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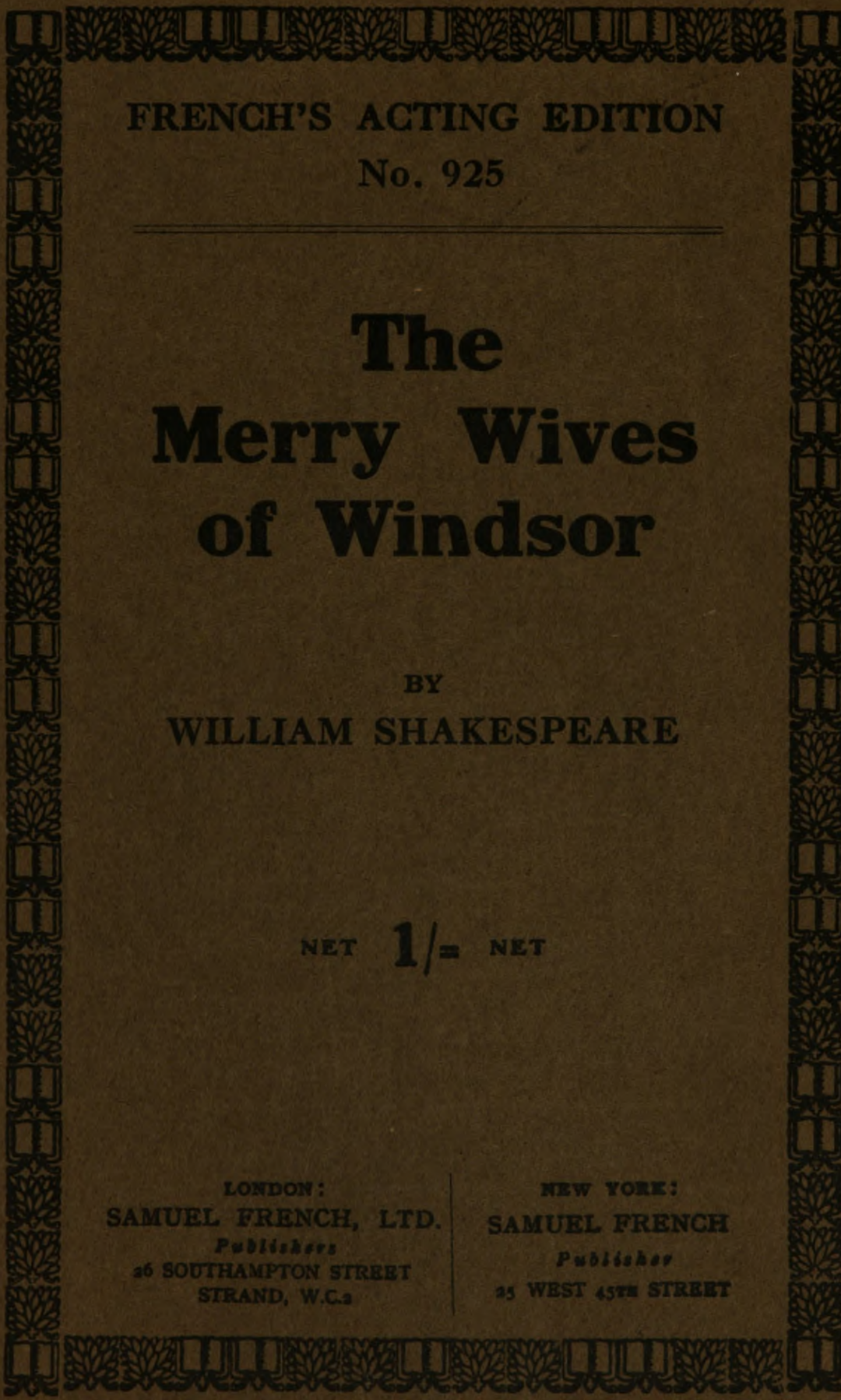
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Shakespeare



FRENCH'S ACTING EDITION

No. 925

**The
Merry Wives
of Windsor**

BY
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

NET 1/2 NET

LONDON:
SAMUEL FRENCH, LTD.
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THE
MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR.

A Comedy,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

LONDON
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MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR

CHARACTERS

SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

JUSTICE SHALLOW.

MASTER SLENDER.

MR. FORD.

MR. PAGE.

FENTON.

DR. CAIUS.

SIR HUGH EVANS.

HOCST OF THE GARTER.

PISTOL

NYM

BARDOLPH

}.....(*Falstaff's Retainers*).

ROBIN..... (*his Page*).

SIMPLE.....(*Servant to Slender*).

JOHN RUGBY.....(*Servant to Caius*).

MRS. FORD.

MRS. PAGE.

ANNE PAGE.

DAME QUICKLY.

Costumes.

SIR JOHN.—*First Dress:* white shirt, trimmed with scarlet, with long sleeves scalloped round the edges, and red cape with cardinal, broad brown leather waistbelt, with sword, and pouch on right side, red sleeves and hose, brown boots, red turban hat. *Second Dress:* A change of a portion of his dress after the immersion into the Thames, seems to be indispensable here. *Third Dress:* a green hunting shirt; a leathern skull cap with a pair of antlers.

FENTON.—Neat purple shirt rather short, with skirt and hanging sleeves scolloped, buff sleeves and tights, buff waistbelt, gypsire, dagger, purple morocco ankle boots, purple turban hat.

SHALLOW.—Long dark gown, with hanging sleeves, belt and gypsire, yellow stockings, and under sleeves, conical hat with brim turned up closely behind and extended in front; buff shoes.

SLENDER.—Short yellow shirt, with very large sleeves, yellow tights and black shoes, with pointed toes, high hat like *Shallow's*, waist belt and gypsire, straight sandy hair, rather long, and very little beard, as described in the text.

FORD.—*First Dress:* Green shirt, with scolloped hanging sleeves, stone-coloured tights and under sleeves, and stone-coloured waistbelt, with gypsire and dagger, black ankle boots, turban hat. *Second Dress:* Blue or red gown with hanging sleeves, hat, waistbelt and gypsire.

PAGE.—Light gray dress, trimmed with puce, same as *Ford's*.

EVANS.—Black tights and under sleeves, black open gown, with hanging sleeves, black caul cap, black shoes.

CAIUS.—Black tights and under sleeves, full red gown and hanging sleeves, trimmed with brown fur, brown fur cap with large red crown.

HOST.—Drab jerkin with hanging sleeves, tights, short black boots, brown leather belt and pouch, turban cap.

BARDOLPH.—Red and worn short shirt, with hanging sleeves, black under sleeves and tights, ankle boots, leather belt and pouch, and sword, drab hat like *Shallow's*, but old. *Second Dress:* Waiter's apron and cap.

PISTOL.—Red jerkin and hanging sleeves, drab tights, high boots, tall hat with large brim, broad leather waistbelt, pouch, and long sword, gauntlets.

NYM.—Red jerkin and blue tights, leather belt and sword, turban hat, all old and worn.

ROBIN.—Red shirt and cap, waistbelt and pouch, white stockings, ankle boots.

SIMPLE.—Yellow jerkin with short full sleeves, blue under sleeves and tights, shoes, hat with peaked brim.

RUGBY.—Black jerkin with short full sleeves, yellow under sleeves and tights, shoes and hat.

MRS. FORD.—Puce velvet body, laced down the front with gold cord, cut square at the neck, showing lace habit, the sleeves slashed with yellow satin, yellow satin skirt, looped up, showing puce satin petticoat, gilt cord girdle, holding chatelaine and gypsire; yellow stockings and puce shoes with yellow ties, gilt necklace and earrings (not too rich), laced headkerchief, showing beneath, a puce velvet caul-cap, slashed with yellow satin, and lightly trimmed with gold cord (the shape of the body may be seen in *Lacy's Female Costumes*, plate 108).

MRS. PAGE.—Green velvet body with violet satin skirts, the dress in all respects like that of Mrs. Ford's excepting that the colours are different; Mrs. Page has silver lace and chatelaine, scarlet stockings and green velvet shoes; she wears a green velvet cap.

ANNE PAGE.—Pure white merino dress, trimmed with blue velvet, and puffed with blue silk, her hair flowing down her back, she wears a small white caul cap, a blue belt with gypsire and chatelaine (see *Lacy's Female Costumes*, plate 119).

DAME QUICKLY.—A dull red stuff gown, white apron, black shoes, white cap beneath a black velvet caul cap, with long black lappets.

FAIRIES.—Long white gowns and masks; they should also wear white caps with a lighted taper in each; but high conical paper caps have been hitherto used. T. H. L.

REMARKS.

The first edition of this Comedy appeared under the following title, "A Most pleasaunt and excellent conceited Comedie of Syr *John Falsaffe*, and the Merrie Wives of *Windsor*. Entermixed with sundrie variable and pleasing humours, of Syr *Hugh the Welch Knight*, Iustice *Shallow*, and his wise Cousin, M. *Slender*. With the swaggering vaine of Auncient *Pistoll*, and Corporall *Nym*. By William Shakespeare. As it hath bene diuers times acted by the Right Honorable my Lord Chamberlaine's seruants. Both before her Maiestie, and else-where. London: Printed by T. C. for Arthur Johnson, and are to be sold at his shop in Powles Church-yard, at the sign of the Flower de Leuse and the Crowne, 1602." It is entered on the Stationers' Books 18th Jan., 1602 as assigned by John Busbye to Arth. Johnson (a copy of this edition was edited by Mr. Halliwell for the Shakespeare Society and published, 8vo., 1842). A second edition was issued by Johnson in 1619; it next appeared in the folio of 1623.

The action of this Play seems to be best placed by following that of the first part of Henry IV, and preceding the second part.

SCENERY.

ACT ONE.

SCENE 1.—Landscape View of Windsor, 5 g. Set Balustrade, cross stage, 4 g. Set Antique House, R. 3 E. practical door backed by interior.

SCENE 2.—Panel Chamber, 2 g., D. in F., R. C., practical, backed by interior.

ACT TWO.

SCENE 1.—Same as Scene 1st, Act 1, 5 g.

SCENE 2.—Plain Oak, 2 g.

SCENE 3.—Meadows, with View of Windsor, 4 g.

ACT THREE.

SCENE 1.—Landscape, 5 g. Set Tree, 3 g., centre. Well braced and cleats behind for *Slender* to climb up to opening.

SCENE 2.—Old Street, 1 g.

SCENE 3.—Antique Oak Chamber, 3 g. Arras to open, R. 2 E. Set door, L. 1 E. A fireplace in centre.

SCENE 4.—2 D., Oak, 1 g.

SCENE 5.—Plain Oak, 2 g.

ACT FOUR.

SCENE 1.—Same as 3rd Scene, Act 3rd, 3 g.

SCENE 2.—Antique House Flats, 2 g., D. F., R. C., practical, backed by interior.

SCENE 3.—Same as Act 2, Scene 2.

ACT FIVE.

SCENE 1.—Same as last.

SCENE 2.—Old Street, 1 g. (same as Act 3, Scene 2.)

SCENE 3.—Wood, 2 g.

SCENE 4.—Moonlight Wood, 5 g. Herne's Oak in c. Moon lighted.

PROPERTIES.

ACT ONE.

SCENE 1.—Crutch cane for *Sir John*. Salver with four wine glasses and pitcher of wine ready in house, R. 3 E., for *Anne Page*.

SCENE 2.—Two blank letters (alike) for *Sir John*.

SCENE 3.—Two antique chairs on. Blank letter and long gold-headed cane for *Dr. Caius*. Small green casket ready, D. F., R., for *Mrs. Quickly*. Scarlet cloak and two rapiers ready, D. F., R. C., for *Rugby*.

ACT TWO.

SCENE 1.—Two written letters for *Mrs. Ford* and *Mrs. Page*. Cane for *Ford*.

SCENE 2.—Plain table. One oak chair and large arm chair carried on from R. 2 E., and placed in centre, 1 g. Purse of money for *Ford*. Salver covered with a white napkin, on it a tankard of ale, and a napkin folked up on it, ready, L. 1 E., for *Bardolph*. Purse for *Falstaff*.

SCENE 3.—Scarlet cloak for *Dr. Caius*. Two rapiers for *Rugby*.

ACT THREE.

SCENE 1.—Hymn book for *Evans*. Rapier and *Evans'* cloak for *Simple*. Rapier for *Dr. Caius* and scarlet cloak.

SCENE 3.—Large buck basket, with two strong handles to it, containing a quantity of linen ready, L. 2 E. Bunch of door keys and cane for *Ford*.

SCENE 5.—Plain table in centre. On R. of table one oak chair. On L. of table a large arm chair. Salver covered with a white napkin, on it a quart tankard containing a gill of ale, and a folded napkin, ready, L. 1 E., for *Bardolph*.

ACT FOUR.

SCENE 1.—Large buck basket discovered in c., containing a quantity of linen, a very large bundle tied up in a white sheet and white muslin on top. Cane for *Ford*. Antique table and two chairs on L. Table, looking glass, two lighted candles, 3 R. E., and woman's dress complete with bonnet, &c., ready, R. 3 E., for *Sir John*.

ACT FIVE.

SCENE 2.—Eighteen children's rattles, and eighteen white conical paper caps for *Fairies*.

SCENE 3.—Buck's head and large heavy chains for *Sir John*. Four lighted torches for servants.

 Characters enter.

JUSTICE SHALLOW at page 7, 26, 35, 38, 42, 50, 65.	MRS. FORD—11, 23, 43, 55, 58, 60, 65, 66, 68.
SIR HUGH EVANS—7, 15, 37, 42, 47, 49, 58, 60—change 66, 67.	MRS. PAGE—11, 22, 41, 43, 46, 55, 59, 60, 66, 68.
MASTER SLENDER—7, 35, 38, 42, 50, 65, 68, 70.	SIMPLE—12, 15, 18, 19, 37, 38, 42.
PAGE—8, 14, 24, 35, 38, 42, 47, 48, 58, 60, 65, 68.	HOST—15, 26, 27, 35, 39, 42.
PISTOL—9, 15, 24, 28.	DAME QUICKLY—18, 19, 25, 28, 50, 51, 52, 63, 64.
NYM—9, 15, 24.	RUGBY—18 twice, 19, 20, 35, 39, 42.
BARDOLPH—9, 31 twice, 51.	CAIUS—19 twice, 20, 35, 39, 47, 49, 58, 60, 65, 68, 70.
FALSTAFF—9, 15, 28, 45, 47— change 51, 52, 55, 56—change 59—change 62, 64—change 66.	FENTON—21, 68, 70.
ROBIN—9, 15, 28, 31, 41, 44, 45, 46, twice	FORD—24—change 31, 41, 47, 48 —change 53—change 58, 60, 68.
ANNE PAGE—11, 13, 50—change 66, 67, 70.	SERVANTS—44, 47, 58, 68.
	FAIRIES—66.
	GENTLEMEN & NEIGHBOURS—68.

Time in Performance—2 hours 40 minutes.

THE
MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR.

ACT I.

SCENE FIRST—*A view of Windsor Castle in the distance ; set antique house, R. 3 E., with large door, practical ; set balustrade across the stage.*

Enter JUSTICE SHALLOW, SIR HUGH EVANS, and MASTER SLENDER, L. 1 E.

SHALLOW. (R. C.) Sir Hugh, persuade me not ; I will make a Star-chamber matter of it ; if he were twenty Sir John Falstaffs, he shall not abuse Robert Shallow, esquire.

SLENDER. (L. C.) In the county of Gloster, justice of peace, and *coram*.

SHALLOW. Ay, cousin Slender, and *Cust-alorum*.

SLENDER. Ay, and *ratolorum* too ; and a gentleman born, master parson ; who writes himself, *armigero*, in any bill, warrant, quittance, or obligation, *armigero*.

SHALLOW. Ay, that we do ; and have done any time these three hundred years.

SLENDER. All his successors, gone before him, have done't, and all his ancestors, that come after him, may ; they may give the dozen white luses in their coat.

SHALLOW. It is an old coat.

EVANS. The dozen white louses do pecome an old coat well ; it agrees well, passant ; it is a familiar peast to man, and signifies love.

SLENDER. I may quarter, coz ?

SHALLOW. You may, by marrying.

EVANS. It is marring, indeed, if he quarter it.

SHALLOW. Not a whit.

EVANS. Yes, py'r-lady ! if he has a quarter of your

coat, there is put three skirts for yourself, in my simple conjectures; put that is all one. If Sir John Falstaff have committed disparagements unto you, I will be glad to do my penevolence, to make atonements and compromises between you.

