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Gill's
Oxford and Cambridge Series.

SHAKESPEARE'S
CORIOLANUS,
FOR
SCHOOLS.
AND
STUDENTS PREPARING FOR EXAMINATION.



ONE SHILLING.

London:
GEORGE GILL & SONS,
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GILL'S ENGLISH CLASSICS.

SHAKESPEARE'S
CORIOLANUS.

FOR THE USE OF

Students Preparing for Examination.

WITH

INTRODUCTION AND NOTES.

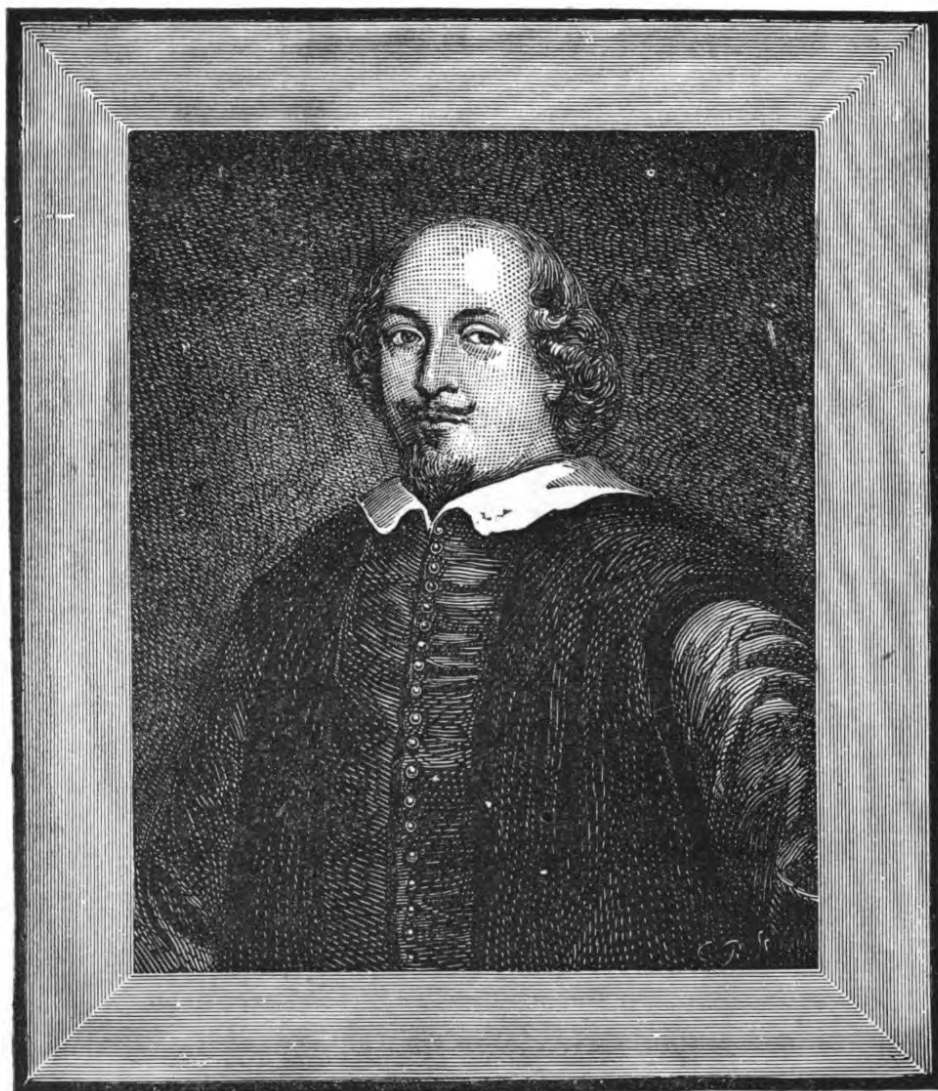


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SHAKESPEARE (CHANDOS PORTRAIT).

"TRIUMPH, MY BRITAIN, THOU HAST ONE TO SHOW,
TO WHOM ALL SCENES OF EUROPE HOMAGE OWE.
HE WAS NOT OF AN AGE, BUT FOR ALL TIME!
NATURE HERSELF WAS PROUD OF HIS DESIGNS,
AND JOYED TO WEAR THE DRESSING OF HIS LINES."

BEN JONSON.

PREFACE.

THIS manual is intended especially for the use of students preparing for examination; but, at the same time, it will be found useful to any one who desires to make the acquaintance of one of Shakespeare's most delightful plays.

The editor has not hesitated to remove all objectionable words and phrases; and has, in one case, cut out a whole scene which he considered offended against the nicer distinctions of modern language.

The notes will be found arranged at the end of the book in such a way as to obviate much of the waste of time usually incurred in finding the explanation of any passage; for both the line of the play and the page on which it occurs are clearly indicated.

With regard to the notes themselves, it is believed that they will be found plain, simple, and yet of such a nature as to supply every need.

LONDON, *August*, 1886.

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SHAKESPEARES'S HOUSE

A SHORT INTRODUCTION
TO THE STUDY OF SHAKESPEARE'S
CORIOLANUS.

A.—A BRIEF MEMOIR OF SHAKESPEARE.

Birthplace. *William Shakespeare* was born in the quiet village of Stratford-on-Avon on Sunday, April 23rd, 1564. The house in which he first saw the light of day now belongs to the nation. It is a large dwelling of what was called "the dab and wattle sort;" that is to say, an oak-frame residence of the Elizabethan age. His father, John Shakespeare, was a general dealer and farmer, who had settled in Stratford fourteen years before the birth of his son William.

Boyhood. We should like to know something of the boyhood of our prince of poets, but no record has been handed down to us of that time. As his poetry is full of apt allusions to the natural objects of the country,—the field flowers, the buzzing bees, the fitting bats, and the numberless creatures that haunt the lanes, fields, woods, coppices, and brook sides,—we may conclude that young William Shakespeare was fond of rural sights and rustic sounds.



THE FREE SCHOOL, STRATFORD.

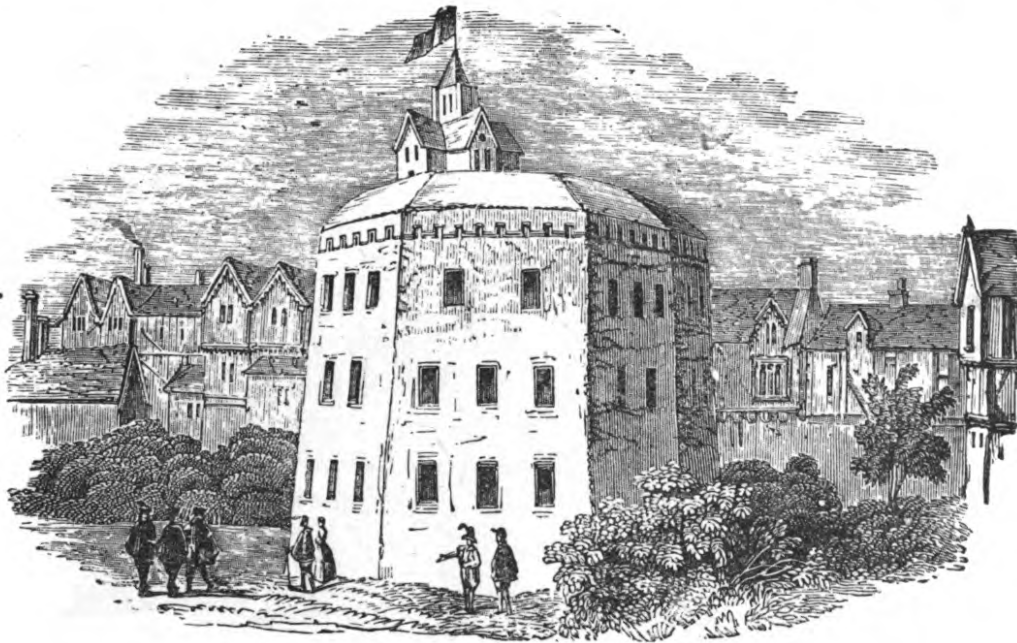
In addition to a knowledge of nature and an intimate acquaintance with a country life, young Shakespeare must have stored his mind with the ballads then sung all over “merrie England.” He treasured up the stories of King Arthur, Hereward, Robin Hood, and many another hero of ballad poetry with which he enriched his lays.

School Life. Like a good boy, he attended the Free School of his native town, where, perhaps, he obtained more than the “small Latin

and less Greek" with which his scholarly friend Ben Jonson credits him.

Manhood. When only eighteen, our hero married Anne, the daughter of Richard Hathaway, of Shottery, who was eight years older than her husband. Before Shakespeare was twenty-one he was the father of three children—Susannah, Hamnet, and Judith.

In 1585 the poet repaired to London, and became an actor; then from an actor of plays he became an author. As actor, author, and shareholder, first in the Blackfriars and then in the Globe Theatre,



GLOBE THEATRE.

Shakespeare led a busy life, but his gains were considerable. Almost all the remainder of his life is filled up with the production of play after play, a list of the principal of which we give you in another part of this book.

Death. On the 10th of February, 1616, the marriage of Judith Shakespeare took place. To celebrate the event there was then a "merrie meetinge," with Drayton and Ben Jonson among the guests. This was the last of many such that these old friends ever held, for he, who was the life and joy of them, was soon stricken down on the bed of death.

On Tuesday, 23rd of April, the great poet breathed his last, and departed to

*“The undiscovered country, from whose bourn
No traveller returns.”*



CHANCEL OF STRATFORD CHURCH.

On Thursday, 25th of April, he was buried in the chancel of Stratford Church. He had survived his son Hamnet by some years. The last descendant of Shakespeare, Elizabeth Hall, died in 1669, and with her death the family became extinct. His works can never die till the English language is forgotten.

B.—SHAKESPEARE'S WORKS.

Shakespeare is said to have given us thirty-seven plays and a number of lesser poems, in which he employs his enormous vocabulary of twenty-one thousand words.

THE FINEST PLAYS ARE

Tragedies.	Comedies.	Histories.
<i>Romeo and Juliet.</i>	<i>Midsummer Night's Dream.</i>	<i>Richard II.</i>
<i>Hamlet, Prince of Denmark.</i>	<i>The Merchant of Venice.</i>	<i>Richard III.</i>
<i>Othello, the Moor of Venice.</i>	<i>Much Ado About Nothing.</i>	<i>King John.</i>
<i>Macbeth.</i>	<i>As You Like It.</i>	<i>Henry V.</i>
<i>King Lear.</i>	<i>Twelfth Night.</i>	<i>Julius Cæsar.</i>
	<i>The Tempest.</i>	<i>Coriolanus.</i>

C.—SHAKESPEARE'S VERSE.

Lines of verse can be separated into a number of divisions, called *feet*, each of which contains one, or rarely two accents, as :—

“To im'- | itate' | the gra'- | ces of' | the gods'.”

The line in the example consists of five feet, and each foot contains one unaccented syllable followed by an accented one. Such a foot is called an *Iambus*.

The *Iambus*, then, is a foot of two syllables, of which the second is accented, as in the example above. By using two simple signs, one for the unaccented syllable, marked thus, \cup , and another, a dash, —, for the accented one, we represent an *iambus* by the sign \cup —.

There are other kinds of feet employed in poetry, but they need not detain us at present.

These different kinds of feet are combined in various ways to form *measures*. Thus the line given above contains five feet, and is therefore called a *pentameter*; ¹ and, as each foot in the line is an *iambus*, this kind of verse is known as *Iambic Pentameter*.

We have thousands of lines of *iambic pentameter* for every one of any other metre. When it rhymes it is called *Heroic Verse*, and when employed without rhyme, as in the example below, it is known as *Blank Verse*.

“Now, Mars' | I prith'- | ee make' | us quick' | in work',
That we' | with smok-' | ing swords' | may march' | from hence',
To help' | our field'- | ed friends' ! | Come blow' | thy blast'.”

Coriolanus, Act I., Scene 3.

¹ *Pentameter*, from the Greek “*penta*,” five, and “*metron*,” a measure.

Shakespeare's plays are written chiefly in blank verse, but most of them, especially the earlier ones, contain a number of rhyming and some prose lines.

Coriolanus, one of his later plays, has very few rhyming lines. You will find some in Act II., Scene 3, lines 1102 to 1113.

If all the lines were written with the five accents of blank verse, we should find them very monotonous to read; so to produce a pleasing variety, Shakespeare sometimes adds one or two accented syllables after the tenth, or he introduces a *Trochee*¹ in the midst of the Iambics, or inserts more than the normal number of syllables. Your attention will be drawn to examples of such irregularities in the notes on the Play.

D.—SOURCES OF SHAKESPEARE'S PLAY.

Shakespeare was the first who succeeded in achieving what the Latin writers had attempted in vain to accomplish—namely, to create the Roman historical drama.

He had before him in Sir Thomas North's "Plutarch" a work in which the art of biography was seen in its highest perfection. It was a perfect mirror of ancient Roman life: Shakespeare dramatised it. He followed the Greek biographer closely in the entire legend of Coriolanus, and from the English translator he copied almost directly many of the principal speeches which the drama contains.

The simple story as told in North's version of Plutarch supplied the seed which grew into the beautiful drama we are about to study together.

Sir Thomas North translated from Amyot's French version, which was made from a Latin rendering of Plutarch's original Greek by the German scholar Xylander. Thus we see that the original Greek passed through a German's mind into Latin; from Latin into French; from Amyot's French into North's English, and at last reached its crowning point in Shakespeare's noble drama.

"It was through Sir Thomas North's translation that the rich treasure house of Plutarch's lives was accessible to Shakespeare," says Archbishop Trench. However this may be, we may affirm with him that "Shakespeare's three great Roman plays, *Coriolanus*, *Julius Caesar*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*, which reproduce the ancient Roman

¹ *The Trochee is a foot of two syllables, of which the first is accented, — ˘.*

world as no other poetry has ever done, would never have existed, or would have existed in forms altogether different from those in which they now appear, if Plutarch had not written, and Sir Thomas North, or some other in his place, had not translated the Lives of the great Roman heroes.

“It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that the whole story of the play of *Coriolanus* is to be found in Plutarch. Shakespeare, indeed, has thrown a rich mantle of poetry over all, which is often wholly his own ; but of the incident there is almost nothing which he does not owe to Plutarch, even as continually as he owes the very wording to Sir Thomas North.

“Nowhere, as is abundantly clear, does our English poet make any pretence of concealing these obligations to Plutarch, but adopts all, even to the very words of Sir Thomas North, with only such transpositions and slight alterations as may be necessary to give them a rhythmical cadence and flow. He is too rich, and too conscious that he is rich, to fear the charge of endeavouring to pass himself off for such, by laying hands upon the riches of others.”¹

E.—THE LEGEND OF CORIOLANUS.

Among the mythical stories of early Roman history that of Coriolanus is one of the simplest and most interesting.

Briefly told, the legend runs thus :—

Caius Marcius, of

“*The noble house of Marcians, from whence came
That Ancus Marcius, Numa’s daughter’s son,
Who, after great Hostilius, here was king ;
Of the same house Publius and Quintus were,
That our best water brought by conduits hither,*”

was one of the bravest warriors of Rome.

At sixteen years of age he fought against Tarquin, and with his boyish arms did deeds of wonder in the field ; “and for his meed was brow-bound with the oak” leaves which Rome conferred on conquerors. In seventeen subsequent battles he wielded the sword with great bravery, and won the admiration of his fellow-citizens. In the war waged by the Romans against the Volscians he again distinguished himself ; for when the Roman army under the command of Cominius

¹ *Archbishop Trench’s Lectures on Plutarch.*

the consul besieged the capital city of Corioli, B.C. 493, a vigorous sally was made from its gates. The Romans were driven before the Volscians, and defeat seemed certain, till Marcius, rushing into the midst of the retreating Romans, called them to a halt, rallied them for a new effort, rushed through the gates of Corioli, stormed the city, and secured its surrender.

