphasis of the rhythm will help those who do not easily detect it. From the earliest stages lines in which the sound echoes the sense with particular distinctness should be noticed, and attention called to the effect of long and short vowel sounds, liquid, sibilant, guttural, and explosive consonants. Then the differences in the style of Shakespeare's earlier and later verse should be considered. In the later plays an extra syllable will often be found after the cæsura, or mid-line pause, as well as at the end of the line. Sometimes the last accent of the line falls upon an unaccentable word, such as “and” or “for.” The number of “run-on” lines increases. This variation of pause makes a flexible dramatic verse. It has been said that Shakespeare's earlier verse proceeds line by line; his later, paragraph by paragraph.

Compare the construction of the verse in these two passages, one from *Richard III.*, written in 1593, one from *Coriolanus*, written sixteen years later.

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RICHARD'S ORATION TO HIS ARMY

What shall I say more than I have inferred ?
Remember whom you are to cope withal ;
A sort of vagabonds, rascals, and runaways,
A scum of Bretons, and base lackey peasants,
Whom their o'er-cloyed country vomits forth
To desperate ventures and assured destruction.
And who doth lead them but a paltry fellow,
Long kept in Bretagne at our mother's cost ?
A milk-sop, one that never in his life
Felt so much cold as over shoes in snow ?
Let's whip these stragglers o'er the seas again ;
Lash hence these overweening rags of France,
These famished beggars, weary of their lives ;
Who, but for dreaming on this fond exploit,
For want of means, poor rats, had hanged themselves :
If we be conquered, let men conquer us,
And not these bastard Bretons, whom our fathers
Have in their own land beaten, bobbed, and thumped,
And in record, left them the heirs of shame.
Fight, gentlemen of England ! fight, bold yeomen !
Draw, archers, draw your arrows to the head !
Spur your proud horses hard, and ride in blood ;
Amaze the welkin with your broken staves !

CORIOLANUS CHOOSES HIS SOLDIERS

Cominius. Take your choice of those
That best can aid your action.

Marcus. Those are they
That most are willing. If any such be here—
As it were sin to doubt—that love this painting
Wherein you see me smeared ; if any fear
Lesser his person than an ill report ;

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If any think brave death outweighs bad life
And that his country's dearer than himself ;
Let him alone, or so many so minded,
Wave thus, t'express his disposition,
And follow Marcins.

[*They all shout and wave their swords, take him
up in their arms, and cast up their caps.*]

O, me alone ! make you a sword of me ?
If these shows be not outward, which of you
But is four Volsces ? none of you but is
Able to bear against the great Aufidius
A shield as hard as his. A certain number,
Though thanks to all, must I select from all : the rest
Shall bear the business in some other fight,
As cause will be obeyed. Please you to march ;
And you shall quickly draw out my command,
Which men are best inclined.

27. In your lessons on the history of language :

(a) Look up the derivations of the following words, and distinguish their meanings as used by Shakespeare and in modern English :—abuse, addition, affection, atone, attach, avoid, battle, censure, changeling, companion, composition, condition, confound, demerit, disease, envy, estimate, favour, fond, gratify, house-keeper, humorous, inheritance, injurious, offer, opposite, out, owe, parcel, physical, possess, power, practice, preparation, presently, pretence, proper, rack, repeal, sensible, sinew, single, spot, still, success, take, translate, treaty, virtue, voice.

(b) Look up the derivations of the following words and their meaning in Shakespeare's *Coriolanus*, and note which are no longer in common use :—abate, abram, alarum, anon, audit, bait, bale, balm, batten, bewray, billet, bisson, bolt, botcher, brunt, bulk, buss, cankered, canon, capitulate, carbonado, cautelous, centurion, charter, choler, clip, cockle, coign, cony, corslet, coxcomb, doit, empiricute, epitome, fell (*adj.*),

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fillip, flamen, flaw, flout, fob, forset, fusty, gangrened, giber, gin (*verb*), girp, godden, guardant, havoc, husbandry, inkling, kam, leasing, lockram, lout, malkin, mammock, methinks, microcosm, mountebank, mulled, mummer, muniment, murrain, palter, percussion, portance, pother, pound, prank (*verb*), psaltery, puling, puny, quarry, rascal, recreant, reechy, roted, rub (*noun*), sackbut, sconce, scotch, sennet, shent, sowl, surcease, synod, tabor, tag (*noun*), tent (*verb*), tetter, unbarbed, undercrest, varlet, vaward, vouch, weal, weed, wot.