SHALLOW. Ha! o' my life, if I were young again, the sword should end it.

EVANS. It is petter that friends is the sword, and end it; and there is also another device in my prain, which, peradventure, prings goot discretions with it. There is Anne Page, which is daughter to master George Page, which is pretty virginity.

SLENDER. Mistress Anne Page? she has brown hair, and speaks small like a woman.

EVANS. It is that fery person for all the 'orld, as just as you will desire; and seven hundred pounds of moneys, and gold, and silver, is her grandsire upon his death's-bed give, when she is able to overtake seventeen years old. It were a goot notion if we leave our pribbles and prabbles, and desire a marriage petween master Apraham and mistress Anne Page.

SHALLOW. Did her grandsire leave her seven hundred pounds?

EVANS. Ay, and her father is make her a petter penny.

SHALLOW. I know the young gentlewoman; she has good gifts.

EVANS. Seven hundred pounds, and possibilities, is goot gifts.

SHALLOW. Well, let us see honest master Page. Is Falstaff there?

EVANS. Shall I tell you a lie? I do despise a liar, as I do despise one that is false, or as I despise one that is not true. The knight, Sir John, is there; and, I peseech you, pe ruled by your well-willers. I will peat the door for master Page. (*crosses and knocks at R. door*—SHALLOW and SLENDER confer apart, L. C.) What, hoa! pless your house here!

Enter PAGE, from house, R. 3 E.

PAGE. (R.) Who's there?

EVANS. (C.) Here is your friend, and justice Shallow;

and here young master Slender; that, peradventures, shall tell you another tale, if matters grow to your likings.

PAGE. I am glad to see your worships well; I thank you for my venison, master Shallow. (*crosses to R. C.*)

SHALLOW. Master Page, I am glad to see you. How doth good mistress Page?—and I thank you always with my heart, la; with my heart.

PAGE. Sir, I thank you. I am glad to see you, good master Slender.

SHALLOW. Is Sir John Falstaff here?

PAGE. Sir, he is within; and I would I could do a good office between you.

EVANS. It is spoke as a Christian ought to speak.

SHALLOW. He hath wronged me, master Page.

PAGE. Sir, he doth in some sort confess it.

SHALLOW. If it be confessed, it is not redressed; is not that so, master Page? He hath wronged me, indeed he hath; at a word, he hath; believe me, Robert Shallow, esquire, saith he is wronged.

PAGE. Here comes Sir John.

Enter PISTOL, NYM, BARDOLPH, FALSTAFF, *and* ROBIN, *from house, R.*

FALSTAFF. Now, master Shallow, you'll complain of me to the king?

SHALLOW. (*crosses to C.*) Knight, you have beaten my men, killed my deer, and broke open my lodge.

FALST. But not kissed your keeper's daughter?

SHALLOW. Tut, a pin! this shall be answered.

FALST. I will answer it straight; I have done all this; that is now answered.

SHALLOW. The Council shall know this.

FALST. 'Twere better for you, if it were known in counsel; you'll be laughed at.

EVANS. (*coming forward, L. C.*) *Pauca verba*, Sir John; goot worts.

ROBIN.

EVANS.

FALSTAFF. SHALLOW.

PISTOL.

PAGE.

NYM.

R. BARD.

SLENDER. L.

FALST. Good worts! good cabbage! (*crosses L. c.*)
Slender, I broke your head; what matter have you against me? (*retires up, L.*)

SLENDER. Marry, sir, I have matter in my head against you; and against your coney-catching rascals, Bardolph, Nym, and Pistol. They carried me to the tavern, and made me drunk, and afterwards picked my pocket.

BARD. (*stalking across to SLENDER, half drawing sword*)
You Banbury cheese! (*going up c., and behind to R.*)

SLENDER. Ay, it is no matter.

PISTOL. (*stalking across, imitating BARDOLPH*) How now, Mephistophilus? (*going round to R.*)

SLENDER. Ay, it is no matter.

NYM. (*same business as BARDOLPH*) Slice, I say! slice, that's my humour. (*round to R.*)

SLENDER. Where's Simple, my man? Can you tell, cousin?

EVANS. Peace, I pray you! Now let us understand: there is three umpires in this matter, as I understand, that is, master Page, *fidelicet*, master Page; and there myself, *fidelicet*, myself; and the three party is, lastly and finally, mine host of the Garter.

PAGE. We three, to hear it, and end it between them.

EVANS. Fery goot; I will make a prief of it in my note book; and we will afterwards 'ork upon the cause with as great discreetly as we can.

FALST. Pistol!

PISTOL. (*advancing, R.*) He hears with ears!

EVANS. What phrase is this, *He hears with ear*? Why, it is affectations.

FALST. Pistol, did you pick master Slender's purse?

SLENDER. (*L.*) Ay, by these gloves did he, or I would I might never come in mine own great chamber again else, of seven groats in mill-sixpences, and two Edward shovel-boards, that cost me two shillings and two pence a-piece of Yead Miller, by these gloves.

FALST. Is this true, Pistol?

EVANS. No; it is false, if it is a pick-purse.

PISTOL. (*crosses to EVANS*) Ha, thou mountain-foreigner!
Sir John, and master mine,
I combat challenge of this latten bilbo:

Word of denial in thy labras here. (*crosses to SLENDER*)

Word of denial; froth and scum, thou liest!

(*then goes up, crossing behind to R.*)

SLENDER. (L.) By these gloves, then 'twas he. (*to NYM*)

NYM. (*crosses to L. C.*) Be advised, sir, and pass good humours; I will say, *marry trap* with you, if you run the nut-hook's humour on me; that is the very note of it. (*goes up, crossing behind to R.*)

SLENDER. By this hat, then he in the red face had it; for though I cannot remember what I did when you made me drunk, yet I am not altogether an ass.

FALST. What say you, Scarlet and John?

BARD. (R.) Why, sir, for my part, I say the gentleman had drunk himself out of his five sentences.

EVANS. It is his five senses; fie, what the ignorance is!

BARD. And being fap, sir, was, as they say, cashiered; and so conclusions passed the careers.

SLENDER. Ay, you spake in Latin then too; but 'tis no matter; I'll never be drunk whilst I live again, but in honest, civil company, for this trick; if I be drunk, I'll be drunk with those that have the fear of heaven, and not with drunken knaves.

EVANS. So heaven 'udge me, that is a virtuous mind.

FALST. Ha, ugh! you hear. You hear all these matters denied, gentlemen, you hear it. (*PISTOL, BARDOLPH, and NYM retire up the stage in centre*)

Enter ANNE PAGE, R. 3 E., with wine, from R.

PAGE. Nay, daughter, carry the wine in; we'll drink within. *Exit ANNE to house, R.*

SLENDER. O, heaven! this is mistress Anne Page. (*following her*)

Enter MRS. FORD, L. 1 E.-- MRS. PAGE from house, R. 3 E.

PAGE. How now, mistress Ford?

FALST. Mistress Ford, by my troth, you are very well met; by your leave, good mistress. (*kissing her hand—FALSTAFF goes to them joyfully, offers them his arms, and conducts them off very lovingly into house, R.—ROBIN follows*)

PAGE. Wife, bid these gentlemen welcome. Come, we

have a hot venison pasty to dinner; come, gentleman, I hope we shall drink down all unkindness.

Exit, R.—PISTOL, NYM, and BARDOLPH advance towards SLENDER, and touch their sword-hilts threateningly—SLENDER shrinks in fear of them, and they exeunt in a very pompous manner, to house, R.)

SLENDER. I had rather than forty shillings I had my book of songs and sonnets here.

Enter SIMPLE, L. 1 E.

How now, Simple! where have you been? I must wait on myself, must I? You have not the book of riddles about you, have you?

SIMPLE. Book of riddles! why, did you not lend it to Alice Shortcake, upon Allhallowmas last, a fortnight afore Michaelmas?

SHALLOW. (R.) Come, coz—come, coz, we stay for you. A word with you, coz; marry, this, coz; there is, as 'twere, a tender, a kind of tender, made afar off, by Sir Hugh here; do you understand me?

SLENDER. Ay, sir, you shall find me reasonable; if it be so, I shall do that that is reason.

SHALLOW. Nay, but understand me.

SLENDER. So I do, sir.

EVANS. (C.) Give ear to his motions, master Slender; I will description the matter to you, if you be capacity of it.

SLENDER. Nay, I will do as my cousin Shallow says; I pray you pardon me; he's a justice of peace in his country, simple though I stand here.

EVANS. Put that is not the question; the question is concerning your marriage.

SHALLOW. Ay, there's the point, sir.

EVANS. Marry, is it; the very point of it; to mistress Anne Page.

SLENDER. Why, if it be so, I will marry her, upon any reasonable demands.

EVANS. But can you affection the 'oman? let us command to know that of your mouth, or of your lips; for divers philosophers hold, that the lips is parcel of the

mouth; therefore, precisely, can you carry your good will to the maid?

SHALLOW. Cousin, Abraham Slender, can you love her?

SLENDER. I hope, sir, I will do as it shall become one that would do reason.

EVANS. Nay, you must speak possitable, if you can carry her your desires towards her.

SHALLOW. That you must. Will you, upon good dowry, marry her?

SLENDER. I will do a greater thing than that, upon your request, cousin, in any reason.

SHALLOW. Nay, conceive me, conceive me, sweet coz; what I do, is to pleasure you, coz. Can you love the maid?

SLENDER. I will marry her, sir, at your request; but if there be no great love in the beginning, yet heaven may decrease it upon better acquaintance; when we are married, and have more occasion to know one another: I hope, upon familiarity will grow more contempt, but if you say, *marry her*, I will marry her, that I am freely dissolved, and dissolutely.

EVANS. It is a fery discretion answer; save the faul' is in the 'ort dissolutely; the 'ort is, according to our meaning, resolutely; his meaning is good.

SHALLOW. Ay, I think my cousin meant well.

SLENDER. Ay, or else I would I might be hang'd, la.

Enter ANNE PAGE, from house, R.

SHALLOW. Here comes fair mistress Anne. Would I were young, for your sake, mistress Anne.

ANNE. The dinner is on the table; my father desires your worships' company.

SHALLOW. I will wait on him, fair Mistress Anne!

Exit to house, R.

EVANS. Od's plessed will! I will not be absence at the grace.

Exit to house, R.

ANNE. (C.) Will't please your worship to come in, sir?

SLENDER. (L. C.) No, I thank you, forsooth, heartily; I am very well.

ANNE. The dinner attends you, sir.

SLENDER. I am not a-hungry, I thank you, forsooth!

Go, sirrah, for all you are my man, go, wait upon my cousin, Shallow. (*SIMPLE crosses behind, and exit to house, R.*) A justice of peace sometimes may be beholden to his friend for a man; I keep but three men and a boy yet, till my mother be dead. But what though? yet I live like a poor gentleman born.

ANNE. I may not go in without your worship; they will not sit till you come.

SLENDER. I'faith I'll eat nothing; I thank you as much as though I did.

ANNE. I pray you, sir, walk in.

SLENDER. I had rather walk here, I thank you: I bruised my shin the other day with playing at sword and dagger with a master of fence; three veneyes for a dish of stewed prunes; and, by my troth, I cannot abide the smell of hot meat since. Why do your dogs bark so? Be there bears i' the town?

ANNE. I think there are, sir; I heard them talk'd of.

SLENDER. I love the sport well; but I shall as soon quarrel at it, as any man in England. You are afraid, if you see the bear loose, are you not?

ANNE. Ay, indeed, sir.

SLENDER. That's meat and drink to me now; I have seen Sackerson loose twenty times; and have taken him by the chain; but I warrant you, the women have so cried and shriek'd at it, that it passed; but women, indeed, cannot abide 'em; they are very ill-favour'd rough things.

Enter PAGE, from house, R.

PAGE. Come, gentle master Slender, come; we stay for you.

SLENDER. I'll eat nothing; I thank you, sir.

PAGE. By cock and pye, you shall not choose, sir; come, come. *Exit into house, R. 3 E.*

SLENDER. Nay, pray you lead the way.

ANNE. Come on, sir.

SLENDER. Mistress Anne, yourself shall go first.

ANNE. Not I, sir; pray you keep on.

SLENDER. Truly I will not go first; truly-la; I will not do you that wrong.

ANNE. I pray you, sir.

SLENDER. I'll rather be unmannerly, than troublesome.
(*crosses to R.*) You do yourself wrong, indeed-la.

Exeunt to house, R. 3 E.

SCENE SECOND.—*The Garter Inn.*

Enter FALSTAFF, HOST, ROBIN, NYM, and PISTOL, R.

FALST. Mine host of the Garter.

HOST. What says my bully rook? Speak scholarly and wisely,

FALST. Truly, mine host, I must turn away some of my followers.

HOST. Discard, bully Hercules; cashier: let them wag; trot, trot.

FALST. I sit at ten pounds a week.

HOST. Thou'rt an emperor, Cæsar, Keisar, and Pheesar. I will entertain Bardolph; he shall draw, he shall tap; said I well, bully Hector?

FALST. Do so, good mine host.

HOST. I have spoke: let him follow. Let me see thee froth, and live. I am at a word: follow! *Exit Host, L.*

FALST. Bardolph, follow him! A tapster is a good trade; an old cloak makes a new jerkin; a withered servingman a fresh tapster. Go; adieu!

BARD. It is a life that I have desired; I will thrive.

Exit BARDOLPH, L.

PISTOL. O, base Hungarian wight! wilt thou the spigot wield?

NYM. He was gotten in drink! Is not the humour conceited? His mind is not heroic, and there's the humour of it.

FALST. I am glad I am so acquit of this tinder-box; his thefts were too open; his filching was like an unskilful singer—he kept not time.

NYM. The good humour is to steal at a minim's rest.

PISTOL. Convey, the wise it call. Steal! foh; a fico for the phrase.

FALST. Well, sirs, I am almost out at heels.

PISTOL. Why then let kibes ensue.

FALST. There is no remedy; I must coney-catch; I must shift.

PISTOL. Young ravens must have food.

FALST. Which of you know Ford, of this town?

PISTOL. I ken the wight; he is of substance good.

FALST. My honest lads, I will tell you what I am about.

PISTOL. Two yards and more.

FALST. No quips now, Pistol. Indeed I am in the waist two yards about; but I am now about no waist, I am about thrift. Briefly, I do mean to make love to Ford's wife; I spy entertainment in her; she discourses, she carves; she gives the leer of invitation; I can construe the action of her familiar style; and the hardest voice of her behaviour, to be English'd rightly, is, I am Sir John Falstaff's! (*crosses to L.*)

PISTOL. (R. C.—*aside to NYM*) He hath studied her well; and translated her well, out of honesty into English.

FALST. Now, the report goes, she has all the rule of her husband's purse; she hath a legion of angels!

NYM. (R.) The humour rises; it is good; humour me the angels.

FALST. I have writ me here a letter to her; and here another to Page's wife; who even now gave me good eyes too, examined my parts with most judicious eye-liads; sometimes the beam of her view gilded my foot, sometimes my portly chest. (*crosses to R.*)

PISTOL. (L.) Then did the sun on dunghill shine.

NYM. I thank thee for that humour.

FALST. (*crosses to C.*) O, she did so course o'er my exteriors with such a greedy intention, that the appetite of her eye did seem to scorch me up like a burning glass. (*a long, vain self-conceited chuckle*) Here's another letter to mistress Ford! She bears the purse too; she is a region in Guiana, all gold and bounty. I will be cheater to them both, and they shall be exchequers to me; they shall be my East and West Indies, and I will trade to them both. Go, bear thou this letter to mistress Page; and thou this to mistress Ford; we will thrive, lads, we will thrive.

PISTOL. (L.) Shall I Sir Pandarus of Troy become; and by my side wear steel? Then, Lucifer, take all! (*goes up stage in a pompous manner, and stands L. of ROBIN*)

NYM. (R.) I will run no base humour; here, take the

humour letter! (*gives him letter*) I will keep the 'haviour of reputation. (*goes up stage in a pompous manner, and stands R. of ROBIN*)

FALST. (C.) Hold, sirrah; (*to ROBIN, who is up C., comes down L. C.*) bear you these letters tightly. (*gives letters to ROBIN*) Sail like my pinnace to these golden shores.

Exit ROBIN, L. 1 E.—FALSTAFF goes to L., turns and speaks.

Rogues, hence, avaunt! (*drives them round stage to R.*)

Vanish like hailstones, go :

Trudge, plod away o' the hoof; seek shelter, pack !

Falstaff will learn the humour of this age,

French thrift, you rogues; myself, and skirted page.