Meanwhile the Antiates, advancing to aid the Volscians, endeavoured to raise the siege of Corioli. They encountered the army of Cominius in the suburbs of that city. Marcius, who had just returned, wounded and bleeding, from his attack on Corioli, joined in the fray, and led the Romans once more to victory. For these deeds of heroism the consul Cominius conferred on Marcius the title of *Coriolanus*, as the conqueror of Corioli.

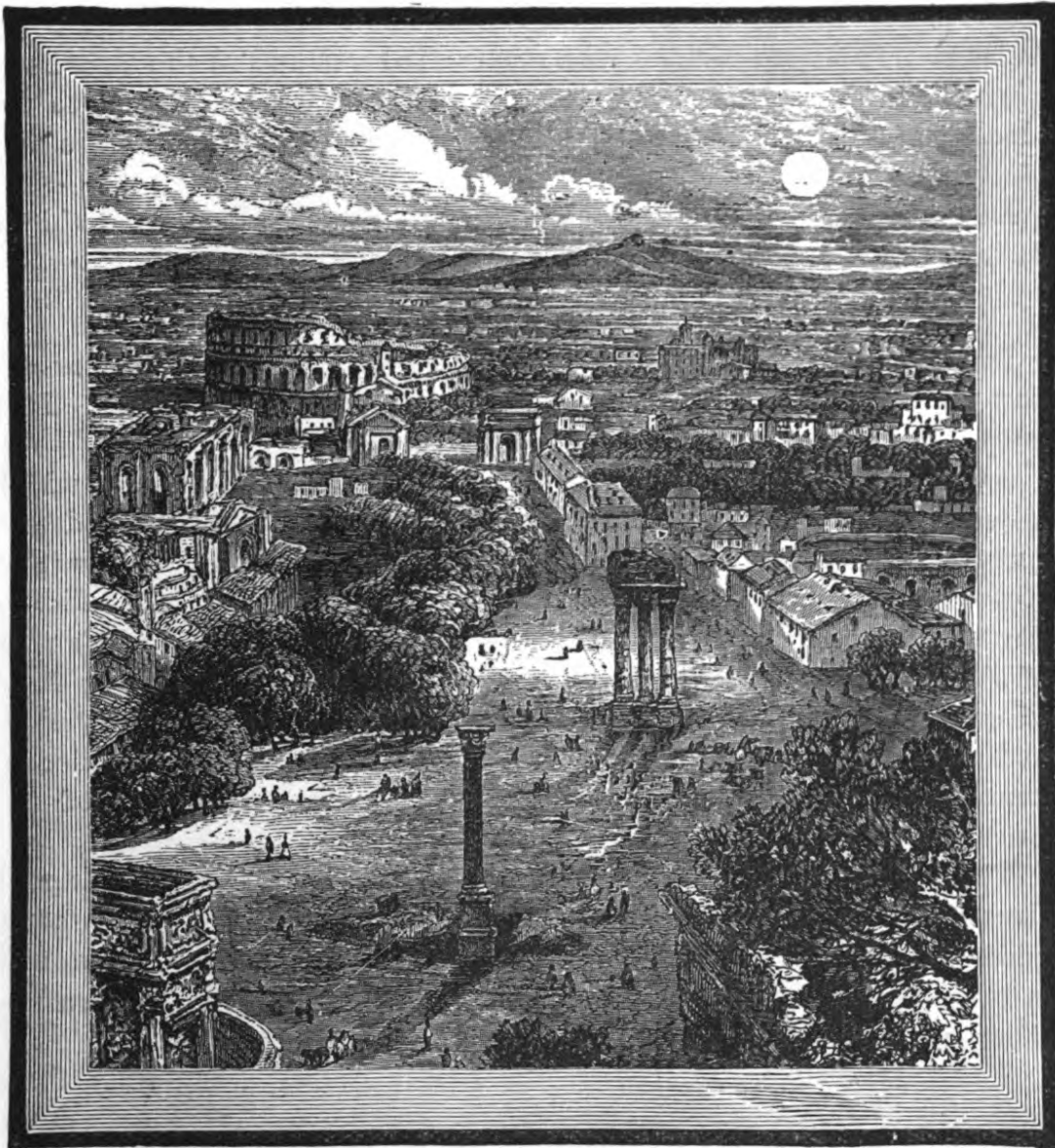
At this time there was dire distress in Rome. Costly wars had dissipated the revenues, and the iron grip of famine had spread discontent among the common people. The nobles had conveyed a supply of corn from Sicily and Greece to feed the starving multitudes of Rome. The majority of the Senate were in favour of a free distribution of food to the people, but Coriolanus, who believed such gifts to be dangerous to the welfare of the Commonwealth, advocated the sale of the food. This enraged the common people, who, stirred up by the tribunes, opposed the election of Coriolanus to the consulship; and, not satisfied with disgracing so brave a soldier, the tribunes brought him to trial as a disturber of the public peace, and procured his banishment from Rome.

Bidding farewell to his mother, wife, and child, Coriolanus left Rome, and, shortly afterwards, took refuge with his old enemy Tullus Aufidius, the general of the Volscians.

As soon as the Volscians felt strong enough to take the field, Coriolanus, who had volunteered to fight against his former fellow-citizens, and Aufidius advanced against the Roman legions. Circii, Satricum, Longula, and Lavinium yielded to the ever-victorious Coriolanus, and he resolved to lead his invincible army against the sacred city itself.

The Romans sued for peace to their exiled general. The haughty Coriolanus demanded the dismissal of the tribunes, the repeal of his exile, and, for his allies, the restoration of their land, and the rights and privileges of Roman citizens.

He refused to discuss the terms of peace with the Roman senators,



RUINS OF ANCIENT ROME.

with his old friend Menenius, or with the priests and augurs of Rome. Nothing short of unreserved submission would satisfy him. At length, his mother, wife, and son presented themselves before him to plead for Rome. To them he relented ; he dismissed his forces, and returned to Antium in order to make his report to the Volscian senators.

Aufidius, who had been obscured by the great Roman general, and who was jealous of his popularity in the land of his adoption, instituted

a conspiracy to basely murder Coriolanus in the market-place of Antium. This atrocious scheme was carried out, and at the very hour when his pride was most humbled, and his heart most softened to the kindlier impulses of human affection, the haughty patrician exile fell foully murdered.

His death was mourned in Rome with all the honours paid to ancient heroes.

F.—NOTES ON THE GOVERNMENT OF ROME.

In order clearly to understand the Play of *Coriolanus*, it is necessary to have some knowledge of the government of Rome. This knowledge we shall endeavour to set forth here.

At first the Romans were ruled by kings, a state of things which lasted from the building of the city for a space of two hundred and forty-five years. Then a great alteration took place; as the power of Rome increased, the kings became more and more tryannic, till *Junius Brutus*, the ancestor of Marcus Brutus, the hero of Shakespeare's play of *Julius Cæsar*, obtained the upper hand, and established a new form of government. The kingdom was converted into a Commonwealth, and the chief power was vested in two *Consuls*, who were elected annually. The Consuls were the heads of the people and of the Senate, and, in fact, had all the power of kings.

The *Senators* were originally chosen by Romulus, the first king of Rome, who elected one hundred men to assist him in the government. Subsequently the number of senators was increased to three hundred. Afterwards they were chosen by the people, and not by the consuls. They were consulted on all the affairs of state.

The *Tribunes* were elected by the people (*tribes*); originally there were five of them, but subsequently the number was increased to ten. They had the power of interposing, and the design of that power was to relieve the oppressed, and to be a shield to keep off all evil and mischief. They annulled all such decrees and commands of the Senate as they considered unjust, and their doors stood open, night and day, to hear complaints.

G.—DATE OF THE PLAY.

"The Tragedy of *Coriolanus*" was first published in the folio edition of 1623. It is supposed to have been written in 1608 or 1610, but there is little, if any evidence to fix the date of its composition.

CORIO LANUS:
A HISTORICAL PLAY IN FIVE ACTS,
BY
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

CAIUS MARCIUS, afterwards CAIUS MARCIUS CORIO LANUS,
a Roman General.

TITUS LARTIUS, } *Generals against the Volscians.*
COMINIUS, }

MENENIUS AGRIPPA, *Friend to Coriolanus.*

SICINIUS VELUTUS, } *Tribunes of the People.*
JUNIUS BRUTUS, }

Young MARCIUS, *the son of Coriolanus.*

TULLUS AUFIDIUS, *General of the Volscians.*

VOLUMNIA, *Mother to Coriolanus.*

VIRGILIA, *Wife to Coriolanus.*

VALERIA, *Friend to Virgilia.*

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

SCENE.—*Rome and the neighbourhood; Corioli and the neighbourhood;
and Antium.*



MUTINOUS ROMAN CITIZENS.

CORIOLANUS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Street in Rome.*

Enter a Company of mutinous Citizens, with staves, clubs, and other weapons.

1 *Citizen.* Before we proceed any further, hear me speak.

All. Speak, speak.

1 *Citizen.* You are all resolved rather to die than to famish?

All. Resolved, resolved.

1 *Citizen.* First, you know Caius Marcius is chief enemy to the people.

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

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

All. No more talking on 't; let it be done: away, away! 10

2 *Citizen.* One word, good citizens.

1 *Citizen.* We are accounted poor citizens; the patricians good. What authority surfeits on, would relieve us: if they would yield us but the superfluity, while it were wholesome, we might guess they relieved us humanely; but they think we are too dear: the leanness that afflicts us, the object of our misery, is as an inventory to particularise their abundance; our sufferance is a gain to them. Let us revenge this with our pikes, ere we become rakes: for the gods know I speak this in hunger for bread, not in thirst for revenge. 20

2 *Citizen.* Would you proceed especially against Caius Marcius?

1 *Citizen.* Against him first: he's a very dog to the commonalty.

2 *Citizen.* Consider you what services he has done for his country?

1 *Citizen.* Very well; and could be content to give him good report for 't, but that he pays himself with being proud. 26

2 *Citizen.* Nay, but speak not maliciously.

1 *Citizen.* I say unto you, what he hath done famously, he did it to that end: though soft-conscienced men can be content to say it was for his country, he did it to please his mother, and to be partly proud; which he is, even to the altitude of his virtue. 31

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

1 *Citizen.* If I must not, I need not be barren of accusations: he hath faults, with surplus, to tire in repetition. [*Shouts within.*] What shouts are these? The other side o' the city is risen: why stay we prating here? to the Capitol! 37

All. Come, come.

1 *Citizen.* Soft! who comes here?

Enter MENENIUS AGRIPPA.

2 *Citizen.* Worthy Menenius Agrippa; one that hath always loved the people. 41

Coriolanus.

1 *Citizen.* He's one honest enough: would all the rest were so!

Menenius. What work 's, my countrymen, in hand? Where
go you?

With bats and clubs? The matter? Speak, I pray you. 45

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

Menenius. Why, masters, my good friends, mine honest neigh-
bours, 51

Will you undo yourselves?

1 *Citizen.* We cannot, sir, we are undone already.

Menenius. I tell you, friends, most charitable care
Have the patricians of you. For your wants, 55

Your suffering in this dearth, you may as well
Strike at the heaven with your staves, as lift them
Against the Roman state; whose course will on
The way it takes, cracking ten thousand curbs
Of more strong link asunder, than can ever 60

Appear in your impediment: for the dearth,
The gods, not the patricians, make it; and
Your knees to them, not arms, must help. Alack,
You are transported by calamity
Thither where more attends you; and you slander 65
The helms o' the state, who care for you like fathers,
When you curse them as enemies.

1 *Citizen.* Care for us!—True, indeed! They ne'er cared for
us yet.—Suffer us to famish, and their storehouses crammed with
grain; make edicts for usury, to support usurers; repeal daily
any wholesome act established against the rich; and provide
more piercing statutes daily, to chain up and restrain the poor.
If the wars eat us not up, they will; and there 's all the love
they bear us.

Menenius. Either you must 75
Confess yourselves wondrous malicious,

Or be accus'd of folly. I shall tell you
 A pretty tale : it may be, you have heard it ;
 But, since it serves my purpose, I will venture
 To stale 't a little more. 80

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

Menenius. There was a time, when all the body's members
 Rebell'd against the belly ; thus accus'd it :—
 That only like a gulf it did remain 85
 I' the midst o' the body, idle and unactive,
 Still cupboarding the viand, never bearing
 Like labour with the rest ; where the other instruments
 Did see and hear, devise, instruct, walk, feel,
 And, mutually participate, did minister 90
 Unto the appetite and affection common
 Of the whole body. The belly answered,—

1 *Citizen.* Well, sir, what answer made the belly ?

Menenius. Sir, I shall tell you.—With a kind of smile,
 Which ne'er came from the lungs, but even thus 95
 (For, look you, I may make the belly smile
 As well as speak) it tauntingly replied
 To the discontented members, the mutinous parts
 That envied his receipt ; even so most fitly
 As you malign our senators, for that 100
 They are not such as you.

1 *Citizen.* Your belly's answer ? What,
 The kingly crownèd head, the vigilant eye,
 The counsellor heart, the arm our soldier,
 Our steed the leg, the tongue our trumpeter
 With other muniments and petty helps 105
 In this our fabric, if that they—

Menenius. What then ?

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

1 *Citizen.* Should by the cormorant belly be restrain'd,
 Who is the sink o' the body,—

- Menenius.* Well, what then?
- 1 *Citizen.* The former agents, if they did complain, 110
What could the belly answer?
- Menenius.* I will tell you ;
If you'll bestow a small (of what you have little)
Patience awhile, you'll hear the belly's answer.
- 1 *Citizen.* You're long about it.
- Menenius.* Note me this, good friend ; 115
Your most grave belly was deliberate,
Not rash like his accusers, and thus answer'd.
" *True is it, my incorporate friends,*" quoth he,
" *That I receive the general food at first,*
Which you do live upon : and fit it is ;
Because I am the store-house, and the shop 120
Of the whole body : but, if you do remember,
I send it through the rivers of your blood,
Even to the court, the heart, to the seat o' the brain ;
And, through the cranks and offices of man,
The strongest nerves, and small inferior veins, 125
From me receive that natural competency
Whereby they live : and though that all at once,"
You, my good friends, this says the belly, mark me,—
- 1 *Citizen.* Ay, sir ; well, well.
- Menenius.* " *Though all at once cannot* 130
See what I do deliver out to each,
Yet I can make my audit up, that all
From me do back receive the flour of all,
And leave me but the bran." What say you to 't?
- 1 *Citizen.* It was an answer : how apply you this?
- Menenius.* The senators of Rome are this good belly, 135
And you the mutinous members : for, examine
Their counsels and their cares ; digest things rightly
Touching the weal o' the common ; you shall find,
No public benefit which you receive,
But it proceeds or comes from them to you, 140

And no way from yourselves.—What do you think?

You, the great toe of this assembly?—

1 *Citizen.* I the great toe? Why the great toe?

Menenius. For that, being one o' the lowest, basest, poorest,
Of this most wise rebellion, thou go'st foremost: 145

Thou rascal, that art worst in blood to run,

Lead'st first to win some vantage.—

But make you ready your stiff bats and clubs:

Rome and her rats are at the point of battle;

The one side must have bale. 150

Enter CAIUS MARCIUS.

Hail, noble Marcius!

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

1 *Citizen.* We have ever your good word.

Marcus. He that will give good words to thee, will flatter
Beneath abhorring.—What would you have, you curs, 155

That like nor peace, nor war? the one affrights you,

The other makes you proud. He that trusts to you,

Where he should find you lions, finds you hares;

Where foxes, geese: you are no surer, no,

Than is the coal of fire upon the ice, 160

Or hailstone in the sun. Your virtue is,

To make him worthy whose offence subdues him,

And curse that justice did it. Who deserves greatness,

Deserves your hate; and your affections are

A sick man's appetite, who desires most that 165

Which would increase his evil. He that depends

Upon your favours, swims with fins of lead,

And hews down oaks with rushes. Hang ye! Trust ye?

With every minute you do change a mind;

And call him noble that was now your hate, 170

Him vile that was your garland. What's the matter,

That in these several places of the city
 You cry against the noble senate, who,
 Under the gods, keep you in awe, which else
 Would feed on one another?—What's their seeking? 175

Menenius. For corn at their own rates; whereof, they say
 The city is well stor'd.