28. Do you remember on what occasions or of whom the following things are said :—(a) They'll sit by the fire, and presume to know what's done in the Capitol. (b) You shall not be the grave of your deserving. (c) We call a nettle but a nettle, and the faults of fools but folly. (d) The many-headed multitude. (e) What custom wills, in all things we should do't. (f) Suffer't, and live with such as cannot rule, nor ever will be ruled. (g) This Triton of the minnows. (h) What is the city but the people? (i) This must be patched with cloth of any colour. (j) I'll mountebank their loves. (k) O world, thy slippery turns! (l) I think he'll be to Rome as is the osprey to the fish, who takes it by sovereignty of nature. (m) I'll stand as if a man were author of himself, and knew no other kin. (n) Like an eagle in a dovecot, I fluttered your Volscians in Corioles: alone I did it! (o) Bring in the crows to peck the eagles. (p) 'Tis odds beyond arithmetic. (q) There is a world elsewhere.

29. From time to time, for the sake of testing your understanding of what you read, you should try to express a short passage of the play you are studying in modern prose. Every one knows that part of the meaning is bound up in the form, and you cannot get the *value* of the original passage in another rendering, but this exercise of paraphrasing does prove if you are reading with intelligence. In paraphrasing the

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following passages, do not necessarily reproduce the explanation of word or phrase given in the footnotes, for this is a mere explanation, and might fit in clumsily with your rendering.

(1) A very little thief of occasion will rob you of a great deal of patience.

(2) You are well understood to be a perfecter giber for the table than a necessary bencher in the Capitol.

(3) A letter for me ! it gives me an estate of seven years health ; in which time I will make a lip at the physician : the most sovereign prescription in Galen is but empiricotic, and, to this preservative, of no better report than a horse drench.

(4) The senate has letters from the general, wherein he gives my son the whole name of the war.

(5) He cannot temperately transport his honours
From where he should begin and end, but will
Lose those he won.

(6) Let's to the Capitol ;
And carry with us ears and eyes for the time,
But hearts for the event.

(7) Speak, good Cominius,
Leave nothing out for length, and make us
think

Rather our state's defective for requital
Than we to stretch it out.

(8) I cannot speak him home.

(9) Custom calls me to it :

What custom wills, in all things should we
do't,

The dust on antique time would lie unswept,
And mountainous error be too highly heapt
For truth to o'er-peer.

(10) He would pawn his fortunes
To hopeless restitution, so he might
Be called your vanquisher.

(11) If he have power

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Then veil your ignorance ; if none, awake
Your dangerous lenity.

- (12) My soul aches
To know, when two authorities are up,
Neither supreme, how soon confusion
May enter 'twixt the gap of both and take
The one by the other.
- (13) Put not your worthy rage into your tongue,
One time will owe another.
- (14) Do not cry havoc, where you should but
hunt
With modest warrant.
- (15) Lesser had been
The thwartings of your dispositions, if
You had not showed them how ye were dis-
posed
Ere they lacked power to cross you.
- (16) Let them accuse me by invention, I
Will answer in mine honour.

30. The following are some of the emendations made in the First Folio text of *Coriolanus* by various Shakespearcan editors. Discuss the value of these. (The context of the passages should be consulted.)

FOLIO I

EMENDATIONS

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>I. i., page 16.
To be <i>partly</i> proud.</p> | <p>To be <i>portly</i> proud
(Staunton).</p> |
| <p>I. i., page 18.
It <i>taintingly</i> replied.</p> | <p>It <i>tauntingly</i> replied
(Folio 4).</p> |
| <p>I. i., p. 22.
<i>Shooting</i> their emulation.</p> | <p><i>Shouting</i> their emulation
(Pope).</p> |
| <p>I. i., page 22.
The rabble should have
first <i>unroo'st</i> the city.</p> | <p>The rabble <i>should</i> have
first <i>unroofed</i> the city
(Theobald).</p> |

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I. iii., page 28.

At Grecian *sword*, *Contemning*, tell Valeria—

At Grecian *swords contending*: tell Valeria—
(Folio 4).

At Grecian *sword, contemning*: tell Valeria—
(Collier).

I. iv., page 31.

No, nor a man that fears
you *less* than he.

No, nor a man that fears
you *more* than he
(Johnson).

I. iv., page 33.

Thou wast a soldier
Even to *Calues* wish.

Thou wast a soldier
Even to *Cato's* wish
(Theobald).

I. v., page 34.

These movers that do
prize their *hours*.