Exit, L. 1 E.

PISTOL. Let vultures gripe thy gut; for gourd and fullam holds !

And high and low beguile the rich and poor;

Tester I'll have in pouch when thou shalt lack,

Base Phrygian Turk !

NYM. (R.) I have operations in my head, which be humours of revenge.

PISTOL. (L.) Wilt thou revenge ?

NYM. By welkin, and her star !

PISTOL. With wit or steel? (*going to L. 1 E.*)

NYM. With both humours : (*going to R. 1 E.*)

I will discover the humour of his love to Ford.

PISTOL. And I to Page shall eke unfold,

How Falstaff, varlet, vile,

His dove will prove, his gold will hold,

And his soft couch defile.

Exeunt PISTOL, L. 1 E., and NYM, R. 1 E.

SCENE THIRD.—*Antique Chamber in Dr. Caius's House ; door in flat, R.*

Enter MRS. QUICKLY, with a letter, and SIMPLE, R.

QUICK. What ! John Rugby !

Enter RUGBY, L.

I pray thee, go to the casement, and see if you can see

my master Doctor Caius, coming ; if he do, i' faith, and find any body in the house, here will be an old abusing of Heaven's patience, and the king's English.

RUGBY. I'll go watch.

QUICK. Go ; and we'll have a posset for't soon at night, in faith, at the latter end of a sea-coal fire. (*Exit RUGBY, L.*)

An honest, willing, kind fellow, as ever servant shall come in house withal ; and, I warrant you no tell-tale ; his worst fault is that he is given to prayer ; he is something peevish that way, but nobody but has his faults. But let that pass ; Peter Simple you say your name is ?

SIMPLE. Ay, for fault of a better.

QUICK. And master Slender's your master ?

SIMPLE. Ay, forsooth.

QUICK. Does he not wear a great round beard like a glover's paring knife ?

SIMPLE. No, forsooth ! He hath but a little, wee face, with a little yellow beard—a cane-coloured beard.

QUICK. A softly-sprighted man, is he not ?

SIMPLE. Ay, forsooth ; but he is as tall a man of his hands as any is between this and his head ; he hath fought with a warrener.

QUICK. How say you ? O, I should remember him ! Does he not hold up his head as it were, and strut in his gait ?

SIMPLE. Yes, indeed does he.

QUICK. Well, heaven send Anne Page no worse fortune ! Tell master Parson Evans I will do what I can for your master ; Anne is a good girl, and I wish——

Enter RUGBY, L.

RUGBY. Out, alas ! here comes my master. *Exit L.*

QUICK. We shall all be shent. Run in here, good young man ; go into this closet. (*shuts SIMPLE in the closet, R. door in flat*) He will not stay long. What, John Rugby ! John, what John, I say ! Go, John ; go enquire for my master ; I doubt, he be not well, that he comes not home. (*singing*) And down, down, a down-a etc.

Enter DOCTOR CAIUS, L. 1 E.

CAIUS. Vat is you sing ? I do not like dese toys.

Pray you, go and vetch me in my closet *un boitier verd*; a box, a green-a box: Do intend vat I speak? a green-a box.

QUICK. Ay, forsooth, I'll fetch it you. I am glad he went not in himself; if he had found the young man, he would have been horned mad. *Exit door in flat, R.*

CAIUS. *Fe, fe, fe, fe! ma foi, il fait fort chaud. Je m'en vais à la Cour,—la grande affaire.*

Re-enter MRS. QUICKLY, with a green box, door in flat, R.

QUICK. Is it this, sir?

CAIUS. *Oui; mette le au mon pocket. Dépêche quickly.* (MRS. QUICKLY puts box into his pouch) Vere is dat knave, Rugby?

QUICKLY. What John Rugby! John!

Enter RUGBY, L.

RUGBY. Here, sir.

CAIUS. You are John Rugby, and you are Jack Rugby; Come, take-a your rapier, and come after my heel to de court.

RUGBY. 'Tis ready, sir, here in the porch.

CAIUS. By my trot, I tarry too long:—Od's me' *Qu'ay j'oubliè?* dere is some simples in mon closet, that I vill not for the varld I shall leave behind.

Exit R. door in flat.

QUICKLY. Ah me! he'll find the young man there, and be mad.

CAIUS. (*within*) *O diable; diable!* Vat is in mon closet? Villainy! *larron!* Rugby, my rapier!

Enter CAIUS from door in flat, R., pulling SIMPLE out by the collar.

QUICK. (R.) Good master, be content.

CAIUS. (C.) Verefore shall I be content-a?

QUICK. The young man is an honest man.

CAIUS. Vat sall de honest man do in mon closet? dere is no honest man dat sall come in mon closet.

QUICK. I beseech you, be not so phlegmatic; hear the truth of it. He came of an errand to me from parson Hugh.

CAIUS. Vell.

SIMPLE. (L.) Ay, forsooth, to desire her to——

QUICK. Peace, I pray you.

CAIUS. Peace-a *your* tongue. (to SIMPLE) Speak-a your tale.

SIMPLE. To desire this honest gentlewoman, your maid, to speak a good word to mistress Anne Page for my master, in the way of marriage.

QUICK. This is all, indeed, la; but I'll ne'er put my finger in the fire, and need not.

CAIUS. Sir Hugh send-a you? Rugby, *baillez* me some papier. Tarry you a little while on that spot. (CAIUS places SIMPLE on L. C., and goes off door in flat, R. with RUGBY)

QUICK. Man, I'll do your master what good I can; and the very yea and the no is, the French doctor, my master. I may call him my master, look you, for I keep his house; and I wash, wring, brew, bake, scour, dress meat and drink, make the beds, and do all myself.

SIMPLE. 'Tis a great charge, to come under one body's hand. (*going L. C. by degrees*)

QUICK. Are you avis'd o' that? You shall find it a great charge. And to be up early and down late; but notwithstanding, (to tell you in your ear; I would have no words of it;) my master himself is in love with mistress Anne Page; but, notwithstanding that, I know Anne's mind—that's neither here nor there.

CAIUS. (*within door in flat*) Come along, Jack Rugby. (SIMPLE runs back to L. C. where CAIUS placed him)

Enter CAIUS and RUGBY from door in flat, R., with a letter—RUGBY with CAIUS's red cloak and rapier.

CAIUS. You jac'nape; give-a dis letter to Sir Hugh: by gar, it is a shallenge; I vill cut his troat in de park; and I vill teach a scurvy jack-a-nape priest to meddle or make;—you may be gone; it is not good you tarry here.

Exit SIMPLE, L. 1 E.

QUICK. Alas, he speaks but for his friend.

CAIUS. It is no matter for dat:—do not you tell-a me dat I shall have Anne Page for myself? By gar. I vill kill the Jack priest; and I vill appoint mine host of de

Jarterre to measure our weapon. By gar, I vill myself have Anne Page.

QUICK. Sir, the maid loves you, and all shall be well.

CAIUS. (*taking his scarlet cloak from RUGBY, Mrs. QUICKLY giving him his cane and hat*) Rugby, come to the court vid me. By gar, if I have not Anne Page, I shall turn your head out of my door. Follow my heels, Rugby. (*CAIUS going L., RUGBY runs and treads on his heels*) Ah! Jack-a-dandy, I tell you follow my heels, not tread on my heels. *Exeunt CAIUS and RUGBY, L.*

QUICK. You shall have an fool's-head of your own. No, I know Anne's mind for that; never a woman in Windsor knows more of Anne's mind than I do; nor can do more than I do with her, I thank heaven.

FENTON. (*within, L.*) Who's within there, ho?

QUICK. Who's there, I trow?

Enter FENTON, L. I. E.

FENTON. How now, good woman; how dost thou?

QUICK. The better, that it pleases your good worship to ask.

FENTON. What news—how does pretty mistress Anne?

QUICK. In truth, sir, and she is pretty, and honest, and gentle; and one that is your friend, I can tell you that by the way; I praise heaven for it.

FENTON. Shall I do any good, thinkest thou; shall I not lose my suit?

QUICK. Troth, sir, all is in his hands above; but, notwithstanding, master Fenton, I'll be sworn on a book, she loves you. Have not your worship a wart above your eye?

FENTON. Yes, marry, have I: what of that?

QUICK. Well, thereby hangs a tale; good faith, it is such another Nan; but I detest, an honest maid as ever broke bread; we had an hour's talk of that wart; I shall never laugh but in that maid's company! But, indeed, she is given to much to allicholly and musing. But for you—Well, go to.

FENTON. Well, I shall see her to-day. Hold, there's money for thee; let me have thy voice in my behalf; if thou seest her before me, commend me.

QUICK. Will I? ay, i' faith, that I will, and I will tell

your worship more of the wart the next time we have confidence : and of other wooers.

FENTON. Well, farewell ; I am in great haste now.

Exit, L. 1 E.

QUICK. Farewell to your worship. Truly, an honest gentleman ; but Anne loves him not ; I know Anne's mind as well as another does. Out upon't ! what have I forgot ?

Exit, R.

END OF ACT THE FIRST.

ACT II.

SCENE FIRST.—*Windsor Castle in the distance*—PAGE'S House, R. 3 E. (as in Act 1, Scene 1)

Enter MRS. PAGE, reading a letter, from house, R. 3 E.

MRS. PAGE. What, have I 'scap'd love letters in the holiday-time of my beauty, and am I now a subject for them ? Let me see. (*reads*)

"Ask me no reason why I love you ! for, though love use reason for his physician, he admits him not for his counsellor ! You are not young, no more am I ; go to then, there's sympathy ; you are merry, so am I. Ha, ha ! then there's more sympathy : You love sack, and so do I : Would you desire better sympathy ? Let it suffice thee, mistress Page, (at the least, if the love of soldier can suffice,) that I love thee : I will not say pity me ! 'tis not a soldier-like phrase ; but I say love me. By me,

Thine own true knight,

By day or night

Or any kind of light,

With all his might,

For thee to fight. JOHN FALSTAFF."

What a Herod of Jewry is this ? O, wicked, wicked world ! What an unweigh'd behaviour has this Flemish drunkard picked out of my conversation, that he dares in this manner assay me ? Why, he hath not been thrice in my company ! How shall I be revenged on him ? for revenged I will be, as sure as—

Enter MRS. FORD, L. 1 E.

MRS. FORD. (L.) Mrs. Page! trust me, I was going to your house.

MRS. PAGE. (R.) And trust me, I was coming to you. You look very ill.

MRS. FORD. Nay, I'll ne'er believe that; I have to show to the contrary.

MRS. PAGE. 'Faith, but you do, in my mind.

MRS. FORD. Well, I do then; yet I say, I could show you to the contrary: O, Mistress Page, give me some counsel!

MRS. PAGE. What's the matter, woman;

MRS. FORD. O woman, if it were not for one trifling respect, I could come to such honor!

MRS. PAGE. Hang the trifle, woman; take the honor: What is it? dispense with trifles:—what is it?

MRS. FORD. If I would but go to perdition for an eternal moment, or so, I could be knighted.

MRS. PAGE. What? thou liest! Sir Alice Ford!

MRS. FORD. Here, read, read; perceive how I might be knighted. I shall think the worse of fat men, as long as I have an eye to make difference of men's liking. Oh! what tempest, I trow, threw this whale, with so many tons of oil in his belly, ashore at Windsor? How shall I be revenged on him? (MRS. FORD reads letter—a copy of MRS. PAGE'S—aloud on L.—MRS. PAGE looking over her letter aside, when MRS. FORD comes to the words "Mrs. Ford.")

MRS. PAGE. (*stops her*) Mrs. Page.

MRS. FORD. No—Ford! (*they compare letters and laugh*) Did you ever hear the like?

MRS. PAGE. Letter for letter! but that the name of Page and Ford differs! To thy great comfort in this mystery of ill opinions, here's the twin-brother of thy letter; but let thine inherit first; for, I protest, mine never shall. I warrant, he hath a thousand of these letters, writ with blank space for different names.

MRS. FORD. Why, this is the very same; the very hand, the very words. What doth he think of us?

MRS. PAGE. Nay, I know not: It makes me almost

ready to wrangle with my own honesty. I'll entertain myself like one that I am not acquainted withal; for sure, unless he knew some strain in me, that I know not myself, he would never have attacked me in this fury, Let's be revenged on him; let's appoint him a meeting; give him a show of comfort in his suit; and lead him on with a fine-baited delay, till he hath pawn'd his horses to mine host of the Garter.

MRS. FORD. Nay, I will consent to act any villany against him, that may not sully the chariness of our honesty. Oh, that my husband saw this letter! it would give eternal food to his jealousy.

MRS. P. Why look where he comes—and my good man too; he's as far from jealousy as I am from giving him cause; and that I hope is an immeasurable distance.

MRS. FORD. You are the happier woman.

MRS. PAGE. Let's counsel together against this greasy knight. Come hither! *They retire up R., and off.*

*Enter PAGE with NYM, and FORD with PISTOL, L. 1 E.
PAGE crosses behind to R. C.*

FORD. (L. C.) Well, I hope it be not so.

PISTOL. Hope is a curtail-dog in some affairs:

Sir John affects thy wife;

FORD. Why, sir, my wife is not young,

PISTOL. He wooes both high and low, both rich and poor,
Both young and old, one with another, Ford;
He loves thy gally-mawfry; Ford, perpend.

FORD. Love my wife?

PISTOL. With liver burning hot: Prevent, or go thou,
Like Sir Actæon he, with Ringwood at thy heels—
O, odious is the name!

FORD. What name, sir?

PISTOL. The horn, I say. (*holding his fingers over his forehead*) Farewell.

Take heed; have open eye; for thieves do foot by night;

Take heed, ere summer comes, or cuckoo birds do sing.

Away, sir Corporal Nym. (*cross L.*)

Believe it, Pago, he speaks sense.

Exit, L.

FORD. (C.) I will be patient; I will find out this.
(*retires up, c.*)

NYM. (L.) And this is true; I like not the humour of lying. He hath wronged me in some humours. I should have borne the humoured letter to her; but I have a sword, and it shall bite upon my necessity. He loves your wife; there's the short and the long. My name is Corporal Nym; I speak and I avouch. 'Tis true; my name is Nym, and Falstaff loves your wife. Adieu! I love not the humour of bread and cheese. Adieu!

Exit, L.

PAGE. (R.) *The humour of it*, quoth'a! here's a fellow frights humour out of his wits.

FORD. I will seek out Falstaff.

PAGE. I never heard such a drawling, affecting rogue.

FORD. If I do find it, well. (*comes forward*)

PAGE. (R.) I will not believe such a Cataian, though the priest o' the town commended him for a true man.

FORD. (L.) 'Twas a good sensible fellow; well.

MRS. PAGE, and MRS. FORD *advance from R. U. E.*

PAGE. How now, Meg?

MRS. PAGE. Whither go you, George?—hark you.

MRS. FORD. How now, sweet Frank? why art thou melancholy?

FORD. I melancholy? I am not melancholy. Get you home, go.

MRS. FORD. 'Faith, thou hast some crotchets in thy head now—will you go, mistress Page?

MRS. PAGE. Have with you—you'll come to dinner, George? (*going*) Look, who comes yonder; she shall be our messenger to this paltry knight. (*aside to MRS. FORD*)

Enter MRS. QUICKLY, L.

MRS. FORD. (*aside to MRS. PAGE*) Trust me, I thought on her—she'll fit it.

MRS. PAGE. You are come to see my daughter, Anne?

QUICK. Ay, forsooth. And I pray, how does good mistress Anne?

MRS. PAGE. Go in with us and see; we have an hour's talk with you.

Exeunt MRS. PAGE, MRS. FORD, and MRS. QUICKLY,
to house R.

PAGE. How now, master Ford?

FORD. You heard what this knave told me; did you not?

PAGE. Yes; and you heard what the other told me!

FORD. Do you think there is truth in them?

PAGE. Hang 'em, slaves! I do not think the knight would offer it; but these that accuse him in his intent towards our wives, are a yoke of his discarded men—very rogues now they be out of service.

FORD. Were they his men?

PAGE. Marry, were they.

FORD. I like it never the better for that—does he lie at the Garter?

PAGE. Ay, marry, does he. If he should intend this voyage towards my wife, I would turn her loose to him; and what he gets more of her than sharp words, let it lie on my head.

FORD. I do not misdoubt my wife; but I would be loth to turn them together. A man may be too confident. I cannot be thus satisfied. (*crosses to R.*)

PAGE. Look where my ranting host of the Garter comes; there is either liquor in his pate, or money in his purse, when he looks so merrily.