Marcus. Hang 'em! They say!
 They'll sit by the fire, and presume to know
 What's done i' the Capitol; who's like to rise,
 Who thrives, and who declines; side factions, and give out 180
 Conjectural marriages; making parties strong,
 And feebling such as stand not in their liking
 Below their cobbled shoes. They say there's grain enough!
 Would the nobility lay aside their ruth,
 And let me use my sword, I'd make a quarry 185
 With thousands of these quarter'd slaves, as high
 As I could pick my lance.

Menenius. Nay, these are almost thoroughly persuaded;
 For though abundantly they lack discretion,
 Yet are they passing cowardly. But I beseech you, 190
 What says the other troop?

Marcus. They are dissolv'd: hang 'em!
 They said, they were a-hungry; sigh'd forth proverbs,
 That hunger broke stone walls, that dogs must eat,
 That meat was made for mouths, that the gods sent not
 Corn for the rich men only:—with these shreds 195
 They vented their complainings; which being answer'd,
 And a petition granted them, a strange one,
 (To break the heart of generosity,
 And make bold power look pale) they threw their caps
 As they would hang them on the horns o' the moon, 200
 Shouting their emulation.

Menenius. What is granted them?

Marcus. Five tribunes to defend their vulgar wisdoms,
 Of their own choice: one's Junius Brutus,

Sicinius Velutus, and I know not—'Sdeath !
 The rabble should have first unroof'd the city, 205
 Ere so prevail'd with me : it will in time
 Win upon power, and throw forth greater themes
 For insurrection's arguing.

Menenius. This is strange.

Marcus. Go, get you home, you fragments !

Enter a Messenger hastily.

Messenger. Where's Caius Marcus ?

Marcus. Here : what's the matter ? 210

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

Marcus. I am glad on 't ; then we shall have means to vent
 Our musty superfluity.—See, our best elders.

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

1 Senator. Marcus, 'tis true that you have lately told us ;
 The Volsces are in arms.

Marcus. They have a leader, 215
 Tullus Aufidius, that will put you to 't.
 I sin in envying his nobility ;
 And were I anything but what I am,
 I would wish me only he.

Cominius. You have fought together.

Marcus. Were half to half the world by the ears, and he 220
 Upon my party I'd revolt, to make
 Only my wars with him : he is a lion
 That I am proud to hunt.

1 Senator. Then, worthy Marcus,
 Attend upon Cominius to these wars.

Cominius. Is it your former promise ?

Marcus. Sir, it is ; 225
 And I am constant.—Titus Lartius, thou
 Shalt see me once more strike at Tullus' face.
 What, art thou stiff ? stand'st out ?

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

Menenius. O, true bred ! 230

1 *Senator.* Your company to the Capitol ; where I know,
Our greatest friends attend us.

Titus. Lead you on :
Follow, Cominius ; we must follow you ;
Right worthy you priority.

Cominius. Noble Marcius !

1 *Senator* [*To the Citizens*]. Hence to your homes ; be gone !

Marcus. Nay, let them follow : 235
The Volsces have much corn, take these rats thither,
To gnaw their garners.—Worshipful mutineers,
Your valour puts well forth : pray, follow.

[*Exeunt* Senators, COMINIUS, MARCIUS, TITUS,
and MENENIUS. Citizens steal away.]

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

Brutus. He has no equal. 240

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

Brutus. Mark'd you his lip, and eyes ?

Sicinius. Nay ; but his taunts.

Brutus. Being mov'd, he will not spare to gird the gods.

Sicinius. Bemock the modest moon.

Brutus. The present wars devour him : he is grown 245
Too proud to be so valiant.

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

Brutus. Fame, at the which he aims, 250
In whom already he is well grac'd, cannot
Better be held, nor more attain'd, than by

A place below the first : for what miscarries
 Shall be the general's fault, though he perform
 To the utmost of a man ; and giddy censure 255
 Will then cry out of Marcius, " O, if he
 Had borne the business ! "

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

Brutus. Come :
 Half all Cominius' honours are to Marcius, 260
 Though Marcius earn'd them not ; and all his faults
 To Marcius shall be honours, though, indeed,
 In aught he merit not.

Sicinius. Let's hence and hear
 How the dispatch is made ; and in what fashion,
 More than his singularity, he goes 265
 Upon this present action.

Brutus. Let's along. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—Corioli. *The Senate House.*

Enter TULLUS AUFIDIUS and certain Senators.

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

Aufidius. Is it not yours ?
 Whatever have been thought on in this state, 270
 That could be brought to bodily act ere Rome
 Had circumvention ? 'Tis not four days gone
 Since I heard thence ; these are the words ; I think
 I have the letter here ; yes, here it is :— [*Reads.*]

" *They have press'd a power, but it is not known* 275
Whether for east, or west ; the earth is great ;
The people mutinous : and it is rumour'd,

Cominius, Marcius, your old enemy,
(Who is of Rome worse hated than of you,)
And Titus Lartius, a most valiant Roman, 280
These three lead on this preparation
Whither 'tis bent: most likely, 'tis for you:
Consider of it.

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

Aufidius. Nor did you think it folly 285
 To keep your great pretences veil'd, till when
 They needs must show themselves; which in the hatching,
 It seem'd, appear'd to Rome. By the discovery,
 We shall be shorten'd in our aim; which was,
 To take in many towns, ere, almost, Rome 290
 Should know we were afoot.

2 *Senator.* Noble Aufidius,
 Take your commission; hie you to your bands:
 Let us alone to guard Corioli:
 If they set down before us, for the remove
 Bring up your army; but, I think, you'll find 295
 They've not prepared for us.

Aufidius. O, doubt not that;
 I speak from certainties. Nay, more,
 Some parcels of their power are forth already,
 And only hitherward. I leave your honours.
 If we and Caius Marcius chance to meet, 300
 'Tis sworn between us, we shall ever strike
 Till one can do no more.

All. The gods assist you!

Aufidius. And keep your honours safe!

1 *Senator.*

Farewell.

2 *Senator.*

Farewell.

All. Farewell.

[*Exeunt.* 304

SCENE III.—*Before Corioli.*

Enter, with drum and colours, MARCIUS, TITUS LARTIUS, Officers, and Soldiers. To them a Messenger.

Marcus. Yonder comes news:—a wager, they have met.

Lartius. My horse, to yours, no.

Marcus. 'Tis done.

Lartius. Agreed.

Marcus. Say, has our general met the enemy?

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

Lartius. So, the good horse is mine.

Marcus. I'll buy him of you.

Lartius. No, I'll nor sell, nor give him; lend you him I will,
For half a hundred years.—Summon the town. 311

Marcus. How far off lie these armies?

Messenger. Within this mile and half.

Marcus. Then shall we hear their 'larum, and they ours.
Now, Mars, I pr'ythee, make us quick in work,
That we with smoking swords may march from hence, 315
To help our fielded friends!—Come, blow thy blast.

A parley sounded. Enter on the walls, some Senators, and others.

Tullus Aufidius, is he within your walls?

1 Senator. No, nor a man that fears you less than he:
That's lesser than a little. Hark, our drums

[*Alarums afar off.*

Are bringing forth our youth; we'll break our walls, 320
Rather than they shall pound us up: our gates,
Which yet seem shut, we have but pinn'd with rushes;
They'll open of themselves. Hark you, far off!

[*Other alarums.*

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

Marcus. O, they are at it! 325

Lartius. Their noise be our instruction,—Ladders, ho !

The Volsces enter, and pass over the stage.

Marcus. They fear us not, but issue forth their city.

Now put your shields before your hearts, and fight
 With hearts more proof than shields.—Advance, brave Titus :
 They do disdain us much beyond our thoughts, 330
 Which makes me sweat with wrath.—Come on, my fellows :
 He that retires, I'll take him for a Volsce,
 And he shall feel mine edge.

*Alarum ; and exeunt Romans and Volsces, fighting. The Romans
 are beaten back to their trenches.*

*Another alarum. The Volsces and Romans re-enter, and the fight is
 renewed. The Volsces retire into Corioli, and MARCIUS follows
 them to the gates.*

So, now the gates are ope :—now prove good seconds :
 'Tis for the followers fortune widens them, 335
 Not for the fliers : mark me, and do the like.

[*MARCIUS enters the gates ; is shut in.*

1 *Soldier.* Fool-hardiness ! not I.

2 *Soldier.* Nor I.

3 *Soldier.* See, they have shut him in. [*Alarum continues.*

Re-enter TITUS LARTIUS.

Lartius. What is become of Marcus ?

All. Slain, sir, doubtless.

1 *Soldier.* Following the fliers at the very heels,
 With them he enters : who, upon the sudden, 340
 Clapp'd-to their gates : he is himself alone,
 To answer all the city.

Lartius. O noble fellow !

Who, sensible, outdares his senseless sword,
 And, when it bows, stands up ! Thou art left, Marcus :
 A carbuncle entire, as big as thou art, 345
 Were not so rich a jewel. Thou wast a soldier
 Even to Cato's wish, not fierce and terrible
 Only in strokes ; but, with thy grim looks, and

The thunder-like percussion of thy sounds,
 Thou mad'st thine enemies shake, as if the world 350
 Were feverous, and did tremble.

Re-enter MARCIUS, bleeding, assaulted by the enemy.

1 *Soldier.* Look, sir!

Lartius. Oh, 'tis Marcius!

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

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

SCENE IV.—*Within Corioli. A Street.*

Enter MARCIUS and TITUS LARTIUS, with a trumpeter.

Marcus. See here these movers, that do prize their hours
 At a crack'd drachma! Cushions, leaden spoons,
 Irons of a doit, doublets that hangmen would 355
 Bury with those that wore them, these base slaves,
 Ere yet the fight be done, pack up:—down with them!—
 And hark, what noise the general makes!—To him!
 There is the man of my soul's hate, Aufidius,
 Piercing our Romans: then, valiant Titus, take 360
 Convenient numbers to make good the city;
 Whilst I, with those that have the spirit, will haste
 To help Cominius.

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

Marcus. Sir, praise me not; 365
 My work hath not yet warm'd me: fare you well:
 The blood I drop is rather physical
 Than dangerous to me: to Aufidius thus
 I will appear, and fight.

Lartius. Now the fair goddess, Fortune,
 Fall deep in love with thee; and her great charms 370
 Misguide thy opposers' swords! Bold gentleman,
 Prosperity be thy page!

Marcus. Thy friend no less
Than those she places highest! So, farewell.

Lartius. Thou worthiest Marcus!—

[*Exit* MARCIUS.

Go, sound thy trumpet in the market-place;
Call thither all the officers of the town,
Where they shall know our mind: away!

375

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—*Near the camp of COMINIUS.*

Enter COMINIUS *and forces, retreating.*

Cominius. Breathe you, my friends: well fought: we are come
off

Like Romans, neither foolish in our stands,
Nor cowardly in retire: believe me, sirs, 380
We shall be charg'd again. Whiles we have struck,
By interims and conveying gusts we have heard
The charges of our friends. Ye Roman gods,
Lead their successes as we wish our own,
That both our powers, with smiling fronts encountering, 385
May give you thankful sacrifice!—

Enter a Messenger.

Thy news?

Messenger. The citizens of Corioli have issu'd,
And given to Lartius and to Marcus battle:
I saw our party to their trenches driven,
And then I came away.

Cominius. Though thou speak'st truth, 390
Methinks thou speak'st not well. How long is 't since?

Messenger. Above an hour, my lord.

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

Messenger. Spies of the Volsces 395
Held me in chase, that I was forc'd to wheel

Three or four miles about ; else had I, sir,
Half an hour since brought my report.

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

400

Marcus [*within*]. Come I too late ?

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

Enter MARCIUS.

Marcus. Come I too late ?

Cominius. Ay, if you come not in the blood of others,
But mantled in your own. Flower of warriors,
How is 't with Titus Lartius ?

405

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

410

Cominius. Where is that slave
Which told me they had beat you to your trenches ?
Where is he ? Call him hither.

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

415

Cominius. But how prevail'd you ?

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

420

Cominius. Marcius, we have at disadvantage fought,
And did retire, to win our purpose.

Marcus. How lies their battle? Know you on which side
They have plac'd their men of trust? 426

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

Marcus. I do beseech you,
By all the battles wherein we have fought, 430
By the blood we have shed together, by the vows
We have made to endure friends, that you directly
Set me against Aufidius and his Antiates;
And that you not delay the present, but,
Filling the air with swords advanc'd and darts, 435
We prove this very hour.

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

Marcus. Those are they 440
That most are willing,—If any such be here
(As it were sin to doubt) that love this painting
Wherein you see me smear'd; if any fear
Less for his person than an ill report:
If any think, brave death outweighs bad life, 445
And that his country's dearer than himself;
Let him, alone, or so many so minded,
Wave thus, to express his disposition,
And follow Marcus.

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

O, me alone! Make you a sword of me! 450
If these shows be not outward, which of you
But is four Volsces? None of you but is
Able to bear against the great Aufidius

A shield as hard as his. A certain number,
 Though thanks to all, must I select from all : the rest 455
 Shall bear the business in some other fight,
 As cause will be obey'd. Please you to march ;
 And four shall quickly draw out my command,
 Which men are best inclin'd.

Cominius. March on, my fellows :
 Make good this ostentation, and you shall 460
 Divide in all with us.

SCENE VI.—*The gates of Corioli.*

TITUS LARTIUS, *having set a guard upon Corioli, going with drum
 and trumpet towards COMINIUS and CAIUS MARCIUS, enters
 with a Lieutenant, a party of Soldiers, and a Scout.*

Lartius. So let the ports be guarded : keep your duties,
 As I have set them down. If I do send, despatch
 Those centuries to our aid ; the rest will serve
 For a short holding ; if we lose the field, 465
 We cannot keep the town.

Lieutenant. Fear not our care, sir.

Lartius. Hence, and shut your gates upon us.—
 Our guider, come ; to the Roman camp conduct us. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VII.—*A Field of Battle between the Roman and the
 Volscian Camps.*

Alarum. Enter from opposite sides MARCIUS and AUFIDIUS.

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

Aufidius. We hate alike : 470
 Not Afric owns a serpent I abhor
 More than thy fame and envy. Fix thy foot.

Marcus. Let the first budger die the other's slave,
 And the gods doom him after !

Aufidius. If I fly, Marcus,
 Halloo me like a hare.

Coriolanus.

Marcus. Within these three hours, Tullus, 475
 Alone I fought in your Corioli walls,
 And made what work I pleas'd; 'tis not my blood
 Wherein thou seest me mask'd; for thy revenge,
 Wrench up thy power to the highest.

Aufidius. Wert thou the Hector, 480
 That was the whip of your bragg'd progeny,
 Thou should'st not 'scape me here.—

[*They fight, and certain Volsces
 come to the aid of AUFIDIUS.*]

Officious, and not valiant, you have sham'd me
 In your condemned seconds.