These movers that do
prize their *honours*
(Rowe).

I. ix., page 42.

When steel grows soft, as
the parasite's silk,
Let him be made an *over-
ture* for th' wars.

When steel grows soft as
the parasite's silk,
Let him be made a *cover-
ture* for the wars
(Tyrwhitt).

I. x., page 45.

South the city *mills*.

South the city *a mile*
(Tyrwhitt).

II. i., page 48.

Your *beesome* conspectu-
ities.

Your *bisson* conspectuities
(Theobald).

II. i., page 48.

An orange-wife and a *for-
set-seller*.

fauset-seller (Folio 4).
fosset-seller (Rowe).
(A *fosset* is a faucet, or wine-
tap.)

II. i., page 53.

Your prattling nurse
Into a *rapture* lets her baby
cry.

Your prattling nurse
Into a *rupture* lets her
baby cry (Anon.).

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II. i., page 54.

The *Naples* vesture of
humility.

The *napless* vesture of
humility (Rowe).

II. i., page 55.

His soaring insolence
Shall *teach* the people.

His soaring insolence
Shall *touch* the people
(Hanmer).

II., iii., page 65.

Why in this *woolvisk tongue*
should I stand here?

Why in this *woolvisk* gown
. . . here (Folios 2, 3, 4)
Why in this *woolvisk toge*
. . . here (Malone).

II. iii., page 70.

And nobly nam'd, so twice
being Censor
Was his great ancestor.

And—nobly named so, twice
being censor—*Censor*
Was his great ancestor
(Spence).

And *Censorinus* nobly
named so,
Twice being *by the people*
chosen censor,
Was his great ancestor
(Cambridge editors).

III. i., page 74.

Cominius. You are like to
do such business.

Coriolanus. You are like
to do such business
(Theobald).

III. i., page 76.

'Twas from the *cannon*.

'Twas from the *canon*
(Rowe).

III. i., page 76.

O *God*! but most unwise
patricians.

O *good* but most unwise
patricians (Theobald).

III. i., page 83.

Were but *one* danger.

Were but *our* danger
(Theobald).

III. iii., page 96.

Making *but* reservation of
yourselves.

Making *not* reservation of
yourselves (Capell).

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IV. i., page 101.

Cats, that can judge as
fitly of his worth . . .

Curs . . . worth (Collier).

Bats . . . worth (Staunton).

Rats . . . worth (Gould).

IV. iii., page 102.

Your favour is well *ap-
peared* by your tongue.

Your favour is well *ap-
proved* by your tongue
(Steevens).

IV. vii., page 121.

Hath not a tomb so evi-
dent as a *chair*.

Hath not a tomb so evi-
dent as a *cheer* (Collier).

Hath not a *tongue* so elo-
quent as a chair
(Grant White).

Hath not a *tongue* so elo-
quent as a *choir*
(Bulloch).

V. i., page 122.

A pair of tribunes, that
wrack'd for Rome.

A pair of tribunes that
have *rack'd* for Rome
(Pope).

A pair of tribunes that
have *sack'd fair* Rome
(Hanmer).

A pair . . . *wreck'd fair*
Rome (Dyce).

V. ii., page 126.

I have ever *verified* my
friends.

I have ever *magnified* my
friends (Hanmer).

I have ever *amplified* my
friends (Hudson).

V. iii., page 130.

You gods ! I *pray*.

You gods ! I *prate*
(Theobald).

V. iii., page 130.

I hope to *frame* thee.

I *holp* to frame thee
(Pope).

V. iii., page 133.

The *five* strains of honour.

The *fine* strains of honour
(Johnson).

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V. iii., page 133.

And yet to *change* thy
sulphur with a bolt.

And yet to *charge* thy
sulphur with a bolt
(Warburton).

V. iii., page 138.

Unshoot the noise that
banished Marcius.

Unshout the noise that
banished Marcius
(Rowe).

31. There is some controversy as to the exact meaning of the following passages. Consider these, and decide which interpretation is right.

III. i., page 76 : " 'Twas from the canon."

(a) It was contrary to the canon, or law. (b) It was taken from, and so according to the law.

III. ii., page 88 : " And thus far having stretched it."

(a) " Stretched " means that Coriolanus has, as it were, stretched his character and will to achieve something distasteful to it—has made an unnatural difficult effort at conciliation. (b) " Stretched " means stretched out your hand, with your cap in it, and, as she speaks, Volumnia imitates the gesture of courtesy she wants Coriolanus to make.