Enter HOST, L.

How now, mine host?

HOST. How now, bully-rook? Thou'rt a gentleman. (*calling off, L.*) Cavalero-justice, I say!

Enter SHALLOW, L.

SHALLOW. I follow, mine host, I follow. (*crosses to PAGE, R.*) Good even, and twenty, good master Page. Master Page, will you go with us? we have sport in hand.

SHALLOW. Sir, there is a fray to be fought, between Sir Hugh the Welsh priest, and Caius the French doctor.

FORD. Good mine host o' th' Garter, a word with you.

HOST. What say'st thou, my bully-rook? (FORD and HOST retire up in conversation)

SHALLOW. Will you go with us to behold it? My merry host hath had the measuring of their weapons; and I think he hath appointed them contrary places; for, believe me, I hear the parson is no jester. Hark, I will tell you what our sport shall be. (SHALLOW and PAGE retire up conversing—FORD and HOST advance)

HOST. (R. C.) Hast thou no suit against my knight, my guest-cavalier?

FORD. (C.) None, I protest! but I'll give you a pottle of burnt sack to give me recourse to him, and tell him my name is Brook; only for a jest.

HOST. Thy hand, bully; thou shalt have egress and regress; said I well? and thy name shall be Brook. It is a merry knight. (*crosses to L.*, SHALLOW and PAGE come down L. C.) Will you go and hear? *Exit* HOST, L.

SHALLOW. Have with you, mine host.

PAGE. I have heard the Frenchman hath good skill in his rapier.

SHALLOW. Tut, sir, I could have told you more; in these times you stand on distance, your passes, stoccadoes, and I know not what; 'tis the heart, master Page; 'tis here, 'tis here! I have seen the time, with my long sword, I would have made you four tall fellows skip like rats.

Re-enter HOST, L.

HOST. Here, boys, here, here! shall we wag?

PAGE. Have with you. (PAGE *crosses*, L.) I had rather hear them scold than fight.

Exeunt HOST, SHALLOW, and PAGE, L.

FORD. (*thoughtfully*) Though Page be a secure fool, and stand so firmly on his wife's frailty, yet I cannot put off my opinion so easily. She was in his company at Page's house; and what they made there, I know not. Well, I will look further into't; and I have a disguise to sound Falstaff. If I find her honest, I lose not my labour; if she be otherwise, 'tis labour well bestowed. *Exit*, L.

SCENE SECOND.—*The Garter Inn (2nd grooves)**Enter FALSTAFF and PISTOL, L.*

FALST. I will not lend thee a penny.

PISTOL. Why, then the world's mine oyster, which I with sword will open.

FALST. Not a penny. I have been content, sir, you should lay my countenance to pawn; I have grated upon my good friends for three reprieves for you and your coach-fellow, Nym; or else you had looked through the grate like a gemini of baboons. I am damned in fire for swearing to gentlemen, my friends, you were good soldiers, and tall fellows; and when mistress Bridget lost the handle of her fan, I took't upon mine honour, thou hadst it not.

PISTOL. Didst thou not share? hadst thou not fifteen pence?

FALST. Reason, you rogue, reason. Think'st thou I'll endanger my soul *gratis*? At a word, hang no more about me, I am no gibbet for you; go! You'll not bear a letter for me, you rogue! you stand upon your honour! Why, thou unconfined baseness, it is as much as I can do, to keep the terms of my honour precise. I, I, I myself sometimes, leaving the fear of heaven on the left hand, and hiding mine honour in my necessity, am fain to shuffle, to hedge, and to lurch; and yet you, rogue, will ensconce your rags, your cat-a-mountain looks, your red-lattice phrases, and your bold-beating oaths, under the shelter of your honour! You will not do it, you?

PISTOL. I do relent. What wouldst thou more of man?

Enter ROBIN, L. 1 E.

ROBIN. Sir, here's a woman would speak with you.

FALST. Let her approach. (ROBIN *brings forward table and chairs, then exit, L. 1 E.*) Hence, rogue, avaunt! (PISTOL *goes entreatingly to FALSTAFF, who raises his cane to strike him*) Go steal and hang! *Exit PISTOL, L. 1 E.*

Enter MISTRESS QUICKLY, L. 1 E.

QUICK. Give your worship good-morrow.

FALST. Good-morrow, good wife.

QUICK. Not so, an't please your worship.

FALST. Good maid, then.

QUICK. I'll be sworn, as my mother was, the first hour I was born.

FALST. I do believe the swearer. What with me?

QUICK. Shall I vouchsafe your worship a word or two?

FALST. Two thousand, fair woman; and I'll vouchsafe thee the hearing.

QUICK. There is one mistress Ford, sir. I pray, come a little nearer this ways. I myself dwell with master Doctor Caius. (*in loud whisper*)

FALST. Well, on; mistress Ford, you say?—

QUICK. Your worship says very truly. I pray, your worship, come a little nearer this ways.

FALST. I warrant thee nobody hears. Well: mistress Ford; what of her?

QUICK. Why, sir, she's a good creature. Lord, lord! your worship's a wanton. Well, heaven forgive you, and all of us, I pray.

FALST. Mistress Ford; come, mistress Ford—

QUICK. Marry, this is the short and the long of it. You have brought her into such a canaries, as 'tis wonderful. The best courtier of them all, when the court lay at Windsor, could never have brought her to such a canary. Yet there has been knights and lords, and gentlemen with their coaches; I warrant you, coach after coach, letter after letter, gift after gift; smelling so sweetly, (all musk) and so rushling, I warrant you, in silk and gold; and in such alligant terms; and in such wine and sugar of the best, and the fairest, that would have won any woman's heart; and, I warrant you, they could never get an eye-wink of her.—I had myself twenty angels given me this morning; but I defy all angels, (in any such sort, as they say) but in the way of honesty:—and, I warrant you, they could never get her so much as sip on a cup with the proudest of them all: and yet there has been earls, nay, which is more, pensioners; but, I warrant you, all is one with her.

FALST. But what says she to me? Be brief, my good she-Mercury.

QUICK. Marry, she hath received your letter; for which she thanks you a thousand times; and she gives you to notify, that her husband will be absence from his house between ten and eleven.

FALST. Ten and eleven?

QUICK. Ay, forsooth; and then you may come and see the picture, she says, that you wot of; master Ford, her husband, will be from home. Alas! the sweet woman leads an ill life with him; he's a very jealous man; she leads a very rumpold life with him, good heart.

FALST. Ten and eleven. Woman, commend me to her; I will not fail her.

QUICK. Why, you say well. But I have another messenger to your worship. Mistress Page hath her hearty commendations to you too; and, let me tell you in your ear, she's as vartuous a civil modest wife, and one, I tell you, that will not miss you morning nor evening prayer, as any is in Windsor, whoe'er be the other; and she bade me tell your worship, that her husband is seldom from home; but, she hopes there will come a time. I never knew a woman so dote upon a man; surely I think you have charms, la; yes, in truth.

FALST. Not I, I assure thee; setting the attraction of my good parts aside, I have no other charms.

QUICK. Blessing on your heart for't!

FALST. But, I pray thee, tell me this; has Ford's wife and Page's wife acquainted each other how they love me?

QUICK. That were a jest, indeed! they have not so little grace, I hope; that were a trick, indeed! But mistress Page would desire you to send her your little page, of all loves; her husband has a marvellous infection to the little page. You must send her your page; no remedy.

FALST. Why, I will.

QUICK. And look you, he may come and go between you both; and, in any case, have a nay-word, that you may know one another's mind, and the boy never need to understand anything; for 'tis not good that children should know any wickedness; old folks, you know, have discretion, as they say, and know the world.

FALST. Fare thee well; commend me to them both; there's my purse. (*gives money*) I am yet thy debtor.—Boy!

Enter ROBIN, L. 1 E.

Go along with this woman.

Exeunt MRS. QUICKLY and ROBIN, L. 1 E.

This news distracts me. Say'st thou so, old Jack? go thy ways; I'll make more of thy old body than I have done. Will they yet look after thee? Wilt thou after the expense of so much money, be now a gainer? Good body, I thank thee. Let them say 'tis grossly done; so it be fairly done, no matter.

Enter BARDOLPH, L., with a tankard of sack.

BARD. Sir John, there's one master Brook below would fain speak with you, and be acquainted with you; and hath sent your worship a morning's draught of sack.

FALST. (*tastes sack*) Brook, is his name?

BARD. Ay, sir.

FALST. Call him in.

Exit BARDOLPH, L. 1 E.

Such Brooks are welcome to me, that o'erflow such liquor. Ah, ah! mistress Ford and mistress Page, have I encompassed you? go to; *via!*

Re-enter BARDOLPH with FORD, disguised, L.

FORD. Bless you, sir.

FALST. And you, sir; would you speak with me?

FORD. I make bold, to press with so little preparation upon you.

FALST. You're welcome. What's your will? Give us leave, drawer. (*crosses to L.*) *Exit* BARDOLPH, L.

FORD. Sir, I am a gentleman that have spent much my name is Brook.

FALST. (L.) Good master Brook, I desire more acquaintance of you. (*drinks to him*)

FORD. Good Sir John, I sue for yours; not to charge you; for I must let you understand, I think myself in better plight for a lender than you are; the which hath something emboldened me to this unseasoned intrusion; for they say, if money go before, all ways do lie open.

FALST. Money is a good soldier, sir, and will on.

FORD. Troth, and I have a bag of money here troubles me; if you will help me to bear it, Sir John, take all, or half, for easing me of the carriage.

FALST. Sir, I know not how I may deserve to be your porter.

FORD. I will tell you, sir, if you will give me the hearing.

FALST. Speak, good master Brook; I shall be glad to be your servant. (*they sit, FORD, R., FALSTAFF, L.*)

FORD. Sir, I will be brief with you. You have been a man long known to me, though I had never so good means, as desire, to make myself acquainted with you. I shall discover a thing to you, wherein I must very much lay open mine own imperfection; but, good Sir John, as you have one eye upon my follies, as you hear them unfolded, turn another into the register of your own, that I may pass with a reproof the easier, sith you yourself know how easy it is to be such an offender.

FALST. Very well, sir;—proceed.

FORD. There is a gentlewoman in this town, her husband's name is Ford.

FALST. (*looks suspiciously at him*) Well, sir!

FORD. I have long loved her, and, I protest to you, bestowed much on her; followed her with a doating observance; engrossed opportunities to meet her; fee'd every slight occasion, that could but niggardly give me sight of her; not only bought many presents to give her, but have given largely too many to know what she would have given; briefly, I have pursued her as love hath pursued me, which hath been on the wing of all occasions. But whatsoever I have merited, either in my mind, or in my means, need I am sure I have received none, unless experience be a jewel, that I have purchased at an infinite rate; and that hath taught me to say this,—

Love like a shadow flies, when substance love pursues;
Pursuing that that flies, and flying what pursues.

FALST. Have you received no promise of satisfaction at her hands?

FORD. Never.

FALST. Have you importuned her to such a purpose?

FORD. Never.

FALST. Of what quality was your love then?

FORD. Like a fair house, built upon another man's

ground ; so that I have lost my edifice, by mistaking the place where I erected it.

FALST. To what purpose have you unfolded this to me ?

FORD. When I have told you that, I have told you all. Some say, that though she appear honest to me, yet in other places she enlargeth her mirth so far, that there is shrewd constructions made of her. Now, Sir John, here is the heart of my purpose. You are a gentleman of excellent breeding, (*SIR JOHN rises and bows to FORD, who rises*) admirable discourse, of great admittance, authentic in your place and person, generally allowed for your many warlike, courtlike, and learned preparations.

FALST. O, sir !

FORD. Believe it, for you know it. There is money ; spend it, spend it—spend more ! spend all I have : only give me so much of your time in exchange of it, as to lay an amiable siege to the honesty of this Ford's wife ; use your art of wooing, win her to consent to you ; if any man may, you may as soon as any.

FALST. Would it apply well to the vehemency of your affection, that I should win what you would enjoy ? Methinks you prescribe to yourself very preposterously.

FORD. O, understand my drift. She dwells so securely on the excellence of her honour, that the folly of my soul dares not present itself ; she is too bright to be looked against. Now, could I come to her with any detection in my hand, my desires had instance and argument to commend themselves. I could drive her then from the ward of her purity, her reputation, her marriage vow, and a thousand other defences, which now are too strongly embattled against me. What say you to't, Sir John ?

FALST. Master Brook, I will first make bold with your money ; next, give me your hand ; and last, as I am a gentleman, you shall, if you will, enjoy Ford's wife.

FORD. O, good sir !

FALST. Master Brook, I say you shall.

FORD. Want no money, Sir John, you shall want none.

FALST. Want no mistress Ford, master Brook, you shall want none. I shall be with her (I may tell you) by her own appointment ; even as you came in to me, her assistant or go-between parted from me : I say I shall be with her

between ten and eleven, for at that time the jealous rascally knave, her husband, will be forth. Come you to me at night; you shall know how I speed.

FORD. I am blessed in your acquaintance. Do you know Ford, sir?

FALST. Hang him, poor wittoldly knave. I know him not: yet I wrong him to call him poor; they say, the jealous knave hath masses of money: for the which his wife seems to me well favoured. I will use her as the key of the wittoldly rogue's coffer; and there's my harvest-home.

FORD. I would you knew Ford, sir: that you might avoid him, if you saw him.

FALST. Hang him, mechanical salt-butter rogue! I will stare him out of his wits; I will awe him with my cudgel: it shall hang like a meteor o'er the wittold's horns. Master Brook, thou shalt know I will predominate o'er the peasant; and thou shalt lie with his wife. (*crosses to R.*) Come to me soon at night. Ford's a knave, and I will aggravate his style; thou, master Brook, shalt know him for knave and wittold. Come to me soon at night. *Exit, R.*

FORD. What a damned Epicurean rascal is this! My heart is ready to crack with impatience. Who says this is improvident jealousy? My wife hath sent to him, the hour is fixed, the match is made. Would any man have thought this? See the hell of having a false woman! My bed shall be abused, my coffers ransacked, my reputation gnawn at; and I shall not only receive this villanous wrong, but stand under the adoption of abominable terms, and by him that does me this wrong. Terms! names!—Amaimon sounds well; Lucifer, well; Barbason, well; yet they are devils' additions—the names of fiends: but wittold! wittold! the devil himself hath not such a name. Page is an ass—a secure ass; he will trust his wife—he will not be jealous; I will rather trust a Fleming with my butter; I will rather trust parson Hugh the Welshman, with my cheese, or an Irishman with my aqua-vitæ bottle, or a thief to walk my ambling gelding, than my wife with herself: then she plots, then she ruminates, then she devises; and

what they think in their hearts they may affect—they will break their hearts but they *will* affect. Heaven be praised for my jealousy! Eleven o'clock the hour; I will prevent this, detect my wife, be revenged on Falstaff, and laugh at Page. I will about it; better three hours too soon, than a minute too late. Fie, fie, fie! wittold, wittold, wittold! *Exit L.—clear stage.*

SCENE THIRD.—*Windsor Park.*

Enter CAIUS and RUGBY, R. U. E.

CAIUS. Jack Rugby.

RUGBY. Sir.

CAIUS. Vat is de clock, Jack?

RUGBY. 'Tis past the hour, sir, that Sir Hugh promised to meet.

CAIUS. By gar, he has save his soul, dat he is no come; he has pray his Bible vell, dat he is no come: by gar, Jack Rugby, he is dead already, if he be come.

RUGBY. He is wise, sir; he knew your worship would kill him if he came.

CAIUS. By gar, de herring is no dead so as I vill kill him. Take your rapier, Jack; I vill tell you how I vill kill him.

RUGBY. Alas, sir, I cannot fence. (*retreating*)

CAIUS. Villany, take your rapier! (*follows thrusting at him*)

RUGBY. Forbear! here's company.

Enter HOST, SHALLOW, PAGE, and SLENDER, L. 2 E.

HOST. 'Bless thee, bully doctor.

SHALLOW. (C.) 'Save you, master doctor Caius.

PAGE. (L. C.) Now, good master doctor.

SLENDER. Give you good-morrow, sir.

CAIUS. (R.) Vat be all you, one, two, three, four, come for?

HOST. (R. C.) To see thee fight, to see thee foin, to see thee traverse; to see thee here, to see thee there; to see thee pass thy punto, thy stock, thy reverse, thy distance, thy montant. Is he dead, my Ethiopian? Is he dead,

my Franciso? ha, bully! What says my Æsculapius? my Galen? my heart of elder? Ha! is he dead, bully Stale?—is he dead?