[*Exeunt fighting, driven in by MARCIUS.*]

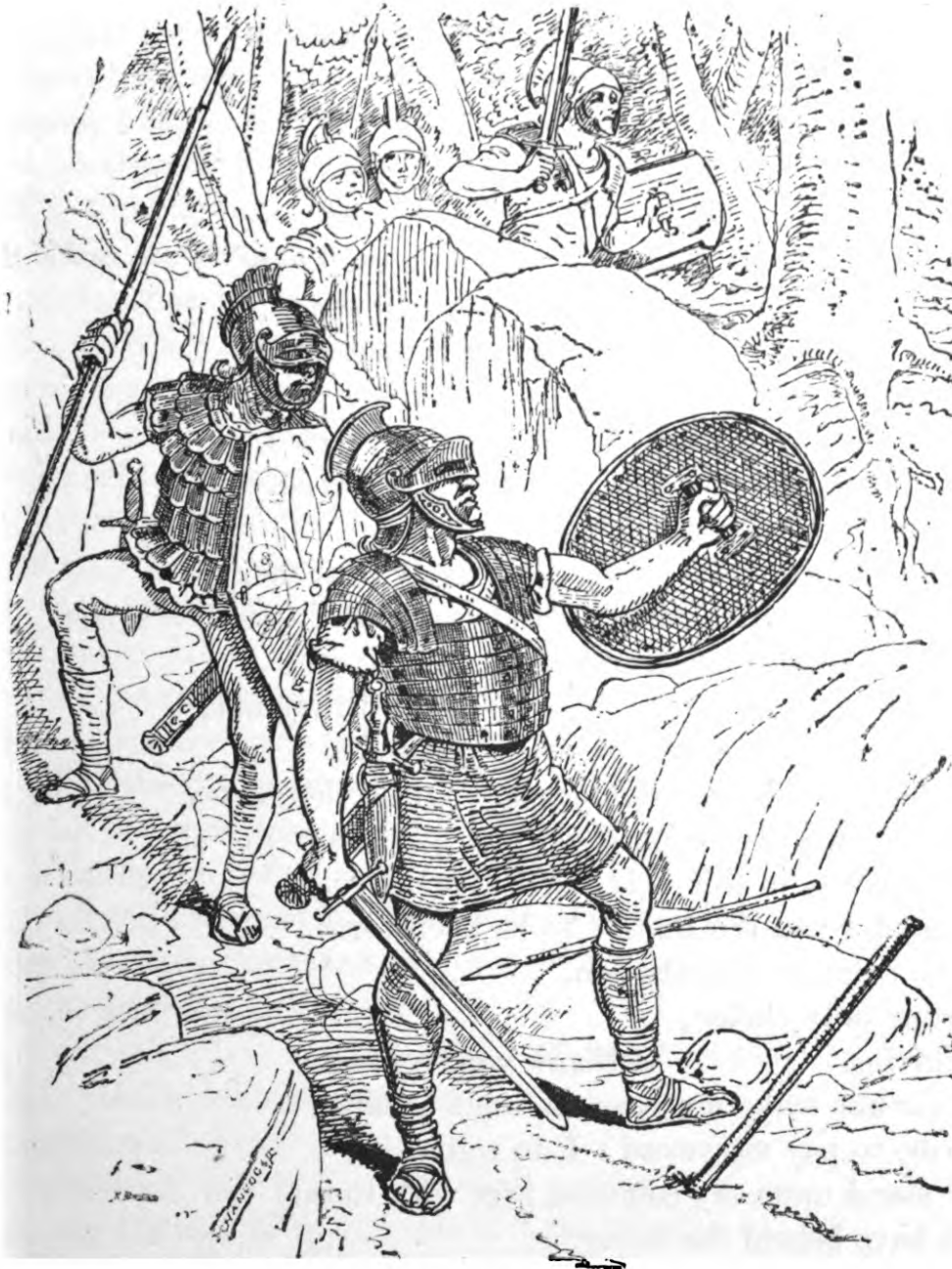
SCENE VIII.—*The Roman Camp.*

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

Cominius. If I should tell thee o'er this thy day's work, 485
 Thou'lt not believe thy deeds: but I'll report it,
 Where senators shall mingle tears with smiles;
 Where great patricians shall attend, and shrug,
 I' the end, admire; where ladies shall be frighted,
 And, gladly quak'd, hear more; where the dull Tribunes, 490
 That, with the fusty plebeians, hate thine honours,
 Shall say, against their hearts, "We thank the gods,
 Our Rome hath such a soldier!"
 Yet can'st thou to a morsel of this feast,
 Having full dined before.

Enter TITUS LARTIUS, with his power, from the pursuit.

Lartius. O general, 495
 Here is the steed, we the caparison:
 Hadst thou beheld—



ROMAN SOLDIERS.

Marcus. Pray now, no more, my mother,
 Who has a charter to extol her blood,
 When she does praise me, grieves me. I have done
 As you have done,—that's what I can ; induc'd 500
 As you have been,—that's for my country ;
 He that has but effected his good will,
 Hath overta'en mine act.

Cominius. You shall not be
 The grave of your deserving ; Rome must know
 The value of her own : 'twere a concealment 505
 Worse than a theft, no less than a traducement,
 To hide your doings ; and to silence that,
 Which, to the spire and top of praises vouch'd,
 Would seem but modest : therefore, I beseech you,
 (In sign of what you are, not to reward 510
 What you have done,) before our army hear me.

Marcus. I have some wounds upon me, and they smart
 To hear themselves remember'd.

Cominius. Should they not,
 Well might they fester 'gainst ingratitude,
 And tent themselves with death. Of all the horses, 515
 (Whereof we have ta'en good, and good store,) of all
 The treasure, in this field achiev'd and city,
 We render you the tenth ; to be ta'en forth,
 At the common distribution,
 At your only choice.

Marcus. I thank you, general ; 520
 But cannot make my heart consent to take
 A bribe to pay my sword : I do refuse it ;
 And stand upon my common part with those
 That have beheld the doing.

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

Marcus. May these same instruments, which you profane, 525

Never sound more, when drums and trumpets shall
I' the field prove flatterers! Let courts and cities be
Made all of false-fac'd soothing,

When steel grows soft as the parasite's silk!

Let them be made an overture for the wars! 530

No more, I say! For that I have not wash'd
My nose that bled, or foil'd some debile wretch,
Which, without note, here's many else have done,
You shout me forth

In acclamations hyperbolical; 535

As if I lov'd my little should be dieted

In praises sauc'd with lies.

Cominius. Too modest are you:

More cruel to your good report, than grateful

To us that give you truly: by your patience

If 'gainst yourself you be incens'd, we'll put you 540

(Like one that means his proper harm) in manacles,

Then reason safely with you.—Therefore, be it known,

As to us, to all the world, that Caius Marcius

Wears this war's garland: in token of the which,

My noble steed, known to the camp, I give him, 545

With all his trim belonging; and from this time,

For what he did before Corioli, call him,

With all the applause and clamour of the host,

CAIUS MARCIUS CORIOLANUS.—

Bear the addition nobly ever! 550

[*Flourish. Trumpets sound, and drums.*]

All. Caius Marcius Coriolanus!

Coriolanus. I will go wash;

And when my face is fair, you shall perceive

Whether I blush, or no: howbeit, I thank you:—

I mean to stride your steed; and at all times, 555

To undercrest your good addition

To the fairness of my power.

Cominius.

So to our tent;

Where, ere we do repose us, we will write
 To Rome of our success.—You, Titus Lartius,
 Must to Corioli back: send us to Rome 560
 The best, with whom we may articulate,
 For their own good and ours.

Lartius. I shall, my lord.

Coriolanus. The gods begin to mock me. I, that now
 Refus'd most princely gifts, am bound to beg
 Of my lord general.

Cominius. Take it; 'tis yours. What is 't? 565

Coriolanus. I sometime lay here in Corioli
 At a poor man's house; he us'd me kindly:
 He cried to me; I saw him prisoner;
 But then Aufidius was within my view,
 And wrath o'erwhelm'd my pity; I request you 570
 To give my poor host freedom.

Cominius. O, well begg'd!
 Were he the butcher of my son, he should
 Be free as is the wind. Deliver him, Titus.

Lartius. Marcius, his name?

Coriolanus. By Jupiter, forgot:—
 I am weary; yea, my memory is tir'd— 575
 Have we no wine here?

Cominius. Go we to our tent:
 The blood upon your visage dries; 'tis time
 It should be look'd to: come. [Exeunt. 578

SCENE IX.—*The Camp of the Volsces.*

*A Flourish. Cornets. Enter TULLUS AUFIDIUS, covered with blood,
 with two or three Soldiers.*

Aufidius. The town is ta'en!

1 Soldier. 'Twill be deliver'd back on good condition. 580

Aufidius. Condition!—

I would I were a Roman; for I cannot,

Being a Volsee, be that I am.—Condition!
 What good condition can a treaty find
 I' the part that is at mercy? Five times, Marcius, 585
 I have fought with thee; so often hast thou beat me;
 And would'st do so, I think, should we encounter
 As often as we eat.—By the elements,
 If e'er again I meet him beard to beard,
 He is mine, or I am his: mine emulation 590
 Hath not that honour in 't it had; for where
 I thought to crush him in an equal force,
 (True sword to sword,) I'll potch at him some way,
 Or wrath or craft may get him.

1 *Soldier.* He's the devil.

Aufidius. Bolder, though not so subtle. My valour's poison'd
 With only suffering stain by him; for him 596
 Shall fly out of itself: nor sleep nor sanctuary,
 Being naked, sick; nor fane nor capitol,
 The prayers of priests nor times of sacrifice,
 Embarquements all of fury, shall lift up 600
 Their rotten privilege and custom 'gainst
 My hate to Marcius: where I find him, were it
 At home, upon my brother's guard, even there
 Against the hospitable canon, would I
 Wash my fierce hand in 's heart. Go you to the city; 605
 Learn how 'tis held; and what they are that must
 Be hostages for Rome.

1 *Soldier.* Will not you go?

Aufidius. I am attended at the cypress grove: I pray you
 ('Tis south the city mills) bring me word thither
 How the world goes, that to the pace of it 610
 I may spur on my journey.

1 *Soldier.* I shall, sir. [*Exeunt*



A ROMAN SENATOR.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Public Place in Rome.**Enter MENENIUS, SICINIUS, and BRUTUS.**Menenius.* The augurer tells me we shall have news to-night.*Brutus.* Good or bad?*Menenius.* Not according to the prayer of the people, for they love not Marcius. 615*Sicinius.* Nature teaches beasts to know their friends.*Menenius.* Pray you, who does the wolf love?*Sicinius.* The lamb.*Menenius.* Ay, to devour him; as the hungry plebeians would the noble Marcius. 620

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

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

Both Tribunes. Well, sir.

Menenius. In what enormity is Marcius poor in that you two have not in abundance? 626

Brutus. He's poor in no one fault, but stored with all.

Sicinius. Especially in pride.

Brutus. And topping all others in boasting.

Menenius. This is strange now: do you two know how you are censured here in the city, I mean of us o' the right-hand file? Do you? 632

Both Tribunes. Why, how are we censured?

Menenius. Because you talk of pride now.—Will you not be angry? 635

Both Tribunes. Well, well, sir, well. 635

Menenius. Why, 'tis no great matter; for a very little thief of occasion will rob you of a great deal of patience; give your dispositions the reins, and be angry at your pleasures; at the least, if you take it as a pleasure to you in being so. You blame Marcius for being proud? 640

Brutus. We do it not alone, sir.

Menenius. I know you can do very little alone; for your helps are many, or else your actions would grow wondrous single: your abilities are too infant-like, for doing much alone. You talk of pride: O that you could turn your eyes towards the napes of your necks, and make but an interior survey of your good selves? O that you could! 647

Brutus. What then, sir?

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

Sicinius. Menenius, you are known well enough too. 651

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

complaint, hasty and tinder-like upon too trivial motion; one that converses more with the buttock of the night, than with the forehead of the morning. What I think I utter, and spend my malice in my breath. Meeting two such weals-men as you are, (I cannot call you Lycurguses,) if the drink you give me touch my palate adversely, I make a crooked face at it. I cannot say your worships have delivered the matter well, when I find the ass in compound with the major part of your syllables: and though I must be content to bear with those that say you are reverend grave men, yet they lie deadly, that tell you have good faces. If you see this in the map of my microcosm, follows it that I am known well enough too? What harm can your bisson conspectuities glean out of this character, if I be known well enough too? 667

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

Menenius. You know neither me, yourselves, nor anything. You are ambitious for poor knaves' caps and legs: you wear out a good wholesome forenoon in hearing a cause between an orange-wife and a fosset-seller; and then rejoin the controversy of threepence to a second day of audience. When you are hearing a matter between party and party, if you chance to be pinched with the colic, you make faces like mummers; and dismiss the controversy bleeding, the more entangled by your hearing: all the peace you make in their cause is, calling both the parties knaves. You are a pair of strange ones. 678

Brutus. Come, come, you are well understood to be a perfecter giber for the table than a necessary bencher in the capitol. 680

Menenius. Our very priests must become mockers, if they shall encounter such ridiculous subjects as you are. When you speak best unto the purpose, it is not worth the wagging of your beards; and your beards deserve not so honourable a grave as to stuff a botcher's cushion, or to be entombed in an ass's pack-saddle. Yet you must be saying, Marcius is proud; who, in a cheap estimation, is worth all your predecessors since Deucalion; though peradventure some of the best of 'em were hereditary hangmen. Good den to your worships: more of your conversation would

infect my brain, being the herdsmen of the beastly plebeians: I will be bold to take my leave of you. 691

[BRUTUS *and* SICINIUS *retire.*

Enter VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, VALERIA, *etc.*

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

Volumnia. Honourable Menenius, my boy Marcus approaches for the love of Juno, let's go. 695

Menenius. Ha! Marcus coming home!

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

Menenius. Take my cap, Jupiter, and I thank thee.—Hoo! Marcus coming home! 700

Volumnia, Virgilia. Nay, 'tis true.

Volumnia. Look, here's a letter from him: the state hath another, his wife another; and, I think, there's one at home for you.

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

Virgilia. Yes, certain, there's a letter for you; I saw it. 705

Menenius. A letter for me! It gives me an estate of seven years' health; in which time I will make a lip at the physician: the most sovereign prescription in Galen is but empiricute, and, to this preservative, of no better report than a horse-drench.—Is he not wounded? he was wont to come home wounded. 710

Virgilia. O, no, no, no.

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

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

Volumnia. On 's brows; Menenius, he comes the third time home with the oaken garland. 716

Menenius. Has he disciplined Aufidius soundly?

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

Menenius. And 'twas time for him too, I'll warrant him that: an' he had stay'd by him, I would not have been so fidiused for all the chests in Corioli, and the gold that's in them. Is the senate possessed of this? 723

Volumnia. Good ladies, let's go.—Yes, yes, yes; the senate has letters from the general, wherein he gives my son the whole name of the war; he hath in this action outdone his former deeds doubly. 727

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

Menenius. Wondrous! ay, I warrant you, and not without his true purchasing.

Virgilia. The gods grant them true!

Volumnia. True! pow, wow. 730

Menenius. True! I'll be sworn they are true.—Where is he wounded?—[*To the Tribunes, who come forward.*] God save your good worships! Marcius is coming home: he has more cause to be proud.—[*To VOLUMNIA.*] Where is he wounded? 734

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

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

Volumnia. He had, before this last expedition, twenty-five wounds upon him. 739

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

Volumnia. These are the ushers of Marcius; before him He carries noise, and behind him he leaves tears: Death, that dark spirit, in 's nery arm doth lie; Which, being advanc'd, declines, and then men die. 745

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

Herald. Know, Rome, that all alone Marcius did fight

Within Corioli gates : where he hath won,
 With fame, a name to Caius Marcius ; these
 In honour follows, Coriolanus :—

Welcome to Rome, renowned Coriolanus ! [Flourish. 750

All. Welcome to Rome, renowned Coriolanus !

Coriolanus. No more of this, it does offend my heart ;
 Pray now no more.

Cominius. Look, sir, your mother !

Coriolanus. O,
 You have, I know, petition'd all the gods
 For my prosperity ! [Kneels.

Volumnia. Nay, my good soldier, up ;
 My gentle Marcius, worthy Caius, and 755
 By deed achieving honour newly-named,
 What is it ? Coriolanus must I call thee ?
 But O, thy wife !

Coriolanus. My gracious silence, hail !
 Wouldst thou have laugh'd had I come coffin'd home,
 That weep'st to see me triumph ? Ah, my dear, 760
 Such eyes the widows in Corioli wear,
 And mothers that lack sons.

Menenius. Now, the gods crown thee !

Coriolanus. And live you yet ?—[To VALERIA.] O my sweet
 lady, pardon.

Volumnia. I know not where to turn :—O, welcome home ;
 And welcome, general ;—and you are welcome all. 765

Menenius. A hundred thousand welcomes : I could weep,
 And I could laugh ; I am light, and heavy : welcome :
 A curse begin at very root on 's heart,
 That is not glad to see thee !—You are three,
 That Rome should dote on : yet by the faith of men 770
 We have some old crab-trees here at home, that will not
 Be grafted to your relish. Yet, welcome, warriors ;
 We call a nettle, but a nettle, and
 The faults of fools but folly.