IV. vii., page 121 : " But he has a merit—To choke it in the utterance."

(a) See rendering on page 121. (b) He has a merit for no other purpose than to destroy it by boasting it. (Johnson.)

IV. vii., page 121 :

" And power, unto itself most commendable,
Hath not a tomb so evident as a chair
To extol what it hath done."

(a) See rendering on page 121. (b) A man may have power, and deserve commendation, yet if his fellow-citizens choose, he may be blotted out, and

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not the slightest monument left to speak his praise. (Chambers.)

32. Discuss the various changes made by Shakespeare in adapting for the stage the story of Coriolanus as he found it in North's translation of Plutarch. (See page 159 *et seq.*) Make a detailed comparison of the extracts given from North's Plutarch with the corresponding passages of the play, and notice the effect of the additions Shakespeare has made. The two speeches of IV. v. show Shakespeare and North, and Shakespeare alone. "That of Coriolanus is Shakespeare putting North into blank verse; that of Aufidius is Shakespeare unalloyed. The first is good dramatic stuff, but the second is magnificent poetry." Do you feel this as you read?

33. There are many ways of representing Shakespearean plays. Originally they were acted on an apron stage without scenery, as we understand the term. The idea of reproducing the costume of the period to which the events of the play belong is a comparatively modern one. In the eighteenth century the actors and actresses generally appeared in the fashions of their time. In the nineteenth century, stage managers like Kean and Tree attempted the most elaborate and detailed realism in scenery and dress. Then Gordon Craig inaugurated a new way, designing settings which should suggest to the imagination the spirit and atmosphere of the tragedy or comedy, instead of showing the eye a multitude of realistic touches, which, correct enough in their way, may quite well fail in their purpose, and prove tiresome and absurd. ("I let my scenes grow out of not merely the play, but from broad sweeps of thought which the play has conjured up in me."—*The Art of the Theatre*. Gordon Craig.) In the modern theatre you may see a Shakespearean play staged against a curtained background, or realistically, or in the imaginative way suggested by Gordon Craig. The

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very latest notion has been to return to the old custom of disregarding period, and to play Shakespeare in modern dress, and with modern accessories.

Discuss these various ways of showing a Shakespearean play, and discover which you consider the most satisfying to the imagination.

34. Nothing is heard of *Coriolanus* on the stage, though it must have been presented there shortly after its composition, with Richard Burbage as the hero, until 1682, when, in common with many of Shakespeare's plays, it underwent alterations calculated to make it more acceptable to the taste of the time. Nahum Tate produced a version called *The Ingratitude of a Commonwealth, or the Fall of Caius Marcius Coriolanus*. In 1719 the famous actor Booth appeared in another modernized version, *The Invader of his Country, or the Fatal Resentment*, by John Dennis. In the latter half of the eighteenth century a hybrid form of the tragedy was staged, containing scenes from Shakespeare, and scenes from James Thomson's *Coriolanus, or the Roman Matron*. Some of Thomson's scenes were retained in Kemble's famous production at Drury Lane in 1789, when Mrs. Siddons triumphed as Volumnia, a part which must have been congenial to her. Kean, Phelps, Macready, and Irving gave notable renderings of Coriolanus. Discuss the following interpretations of the parts of Coriolanus and Volumnia and Menenius, described by critics who watched them.

(a) Mrs. Siddons as Volumnia :

" I remember her coming down the stage in the triumphal entry of her son, Coriolanus, when her dumb-show drew plaudits that shook the building. She came alone, marching and beating time to the music ; rolling (if that be not too strong a term to describe her motion) from side to side, swelling with the triumph of her son. Such was the intoxication of joy which flashed from her eye, and lit up her whole face, that the effect was tre-

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sistible. She seemed to me to reap all the glory of that procession to herself. I could not take my eye from her—Coriolanus, banner, pageant, and all, went for nothing to me after she had walked to her place.”

(Charles Mayne Young.)

(b) Ellen Terry as Volumnia :

“ . . . doing it all with an impulsive naturalness which we do not suppose to be in any respect after the awe-inspiring fashion of Sarah Siddons. For the Siddons tradition is a thing of the past. . . . It is in the third act that there comes the best scene in the play. Here Miss Terry rises to the height of the situation. She bends with a stately movement—

“ My mother bows ;
As if Olympus to a molehill should
In supplication nod——”

and then turns upon her son with the rage of a she-wolf.”
(*The Times*.)