CAIUS. By gar, he is de coward Jack of de vorld, he is not show his face.

HOST. Thou art a Castilian! Hector of Greece, my boy!

CAIUS. I pray you, bear vitness that me have stay six or seven, two three hours for him, and he is no come.

SHALLOW. He is the wiser man, master doctor; he is a curer of souls, and you are a curer of bodies; if you should fight, you go against the hair of your professions; is it not true, master Page?

PAGE. Master Shallow, you have yourself been a great fighter, though now a man of peace.

SHALLOW. Body-kins, master Page, though I now be old, and of the peace, if I see a sword out, my finger itches to make one; though we are justices, and doctors, and churchmen, master Page, we have some salt of youth in us; we are the sons of women, master Page.

PAGE. 'Tis true, master Shallow.

SHALLOW. It will be found so, master Page. Master doctor Caius, I am come to fetch you home. I am sworn of the peace; you have shown yourself a wise physician, and Sir Hugh hath shown himself wise and a patient churchman; you must go with me, master doctor.

HOST. Pardon, guest justice. A word, monsieur mock-water.

CAIUS. Mock-vater! vat is dat?

HOST. Mock-water, in our English tongue, is valour, bully.

CAIUS. By gar, then I have as much mock-vater as de Englishman. Scurvy-jack-dog! by gar, me vill cut his ears.

HOST. He will clapper-claw thee tightly, bully.

CAIUS. Clapper-de-claw! vat is dat?

HOST. That is, he will make thee amends.

CAIUS. By gar, me do look, he shall clapper-de-claw me; for, by gar, me vill have it.

HOST. And I will provoke him to't, or let him wag.

CAIUS. Me tank you for dat. (*goes up to RUGBY, back c.*)

HOST. And moreover, bully,—but first master guest, and master Page, and eke cavalero Slender, go you

through the town to Frogmore. (*aside to PAGE and SHALLOW*)

PAGE. Sir Hugh is there, is he?

HOST. He is there; see what humour he is in; and I will bring the doctor about by the fields; will it do well?

SHALLOW. We will do it.

ALL. Adieu, good master doctor.

Exeunt PAGE and SHALLOW, L.

SLENDER. Oh! sweet Anne Page! *Exit, L.*

CAIUS. By gar, me vill kill de Welshman? for he speak for a jack-an-ape to Anne Page.

HOST. Let him die; but, first, sheath thy impatience; throw cold water on thy choler; go about the fields with me through Frogmore; I will bring thee where mistress Anne Page is, at a farm house a feasting; and thou shalt woo her; said I well?

CAIUS. By gar, me tank you for dat; by gar, I love you, and I shall procure-a you de good guest, de earl, de knight, de lords, de gentleman, my patients.

HOST. For the which, I will be thy adversary towards Anne Page; said I well?

CAIUS. By gar, 'tis good; vell said.

HOST. Let us wag then.

CAIUS. Come at my heels, Jack Rugby. (*RUGBY follows behind CAIUS, in doing so he treads on his heels—CAIUS turns and threatens him—exeunt L.*)

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

SCENE FIRST.—*Frogmore. (A large set tree in centre for Slender to climb and look through the branches to observe the action of scene on stage.)*

Enter EVANS, R. 3 E., with a book in his hand, followed by SIMPLE, with Evans' black gown and rapier.

EVANS. (R.) I pray you now, goot master Slender's serving man, and friend Simple py your name, which way have you looked for master Caius, that calls himself Toctor of Physic?

SIMPLE. (L.) Marry, sir, the City-ward, the Park-ward, every way; Old Windsor way, and every way but the town way.

EVANS. I most feheemently desire you, you will also look that way.

SIMPLE. I will, sir.

Exit, L. 2 E.

EVANS. Pless my soul! how full of cholers I am, and trempling of mind! I shall be glad if he have deceived me; how melancholies I am! I will knog his medicals about his knave's costard, when I have goot opportunities for the 'ork; pless my soul! (*he reads two lines and sings —then reads and sings the last two*)

Py shallow rivers, to whose falls
Melodious pirds sing madrigals;
There will we make our peds of roses,
And a thousand vagrant posies.
Py shallow——

Mercy on me! I have a great dispositions to cry

(*sings*) Melodious pirds sing madrigals.
When as I sat in Papylon,
And a thousand vagrant posies.
Py shallow——

Enter SIMPLE, L. 2 E.

SIMPLE. Yonder he is, coming this way, Sir Hugh.

EVANS. He's welcome.

(*sings*) Py shallow rivers, to whose falls——
Heaven prosper the right! What weapons is he?

SIMPLE. No weapons, sir. There comes my master, master Shallow, and another gentleman from Frogmore, over the stile, this way.

EVANS. 'Pray you, give me my gown; or else keep it in your arms.

Enter PAGE, SHALLOW, and SLENDER, L. 2 E.

SHALLOW. (C.) Good-morrow, good Sir Hugh. Keep a gamester from the dice, and a good student from his book, and it is wonderful.

SLENDER. (L.) Ah, sweet Anne Page!

PAGE. (L. C.) 'Save you, good Sir Hugh

EVANS. (R.) 'Pless you from his mercy sake, all of you.

SHALLOW. What! the sword and the word! do you study them both, master parson?

PAGE. And youthful still, in your doublet and hose, this raw rheumatic day?

EVANS. There is reasons and causes for it.

PAGE. We are come to you to do a good office, master EVANS.

EVANS. Fery well; what is it?

PAGE. Yonder is a most reverend gentleman, who, belike, having received wrong by some person, is at most odds with his own gravity and patience, that ever you saw.

SHALLOW. I have lived fourscore years and upward; I never heard a man of his place, gravity, and learning so wide of his own respect.

EVANS. What is he?

PAGE. I think you know him; master Doctor Caius, the renowned French physician.

EVANS. Got's will, and his passion o' my heart! I had as lief you would tell me of a mess of porridge.

PAGE. Why?

EVANS. He has no more knowledge in Hippocrates and Galen,—and he is a knave pesides; a cowardly knave, as you would desire to pe acquainted withal.

PAGE. I warrant you, he's the man should fight with him.

SLENDER. O, sweet Anne Page! (*goes up*)

SHALLOW. It appears so, by his weapons. Keep them asunder; here comes Doctor Caius.

Enter HOST, CAIUS *and* RUGBY, L. 2 E.

PAGE. Nay, good master parson, keep in your weapon.

SHALLOW. So do you, good master doctor.

PAGE. Disarm them, and let them question. (*PAGE and HOST take the rapiers from them*) Let them keep their limbs whole, and hack our English. (*retires up, R.*)

CAIUS. (*to EVANS*) I pray you, let a-me speak a word vit your ear. Verefore vill you not meet a-me?

EVANS. (*R.*) Pray you use your patience; in goot time.

CAIUS. (*L.*) By gar, you are de coward, de Jack dog, John ape. (*the others laugh*)

SLENDER.	PAGE.	SHALLOW.	HOST.	RUGBY.	SIMPLE.
B.	EVANS.			CAIUS.	L.

EVANS. Pray you, let us not be laughing-stogs to other men's humors; I desire you in friendship, and I will one way or other make you amends; I will knog your pottles about your knave's cogs-combs, for missing your meetings and appointments. *(they struggle and clasp each other, fall down and roll over and over; after awhile they are separated by PAGE and HOST. PAGE assists EVANS and supports him on his knee; HOST assists CAIUS and supports him on his knee, where they are held by PAGE and HOST. they rise three times and attempt to get at each other, but are held back by PAGE and HOST. During the fight SLENDER ascends tree in c. and says, "Sweet Anne Page." RUGBY and SIMPLE go through the same business at back that is done in front by their masters. SHALLOW picks up CAIUS' cloak and gives it to RUGBY. CAIUS and EVANS are now released.*

CAIUS. *Diable!* Jack Rugby, mine *Host de Jarterre*, have I not stay for him, to kill him? have I not at de place I did appoint?

EVANS. As I am a Christians soul, now, look you, this is the place appointed; I'll be judgment by mine host of Garter. *(EVANS and CAIUS advance c. to renew the fight; HOST comes between them and stops it)*

HOST. Peace, I say, Gallia and Gaul, French and Welsh, soul-curer and body-curer.

CAIUS. Ay, dat is very good! excellent!

HOST. Peace, I say; hear mine host of the Garter. Am I politic? am I subtle? am I a Machiavel? Shall I lose my doctor? no, he gives me the potions and the motions. Shall I lose my parson? my priest? my sir Hugh! no; he gives me the proverbs and no-verbs. Give me thy hand, terrestrial. *(CAIUS gives hand to HOST)* So: Give me thy hand, celestial. *(EVANS gives hand to HOST, the HOST then brings them together and joins their hands in token of reconciliation)* So. Boys of art, I have deceived you both; I have directed you to wrong places; your hearts are mighty, your skins are whole, and let burnt sack be the issue. Come *(crosses, L.)* lay thy swords to pawn. Follow me, lad of peace; follow, follow, follow.

SHALLOW. Trust me, a mad host. Follow, gentlemen, follow. *Exeunt HOST, SHALLOW, PAGE and SIMPLE, L.*

SLEN. Oh! Sweet Anne Page. *Exit L.*

CAIUS. Ha! do I perceive dat you have made a de sot of us? ha, ha!

EVANS. This is well; he has made us his vlouting-stog. I desire you that we may pe friends; and let us knog our prains together to be revenge on this same scall, scurvy, cogging companion, the host of the Garter. (CAIUS puts on his cloak)

CAIUS. By gar, vit all my heart; he promise to bring me vere is Anne Page; by gar, he deceive me too.

EVANS. Well, I will smite his noddles. (*they embrace*) Pray you follow.

CAIUS. Jack Rugby, you follow me.

EVANS and CAIUS *exeunt, after great ceremony, arm in arm, L. 1 E. H., RUGBY and SIMPLE come forward, embrace, imitate the others, and go off, L. 1 E., arm and arm.*

SCENE SECOND.—*A Street in Windsor (1st grooves).*

Enter ROBIN and MRS. PAGE, L.

MRS. PAGE. Nay, keep your way, little gallant; you were wont to be a follower, but now you are a leader. Whether had you rather lead mine eyes, or eye your master's heels?

ROBIN. I had rather, forsooth, go before you like a man, than follow him like a dwarf.

MRS. PAGE. O, you are a flattering boy; now I see you'll be a courtier.

Enter FORD, R.

FORD. Well met, mistress Page; whither go you?

MRS. PAGE. Truly, sir, to see your wife. Is she at home?

FORD. Ay; and as idle as she may hang together, for want of your company; I think, if your husbands were dead, you two would marry.

MRS. PAGE. Be sure of that,—two other husbands.

FORD. Where had you this pretty weathercock?

MRS. PAGE. I cannot tell what the dickens his name

is my husband had him of. What do you call your knight's name, sirrah?

ROB. (C.) Sir John Falstaff.

FORD. (R.) Sir John Falstaff.

MRS. PAGE. (L.) He, he; I can never hit on's name. There is such a league between my good man and he! Is your wife at home, indeed?

FORD. Indeed she is.

MRS. PAGE. By your leave, sir. (*crosses R.*) I am sick till I see her. *Exeunt* MRS. PAGE *and* ROBIN, R.

FORD. Has Page any brains? hath he any eyes? hath he any thinking? Sure, they sleep; he hath no use of them. Why this boy will carry a letter twenty miles, as easy as a cannon will shoot point-blank twelve score. He pieces out his wife's inclination; he gives her folly motion and advantage; and now she's going to my wife, and Falstaff's boy with her. Good plots! they are laid! and our revolted wives share damnation together. Well; I will take him, then torture my wife; pluck the borrowed veil of modesty from the so-seeming mistress Page; divulge Page himself for a secure and wilful Actæon, and to these violent proceedings all my neighbours shall cry aim. (*the clock strikes ten*) The clock gives me my cue, and my assurance bids me search; there I shall find Falstaff. I shall be rather prais'd for this, than mocked; for it is as positive as the earth is firm, that Falstaff is there: I will go.

Enter SHALLOW, PAGE, HOST, SLENDER, EVANS *and* CAIUS (*arm and arm*), RUGBY *and* SIMPLE (*arm and arm.*)

SHALLOW, PAGE, &c. Well met, master Ford.

FORD. (R.) Trust me, a good knot. I have good cheer at home; and, I pray you, all go with me.

SHALLOW. (C.) I must excuse myself, master Ford.

SLENDER. And so must I, sir; we have appointed to dine with mistress Anne, and I would not break with her, for more money than I'll speak of.

SHALLOW. We have lingered about a match between Anne Page and my cousin Slender, and this day we shall have our answer.

SLENDER. (L. C.) I hope, I have your good will, father Page.

PAGE. (L.C.) You have, master Slender; I stand wholly for you; but my wife, master doctor, is for you altogether.

CAIUS. (L.) Ay, by gar! and de maid is love-a me; my nursh-a Quickly tell me so mush.

HOST. (L. C.) What say you to young master Fenton? he capers, he dances, he has eyes of youth; he writes verses, he speaks holiday; he smells April and May; he will carry't, he will carry't; 'tis in his buttons; he will carry't.

PAGE. Not by my consent, I promise you. The gentleman is of no having, he kept company with the wild Prince and Pains; he is of too high a region, he knows too much. No, he shall not knit a knot in his fortunes with the finger of my substance: if he take her, let him take her simply; the wealth I have waits on my consent, and my consent goes not that way.

FORD. I beseech you heartily, some of you go home with me to dinner; besides your cheer you shall have sport; I'll show you a monster. Master Doctor, you shall go; so shall you, master Page; and you, Sir Hugh.

SHALLOW. Well, fare you well. We shall have the freer wooing at master Page's.

Exeunt SHALLOW and SIMPLE, L. 1. E.

SLENDER. O, sweet Anne Page! *Exit, L.*

HOST. Farewell, my hearts; I will to my honest knight Falstaff, and drink canary with him. *Exit, L.*

FORD. I think I shall drink in pipe wine first with him; I'll make him dance. Will you go gentles?

ALL. Have with you, & see this monster. *Exeunt, R.*

SCENE THIRD.—*Ford's House. Arras hangings practicable, R. 2. E., to open on stage. Set door, L. 2. E.*

Enter MRS. FORD and MRS. PAGE, R.

MRS. FORD. What, John! What, Robert!

MRS. PAGE. Quickly, quickly; is the buck-basket—

MRS. FORD. I warrant. What, Robin, I say.

Enter JOHN and ROBERT, L. 2 E. with a large buck-basket

MRS. PAGE. Come, come, come.

MRS. FORD. Here, set it down. (*they place it c.*)

MRS. PAGE. Give your men the charge; we must be brief.

MRS. FORD. Marry, as I told you before, John and Robert, be ready here hard-by in the brew-house; and when I suddenly call you, come forth, and (without any pause or staggering,) take this basket on your shoulders; that done, trudge with it in all haste, and carry it among the whitsters in Datchet-mead, and there empty it in the muddy ditch, close by the Thames' side.

MRS. PAGE. You will do it?

MRS. FORD. I have told them over and over; they lack no direction. Begone, and come when you are called.

Exeunt JOHN and ROBERT, L. 2 E.

MRS. PAGE. Here comes little Robin.

Enter ROBIN, L. 1 E.

MRS. FORD. How now, my eyas-musket? What news with you?

ROBIN. My master, Sir John, is come in at the back door, mistress Ford, and requests your company.

MRS. PAGE. You little Jack-a-lent, have you been true to us?

ROBIN. Ay, I'll be sworn. My master knows not of your being here; and hath threatened to put me into everlasting liberty, if I tell you of it; for he swears he'll turn me away.

MRS. PAGE. Thou'rt a good boy; this secrecy of thine shall be a tailor to thee, and shall make thee a new doublet and hose. I'll go hide me.

MRS. FORD. Do so. Go and tell thy master, I am alone.

Exit ROBIN, L. 1 E.

Mistress Page, remember you your cue.

MRS. PAGE. I warrant thee; if I do not act it, hiss me.

Exit, L. 1 E.

MRS. FORD. Go to then; we'll use this unwholesome humidity, this gross watery pumpion; We'll teach him to know turtles from jays.

Enter FALSTAFF, L. 1 E.

FALST. Have I caught thee, my heavenly jewel? Why, this is the period of my ambition. (*kisses her hand.*) O, this blessed hour!

MRS. FORD. O, sweet Sir John!

FALST. Mistress Ford, I cannot cog, I cannot prate, Mistress Ford. Now I shall sin in my wish: I would thy husband were dead; I'll speak it before the best lord, I would make thee my lady.