- Cominius.* Ever right. 775
- Coriolanus.* Menenius, ever, ever.
- Herald.* Give way there, and go on!
- Coriolanus.* [*To his Wife and Mother.*] Your hand,—and yours :
- Ere in our own house I do shade my head,
The good patricians must be visited ;
From whom I have receiv'd not only greetings, 780
But with them change of honours.
- Volumnia.* I have liv'd
To see inherited my very wishes,
And the buildings of my fancy : only
There's one thing wanting, which I doubt not but
Our Rome will cast upon thee.
- Coriolanus.* Know, good mother, 785
I had rather be their servant in my way,
Then sway with them in theirs.
- Cominius.* On, to the Capitol !
- [*Flourish. Cornets. Exeunt in state, as before. The Tribunes remain.*]
- Brutus.* All tongues speak of him, and the bleared sights
Are spectacled to see him : your prattling nurse
Into a rapture lets her baby cry 790
While she chats him : the kitchen malkin pins
Her richest lockram 'bout her reechy neck,
Clamb'ring the walls to eye him : stalls, bulks, windows,
Are smother'd up, leads fill'd, and ridges hors'd
With variable complexions ; all agreeing 795
In earnestness to see him : seld-shown flamens
Do press among the popular throngs, and puff
To win a vulgar station : our veil'd dames
Commit the war of white and damask, in
Their nicely-gawded cheeks, to the wanton spoil 800
Of Phœbus' burning kisses ; such a pother,

As if that whatsoever god who leads him,
Were slyly crept into his human powers,
And gave him graceful posture.

Sicinius. On the sudden
I warrant him consul.

Brutus. Then our office may, 805
During his power, go sleep.

Sicinius. He cannot temperately transport his honours
From where he should begin, and end ; but will
Lose those he hath won.

Brutus. In that there's comfort.

Sicinius. Doubt not the commoners, for whom we stand, 810
But they, upon their ancient malice, will
Forget, with the least cause, these his new honours ;
That he'll give them, make I as little question
As he is proud to do 't.

Brutus. I heard him swear,
Were he to stand for consul, never would he 815
Appear i' the market-place, nor on him put
The napless vesture of humility ;
Nor, showing (as the manner is) his wounds
To the people, beg their stinking breaths.

Sicinius. 'Tis right.

Brutus. It was his word. O, he would miss it, rather 820
Than carry it by the suit o' the gentry to him,
And the desire of the nobles.

Sicinius. I wish no better
Than have him hold that purpose, and to put it
In execution.

Brutus. 'Tis most like he will.

Sicinius. It shall be to him, then, as our good wills, 825
A sure destruction.

Brutus. So it must fall out
To him, or our authorities. For an end,
We must suggest the people, in what hatred

He still hath held them ; that to his power he would
 Have made them mules, silenc'd their pleaders, and 830
 Dispropertied their freedoms ; holding them,
 In human action and capacity,
 Of no more soul, nor fitness for the world,
 Than camels in the war ; who have their provand
 Only for bearing burdens, and sore blows 835
 For sinking under them.

Sicinius. This, as you say, suggested
 At some time when his soaring insolence
 Shall touch the people, (which time shall not want,
 If he be put upon 't ; and that's as easy
 As to set dogs on sheep,) will be his fire 840
 To kindle their dry stubble ; and their blaze
 Shall darken him for ever.

Enter a Messenger.

Brutus. What's the Matter ?
Messenger. You are sent for to the Capitol. 'Tis thought
 That Marcius shall be consul : I have seen
 The dumb men throng to see him, and the blind 845
 To hear him speak : matrons flung gloves,
 Ladies and maids their scarfs and handkerchiefs,
 Upon him as he pass'd : the nobles bended
 As to Jove's statue ; and the commons made
 A shower and thunder with their caps and shouts : 850
 I never saw the like.

Brutus. Let's to the Capitol ;
 And carry with us ears and eyes for the time,
 But hearts for the event.

Sicinius. Have with you.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—Rome. *The Capitol.*

Enter two Officers to lay cushions.

1 *Officer.* Come, come, they are almost here. How many stand for consulships? 855

2 *Officer.* Three, they say; but 'tis thought of every one Coriolanus will carry it.

1 *Officer.* That's a brave fellow; but he's vengeance proud, and loves not the common people. 859

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

1 *Officer.* If he did not care whether he had their love or no, he waved indifferently 'twixt doing them neither good nor harm; but he seeks their hate with greater devotion than they can render it him; and leaves nothing undone that may fully discover him their opposite. Now, to seem to affect the malice and displeasure of the people, is as bad as that which he dislikes, to flatter them for their love. 873

2 *Officer.* He hath deserved worthily of his country: and his ascent is not by such easy degrees as those, who, having been supple and courteous to the people, bonneted, without any farther deed to have them at all into their estimation and report: but he hath so planted his honours in their eyes, and his actions in their hearts, that for their tongues to be silent, and not confess so much, were a kind of ingrateful injury: to report otherwise, were a malice, that, giving itself the lie, would pluck reproof and rebuke from every ear that heard it. 882

1 *Officer.* No more of him; he is a worthy man. Make way, they are coming.

A sennet. Enter, with Lictors before them, COMINIUS, the Consul, MENENIUS, CORIOLANUS, many other Senators, Coriolanus.

SICINIUS, *and* BRUTUS. *The Senators take their places ;
the Tribunes take theirs also by themselves.*

Menenius. Having determin'd of the Volsces, 885
And to send for Titus Lartius, it remains,
As the main point of this our after-meeting,
To gratify his noble service, that hath thus
Stood for his country : therefore, please you,
Most reverend and grave elders, to desire 890
The present consul, and last general
In our well-found successes, to report
A little of that worthy work perform'd
By Caius Marcius Coriolanus : whom
We meet here, both to thank, and to remember 895
With honours like himself.

1 *Senator.* Speak, good Cominius
Leave nothing out for length, and make us think
Rather our state's defective for requital,
Than we to stretch it out. Masters o' the people,
We do request your kindest ears ; and after, 900
Your loving motion toward the common body,
To yield what passes here.

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

Brutus. Which the rather 905
We shall be bless'd to do, if he remember
A kinder value of the people, than
He hath hereto priz'd them at.

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

Brutus. Most willingly : 910
But yet my caution was more pertinent,
Than the rebuke you give it.

Menenius. He loves your people :
But tie him not to be their bedfellow.—
Worthy Cominius, speak.—

[CORIOLANUS rises, and offers to go away.]

Nay, keep your place.

1 *Senator.* Sit, Coriolanus ; never shame to hear 915
What you have nobly done.

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

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

Coriolanus. No, sir, yet oft,
When blows have made me stay, I fled from words. 920
You sooth'd not, therefore hurt not : but, your people,
I love them as they weigh.

Menenius. Pray now, sit down.

Coriolanus. I had rather have one scratch my head i' the sun,
When the alarm was struck, than idly sit
To hear my nothings monster'd. [Exit. 925

Menenius. Masters of the people, 925
Your multiplying spawn how can he flatter,
(That's thousand to one good one,) when you now see,
He had rather venture all his limbs for honour,
Than one of his ears to hear it ?—Proceed, Cominius.

Cominius. I shall lack voice : the deeds of Coriolanus 930
Should not be utter'd feebly.—It is held,
That valour is the chiefest virtue, and
Most dignifies the haver : if it be,
The man I speak of cannot in the world
Be singly counterpois'd. At sixteen years, 935
When Tarquin made a head for Rome, he fought
Beyond the mark of others : our then dictator,
Whom with all praise I point at, saw him fight
When with his Amazonian chin he drove

The bristled lips before him : he bestrid 940
 An o'er-press'd Roman, and i' the consul's view
 Slew three opposers : Tarquin's self he met,
 And struck him on his knee : in that day's feats,
 When he might act the woman in the scene,
 He prov'd best man i' the field : and for his meed 945
 Was brow-bound with the oak. His pupil age
 Man-enter'd thus, he wax'd like a sea ;
 And, in the brunt of seventeen battles since,
 He lurch'd all swords of the garland. For this last,
 Before and in Corioli, let me say, 950
 I cannot speak him home : he stopp'd the fiers !
 And, by his rare example, made the coward
 Turn terror into sport : as weeds, before
 A vessel under sail, so men obey'd
 And fell below his stem : his sword (death's stamp), 955
 Where it did mark, it took : from face to foot
 He was a thing of blood, whose every motion
 Was tim'd with dying cries : alone he enter'd
 The mortal gate of the city, which he painted
 With shunless destiny ; aidless came off, 960
 And with a sudden re-enforcement struck
 Corioli like a planet : now all's his :
 When, by-and-by, the din of war 'gan pierce
 His ready sense ; then straight his double spirit
 Re-quicken'd what in flesh was fatigate, 965
 And to the battle came he ; where he did
 Run reeking o'er the lives of men, as if
 'Twere a perpetual spoil ; and till we call'd
 Both field and city ours, he never stood
 To ease his breast with panting.
Menenius. Worthy man ! 970
 1 *Senator.* He cannot but with measure fit the honours
 Which we devise him.
Cominius. Our spoils he kick'd at ;

And look'd upon things precious, as they were
 The common muck o' the world ; he covets less
 Than misery itself would give ; rewards 975
 His deeds with doing them ; and is content
 To spend the time, to end it.

Menenius. He's right noble :

Let him be called for.

I Senator. Call Coriolanus.

Officer. He doth appear.

Re-enter CORIOLANUS.

Menenius. The senate, Coriolanus, are well pleas'd 980
 To make thee consul.

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

Menenius. It then remains,
 That you do speak to the people.

Coriolanus. I do beseech you,
 Let me o'erleap that custom ; for I cannot
 Put on the gown, stand naked, and entreat them, 985
 For my wounds' sake, to give their suffrage ; please you
 That I may pass this doing.

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

Menenius. Put them not to 't :—
 Pray you, go fit you to the custom ; and 990
 Take to you, as your predecessors have,
 Your honour with your form.

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

Brutus. [*Aside to SICINIUS.*] Mark you that ?

Coriolanus. To brag unto them,—thus I did, and thus ;— 995
 Show them the unaching scars which I should hide,
 As if I had receiv'd them for the hire

Of their breath only!—

Menenius. Do not stand upon 't!—
We recommend to you, tribunes of the people,
Our purpose to them;—and to our noble consul 1000
Wish we all joy and honour.

Senators. To Coriolanus come all joy and honour!
[*Flourish.* *Exeunt* Senators.]

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

Sicinius. May they perceive his intent! He will require them,
As if he did contemn what he requested 1005
Should be in them to give.

Brutus. Come, we'll inform them
Of our proceedings here on the market-place;
I know, they do attend us. [*Exeunt.* 1008

SCENE III.—Rome. *The Forum.*

Enter several Citizens.

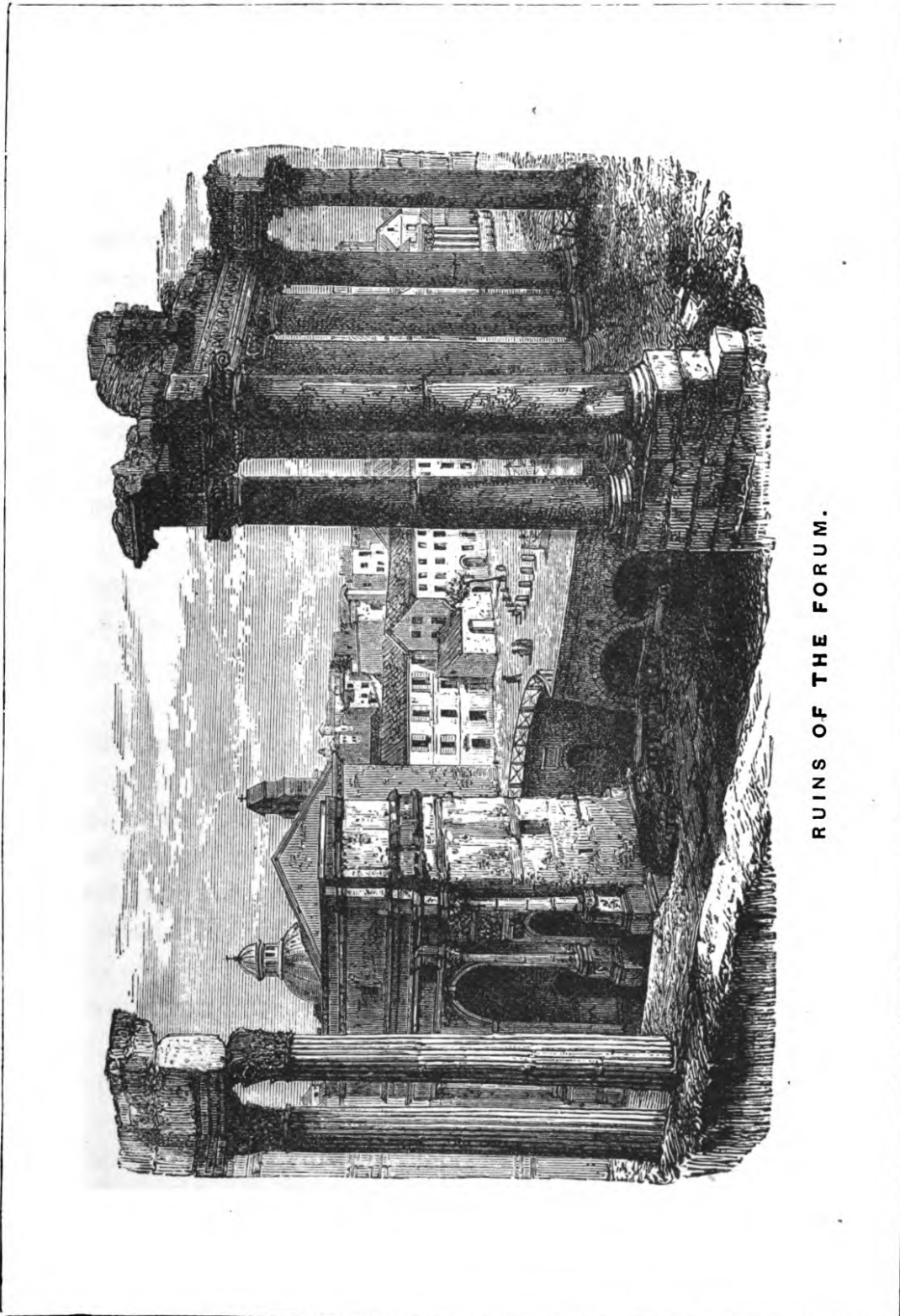
1 *Citizen.* Once, if he do require our voices, we ought not to deny him.

2 *Citizen.* We may, sir, if we will. 1010

3 *Citizen.* We have power in ourselves to do it, but it is a power that we have no power to do: for if he show us his wounds, and tell us his deeds, we are to put our tongues into those wounds, and speak for them: so, if he tell us his noble deeds, we must also tell him our noble acceptance of them. Ingratitude is monstrous: and for the multitude to be ingrateful, were to make a monster of the multitude; of the which, we, being members, should bring ourselves to be monstrous members. 1018

1 *Citizen.* And to make us no better thought of, a little help will serve; for once we stood up about the corn, he himself stuck not to call us the many-headed multitude. 1021

3 *Citizen.* We have been called so of many; not that our heads are some brown, some black, some auburn, some bald, but



RUINS OF THE FORUM.

that our wits are so diversely coloured : and truly, I think, if all our wits were to issue out of one skull, they would fly east, west, north, south ; and their consent of one direct way should be at once to all the points o' the compass. 1027

2 *Citizen*. Think you so ? Which way do you judge my wit would fly ?

3 *Citizen*. Nay, your wit will not so soon out as another man's will, 'tis strongly wedged up in a blockhead ; but if it were at liberty, 'twould, sure, southward. 1031

2 *Citizen*. Why that way ?

3 *Citizen*. To lose itself in a fog ; where being three parts melted away with rotten dews, the fourth would return for conscience' sake, to help to get thee a wife. 1035

2 *Citizen*. You are never without your tricks :—you may, you may.