(c) Edmund Kean as Coriolanus :

“ The intolerable airs and aristocratic pretensions of which Coriolanus is the slave, and to which he falls a victim, did not seem legitimate in Kean, but upstart, turbulent, and vulgar. Thus, his haughty answer to the mob who banish him—‘ *I banish you* ’—was given with all the virulence of execration, and rage of impotent despair, as if he had to strain every nerve and faculty of soul to shake off their hated power over him, instead of being delivered with calm, majestic self-possession, as if he remained rooted to the spot, and his least motion, word, or look must scatter them like chaff or scum from his presence.”
(Hazlitt.)

(d) Samuel Phelps as Coriolanus :

“ All hearts are secured for sympathy with the pride with which the hero resents the taunt of an enemy basely

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triumphant. His whole frame enlarges, and his hands press on the expanding breast, as he cries,

'Measureless liar, thou hast made my heart
Too great for what contains it.' "

(Morley.)

(e) J. H. Barnes as Menenius; and the representation of the plebeians at the Lyceum :

" An admirable study of the genial, smooth-tongued old man, so skilfully designed as a foil to the fiery, uncompromising Coriolanus. The audience notes the evident enjoyment with which the old fellow—who *s'écoute parler*—tells the crowd his story of the Belly and the Members. And what a crowd it is! As every one knows, the crowd is a protagonist in this play, and everything depends upon the power of the stage management to give it life, individuality, diversity. That power is certainly not lacking at the Lyceum. Whether the crowd is hooting or acclaiming Coriolanus, listening open-mouthed to its tribunes, or arguing fatuously with itself, we are made to feel that it is a genuine mob, and no mere pack of supernumeraries." (The Times.)

35. Take any passage or scene which has specially interested you in the reading of the play, and describe the way in which you think it ought to be spoken, and with what action it should be accompanied on the stage. If you see *Coriolanus* acted, notice which scenes, etc., gain by representation, and which, if any, lose.

36. Later editors have changed the following stage directions in Folio I. Look at the present directions, and suggest reasons for alterations made :

(a) I. i., page 23. Enter Sicinius Velutus, Annius Brutus, Cominius, Titus Lartius, with other Senators.

(b) I. viii., pages 39 and 40. Enter Martius and Aufidius at several doors.

Flourish. Alarum. A retreat is sounded. Enter at

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one door Cominius with the Romans : at another door Martius, with his arm in a scarf.

(c) II. ii., page 56. Enter two officers, to lay cushions, as it were, in the Capitol.

(d) II. ii., page 57. A sennet. Enter the Patricians, and the Tribunes of the People. Lictors before them : Coriolanus, Menenius, Cominius the Consul : Sicinius and Brutus take their places by themselves : Coriolanus stands.

(e) II. iii., page 62. Enter three of the citizens.

(f) IV. v., page 110. Enter two of the servingmen.

37. A new memorial theatre is to be erected at Stratford in place of the one burnt early this year (1926). Within the old theatre, round the base of the dome, went a passage from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*,* in letters of gold, and it is likely that somewhere in the new one some lines of Shakespeare's poetry will be blazoned. From the plays you know which lines would you choose for this purpose ?

38. Discuss these statements in class debate :

(a) The whole dramatic moral of *Coriolanus* is that those who have little shall have less, and that those who have much shall take all that others have left.

(Hazlitt.)

(b) This double † worship
... where gentry, title, wisdom,
Cannot conclude but by the yea or no
Of general ignorance,—it must omit
Real necessities, and give way the while
To unsightly slightness : purpose so barred, it follows,
Nothing is done to purpose. (*Coriolanus*, III. i.)

(c) What is the city but the people !

(*Coriolanus*, III. i.)

(d) We must face the fact that society is founded on intolerance. (G. B. Shaw, *St. Joan.*)

(e) Democracy is organized good will, and it is not

* Act V., Scene i., lines 12-17.

† Authority.

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to be achieved by the methods of hatred, cupidity, and exploitation. (Gilbert Cannan.)

(f) *First Serv.* Let me have war, say I ; it exceeds peace as far as day does night ; it's spritely, waking, audible, and full of vent. Peace is a very apoplexy, lethargy ; mulled, deaf, sleepy, insensible.

Sec. Serv. 'Tis so, and it makes men hate one another.

Third Serv. Reason ; because they then less need one another. The wars for my money.

(*Coriolanus*, IV. v.)

(g) Custom calls me to't :
What custom wills, in all things should we do't.
The dust on antique time would lie unswept,
And mountainous error be too highly heapt
For truth to o'er-peer. (*Coriolanus*, II. ii.)

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