MRS. FORD. I your lady, Sir John! alas! I should be a pitiful lady.

FALST. Let the court of France shew me such another. I see how thine eye would emulate the diamond: thou hast the right arched-bent of the brow that becomes the ship-tire, the tire-valiant, or any tire of Venetian admittance.

MRS. FORD. A plain kerchief, Sir John; my brows become nothing else; nor that well neither.

FALST. Thou art a tyrant to say so: thou would'st make an absolute courtier: I see what thou wert, if Fortune thy foe were not; nature is thy friend. Come, thou canst not hide it.

MRS. FORD. Believe me, there's no such thing in me.

FALST. What made me love thee? Let that persuade thee, there's something extraordinary in thee. Come, I cannot cog, and say thou art this and that, like a many of these lispig hawthorn-buds, that come like women in men's apparel, and smell like Bucklersbury in simple-time; I cannot but love thee, none but thee, and thou deservest it.

MRS. FORD. Do not betray me, sir. I fear you love mistress Page.

FALST. Thou might'st as well say, I love to walk by the Counter-gate, which is as hateful to me as the reek of a lime-kiln.

MRS. FORD. Well, heaven knows how I love you, and you shall one day find it.

FALST. Keep that in mind; I'll deserve it.

MRS. FORD. Nay, I must tell you, so you do; or else I could not be in that mind.

Enter ROBIN, L. 2 E.

ROBIN. Mistress Ford, mistress Ford! here's mistress Page at the door, looking wildly, and would needs speak with you presently. *Exit, door L. 2 E.*

FALST. She shall not see me; I will ensconce me behind the arras.

MRS. FORD. 'Pray you do so; she's a very tattling woman.

Exit FALSTAFF, R. 2 E., *who remains, listening.*

Enter ROBIN and MRS. PAGE, door L. 2 E.

What's the matter? How now?

MRS. PAGE. O, mistress Ford, what have you done? You're sham'd, you are overthrown, you are undone for ever.

MRS. FORD. What's the matter, good mistress Page?

MRS. PAGE. O, well-a-day, mistress Ford! having an honest man to your husband, to give him such cause of suspicion. *Mrs Ford, what cause of suspicion?*

MRS. FORD. What cause of suspicion? Out upon you! how I am mistook in you?

MRS. FORD. Why, alas! what's the matter?

MRS. PAGE. Your husband's coming hither, woman, with all the officers in Windsor, to search for a gentleman that, he says, is here now in the house, by your consent, to take an ill advantage of his absence. You are undone.

MRS. FORD. (*aside*) Speak louder. 'Tis not so, I hope.

MRS. PAGE. 'Pray heaven it be not so, that you have such a man here; but 'tis most certain your husband's coming, with half Windsor at his heels, to search for such a one. I come before to tell you; if you know yourself clear, why, I am glad of it; but, if you have a friend here, convey, convey him out. Be not amazed; call all your senses to you; defend your reputation, or bid farewell to your good life for ever.

MRS. FORD. What shall I do? There *is* a gentleman, my dear friend; and I fear not mine own shame, so much as his peril; I had rather than a thousand pound, he were out of the house.

MRS. PAGE. For shame, never stand "you had rather;" and "you had rather;" your husband's here at hand,

bethink you of some conveyance; in the house you cannot hide him. O, how have you deceived me! Look, here is a basket; if he be of any reasonable stature, he may creep in here; and throw foul linen upon him, as if it were going to bucking: or (it is whiting-time) send him by your two men to Datchet-mead.

MRS. FORD. He's too big to go in there. What shall I do?

Enter FALSTAFF from R. 2 E.

FALST. Let me see't, let me see't! O, let me see't! I'll in, I'll in; follow your friend's counsel; I'll in.

MRS. PAGE. What, Sir John Falstaff! Are these your letters, knight? (*pulls him round*)

FALST. I love thee, and none but thee; help me away; let me creep in here; I'll never—— (*he tumbles into the basket, they cover him with the linen*)

MRS. PAGE. Help to cover your master, boy. Call your men, Mistress Ford. You dissembling knight!

MRS. FORD. What, John, Robert, John.

Enter JOHN and ROBERT, L. 2 E.

Go, take up these clothes here quickly. Where's the cowl-staff? Look, how you drumble; carry them to the laundress in Datchet-mead; quickly, come. (*JOHN and ROBERT raise basket and are going, L. 1. E.*)

Enter FORD, PAGE, CAIUS, and EVANS, door L. 2. E.— while FORD is speaking the MEN are going off with basket, L. 1. E.

FORD. Pray you, come near; if I suspect without cause, why then make sport at me, then let me be your jest; I deserve it. How now? whither bear you this?

SERVANT. To the laundress, forsooth.

MRS. F. Why, what have you to do whither they bear it? you were best meddle with buck-washing.

FORD. Buck! I would I could wash myself of the buck! Buck, buck, buck! Ay, buck; I warrant you, buck, and of the season too, it shall appear. (*Exeunt JOHN and ROBERT with the basket, L.*) Gentlemen, I have dreamed to night; I'll tell you my dream. Here, here.

here be my keys, ascend my chambers, search, seek, find out: I'll warrant we'll unkennel the fox. Let me stop this way first. (FORD *locks door* L. 1 E.) So, now uncape.

PAGE. Good Master Ford, be contented; you wrong yourself too much.

FORD. True, Master Page. Up, gentlemen; you shall see sport anon. (*crosses to R.*) Follow me, gentlemen.

Exit, R. 1. E.

PAGE. (*crosses*) Nay, follow him, gentlemen; see the issue of his search.

Exit, R. 1. E.

EVANS. (*crosses*) This is ferry fantastical humors, and jealousies.

Exit, R. 1. E.

CAIUS. (*crosses*) By gar, 'tis no de fashion of France; it is not jealous in France.

Exit, R. 1. E.

MRS. PAGE. Is there not a double excellency in this?

MRS. FORD. I know not which pleases me better, that my husband is deceived, or Sir John.

MRS. PAGE. What a taking was he in when your husband asked who was in the basket!

MRS. FORD. I am half afraid he will have need of washing; so throwing him into the water will do him a benefit.

MRS. PAGE. Hang him, dishonest rascal! I would all of the same strain were in the same distress.

MRS. FORD. I think, my husband hath some special suspicion of Falstaff's being here; for I never saw him so gross in his jealousy till now.

MRS. PAGE. I will lay a plot to try that. And we will yet have more tricks with Falstaff: his dissolute disease will scarce obey this medicine.

MRS. FORD. Shall we send that foolish carrion, Mistress Quickly, to him, and excuse his throwing into the water; and give him another hope, to betray him to another punishment?

MRS. PAGE. We'll do it; let him be sent for to-morrow, eight o'clock, to have amends.

Re-enter FORD and PAGE, R. 1. E.

FORD. I cannot find him; may be the knave bragged of that he could not compass. (*crosses L.*)

MRS. PAGE. (*to MRS. FORD.*) Heard you that?

MRS. FORD. Ay, ay; peace! You use me well, Master Ford, do you?

FORD. Ay, I do so.

MRS. FORD. Heaven make you better than your thoughts! *Exit, R. 1. E.*

FORD. Amen.

MRS. PAGE. You do yourself mighty wrong, Master Ford. *Exit, R. 1. E.*

FORD. Ay, ay; I must bear it.

Enter EVANS and CAIUS, R. 1. E.

EVANS. (R. C.) If there be any body in the house, and in the chambers, and in the coffers, and in the presses, heaven forgive my sins!

CAIUS. (R.) By gar, nor I too; dere is nobodies.

PAGE. Fie, fie, master Ford! are you not ashamed? What spirit, what devil suggests this imagination? I would not have your distemper in this kind, for the wealth of Windsor Castle.

FORD. (L. C.) 'Tis my fault, master Page: I suffer for it.

EVANS. You suffer for a pad conscience; your wife is as honest a 'omans, as I will desire among five thousand, and five hundred too.

CAIUS. By gar I see, 'tis an honest woman.

FORD. Well; I promised you a dinner. Come, come, walk in the park. (*crosses L.*) I pray you pardon me, I will hereafter make known to you why I have done this. Come, wife; come, mistress Page, I pray you pardon me; pray heartily, pardon me.

PAGE. (C.) Let's go, gentlemen; but trust me, we'll mock him, I do invite you to-morrow morning to my house to breakfast; after, we'll a-birding together; I have a fine hawk for the bush; shall it be so?

FORD. Anything. 'Pray you, go, master Page.

FORD *unlocks door, L. 1. E. Exeunt FORD and PAGE door L. 1. E.*

EVANS. I pray you now, remembrance to-morrow on the lousy knave, mine host.

CAIUS. That is good; by gar, vit all my heart.

EVANS. A lousy knave; to have his gibes, and his mockeries. *Exeunt, door L. 1. E.*

SCENE FOURTH.—*Page's House.*

Enter MRS. QUICKLY, SHALLOW, SLENDER, R. 1 E, *and*
ANNE PAGE, *who goes behind to* L. C.

SHALLOW. (R. C.) Mistress Quickly; my kinsman shall speak for himself.

SLEND. (R.) I'll make a shaft, or a bolt on't: 'slid, 'tis but venturing.

SHALLOW. Be not dismayed.

SLEND. No, she shall not dismay me; I care not for that, but that I am afeard.

QUICK. (L. C.) Hark ye; master Slender would speak a word with you. (*to* ANNE PAGE)

ANNE. I come to him. (*comes down, L.*)

(*aside*) This is my father's choice.

O, what a world of vile ill-favoured faults.

Look handsome in three hundred pounds a-year!

SHALLOW. She's coming; to her, coz. O, boy, thou hadst a father! (*pushing* SLENDER *across to centre*—MRS. QUICKLY *retires up, R. C.*)

SLEND. I had a father, mistress Anne; my uncle can tell you good jests of him. 'Pray you, uncle, tell mistress Anne the jest, how my father stole two geese out of a pen, good uncle.

SHALLOW. Mistress Anne, my cousin loves you.

SLEND. Ay, that I do; as well as I love any woman in Glo'stershire.

SHALLOW. He will maintain you like a gentlewoman.

SLEND. Ay, that I will, come cut and long-tail, under the degree of a 'squire.

SHALLOW. He will make you a hundred and fifty pounds jointure.

ANNE. (L.) Good master Shallow, let him woo for himself.

SHALLOW. (R.) Marry, I thank you for it; I thank you for that good comfort. She calls you, coz; I'll leave you. Come, Mrs. Quickly, nurse!

Exeunt SHALLOW *and* MRS. QUICKLY, R. 1 E.

ANNE. (L.) Now, master Slender.

SLEND. (R.) Now, good mistress Anne.

ANNE. What is your will?

SLEND. My will? Od's heartlings, that's a pretty jest indeed! I ne'er made my will yet, I thank heaven; I am not such a sickly creature, I give heaven praise.

ANNE. I mean, master Slender, what would you with me?

SLEND. Truly, for mine own part, I would little or nothing with you. Your father, and my uncle, have made motions; if it be my luck, so: if not, happy man be his dole. They can tell you how things go, better than I can; you may ask your father; there he is—let's go to him. Oh! sweet Anne Page.

Exit ANNE PAGE, L. 1 E., followed by SLENDER.

Enter MISTRESS QUICKLY, R. 1 E., looking after them.

QUICK. Now heaven send thee good fortune! A kind heart he hath: a woman would run through fire and water for such a kind heart. But yet, I would my master had mistress Anne; or I would master Slender had her; or, in sooth, I would master Fenton had her: I will do what I can for them all three: for so I have promised, and I'll be as good as my word; but speciously for master Fenton. Well, I must of another errand to Sir John Falstaff to my two mistresses. What a beast am I to slack it? *Exit, L.*

SCENE FIFTH.—*The Garter Inn. Plain table centre. One plain chair R. of table. Arm chair L. of table.*

Enter FALSTAFF, L. 1 E.—he throws down hat and cane on table.

FALST. Bardolph, I say.

Enter BARDOLPH, L. 1 E.

BARD. Here, sir.

FALST. Go, fetch me a quart of sack; put a toast in't.

Exit BARDOLPH, L. 1 E.

Have I lived to be carried in a basket, like a barrow of butcher's offal; and to be thrown into the Thames? Well; if I be served such another trick, I'll have my brains ta'en out and buttered, and give them to a dog for a new year's gift. The rogues slighted me into the river with as little remorse as they would have drowned

a bitch's blind puppies, fifteen i' the litter: and you may know by my size, that I have a kind of alacrity in sinking; if the bottom were as deep as hell, I should down. I had been drowned, but that the shore was shelvy and shallow; a death that I abhor; for the water swells a man; and what a thing should I have been, when I had been swelled! I should have been a mountain of mummy. (*sits*)

Enter BARDOLPH, with a quart of sack, L.

BARD. Here's Mistress Quickly, sir, to speak with you.

FALST. Come, let me pour in some sack to the Thames water; for my belly's a-cold, as if I had swallowed snow-balls. Call her in.

BARD. Come in, woman.

Enter MRS. QUICKLY, L. 1 E.

QUICK. By your leave; I cry you mercy. Give your worship good-morrow.

FALST. Go brew me a pottle of sack finely.

BARD. With eggs, sir?

FALST. Simple of itself. (*Exit BARDOLPH, L.*) How now?

QUICK. Marry, sir, I come to your worship from mistress Ford.

FALST. Mistress Ford! I have had ford enough: I was thrown into the ford; I have my belly full of Ford.

QUICK. Alas the day! good heart, that was not her fault: she does so take on with her men, they mistook their erection.

FALST. So did I mine, to build upon a foolish woman's promise.

QUICK. Well, she laments, sir, for it, that it would yearn your heart to see it. Her husband goes this morning a-birding; she desires you once more to come to her between eight and nine. I must carry her word quickly: she'll make you amends, I warrant you.

FALST. Well, (*long pause, then half sulkily*) I will visit her. Tell her so; and bid her think what a man is: let her consider his frailty, and then judge of my merit.

QUICK. I will tell her.

FALST. Do so. Between nine and ten, say'st thou?

QUICK. Eight and nine, sir.

FALST. Well, be gone : I will not miss her.

QUICK. Peace be with you, sir *Exit, L.*

FALST. I marvel, I hear not of master Brook ; he sent me word to stay within : I like his money well. O, here he comes.

Enter FORD, L., disguised.

FORD. Bless you, sir !

FALST. Now, master Brook?—you come to know what hath passed between me and Ford's wife ?

FORD. That, indeed, Sir John, is my business.

FALST. Master Brook, I will not lie to you ; I was at her house the hour she appointed me.

FORD. And how sped you, sir ?

FALST. Very ill-favouredly, master Brook.

FORD. How so, sir ? Did she change her determination ?

FALST. No, master Brook ; but the peaking cornuto her husband, master Brook, dwelling in a continual 'larum of jealousy, comes me in the instant of our encounter, after we had embraced, kissed, protested, and as it were, spoke the prologue of our comedy ; and at his heels a rabble of his companions, thither provoked and instigated by his distemper, and, forsooth, to search his house for his wife's love.

FORD. What, while you were there ?

FALST. While I was there.

FORD. And did he search for you, and could not find you ?

FALST. You shall hear. As good luck would have it, comes in one mistress Page ; gives intelligence of Ford's approach ; and by her invention, and Ford's wife's distraction, they conveyed me into a buck-basket.

FORD. A buck-basket !

FALST. Yes, a buck-basket : rammed me in with foul shirts and smocks, socks, foul stockings, and greasy napkins ; that, master Brook, there was the rankest compound of villainous smell, that ever offended nostril.—Phew !

FORD. And how long lay you there ?

FALST. Nay, you shall hear, master Brook, what I have suffered to bring this woman to evil for your good. Being thus crammed in the basket, a couple of Ford's

knaves—his hinds, were called forth by their mistress, to carry me in the name of foul clothes to Datchet-lane; they took me on their shoulders; met the jealous knave their master in the door; who asked them once or twice what they had in the basket. I quaked for fear, lest the lunatic knave would have searched it; but Fate, ordaining he should be deceived, held his hand. Well; on went he for a search, and away went I for foul clothes. But mark the sequel, master Brook: I suffered the pangs of three several deaths; first, an intolerable fright, to be detected of a jealous bell-wether: next, to be compassed like a good bilbo, in the circumference of a peck, hilt to point, heel to head; and then to be stopped in, like a strong distillation, with stinking clothes; think of that—a man of my kidney—think of that—that am as subject to heat as butter; a man of continual dissolution and thaw; it was a miracle, to 'scape suffocation. And in the height of this bath, when I was more than half stewed in grease, like a Dutch dish, to be thrown into the Thames, and cooled, glowing hot in that surge, like a horseshoe think of that—hissing hot—think of that, master Brook. (*goes up and throws himself into arm chair, L. of table*)

FORD. In good sadness, sir, I am sorry, that for my sake you have suffered all this. My suit is then desperate; you'll undertake her no more?