3 *Citizen*. Are you all resolved to give your voices ? But that's no matter ; the greater part carries it. I say, if he would incline to the people, there was never a worthier man. 1039

Enter CORIOLANUS and MENENIUS.

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

All. Content, content. [*Exeunt.*]

Menenius. O, sir, you are not right ; have you not known The worthiest men have done 't ?

Coriolanus. What must I say ?—

“ I pray, sir,”—Plague upon 't ! I cannot bring My tongue to such a pace ;—“ Look, sir ; my wounds ;— 1050 I got them in my country's service, when Some certain of your brethren roar'd, and ran From the noise of our own drums.”

Menenius. O me, the gods !

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

Coriolanus. Think upon me ! Hang 'em ! 1055
I would they would forget me, like the virtues
Which our divines lose by them.

Menenius. You'll mar all :
I'll leave you : pray you, speak to them, I pray you,
In wholesome manner.

Coriolanus. Bid them wash their faces,
And keep their teeth clean.— [Exit *MENENIUS.*
So, here comes a brace. 1060

Enter two Citizens.

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

1 *Citizen.* We do, sir ; tell us what hath brought you to 't.

Coriolanus. Mine own desert.

2 *Citizen.* Your own desert ?

Coriolanus. Ay, not mine own desire.

1 *Citizen.* How ! not your own desire ? 1065

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

1 *Citizen.* You must think, if we give you any thing, we hope
to gain by you.

Coriolanus. Well, then, I pray, your price o' the consulship ?

1 *Citizen.* The price is, to ask it kindly. 1070

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

2 *Citizen.* You shall have it, worthy sir. 1074

Coriolanus. A match, sir.—There is in all two worthy voices
begged.—I have your alms : adieu. 1076

1 *Citizen.* But this is something odd.

2 *Citizen.* An 'twere to give again,—but 'tis no matter.

[*Exeunt the two Citizens.*

Enter two other Citizens.

Coriolanus. Pray you now, if it may stand with the tune of

your voices that I may be consul, I have here the customary gown. 1080

3 *Citizen.* You have deserved nobly of your country, and you have not deserved nobly.

Coriolanus. Your enigma ?

3 *Citizen.* You have been a scourge to her enemies, you have been a rod to her friends ; you have not, indeed, loved the common people. 1085

Coriolanus. You should account me the more virtuous, that I have not been common in my love. I will, sir, flatter my sworn brother, the people, to earn a dearer estimation of them ; 'tis a condition they account gentle, and since the wisdom of their choice is rather to have my hat than my heart, I will practise the insinuating nod, and be off to them most counterfeitly ; that is, sir, I will counterfeit the bewitchment of some popular man, and give it bountifully to the desirers. Therefore, beseech you, I may be consul. 1094

4 *Citizen.* We hope to find you our friend ; and therefore give you our voices heartily. 1096

3 *Citizen.* You have received many wounds for your country.

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

Both Citizens. The gods give you joy, sir, heartily ! [*Exeunt.*]

Coriolanus. Most sweet voices !—

Better it is to die, better to starve,

Than crave the hire which first we do deserve.

Why in this wolvish toge should I stand here,

To beg of Hob and Dick, that do appear,

1105

Their needless vouches ? Custom calls me to 't :—

What custom wills, in all things should we do 't,

The dust on antique time would lie unswept,

And mountainous error be too highly heap'd

For truth to o'er-peer. Rather than fool it so,

1110

Let the high office and the honour go

To one that would do thus.—I am half through ;

The one part suffer'd, the other will I do.
Here come more voices.—

Enter three other Citizens.

Your voices : for your voices I have fought ; 1115
Watch'd for your voices ; for your voices bear
Of wounds two dozen odd ; battles thrice six
I have seen and heard of ; for your voices,
Have done many things, some less, some more ;
Your voices : indeed I would be consul. 1120

5 *Citizen.* He has done, nobly, and cannot go without any
honest man's voice.

6 *Citizen.* Therefore let him be consul : the gods give him joy,
and make him good friend to the people !

All. Amen, amen.—God save thee, noble consul ! 1125
[*Exeunt Citizens.*]

Coriolanus. Worthy voices !

Re-enter MENENIUS, with BRUTUS and SICINIUS.

Menenius. You have stood your limitation ; and the tribunes
Endue you with the people's voice : remains
That, in the official marks invested, you
Anon do meet the senate.

Coriolanus. Is this done ? 1130

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

Coriolanus. Where ? at the senate-house ?

Sicinius. There, Coriolanus. 1135

Coriolanus. May I change these garments ?

Sicinius. You may, sir.

Coriolanus. That I'll straight do ; and, knowing myself again,
Repair to the senate-house.

Menenius. I'll keep you company.—Will you along ?

Brutus. We stay here for the people.

Sicinius. Fare you well. 1140

[*Exeunt CORIOLANUS and MENENIUS.*]

He has it now ; and by his looks, methinks,
'Tis warm at his heart.

Brutus. With a proud heart he wore
His humble weeds. Will you dismiss the people ?

Re-enter Citizens.

Sicinius. How now, my masters ! have you chose this man ?

1 *Citizen.* He has our voices, sir. 1145

Brutus. We pray the gods he may deserve your love.

2 *Citizen.* Amen, sir. To my poor unworthy notice,
He mock'd us when he begg'd our voices.

3 *Citizen.* Certainly,
He flouted us downright.

1 *Citizen.* No, 'tis his kind of speech, he did not mock us. 1150

2 *Citizen.* Not one amongst us, save yourself, but says
He used us scornfully : he should have show'd us
His marks of merit, wounds receiv'd for his country.

Sicinius. Why, so he did, I am sure.

All. No, no ; no man saw 'em.

3 *Citizen.* He said he had wounds, which he could show in
private ; 1155

And with his hat, thus waving it in scorn,
“ *I would be consul,*” says he, “ *aged custom,*
But by your voices, will not so permit me ;

Your voices therefore :” when we granted that
Here was, “ *I thank you for your voices,—thank you,—* 1160
Your most sweet voices :—now you have left your voices.
I have no further with you.”—Was not this mockery ?

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

Brutus. Could you not have told him, 1165
As you were lesson'd,—When he had no power,
But was a petty servant to the state,
He was your enemy ; ever spake against
Your liberties, and the charters that you bear

I' the body of the weal ; and now, arriving 1170
 A place of potency, and sway o' the state,
 If he should still malignantly remain
 Fast foe to the plebeii, your voices might
 Be curses to yourselves? You should have said
 That, as his worthy deeds did claim no less 1175
 Than what he stood for, so his gracious nature
 Would think upon you for your voices, and
 Translate his malice towards you into love,
 Standing your friendly lord.

Sicinius. Thus to have said,
 As you were fore-advis'd, had touch'd his spirit, 1180
 And tried his inclination ; from him pluck'd
 Either his gracious promise, which you might,
 As cause had called you up, have held him to ;
 Or else it would have gall'd his surly nature,
 Which easily endures not article 1185
 Tying him to aught ; so, putting him to rage,
 You should have ta'en the advantage of his choler,
 And pass'd him unelected.

Brutus. Did you perceive
 He did solicit you in free contempt,
 When he did need your loves ; and do you think 1190
 That his contempt shall not be bruising to you,
 When he hath power to crush? Why, had your bodies
 No heart among you? or had you tongues to cry
 Against the rectorship of judgment?

Sicinius. Have you,
 Ere now, denied the asker? and now again, 1195
 Of him that did not ask, but mock, bestow
 Your sued-for tongues?

3 *Citizen.* He's not confirm'd ; we may deny him yet.

2 *Citizen.* And will deny him :

I'll have five hundred voices of that sound. 1200

1 *Citizen.* Ay, twice five hundred, and their friends to piece 'em.

Brutus. Get you hence instantly ; and tell those friends,
They have chose a consul that will from them take
Their liberties ; make them of no more voice
Than dogs, that are as often beat for barking, 1205
As therefore kept to do so.

Sicinius. Let them assemble ;
And, on a safer judgment, all revoke
Your ignorant election : enforce his pride,
And his old hate unto you : besides, forget not
With what contempt he wore the humble weed ; 1210
How in his suit he scorn'd you : but your loves,
Thinking upon his services, took from you
The apprehension of his present portance,
Which most gibingly, ungravely, he did fashion
After the inveterate hate he bears you.

Brutus. Lay 1215
A fault on us, your tribunes ; that we labour'd,
(No impediment between,) but that you must
Cast your election on him.

Sicinius. Say, you chose him
More after our commandment, than as guided
By your own true affections ; and that, your minds, 1220
Pre-occupied with what you rather must do,
Than what you should, made you against the grain
To voice him consul : lay the fault on us.

Brutus. Ay, spare us not. Say, we read lectures to you,
How youngly he began to serve his country, 1225
How long continu'd : and what stock he springs of,
The noble house o' the Marcians ; from whence came
That Ancus Marcius, Numa's daughter's son,
Who, after great Hostilius, here was king ;
Of the same house Publius and Quintus were, 1230
That our best water brought by conduits hither ;
And Censorinus, darling of the people,
And nobly nam'd so, twice being censor,

Was his great ancestor.

Sicinius. One thus descended,
That hath beside well in his person wrought 1235
To be set high in place, we did commend
To your remembrances : but you have found,
Scaling his present bearing with his past,
That he's your fixed enemy, and revoke
Your sudden approbation.

Brutus. Say, you ne'er had done 't, 1240
(Harp on that still,) but by our putting on :
And presently, when you have drawn your number,
Repair to the Capitol.

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

Brutus. Let them go on ;
This mutiny were better put in hazard, 1245
Then stay, past doubt, for greater :
If, as his nature is, he fall in rage
With their refusal, both observe and answer
The vantage of his anger.

Sicinius. To the Capitol,
Come, we'll be there before the stream o' the people ; 1250
And this shall seem, as partly 'tis, their own,
Which we have goaded onward. [Exeunt.]



ROMAN STANDARD BEARERS.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Street in Rome.*

Cornets. Enter CORIOLANUS, MENENIUS, COMINIUS, TITUS LARTIUS,
Senators, and Patricians.

Coriolanus. Tullus Aufidius, then, had made new head?

Lartius. He had, my lord; and that it was, which caus'd
Our swifter composition. 1255

Coriolanus. So then, the Volsces stand but as at first;
Ready, when time shall prompt them, to make road
Upon us again.

Cominius. They are worn, lord consul, so,

That we shall hardly in our ages see
Their banners wave again.

Coriolanus. Saw you Aufidius ? 1260

Lartius. On safe-guard he came to me ; and did curse
Against the Volsces, for they had so vilely
Yielded the town : he is retir'd to Antium.

Coriolanus. Spoke he of me ?

Lartius. He did, my lord.

Coriolanus. How ? what ?

Lartius. How often he had met you, sword to sword ; 1265
That of all things upon the earth he hated
Your person most ; that he would pawn his fortunes
To hopeless restitution, so he might
Be called your vanquisher.

Coriolanus. At Antium lives he ?

Lartius. At Antium. 1270

Coriolanus. I wish I had a cause to seek him there,
To oppose his hatred fully.—[*To LARTIUS.*] Welcome home.—

Enter SICINIUS and BRUTUS.

Behold ! these are the tribunes of the people,
The tongues o' the common mouth : I do despise them,
For they do prank them in authority, 1275
Against all noble sufferance.

Sicinius. Pass no further.

Coriolanus. Ha ! what is that ?

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

Coriolanus. What makes this change ?

Menenius. The matter ?

Cominius. Hath he not pass'd the nobles, and the commons ?

Brutus. Cominius, no. 1281

Coriolanus. Have I had children's voices ?

1 *Senator.* Tribunes, give way ; he shall to the market-place.

Brutus. The people are incens'd against him.

Sicinius. Stop,

Or all will fall in broil.

Coriolanus.

Coriolanus. Are these your herd?—
 Must these have voices, that can yield them now, 1285
 And straight disclaim their tongues?—What are your offices?
 You being their mouths, why rule you not their teeth?
 Have you not set them on?

Menenius. Be calm, be calm.

Coriolanus. It is a purpos'd thing, and grows by plot,
 To curb the will of the nobility: 1290
 Suffer 't, and live with such as cannot rule,
 Nor ever will be rul'd.

Brutus. Call 't not a plot:
 The people cry, you mock'd them; and of late,
 When corn was given them gratis, you repin'd;
 Scandall'd the suppliant for the people, call'd them 1295
 Time-pleasers, flatterers, foes to nobleness.

Coriolanus. Why, this was known before.

Brutus. Not to them all.

Coriolanus. Have you informed them sithence?

Brutus. How! I inform them!

Coriolanus. You are like to do such business.

Brutus. Not unlike.
 Each way, to better yours. 1300

Coriolanus. Why, then, should I be consul? By yon clouds,
 Let me deserve so ill as you, and make me
 Your fellow tribune.

Sicinius. You show too much of that
 For which the people stir: if you will pass
 To where you are bound, you must inquire your way, 1305
 Which you are out of, with a gentler spirit;
 Or never be so noble as a consul,
 Nor yoke with him for tribune.

Menenius. Let's be calm.

Cominius. The people are abus'd; set on. This paltering
 Becomes not Rome; nor has Coriolanus 1310
 Deserv'd this so dishonour'd rub, laid falsely

I' the plain way of his merit.

Coriolanus. Tell me of corn!

This was my speech, and I will speak 't again,—

Menenius. Not now, not now.

1 *Senator.* Not in this heat, sir, now.

Coriolanus. Now, as I live, I will. My nobler friends, 1315

I crave their pardons :

For the mutable, rank-scented many, let them

Regard me as I do not flatter, and

Therein behold themselves : I say again,

In soothing them, we nourish 'gainst our senate 1320

The cockle of rebellion, insolence, sedition,

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

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

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

Which they have given to beggars.

Menenius. Well, no more. 1325

1 *Senator.* No more words, we beseech you.

Coriolanus. How ! no more ?

As for my country I have shed my blood,

Not fearing outward force, so shall my lungs

Coin words till they decay, against those meazels,

Which we disdain should tetter us, yet sought 1330

The very way to catch them.

Brutus. You speak o' the people,

As if you were a god to punish, not

A man of their infirmity.

Sicinius. 'Twere well

We let the people know 't.

Menenius. What, what ? his choler ?

Coriolanus. Choler ! 1335

Were I as patient as the midnight sleep,

By Jove, 'twould be my mind !

Sicinius. It is a mind

That shall remain a poison where it is,
Not poison any further.

Coriolanus. Shall remain!—

Hear you this Triton of the minnows? mark you 1340
His absolute “*shall?*”

Cominius. ’Twas from the canon.

Coriolanus. “*Shall?*”

O good, but most unwise patricians! why,
You grave, but reckless senators, have you thus
Given Hydra here to choose an officer, 1345
That with his peremptory “*shall,*” being but

The horn and noise o’ the monster, wants not spirit
To say he’ll turn your current in a ditch,
And make your channel his? If he have power,
Then veil your ignorance; if none, awake
Your dangerous lenity. If you are learn’d, 1350

Be not as common fools; if you are not,
Let them have cushions by you. You are plebeians,
If they be senators: and they are no less,
When, both your voices blended, the great’st taste
Most palates theirs. They choose their magistrate; 1355

And such a one as he, who puts his “*shall,*”
His popular “*shall,*” against a graver bench
Than ever frown’d in Greece. By Jove himself,
It makes the consuls base! and my soul aches
To know, when two authorities are up, 1360

Neither supreme, how soon confusion
May enter ’twixt the gap of both, and take
The one by the other.

Cominius. Well,—on to the market-place.

Coriolanus. Whoever gave that counsel, to give forth
The corn o’ the storehouse gratis, as ’twas us’d 1365
Sometime in Greece,—

Menenius. Well, well, no more of that.

Coriolanus. Though there the people had more absolute power,

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

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

Coriolanus. I'll give my reasons, 1370

More worthier than their voices. They know the corn
Was not our recompense, resting well assur'd
They ne'er did service for 't: being press'd to the war,
Even when the navel of the state was touch'd,
They would not thread the gates: this kind of service 1375

Did not deserve corn gratis: being i' the war,
Their mutinies and revolts, wherein they show'd
Most valour, spoke not for them: the accusation
Which they have often made against the senate,
All cause unborn, could never be the native 1380
Of our so frank donation. Well, what then ?

How shall this bosom multiplied digest
The senate's courtesy? Let deeds express
What's like to be their words:—" *We did request it:*
We are the greater poll, and in true fear 1385
They gave us our demands."—Thus we debase

The nature of our seats, and make the rabble
Call our cares, fears; which will in time break ope
The locks o' the senate, and bring in the crows
To peck the eagles.

Menenius. Come, enough. 1390

Brutus. Enough, with over-measure.

Coriolanus. No, take more:
What may be sworn by, both divine and human,
Seal what I end withal!—This double worship,—
Where one part does disdain with cause, the other
Insult without all reason: where gentry, title, wisdom, 1395
Cannot conclude, but by the yea and no
Of general ignorance—it must omit
Real necessities, and give way the while

To unstable slightness ; purpose so barr'd, it follows,
 Nothing is done to purpose. Therefore, beseech you,— 1400
 You that will be less fearful than discreet ;
 That love the fundamental part of state,
 More than you doubt the change on 't : that prefer
 A noble life before a long, and wish
 To jump a body with a dangerous physic 1405
 That's sure of death without it,—at once pluck out
 The multitudinous tongue ; let them not lick
 The sweet which is their poison : your dishonour
 Mangles true judgment, and bereaves the state
 Of that integrity which should become it ; 1410
 Not having the power to do the good it would
 For the ill which doth control it.

Brutus. He has said enough.

Sicinius. He has spoken like a traitor, and shall answer
 As traitors do.

Coriolanus. Thou wretch ! despite o'erwhelm thee !—
 What should the people do with these bald tribunes ? 1415
 On whom depending, their obedience fails
 To the greater bench : in a rebellion,
 When what's not meet, but what must be, was law,
 Then were they chosen : in a better hour,
 Let what is meet, be said, it must be meet, 1420
 And throw their power i' the dust.

Brutus. Manifest treason !

Sicinius. This a consul ? no.

Brutus. The Ædiles, ho !—Let him be apprehended.

Sicinius. Go, call the people ; [*Exit BRUTUS*] in whose name,
 myself
 Attach thee as a traitorous innovator, 1425
 A foe to the public weal : obey, I charge thee,
 And follow to thine answer.

Coriolanus. Hence, old goat !

Senators and Patricians. We'll surety him.

- Cominius.* Aged sir, hands off.
- Coriolanus.* Hence, rotten thing! or I shall shake thy bones
Out of thy garments.
- Sicinius.* Help, ye citizens! 1430
- Re-enter BRUTUS, with the Ædiles and a rabble of Citizens.*
- Menenius.* On both sides more respect.
- Sicinius.* Here's he that would
Take from you all your power.
- Brutus.* Seize him, Ædiles!
- Citizens.* Down with him! down with him!
- Senators.* Weapons, weapons, weapons!
[*They all bustle about CORIOLANUS.*
- Tribunes, patricians, citizens!—what ho!—
- Sicinius, Brutus, Coriolanus, citizens!* 1435
- Citizens.* Peace, peace, peace! stay, hold, peace!
- Menenius.* What is about to be?—I am out of breath;
Confusion's near; I cannot speak.—You, tribunes
To the people.—Coriolanus, patience:—
Speak, good Sicinius.
- Sicinius.* Hear me, people; peace! 1440
- Citizens.* Let's hear our tribune; peace!—Speak, speak, speak.
- Sicinius.* You are at point to lose your liberties;
Marcius would have all from you; Marcius,
Whom late you have nam'd for consul.
- Menenius.* Fie, fie, fie!
This is the way to kindle, not to quench. 1445
- 1 Senator.* To unbuild the city, and to lay all flat.
- Sicinius.* What is the city, but the people?
- Citizens.* True.
The people are the city.
- Brutus.* By the consent of all, we were established
The people's magistrates.
- Citizens.* You so remain. 1450
- Menenius.* And so are like to do.
- Cominius.* That is the way to lay the city flat;

To bring the roof to the foundation.
And bury all, which yet distinctly ranges,
In heaps and piles of ruin.

Sicinius. This deserves death. 1455

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

Sicinius. Therefore lay hold of him ; 1460
Bear him to the rock Tarpeian, and from thence
Into destruction cast him.

Brutus. Ædiles, seize him !

Citizens. Yield, Marcius, yield !

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

Ædiles. Peace, peace ! 1465

Menenius. Be that you seem, truly your country's friends,
And temperately proceed to what you would
Thus violently redress.

Brutus. Sir, those cold ways,
That seem like prudent helps, are very poisonous
Where the disease is violent.—Lay hands upon him, 1470
And bear him to the rock.

Coriolanus. [*Drawing his sword.*] No, I'll die here.
There's some among you have beheld me fighting :
Come, try upon yourselves what you have seen me.

Menenius. Down with that sword !—Tribunes, withdraw a
while.

Brutus. Lay hands upon him.

Menenius. Help, Marcius, help, 1475
You that be noble ; help him, young and old !

Citizens. Down with him ! down with him !

[*In this mutiny, the Tribunes, the Ædiles,
and the people are beaten in.*]

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

2 Senator. Get you gone.

Cominius. Stand fast ;
We have as many friends as enemies. 1480

Menenius. Shall it be put to that ?

1 Senator. The gods forbid !
I pr'ythee, noble friend, home to thy house ;
Leave us to cure this cause.

Menenius. For 'tis a sore upon us,
You cannot tent yourself ; begone, 'beseech you.
Put not your worthy rage into your tongue : 1485
One time will owe another.

Coriolanus. On fair ground,
I could beat forty of them.

Menenius. I could myself
Take up a brace of the best of them ; yea, the two tribunes.

Cominius. But now 'tis odds beyond arithmetic ;
And manhood is call'd foolery, when it stands 1490
Against a falling fabric.—Will you hence,
Before the tag return ? whose rage doth rend
Like interrupted waters, and o'erbear
What they are us'd to bear.

Menenius. Pray you, be gone :
I'll try whether my old wit be in request 1495
With those that have but little : this must be patch'd
With cloth of any colour.

Cominius. Nay, come away.

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

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

Menenius. His nature is too noble for the world :
He would not flatter Neptune for his trident, 1500
Or Jove for 's power to thunder. His heart's his mouth :
What his breast forges, that his tongue must vent !
And, being angry, does forget that ever

He heard the name of death. [*A noise within.*]
 Here's goodly work!

2 *Patrician.* I would they were a-bed! 1505

Menenius. I would they were in Tiber!—What, the vengeance,
 Could he not speak them fair?

Re-enter BRUTUS and SICINIUS, with the rabble.

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

Menenius. You worthy tribunes,—

Sicinius. He shall be thrown down the Tarpeian rock 1510
 With rigorous hands: he hath resisted law,
 And therefore law shall scorn him any further trial
 Than the severity of the public power,
 Which he so sets at nought.

1 *Citizen.* He shall well know
 The noble tribunes are the people's mouths, 1515
 And we their hands.

Citizens. He shall, sure on 't.

Menenius. Sir, sir,—

Sicinius. Peace!

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

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

Menenius. Hear me speak:—
 As I do know the consul's worthiness, 1520
 So can I name his faults,—

Sicinius. Consul!—what consul?

Menenius. The consul Coriolanus.

Brutus. He consul?

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

Menenius. If, by the tribunes' leave, and yours, good people,
 I may be heard, I would crave a word or two; 1525
 The which shall turn you to no further harm,

Than so much loss of time.

Sicinius. Speak briefly, then ;
 For we are peremptory to despatch
 This viperous traitor : to eject him hence,
 Were but one danger ; and to keep him here, 1530
 Our certain death : therefore it is decreed ;
 He dies to-night.

Menenius. Now the good gods forbid
 That our renownèd Rome, whose gratitude
 Towards her deservèd children is enroll'd
 In Jove's own book, like an unnatural dam 1535
 Should now eat up her own !

Sicinius. He's a disease that must be cut away.
Menenius. O, he's a limb, that has but a disease ;
 Mortal, to cut it off ; to cure it, easy.
 What has he done to Rome that's worthy death ? 1540
 Killing our enemies ? The blood he hath lost,
 (Which, I dare vouch, is more than that he hath,
 By many an ounce,) he dropped it for his country :
 And what is left, to lose it by his country,
 Were to us all, that do 't and suffer it, 1545
 A brand to the end o' the world.

Sicinius. This is clean kam.
Brutus. Merely awry. When he did love his country,
 It honour'd him.
Menenius. The service of the foot,
 Being once gangren'd, is not then respected
 For what before it was ?

Brutus. We'll hear no more.— 1550
 Pursue him to his house, and pluck him thence ;
 Lest his infection, being of catching nature,
 Spread further.

Menenius. One word more, one word.
 This tiger-footed rage, when it shall find
 The arm of unscann'd swiftness, will, too late, 1555

Tie leaden pounds to 's heels. Proceed by process ;
Lest parties (as he is belov'd) break out,
And sack great Rome with Romans.

Brutus. If 'twere so,—

Sicinius. What do ye talk ?
Have we not had a taste of his obedience ? 1560
Our Ædiles smote ? ourselves resisted ?—come,—

Menenius. Consider this :—he has been bred i' the wars
Since he could draw a sword, and is ill school'd
In bolted language ; meal and bran together
He throws without distinction. Give me leave, 1565
I'll go to him, and undertake to bring him
Where he shall answer by a lawful form,
In peace, to his utmost peril.

1 *Senator.* Noble tribunes,
It is the humane way : the other course
Will prove too cruel ; and the end of it 1570
Unknown to the beginning.

Sicinius. Noble Menenius,
Be you, then, as the people's officer.—
Masters, lay down your weapons.

Brutus. Go not home.

Sicinius. Meet on the market-place.—We'll attend you there :
Where, if you bring not Marcius, we'll proceed 1575
In our first way.

Menenius. I'll bring him to you.—
[*To the Senators.*] Let me desire your company : he must come.
Or what is worst will follow.

1 *Senator.* Pray you, let's to him. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A Room in CORIOLANUS'S House.**Enter CORIOLANUS and Patricians.*

Coriolanus. Let them pull all about mine ears ; present me
 Death on the wheel, or at wild horses' heels ; 1580
 Or pile ten hills on the Tarpeian rock,
 That the precipitation might down stretch
 Below the beam of sight ; yet will I still
 Be thus to them.

1 *Patrician.* You do the nobler.

Coriolanus. I muse my mother 1585
 Does not approve me further, who was wont
 To call them woollen vassals ; things created
 To buy and sell with groats ; to show bare heads
 In congregations, to yawn, be still, and wonder,
 When one but of my ordinance stood up 1590
 To speak of peace, or war.

Enter VOLUMNIA.

I talk of you :

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

Volumnia. O, sir, sir, sir,
 I would have had you put your power well on, 1595
 Before you had worn it out.

Coriolanus. Let go.

Volumnia. You might have been enough the man you are,
 With striving less to be so : lesser had been
 The thwarting of your dispositions, if
 You had not show'd them how you were dispos'd, 1600
 Ere they lack'd power to cross you.

Coriolanus. Let them hang.

Volumnia. Ay, and burn too.

Enter MENENIUS and Senators.

Menenius. Come, come, you have been too rough, something
 too rough ;

You must return and mend it.

1 *Senator.* There's no remedy ;
Unless, by not so doing, our good city 1605
Cleave in the midst, and perish.

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

Menenius. Well said, noble woman !
Before he should thus stoop to the herd, but that 1610
The violent fit o' the time craves it as phisic
For the whole state, I would put mine armour on,
Which I can scarcely bear.

Coriolanus. What must I do ?

Menenius. Return to the tribunes.

Coriolanus. Well, what then ? what then ?

Menenius. Repent what you have spoke. 1615

Coriolanus. For them ?—I cannot do it to the gods ;
Must I, then, do 't to them ?

Volumnia. You are too absolute ;
Though therein you can never be too noble,
But when extremities speak. I have heard you say,
Honour and policy, like unsever'd friends, 1620
I' the war do grow together : grant that, and tell me,
In peace what each of them by th' other lose,
That they combine not there.

Coriolanus. Tush, tush !

Menenius. A good demand.

Volumnia. If it be honour in your wars to seem
The same you are not, (which, for your best ends, 1625
You adopt your policy,) how is it less or worse,
That it shall hold companionship in peace
With honour, as in war ; since that to both
It stands in like request ?

Coriolanus. Why force you this ?

Volumnia. Because that now it lies you on to speak 1630

To the people ; not by your own instruction,
 Nor by the matter which your heart prompts you,
 But with such words that are but roted in
 Your tongue, though but bastards, and syllables
 Of no allowance to your bosom's truth. 1635

Now, this no more dishonours you at all,
 Than to take in a town with gentle words,
 Which else would put you to your fortune, and
 The hazard of much blood.

I would dissemble with my nature, where, 1640
 My fortunes and my friends at stake, requir'd
 I should do so in honour : I am in this,
 Your wife, your son, these senators, the nobles ;
 And you will rather show our general louts
 How you can frown, than spend a fawn upon them, 1645
 For the inheritance of their loves, and safeguard
 Of what that want might ruin.

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

Volumnia. I pr'ythee now, my son, 1650
 Go to them, with this bonnet in thy hand ;
 And thus far having stretched it, (here be with them,)
 Thy knee bussing the stones (for in such business
 Action is eloquence, and the eyes of the ignorant
 More learnèd than the ears), waving thy head, 1655
 Which often, thus, correcting thy stout heart,
 Now humble as the ripest mulberry
 That will not hold the handling : or say to them,
 Thou art their soldier, and, being bred in broils,
 Hast not the soft way, which, thou dost confess, 1660
 Were fit for thee to use, as they to claim
 In asking their good loves ; but thou wilt frame
 Thyself, forsooth, hereafter theirs, so far
 As thou hast power and person.

Menenius. This but done,
Even as she speaks, why, their hearts were yours ; 1665
For they have pardons, being ask'd, as free
As words to little purpose.

Volumnia. Pr'ythee now,
Go, and be ruled : although I know thou hadst rather
Follow thine enemy in a fiery gulf,
Than flatter him in a bower. Here is Cominius. 1670

Enter COMINIUS.

Cominius. I have been i' the market-place ; and, sir, 'tis fit
You make strong party, or defend yourself
By calmness or by absence : all 's in anger.

Menenius. Only fair speech.

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

Volumnia. He must, and will.— 1675
Pr'ythee now, say you will, and go about it.

Coriolanus. Must I go show them my unbarbèd sconce ?
Must I, with my base tongue, give to my noble heart
A lie, that it must bear ? Well, I will do 't :
Yet, were there but this single plot to lose, 1680
This mould of Marcius, they to dust should grind it,
And throw 't against the wind.—To the market-place :—
You have put me now to such a part, which never
I shall discharge to the life.

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

Volumnia. I pr'ythee now, sweet son, as thou hast said, 1685
My praises made thee first a soldier, so,
To have my praise for this, perform a part
Thou hast not done before.

Coriolanus. Well, I must do 't :
Away, my disposition, and possess me
Some humble spirit ! My throat of war be turn'd, 1690
Which quired with my drum, into a pipe
Small as a school-girl, or the virgin voice
That babies lulls asleep ! The smiles of knaves

Tent in my cheeks ; and school-boys' tears take up
 The glasses of my sight ! A beggar's tongue 1695
 Make motion through my lips ; and my arm'd knees,
 Who bow'd but in my stirrup, bend like his
 That hath receiv'd an alms :—I will not do 't,
 Lest I surcease to honour mine own truth,
 And, by my body's action, teach my mind 1700
 A most inherent baseness.

Volumnia. At thy choice, then :
 To beg of thee, it is my more dishonour,
 Than thou of them. Come all to ruin : let
 Thy mother rather feel thy pride, than fear
 Thy dangerous stoutness ; for I mock at death 1705
 With as big heart as thou. Do as thou list.
 Thy valiantness was mine, thou suck'dst it from me
 But owe thy pride thyself.