FALST. (*rises*) Master Brook, I will be thrown into Ætna, as I have been into Thames, ere I will leave her thus. Her husband is this morning gone a-birding: I have received from her another embassy of meeting: 'twixt eight and nine is the hour, master Brook.

FORD. 'Tis past eight already, sir.

FALST. Is it? I will then address me to my appointment. (*goes to table, takes hat and cane*) Come to me at your convenient leisure, and you shall know how I speed; and the conclusion shall be crown'd with your enjoying her: Adieu. You shall have her, master Brook; master Brook, you shall have her! *Exit, L.*

FORD. Hum! ha! is this a vision? Is this a dream? Do I sleep? Master Ford, awake; awake, master Ford; there's a hole made in your best coat, master Ford. This 'tis to be married! this 'tis to have linen, and buck-

baskets! Well, I will proclaim myself what I am: I will now take the lecher, he's at my house; he cannot 'scape me; 'tis impossible he should; he cannot creep into a halfpenny purse, nor into a pepper box; but, lest the devil that guides him should aid him, I will search impossible places. Though what I am I cannot avoid; yet, to be what I would not, shall not make me tame; if I have horns to make one mad, let the proverb go with me, I'll be horn mad. *Exit, L.*

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

ACT IV.

SCENE FIRST.—*Ford's House as before. The buck-basket discovered with plenty of linen, and a very large bundle tied up in a white sheet at bottom, a quantity of white muslin on top, to have the appearance as if Falstaff was in the basket.*

Enter FALSTAFF and MRS. FORD, arm in arm, R.

FALST. Mistress Ford, your sorrow hath eaten up my sufferance: I see, you are obsequious in your love, and I profess requital to a hair's breadth; not only, Mistress Ford, in the simple office of love, but in all the accoutrements, complements, and ceremony of it. But are you sure of your husband now?

MRS. FORD. He's a-birding, sweet Sir John.

MRS. PAGE. (*within, L.*) What hoa, gossip Ford! what hoa!

MRS. FORD. Step into the chamber, Sir John.

Exit FALSTAFF, R.

Enter MRS. PAGE, L.

MRS. PAGE. (*L.*) How now, sweetheart? Who's at home besides yourself?

MRS. FORD. (*R.*) Why, none but mine own people.

MRS. PAGE. Indeed?

MRS. FORD. No, certainly. Speak louder. (*aside*)

MRS. PAGE. Truly, I am so glad you have nobody here.

MRS. FORD. Why?

MRS. PAGE. Why, woman, your husband is in his old vein again; he so takes on yonder with my husband; so rails against all married mankind; so curses all Eve's daughters, of whatever complexion whatever; that any madness I ever yet beheld, seemed tameness, civility, and patience to this distemper he is in now. I'm glad the fat knight is not here.

MRS. FORD. Why, does he talk of him?

MRS. PAGE. Of none but him; and swears he was carried out, the last time he searched for him, in a basket; protests to my husband, he is now here; and hath drawn him and the rest of their company from their sport, to make another experiment of his suspicion; but I am glad the knight is not here; now he shall see his own foolery.

MRS. FORD. How near is he, mistress Page?

MRS. PAGE. Hard by, at street end, he will be here anon.

MRS. FORD. I am undone! the knight is here.

MRS. PAGE. Why, then thou art utterly shamed, and he's but a dead man. (FALSTAFF *groans within, R.*) What a woman are you! Away with him, away with him; better shame than murder.

MRS. FORD. Which way should he go? How should I bestow him? Shall I put him into the basket again?

Re-enter FALSTAFF, R. 2 E.

FALST. No, I'll come no more i' the basket. May I not go out, ere he come?

MRS. PAGE. Alas! three of Master Ford's brothers watch the door with pistols, that none should issue out; otherwise you might slip away ere he came.

FALST. What shall I do? I'll creep up into the chimney. (*running about*)

MRS. FORD. There they always use to discharge their birding-pieces; creep into the kiln-hole.

FALST. Where is it?

MRS. FORD. He will seek there, on my word. Neither press, coffer, chest, trunk, well, vault, but he hath an abstract for the remembrance of such places, and goes to them by his note. There is no hiding you in the house.

FALST. I'll go out then.

MRS. PAGE. If you go out in your own semblance, you die, Sir John. Unless you go out disguised.

MRS. FORD. How might we disguise him?

MRS. PAGE. Alas the day, I know not. There is no woman's gown big enough for him; otherwise he might put on a hat, a muffler, and a kerchief, and so escape.

FALST. Good hearts, devise something; any extremity rather than a mischief.

MRS. FORD. My maid's aunt, the fat woman of Brentford, has a gown above.

MRS. PAGE. On my word it will serve him, she's as big as he is; and there's her thrummed hat, and her muffler too. Run up, Sir John.

MRS. FORD. Go, go, sweet Sir John. Mistress Page and I will look some linen for your head.

MRS. PAGE. Quick, quick; we'll come dress you straight; put on the gown the while. *Exit FALSTAFF, R. 1 E.*

MRS. FORD. I would my husband would meet him in this shape; he cannot abide the old woman of Brentford; he swears she's a witch; forbade her my house, and hath threatened to beat her.

MRS. PAGE. Heaven guide him to thy husband's cudgel: and the devil guide his cudgel afterwards!

MRS. FORD. But is my husband coming?

MRS. PAGE. Ay, in good sadness is he; and talks of the basket, too, howsoever he hath had intelligence.

MRS. FORD. We'll try that; for I'll appoint my men to carry the basket again, to meet him at the door with it, as they did last time.

MRS. PAGE. Nay, but he'll be here presently; let's go dress him like the witch of Brentford.

MRS. FORD. I'll first direct my men what they shall do with the basket. Go up, I'll bring linen for him straight.

MRS. PAGE. Hang him, dishonest varlet! we cannot misuse him enough.

We'll leave a proof, by that which we will do,

Wives may be merry, and yet honest too.

We do not act, that often jest and laugh;

'Tis old, but true, *Still swine eat all the draff.*

Exit, R. 1 E.

Enter JOHN and ROBERT, L. 2 E.

MRS. FORD. Go, sirs, take the basket again on your shoulders; your master is hard at door; if he bid you set it down, obey him—quickly dispatch. Now, then, to see Falstaff dressed. *Exit, R. 1 E.*

1ST SERV. Come, come, take it up.

2ND SERV. Pray heaven it be not full of knight again!

1ST SERV. I hope not; I had as lief bear so much lead.

Enter FORD, PAGE, CAIUS, and EVANS, L. door.

FORD. Ay, but if it prove true, master Page, have you any way then to unfool me again? Set down the basket, villains! Somebody call my wife. *Exit JOHN, R. 1 E.* Youth in a basket! O, you panderly rascals! there's a knot, a gang, a pack, a conspiracy against me. Now shall the devil be shamed. What! wife, I say! come, come forth; behold what honest clothes you send forth to bleaching.

PAGE. Why, this passes! Master Ford, you are not to go loose any longer; you must be pinioned.

EVANS. Why, this is lunatics! this is mad as a mad dog.

SHALLOW. Indeed, master Ford, this is not well; indeed.

Re-enter JOHN and MRS. FORD, R. 1 E.

FORD. So say I too, sir. Why, wife, wife! Come hither, mistress Ford; mistress Ford, the honest woman, the modest wife, the virtuous creature, that hath the jealous fool to her husband! I suspect without cause, mistress, do I?

MRS. FORD. Heaven be my witness, you do, if you suspect me in any dishonesty.

FORD. Well said, brazen face; hold it out. Come forth, sirrah! (*pulls the clothes out of the basket*)

PAGE. This passes!

MRS. FORD. Are you not ashamed? let the clothes alone.

FORD. I shall find you anon.

EVANS. 'Tis unreasonable! Will you take up your wife's clothes? Come away.

FORD. Empty the basket, I say.

MRS. FORD. Why, man, why?

FORD. Master Page, as I am a man, there was one conveyed out of my house yesterday in this basket. Why

may not he be there again? In my house I am sure he is; my intelligence is true; my jealousy is reasonable. Pluck me out all the linen.

MRS. FORD. If you find a man there he shall die a flea's death.

FORD. Well, he's not here I seek for.

PAGE. No, nor nowhere else but in your brain. (JOHN and ROBERT *replace clothes in buck-basket and carry it off, L.*)

FORD. Help to search my house this one time; if I find not what I seek, shew no colour for my extremity, let me for ever be your table sport; let them say of me, "As jealous as Ford, that searched a hollow walnut for his wife's leman." Satisfy me once more, once more search with me. (*crosses, R.*)

MRS. FORD. (R.) What ho, mistress Page! come you and the old woman down; my husband will come into the chamber.

FORD. (R. C.) Old woman! what old woman's that?

MRS. FORD. Why, it is my maid's aunt, of Brentford.

FORD. A witch, a quean, an old cozening quean! Have I not forbid her my house? She comes of errands, does she? We are simple men; we do not know what's brought to pass under the profession of fortune-telling. (*crosses, R.*) Come down, you witch; you hag, you; come down, I say!

MRS. FORD. Nay, good sweet husband; good gentlemen, let him not strike the old woman.

Enter FALSTAFF, in woman's clothes, led by MRS. PAGE,
R. 1 E.

MRS. PAGE. Come, mother Prat, come, give me your hand.

FORD. I'll prat her! Out of my door, you witch! (*beats him across to L.*) You hag, you baggage, you pole-cat, you ronyon! out, out! I'll conjure you, I'll fortune-tell you! (*beats him off, L. door*)

MRS. PAGE. Are you not ashamed? I think you have killed the poor woman.

MRS. FORD. Nay, he will do it. 'Tis a goodly credit for you.

FORD. Hang her, witch!

EVANS. (*aside*) By yea and no, I think the 'oman is a

witch indeed : I like not when a 'omans has a great peard ; I spy a great peard under her muffler.

FORD. Will you follow, gentlemen? I beseech you follow ; see but the issue of my jealousy ; if I cry out thus upon no trail, never trust me when I open again.

Exit R. 1 E.

PAGE. Let's obey his humour a little further. Come, gentlemen.

Exeunt all but MRS. FORD and MRS. PAGE, R. 1 E.

MRS. PAGE. Trust me, he beat him most pitifully.

MRS. FORD. Nay, by the mass, that he did not ; he beat him most unpitifully, methought.

MRS. PAGE. I'll have the cudgel hallow'd and hung o'er the altar ; it hath done meritorious service.

MRS. FORD. What think you? May we, with the warrant of womanhood, and the witness of a good conscience, pursue him with any further revenge?

MRS. PAGE. The spirit of wantonness is sure scared out of him ; if the devil have him not in fee-simple, he will never, I think, attempt us again.

MRS. FORD. Shall we tell our husbands how we have served him?

MRS. PAGE. Yes, by all means ; if it be but to scrape the figures out of your husband's brains. If they can find in their hearts, the poor unvirtuous fat knight shall be any further afflicted, we two will still be the ministers.

MRS. FORD. I'll warrant they'll have him publicly shamed ; and methinks there would be no period to the jest, should he not be publicly shamed.

MRS. PAGE. Come, to the forge with it then—shape it : I would not have things cool. *Exeunt, R. 1 E.*

SCENE SECOND.—*Exterior of Ford's House, door in flau*
R. C. practical.

Enter EVANS, PAGE, MRS. PAGE, FORD, MRS. FORD, and CAIUS, from house.

EVANS. 'Tis one of the best discretions of a 'omans as ever I did look upon.

PAGE. And did he send you both these letters at an instant?

MRS. PAGE. Within a quarter of an hour.

FORD. Pardon me, wife. Henceforth do what thou wilt;
I rather will suspect the sun with cold,
Than thee with wantonness; now doth thy honour
In him that was of late a heretic, [stand,
As firm as faith.

PAGE. 'Tis well, 'tis well; no more:
Be not as éxtrême in submission, as in offence,
But let our plot go forward; let our wives
Yet once again, to make us public sport,
Appoint a meeting with this old fat fellow,
Where we may take him and disgrace him for it.

FORD. There is no better way than that they spoke of.

PAGE. How? to send him word they'll meet him in
the park at midnight? fie, fie; he will never come.

EVANS. You say he has been thrown into the rivers; and
hath been grievously peaten as an old 'oman; methinks
there should be terrors in him, that he should not come;
methinks his flesh is punished, he shall have no desires.

PAGE. So think I too.

MRS. FORD. Devise but how you'll use him when he comes,
And let us two devise to bring him thither.

MRS. PAGE. There is an old tale goes, that Herne the
hunter,

Sometime a keeper here in Windsor forest,
Doth all the winter-time, at still midnight,
Walk round about an oak, with great ragged horns;
And shakes a chain

In a most hideous and dreadful manner.
You've heard of such a spirit; and well you know,
The superstitious idle-headed eld
Received, and did deliver to our age,
This tale of Herne the hunter for a truth.

GE. Why, yet there want not many that do fear
In deep of night to walk by this Herne's oak.
But what of this?

	FORD.	PAGE.	
MRS. FORD.		MRS. PAGE.	EVANS.
B.			CAIUS.
			L.

MRS. FORD. Marry, this is our device ;
That Falstaff at that oak shall meet with us,
Disguised like Herne, with huge horns on his head.

PAGE. Well, let it not be doubted but he'll come,
And in this shape. When you have brought him
thither,

What shall be done with him? What is your plot?

MRS. PAGE. That likewise have we thought upon.
Nan Page my daughter, and my little son,
And three or four more of their growth, we'll dress
Like urchins, ouphes, and fairies, green and white,
With rounds of waxen tapers on their heads,
And rattles in their hands. Upon a sudden,
As Falstaff, she, and I, are newly met,
Let them, from forth a saw-pit, rush at once,
With some diffused song : upon their sight,
We two in great amazedness will fly.
Then let them all encircle him about,
And, fairy-like, to pinch the unclean knight ;
And ask him why, that hour of fairy revel,
In their so sacred paths he dares to tread
In shape profane.

MRS. FORD. And till he tell the truth,
Let the supposed fairies pinch him sound,
And burn him with their tapers.

MRS. PAGE. The truth being known,
We'll all present ourselves, dishorn the spirit,
And mock him home to Windsor.

EVANS. Let us about it : it is admirable pleasures, and
fery honest knaveries.

Exeunt PAGE, FORD, and EVANS to house, R.

MRS. PAGE. Go, mistress Ford,
Send quickly to Sir John, to know his mind.

Exit MRS. FORD, L.

I'll to the doctor ; he hath my good will,
And none but he, to marry with Nan Page.
That Slender, though well landed, is an idiot ;
And he my husband best of all affects :
The doctor is we'll money'd, and his friends
Potent at court ; he, none but he, shall have her,
Though twenty thousand worthier come to crave her.

Exit to house, R.

SCENE THIRD.—*A Room in the Garter.*

Enter FALSTAFF, R.

FALST. That wise woman hath taught me more wit, than ever I learned before in my life; and I paid nothing for it neither, but was paid for my learning. I would all the world might be cozened; for I have been cozened and beaten too. If it should come to the ear of the court, how I have been transformed, and how my transformation hath been washed and cudgelled, they would melt me out of my fat, drop by drop, and liquor fishermen's boots with me. I warrant they would whip me with their fine wits, till I were as crest-fallen as a dried pear. I never prospered since I foreswore myself at *primero*. Well, if my wind were but long enough to say my prayers, I would repent.

Enter MISTRESS QUICKLY, L.

Now, whence come you?

QUICK. From the two parties, forsooth.

FALST. The devil take one party, and his dam the other, and so they shall be both bestowed. I have suffered more for their sakes, more than the villanous inconstancy of man's disposition is able to bear.

QUICK. And have not they suffered? yes, I warrant; speciously one of them; mistress Ford, good heart, is beaten black and blue, that you cannot see a white spot about her.

FALST. What tell'st thou me of black and blue? I was beaten myself into all the colours of the rainbow; and I was like to be apprehended for the witch of Brentford; but that my admirable dexterity of wit, my counterfeiting the action of an old woman, delivered me, the knave constable had set me i' the stocks, i' the common stocks, for a witch.

QUICK. Sir, let me speak with you in your chamber; you shall hear how things go; and, I warrant, to your content. Here is a letter will say somewhat. Good

hearts, what ado here is to bring you together. Sure, one of you does not serve heaven well that you are so crossed.

FALST. Come up into my chamber. *Exeunt, R.*

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

ACT V.

SCENE FIRST.—*A Room in the Garter Inn.*

Enter FALSTAFF and MRS. QUICKLY, R.

FALST. Prithee, no more prattling—go. I'll hold: this is the third time; I hope good luck lies in odd numbers. Away, go; they say there is divinity in odd numbers, either in nativity, chance, or death.—Away!

QUICK. I'll provide you a chain; and I'll do what I can to get you a pair of horns.

FALST. Away, I say; time wears; hold up your head and mince. *Exit MRS. QUICKLY, L.*

Enter FORD, L., disguised.

How now, master Brook? Master Brook, the matter will be known to-night, or never. Be you in the Park about midnight, at Herne's oak, and you shall see wonders.

FORD. Went you not to her yesterday, sir, as you told me you had appointed?

FALST. I went to her, master Brook, as you see, like a poor old man; but I came from her, master Brook, like a poor old woman. That same knave, Ford her husband, hath the finest mad-devil of jealousy in him, master Brook, that ever governed frenzy. I will tell you:—He beat me grievously, in the shape of a woman; for in the shape of man, master Brook, I fear not Goliath with a weaver's beam; because I know also, life is a shuttle. I am in haste; go along with me; I'll tell you all, master Brook. Since I plucked geese, played truant, and whipped top, I knew not what it was to be beaten, till lately. Follow

me; I'll tell you strange things of this knave Ford, on whom to-night I will be revenged, and I will deliver his wife into your hands. Follow: strange things in hand, master Brook! follow. *Exeunt, L.*

SCENE SECOND.—*Ancient Street in Windsor—dark.*

Enter PAGE, SHALLOW, and SLENDER, L.

PAGE. Come, come; we'll couch i' the castle ditch, till we see the light of our fairies. Remember, son Slender, my daughter.

SLENDER. Ay, forsooth; I have spoke with her, and we have a nay-word how to know one another. I come to her in white, and cry *mum*, she cries *budget*, and by that we know one another.

SHALLOW. That's good, too; but what needs either your *mum* or her *budget*? The white will decipher her well enough. It hath struck ten o'clock.

PAGE. The night is dark; light and spirits will become it well. No man means evil but the devil, and we shall know him by his horns. Let's away; follow me.

SLENDER. Sweet Anne Page! *Exeunt, R.*

Enter MRS. PAGE, CAIUS, and MRS. FORD, L.

MRS. PAGE. Master Doctor, my daughter is in green; when you see your time, take her by the hand, away with her to the deanery, and dispatch it quickly. Go before into the park; we two must go together.

CAIUS. I know vat I have to do. Adieu. *Exit, R.*

MRS. PAGE. Fare you well, sir. My husband will not rejoice so much at the abuse of Falstaff, as he will chafe at the doctor's marrying my daughter; but 'tis no matter; better a little chiding, than a great deal of heart-break.

MRS. FORD. Where is Nan, now, and her troop of fairies, and the Welsh devil, Evans?

MRS. PAGE. They are all couched in a pit, hard by Herne's oak, with obscured lights; which, at the very instant of Falstaff's and our meeting, they will at once display to the night.

MRS. FORD. That cannot choose but amaze him.

MRS. PAGE. If he be not amazed, he will be mocked ;
if he be amazed, he will every way be mocked.

MRS. FORD. We'll betray him finely.

MRS. PAGE. Against such lewdsters,
Those that betray them do no treachery.

MRS. FORD. The hour draws on. To the oak, to the oak !
Exeunt, R.

SCENE THIRD.—*Windsor Park. (2nd grooves) Music.*

Enter EVANS and rest dressed for fairies, L. 2 E.—the FAIRIES have hold of each other's garments, carry a rattle, and run after EVANS round the stage—a very little one last.

EVANS. Trib, trib, fairies ; come ; and remember your parts ; be pold, I pray you ; follow me into the pit ; and when I give the watch-'ords, do as I pid you. Come, come, trib, trib.

(they run round as before, and exeunt R. 2 E.—when FAIRIES off R. 2 E. begin to strike twelve—at seventh stroke change to)

SCENE FOURTH.—*Another part of the Park—Herne's Oak, by moonlight.*

Enter FALSTAFF, with a buck's head on, clanking a chain, L. 3 E.

FALST. The Windsor bell hath struck twelve ; the minute draws on. Now, the hot-blooded gods assist me ! Remember, Jove, thou wast a bull for thy Europa ; love set on thy horns. O, powerful love ! that, in some respects, makes a beast a man ; in some other, a man a beast. You were also, Jupiter, a swan, for the love of Leda :—O, omnipotent love ! how near the god drew to the complexion of a goose ! A fault done first in the form of a beast—O, Jove, a beastly fault ! and then another fault in the semblance of a fowl ; think on't, Jove ; a foul fault. When gods have hot backs, what shall poor men do ? For me, I am here a Windsor stag ; and the fattest, I think, i' the forest. Who comes here ? my doe ?

Enter MRS. FORD and MRS. PAGE, L. 3 E.

MRS. FORD. Sir John ? Art thou there, my deer ?

FALST. Let the sky rain potatoes ; let it thunder to the tune of *Green Sleeves* ; hail kissing-comfits, and snow eringoes ; let there come a tempest of provocation, I will shelter me here. (*embracing her*)

MRS. FORD. Mistress Page is come with me, sweetheart.

FALST. Divide me like a bribe-buck, each a haunch ; I will keep my sides to myself, my shoulders for the fellow of this walk, and my horns I bequeath your husbands. Am I a woodman ? ha ! Speak I like Herne the hunter ? Why, now is Cupid a child of conscience ; he makes restitution. As I am a true spirit, welcome !

(*the FAIRIES spring their rattles, within R.*)

MRS. PAGE. Alas ! what noise ?

MRS. FORD. Heaven forgive our sins !

FALST. What shall this be ?

MRS. FORD and MRS. PAGE. Away, away !

MRS. FORD and MRS. PAGE *run away, L.*

FALST. They are fairies ; he that speaks to them shall die.

I'll wink and couch ; no man their works must eye.

(*Music.—FALSTAFF lies down upon his face, R. C. Enter EVANS, ANNE PAGE as the Fairy Queen, and the other FAIRIES, from R. U. E.*)

ANNE. Fairies, black, grey, green, and white,
You moon-shine revellers, and shades of night,
You orphan heirs of fixed destiny,
Attend your office and your quality.
About, about ;
Search Windsor Castle, elves, within and out ;
Strew good luck, outhes, on every sacred room,
That it may stand till the perpetual doom,
In state as wholesome, as in state 'tis fit ;
Worthy the owner, and the owner it.
Away, disperse : but, till 'tis one o'clock,
Our dance of custom, round about the oak
Of Herne the hunter, let us not forget.

EVANS. Pray you lock hand in hand ; yourselves in order set,

And twenty glow-worms shall our lanterns be,
To guide our measure round about the tree

(*they dance round the tree*)

Put stay; I smell a man of middle earth.

FALST. Heaven defend me from that Welch fairy,
Lest he transform me to a piece of cheese.

ANNE. About him, fairies, sing a scornful rhyme,
And as you trip, still pinch him to your time.
*(they dance round FALSTAFF three times, and beat him
with their wands, during the dance they sing)*

Chorus of Fairies.

Pinch him, fairies, mutually;
Pinch him for his villany!

*(SLENDER, DR. CAIUS and FENTON come on, R. First
time the FAIRIES dance round, CAIUS runs off R.
with a FAIRY—second time round, SLENDER runs
off with another FAIRY—third time, FENTON meets
ANNE PAGE, who removes her mask aside, and they
exeunt together, R.—noise of horns heard L. U. E.
—the FAIRIES all run off, R. U. E.—FALSTAFF shows
great terror—MR. FORD, MRS. FORD, MR. PAGE,
MRS. PAGE, with FRIENDS (male and female) and
four SERVANTS, with lighted torches, enter L. 3 E.—
FORD and PAGE seize FALSTAFF, who attempts
to escape, R.)*

PAGE. (R. C.) Nay, do not fly; I think we have watch'd
you now;

Will none but Herne the hunter serve your turn?

MRS. PAGE. (R.) I pray you, come, hold up the jest no
higher.

Now, good sir John, how like you Windsor wives?
See you these, husband? Do not these fair yokes
Become the forest better than the town?

FORD. (L. C.) Now, sir, who's a wittold now? Master
Brook, Falstaff's a knave, a wittoldly knave; here are his
horns, master Brook. And, master Brook, he hath enjoyed
nothing of Ford's but his buck-basket, his cudgel, and
twenty pounds of money; which must be paid to master
Brook; his horses are arrested for it, master Brook.

MRS. FORD. (L. C.) Sir John, we have had ill luck;
we could never meet. I will never take you for my love
again, but I will count you my deer.

FALST. I do begin to perceive, that I am made an ass.

FORD. Ay, and an ox too; both the proofs are extant.

FALST. And these are not fairies? I was three or four times in the thought, they were not fairies: and yet the guiltiness of my mind, the sudden surprise of my powers, drove the grossness of the foppery into a received belief in despite of the teeth of all rhyme and reason, that they were fairies. See now, how wit may be made a Jack-a-lent, when 'tis upon ill employment.

EVANS. (L.) Sir John Falstaff, serve heaven, and leave your desires, and fairies will not pinse you.

FORD. Well said, fairy Hugh.

EVANS. And leave *you* your jealousies too, I pray you.

FORD. I will never mistrust my wife again, till thou art able to woo her in good English.

FALST. Have I laid my brain in the sun, and dried it, that it wants matter to prevent so gross o'er-reaching as this? Am I ridden with a Welch goat too? Shall I have a coxcomb of frieze? 'tis time I were choked with a piece of toasted cheese.

EVANS. Sees is not good to give putter; your pelly is all putter.

FALST. Sees and putter! Have I liv'd to stand at the taunt of one that makes fritters of English?

MRS. PAGE. Why, Sir John, do you think, though we would have thrust virtne out of our hearts by the head and shoulders, that ever the devil could have made you our delight?

FORD. What, a hodge-pudding! a bag of flax!

MRS. FORD. A puffed man!

PAGE. Old, cold, withered, and of intolerable entrails.

FORD. And one that is as slanderous as Satan?

PAGE. And as poor as Job?

FORD. And as wicked as his wife?

EVANS. And given to fornications, and to taverns, and sack, and wine, and to drinkings, and swearings, and starings, pribbles and prabbles?

FALST. Well, I am your theme; you have the start of me; I am dejected; I am not able to answer the Welch flannel; ignorance itself is a plummet o'er me; use me as you will.

FORD. Marry, sir, we'll bring you to Windsor, to one master Brook, that you have cozened of money, to whom you should have been a pander; over and above that you have suffered, I think, to repay that money, will be a biting affliction.

MRS. FORD. Nay, husband, let that go to make amends.

Forgive that sum, and so we'll all be friends.

FORD. Well, here's my hand. (*they shake hands*) All's forgiven at last.

PAGE. Yet be cheerful, knight; thou shalt eat a posset to-night at my house; where I will desire thee to laugh at my wife, that now laughs at thee. Tell her, master Slender hath married her daughter.

MRS. PAGE. (*aside*) Doctors doubt that; if Anne Page be my daughter, she is, by this, Doctor Caius' wife.

Enter SLENDER, R. 1 E. crying.

SLENDER. Whoo, ho! ho! father Page!

PAGE. Son! how now? how now, son? have you despatched?

SLENDER. Despatched! I'll make the best in Gloucestershire know on't; would I were hanged, la, else.

PAGE. Of what, son?

SLENDER. I came yonder at Eton to marry Mistress Anne Page, and she's a great lubberly boy. If it had not been i' the church, I would have swunged him, or he should have swunged me. If I did not think it had been Anne Page, would I might never stir, and 'tis a post-master's boy.

PAGE. Upon my life, then you took the wrong.

SLENDER. What need you tell me that? I think so, when I took a boy for a girl. If I had been married to him, for all he was in woman's apparel, I would not have had him.

PAGE. Why, this is your own folly. Did not I tell you, how you should know my daughter by her garments?

SLENDER. I went to her in white, (*crosses to L.*) and cried, "mum," and she cried "budget," as Anne and I had appointed; and yet it was not Anne, but a post-master's boy.

Exit, crying, L.

MRS. PAGE. Good George, be not angry; I knew of

your purpose; turned my daughter into green; and, indeed, she is now with the doctor at the deanery, and there married.

Enter CAIUS, R.

CAIUS. Vere is mistress Page? By gar, I am cozened; I ha' married *un garcon*, a boy; *un paisan*, by gar, a boy, it is not Anne Page; by gar, I am cozened!

MRS. PAGE. Why, did you take her in green?

CAIUS. Ay, by gar, and 'tis a boy; by gar, I'll raise all Windsor! (*takes off hat, throws it down L., kicks hat off, and follows, L.*)

FORD. This is strange. Who hath got the right Anne?

PAGE. My heart misgives me. Here comes master Fenton.

Enter FENTON and ANNE PAGE, R. 1 E.—they kneel.

How now, master Fenton?

ANNE. Pardon, good father! good my mother, pardon!

PAGE. Now, mistress; how chance you went not with master Slender?

MRS. PAGE. Why went you not with master doctor, maid?

FENTON. (*rises*) You do amaze her. Hear the truth of it.

You would have married her, most shamefully,

Where there was no proportion held in love.

The truth is, she and I long since contracted,

Are now so sure, that nothing can dissolve us.

The offence is holy, that she hath committed:

Since therein she doth evitate and shun

A thousand irreligious cursed hours,

Which forced marriage would have brought upon her.

FORD. Stand not amazed; here is no remedy:

In love, the heavens themselves do guide the state;

Money buys lands, and wives are sold by Fate.

FALST. (*laughs*) I am glad, though you have taken a special stand to strike at *me*, that your arrow hath glanced.

PAGE. Well, what remedy? Fenton, heaven give thee joy.

What cannot be eschewed, must be embrac'd.

FALST. When night-dogs run, all sorts of deer are chas'd.

EVANS. I will dance, and eat plums, at your wedding,

MRS. PAGE. Well, I will muse no farther. Master Fenton,

Heaven give you many, many merry days!

Good husband, let us every one go home,
And laugh the sport o'er by a country fire;
Sir John and all.

FORD. Let it be so: Sir John,
To master Brook you yet shall hold your word;
For he to night shall lie with mistress Ford.

FENTON. ANNE. PAGE. MRS. P. FALSTAFF. MRS. F. FORD. EVANS
E. L.

Curtain.

GLOSSARY

OF OBSOLETE TERMS IN THIS PLAY.

- "*Latten bilbo.*"—*Bilboa*, a sword blade—*latten*, a mixed and base metal.
- "*Nuthook's humour.*"—*Nuthook*, was the slang of the period for a constable.
- "*Being fap.*"—Being drunk.
- "*Three veney's.*"—Three places hit by the fencing foil.
- "*Bully-rook.*"—A convivial greeting.
- "*Gourd, fullom.*"—High and low—cant words for false dice.
- "*As tall a man.*"—As able a man.
- "*Cataian.*"—An obsolete term of opprobrium.
- "*Red lattice phrases.*"—Ale house phrases.
- "*Canaries.*"—Quandaries.
- "*Frampod.*"—Vexed.
- "*Up with your fights.*"—Canvas screens, used to prevent the sight and aim of enemies' ships.
- "*To see thee foin.*"—To see thee fence.
- "*Thy punto, thy stock, &c.*"—Terms of fencing—*punto*, *stoccano*, [reverso].
- "*Pittie-ward.*"—Petty-ward.
- "*Of no having.*"—Having nothing.
- "*Whitsters.*"—Bleachers.
- "*Eyas-musket.*"—A young male sparrow-hawk.
- "*Bucklersbury in simple time.*"—*Simples*, were medicines from herbs—*Bucklersbury*, was inhabited by druggists.
- "*Counter-gate.*"—The *counter*, a prison for debtors.
- "*Whiting-time.*"—Bleaching-time.
- "*Shajt or bolt of it.*"—I'll have a shot with bow and arrow, or bolt and cross-bow.
- "*Come cut and long tail.*"—Perhaps, short jerkins and long robes.
- "*Leman.*"—A paramour.
- "*Ouphes.*"—Elves.
- "*Primero.*"—A game of chance.
- "*Coxcomb.*"—A fool's cap.



Continued from second page of cover.

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