Coriolanus. Pray, be content :
 Mother, I am going to the market-place ;
 Chide me no more. I'll mountebank their loves, 1710
 Cog their hearts from them, and come home belov'd
 Of all the trades in Rome. Look, I am going :
 Commend me to my wife. I'll return consul ;
 Or never trust to what my tongue can do
 I' the way of flattery further.

Volumnia. Do your will. [*Exit.* 1715

Cominius. Away ! the tribunes do attend you : arm yourself
 To answer mildly : for they are prepar'd
 With accusations, as I hear, more strong
 Than are upon you yet.

Coriolanus. The word is, mildly :—pray you, let us go : 1720
 Let them accuse me by invention, I
 Will answer in mine honour.

Menenius. Ay, but mildly.

Coriolanus. Well, mildly be it then ; mildly. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—Rome. *The Forum.**Enter SICINIUS and BRUTUS.*

Brutus. In this point charge him home, that he affects
 Tyrannical power : if he evade us there, 1725
 Enforce him with his envy to the people ;
 And that the spoil got on the Antiates
 Was ne'er distributed.—

Enter an Ædile.

What, will he come ?

Ædile. He's coming.*Brutus.* How accompanied ?

Ædile. With old Menenius, and those senators 1730
 That always favour'd him.

Sicinius. Have you a catalogue
 Of all the voices that we have procur'd,
 Set down by the poll ?

Ædile. I have ; 'tis ready.*Sicinius.* Have you collected them by tribes ?*Ædile.* I have.

Sicinius. Assemble presently the people hither : 1735
 And when they hear me say, "*It shall be so,*
I' the right and strength o' the commons," be it either
 For death, for fine, or banishment, then let them,
 If I say, fine, cry "*Fine,*"—if death, cry "*Death ;*"
 Insisting on the old prerogative 1740
 And power i' the truth o' the cause.

Ædile. I shall inform them.

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

Ædile. Very well. 1745

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

Brutus. Go about it. [*Exit Ædile.*
 Put him to choler straight : he hath been us'd
 Ever to conquer, and to have his worth
 Of contradiction : being once chaf'd, he cannot 1750
 Be rein'd again to temperance ; then he speaks
 What's in his heart ; and that is there, which looks
 With us to break his neck.

Sicinius. Well, here he comes.

Enter CORIOLANUS, MENENIUS, COMINIUS, Senators, and Patricians.

Menenius. Calmly, I do beseech you.

Coriolanus. Ay, as an ostler, that for the poorest piece 1755
 Will bear the knave by the volume.—The honour'd gods
 Keep Rome in safety, and the chairs of justice
 Supplied with worthy men! plant love among us!
 Throng our large temples with the shows of peace,
 And not our streets with war!

1 *Senator.* Amen, amen. 1760

Menenius. A noble wish.

Re-enter Ædile, with Citizens.

Sicinius. Draw near, ye people.

Ædile. List to your tribunes. Audience! peace, I say!

Coriolanus. First, hear me speak.

Both Tribunes. Well, say.—Peace, ho!

Coriolanus. Shall I be charg'd no further than this present?
 Must all determine here?

Sicinius. I do demand, 1765
 If you submit you to the people's voices,
 Allow their officers, and are content
 To suffer lawful censure for such faults
 As shall be prov'd upon you?

Coriolanus. I am content.

Menenius. Lo, citizens, he says he is content: 1770
 The warlike service he has done, consider ;
 Think upon the wounds his body bears, which show

Like graves i' the holy churchyard.

Coriolanus. Scratches with briers,
Scars to move laughter only.

Menenius. Consider further,
That when he speaks not like a citizen, 1775
You find him like a soldier: do not take
His rougher accents for malicious sounds,
But, as I say, such as become a soldier,
Rather than envy you.

Cominius. Well, well, no more.

Coriolanus. What is the matter, 1780
That being pass'd for consul with full voice,
I am so dishonour'd, that the very hour
You take it off again?

Sicinius. Answer to us.

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

Sicinius. We charge you, that you have contriv'd to take 1785
From Rome all season'd office, and to wind
Yourself into a power tyrannical;
For which you are a traitor to the people.

Coriolanus. How! Traitor!

Menenius. Nay, temperately; your promise.

Coriolanus. The fires i' the lowest hell fold in the people!
Call me their traitor!—Thou injurious tribune! 1791
Within thine eyes sat twenty thousand deaths,
In thy hands clutch'd as many millions, in
Thy lying tongue both numbers, I would say,
Thou liest, unto thee, with a voice as free 1795
As I do pray the gods.

Sicinius. Mark you this, people?

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

Sicinius. Peace!

We need not put new matter to his charge:
What you have seen him do, and heard him speak,
Beating your officers, cursing yourselves, 1800

Opposing laws with strokes, and here defying
 Those whose great power must try him ; even this
 So criminal, and in such capital kind,
 Deserves the extremest death.

Brutus. But since he hath

Serv'd well for Rome,—

Coriolanus. What do you prate of service ? 1805

Brutus. I talk of that, that know it.

Coriolanus. You ?

Menenius. Is this

The promise that you made your mother ?

Cominius. Know,

I pray you,—

Coriolanus. I'll know no further :

Let them pronounce the steep Tarpeian death,
 Vagabond exile, flaying, pent to linger 1810

But with a grain a day, I would not buy
 Their mercy at the price of one fair word ;
 Nor check my courage for what they can give,
 To have 't with saying, good morrow.

Sicinius. For that he has

(As much as in him lies) from time to time 1815

Envied against the people, seeking means
 To pluck away their power ; as now at last
 Given hostile strokes, and that not in the presence
 Of dreaded justice, but on the ministers

That do distribute it ; in the name o' the people, 1820

And in the power of us, the tribunes, we,
 Even from this instant, banish him our city ;
 In peril of precipitation

From off the rock Tarpeian, never more
 To enter our Rome gates i' the people's name, 1825

I say, it shall be so.

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

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

Sicinius. He's sentenc'd; no more hearing. 1830

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

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

Coriolanus. You common cry of curs ! whose breath I hate
As reek o' the rotten fens, whose loves I prize 1835

As the dead carcasses of unburied men
That do corrupt my air, I banish you ;
And here remain with your uncertainty !
Let every feeble rumour shake your hearts !
Your enemies, with nodding of their plumes, 1840

Fan you into despair ! Have the power still
To banish your defender ; till at length
Your ignorance, which finds not, till it feels,
Making but reservation of yourselves,
Still your own foes, deliver you, as most 1845
Abated captives, to some nation
That won you without blows ! Despising,
For you, the city, thus I turn my back :
There is a world elsewhere.

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

Ædile. The people's enemy is gone, is gone ! 1850

Citizens. Our enemy is banish'd ! he is gone ! Hoo ! hoo !

[*Shouting and throwing up their caps.*

Sicinius. Go, see him out at gates ; and follow him,
As he hath follow'd you, with all despite ;
Give him deserv'd vexation. Let a guard
Attend us through the city. 1855

Citizens. Come, come, let us see him out at gates ; come :—
The gods preserve our noble tribunes !—Come. [*Exeunt.*



ROMAN ARMS AND ARMOUR.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—Rome. *Before a Gate of the City.*

Enter CORIOLANUS, VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, MENENIUS, COMINIUS,
and several young Patricians.

Coriolanus. Come, leave your tears; a brief farewell:— the
beast

With many heads butts me away.—Nay, mother,
Where is your ancient courage? you were us'd 1860
To say, extremity was the trier of spirits;
That common chances common men could bear;
That, when the sea was calm, all boats alike
Show'd mastership in floating; fortune's blows,
When most struck home, being gentle wounded, craves 1865
A noble cunning: you were us'd to load me
With precepts, that would make invincible,
The heart that conn'd them.

Virgilia. O heavens! O heavens!

Coriolanus. Nay, I pr'ythee, woman.—

Volumnia. Now the red pestilence strike all trades in Rome,
And occupations perish! 1871

Coriolanus. What, what, what!
I shall be lov'd when I am lack'd. Nay, mother,
Resume that spirit, when you were wont to say,

- If you had been the wife of Hercules,
Six of his labours you'd have done, and sav'd 1875
Your husband so much sweat.—Cominius,
Droop not ; adieu.—Farewell, my wife,—my mother ;
I'll do well yet.—Thou old and true Menenius,
Thy tears are salter than a younger man's, 1880
And venomous to thine eyes.—My sometime general,
I have seen thee stern, and thou hast oft beheld
Heart-hardening spectacles ; tell these sad women,
'Tis fond to wail inevitable strokes,
As 'tis to laugh at them.—My mother, you wot well 1885
My hazards still have been your solace : and
Believe 't not lightly (though I go alone
Like to a lonely dragon, that his fen
Makes fear'd and talk'd of more than seen), your son
Will or exceed the common, or be caught 1890
With cautelous baits and practice.
- Volumnia.* My first son,
Whither wilt thou go ? Take good Cominius
With thee awhile : determine on some course,
More than a wild exposure to each chance
That starts i' the way before thee.
- Coriolanus.* O the gods ! 1895
- Cominius.* I'll follow thee a month, devise with thee
Where thou shalt rest, that thou mayst hear of us,
And we of thee : so, if the time thrust forth
A cause for thy repeal, we shall not send
O'er the vast world to find a single man : 1900
And lose advantage, which doth ever cool
I' the absence of the needer.
- Coriolanus.* Fare ye well :
Thou hast years upon thee : and thou art too full
Of the war's surfeits, to go rove with one
That's yet unbruis'd : bring me but out at gate. 1905
Come, my sweet wife, my dearest mother, and

My friends of noble touch ; when I am forth,
 Bid me farewell, and smile. I pray you, come.
 While I remain above the ground, you shall
 Hear from me still ; and never of me aught
 But what is like me formerly. 1910

Menenius. That's worthily
 As any ear can hear.—Come, let's not weep.
 If I could shake off but one seven years
 From these old arms and legs, by the good gods
 I'd with thee every foot.

Coriolanus. Give me thy hand : 1915
 Come. [Exit.

SCENE II.—Antium. *Before AUFIDIUS' House.*

Enter CORIOLANUS, in mean apparel, disguised and muffled.

Coriolanus. A goodly city is this Antium : City,
 'Tis I that made thy widows : many an heir
 Of these fair edifices 'fore my wars
 Have I heard groan and drop : then, know me not ;
 Lest that thy wives with spits, and boys with stones, 1920
 In puny battle slay me,—

Enter a Citizen.

Save you, sir,

Citizen. And you.

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

Citizen. He is, and feasts the nobles of the state,
 At his house this night.

Coriolanus. Which is his house, beseech you ? 1925

Citizen. This, here, before you.

Coriolanus. Thank you, sir : farewell.

[Exit Citizen.]

O world, thy slippery turns ! friends now fast sworn,
 Whose double bosoms seem to wear one heart,

Whose hours, whose bed, whose meal, and exercise,
 Are still together, who twin, as 'twere, in love 1930
 Unseparable, shall within this hour,
 On a dissension of a doit, break out
 To bitterest enmity : so, fellest foes,
 Whose passions and whose plots have broke their sleep
 To take the one the other, by some chance, 1935
 Some trick not worth an egg, shall grow dear friends,
 And interjoin their issues. So with me :
 My birth-place hate I, and my love's upon
 This enemy town. I'll enter : if he slay me,
 He does fair justice ; if he give me way, 1940
 I'll do his country service. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III. —Antium. *A Hall in AUFIDIUS' House. Music within.*

Enter CORIOLANUS.

Coriolanus. A goodly house ; the feast smells well ; but I
 Appear not like a guest.

Enter a Servant.

Servant. What would you have, friend ? Whence are you ?
 Here's no place for you : pray, go to the door. 1945

Coriolanus. I have deserved no better entertainment,
 In being Coriolanus.

Re-enter second Servant.

Servant. Whence are you, sir ? Has the porter his eyes in his
 head, that he gives entrance to such companions ? Pray, get you
 out. 1950

Coriolanus. Away !

Servant. Away ! Get you away.

Coriolanus. Now, thou art troublesome.

Servant. Are you so brave ? I'll have you talked with anon.

Servant. What have you to do here, fellow ? Pray you, avoid
 the house. 1956

Coriolanus. Let me but stand ; I will not hurt your hearth.

Servant. What are you ?

Coriolanus. A gentleman.

Servant. A marvellous poor one. 1960

Coriolanus. True, so I am.

Servant. Pray you, poor gentleman, take up some other station ; here's no place for you ; pray you, avoid : come.

Coriolanus. Follow your function, go, and batten on cold bits.
[*Pushes him away.*]

Servant. What, you will not ?—Pr'ythee, tell my master what a strange guest he has here. [Exit. 1966]

Servant. Where dwell'st thou ?

Coriolanus. Under the canopy.

Servant. Under the canopy !

Coriolanus. Ay. 1970

Servant. Where's that ?

Coriolanus. I' the city of kites and crows.

Servant. I' the city of kites and crows ?—What an ass it is !—Then thou dwell'st with daws too ?

Coriolanus. No, I serve not thy master. 1975

Enter AUFIDIUS.

Aufidius. Where is this fellow ?

Servant. Here, sir : I'd have beaten him like a dog, but for disturbing the lords within.

Aufidius. Whence com'st thou ? what wouldst thou ? Thy name ? 1980

Why speak'st not ? Speak, man : what's thy name ?

Coriolanus. [*Unmuffling.*] If, Tullus,

Not yet thou know'st me, and, seeing me, dost not

Think me for the man I am, necessity

Commands me name myself.

Aufidius. What is thy name ?

[*Servants retire.*]

Coriolanus. A name unmusical to the Volscians' ears, 1985
And harsh in sound to thine.

Aufidius. Say, what's thy name ?

Thou hast a grim appearance, and thy face

Bears a command in't ; though thy tackle's torn,
Thou show'st a noble vessel : what's thy name ?

Coriolanus. Prepare thy brow to frown :—know'st thou me
yet ? 1990

Aufidius. I know thee not :—thy name ?

Coriolanus. My name is Caius Marcius, who hath done
To thee particularly, and to all the Volsces,
Great hurt and mischief ; thereto witness may
My surname, Coriolanus : the painful service, 1995

The extreme dangers, and the drops of blood
Shed for my thankless country, are requited
But with that surname ; a good memory,
And witness of the malice and displeasure
Which thou should'st bear me : only that name remains ; 2000

The cruelty and envy of the people,
Permitted by our dastard nobles, who
Have all forsook me, hath devour'd the rest ;
And suffer'd me by the voice of slaves to be
Whoop'd out of Rome. Now, this extremity 2005

Hath brought me to thy hearth : not out of hope,
Mistake me not, to save my life ; for if
I had feared death, of all the men i' the world
I would have 'voided thee ; but in mere spite,
To be full quit of those my banishers, 2010

Stand I before thee here. Then, if thou hast
A heart of wreak in thee, that will revenge
Thine own particular wrongs, and stop those maims
Of shame seen through thy country, speed thee straight,
And make my misery serve thy turn : so use it, 2015

That my revengeful services may prove
As benefits to thee ; for I will fight
Against my canker'd country with the spleen
Of all the under fiends. But if so be
Thou dar'st not this, and that to prove more fortunes 2020

Thou art tir'd, then, in a word, I also am

Longer to live most weary, and present
 My throat to thee, and to thy ancient malice ;
 Which not to cut would show thee but a fool,
 Since I have ever follow'd thee with hate, 2025
 Drawn tuns of blood out of thy country's breast,
 And cannot live but to thy shame, unless
 It be to do thee service.

Aufidius. O Marcius, Marcius !
 Each word thou hast spoken hath weeded from my heart
 A root of ancient envy. If Jupiter 2030
 Should from yond' cloud speak divine things,
 And say, "'Tis true," I'd not believe them more
 Than thee, all noble Marcius.—Let me twine
 Mine arms about that body, where against
 My grainèd ash a hundred times hath broke, 2035
 And scarr'd the moon with splinters : here I clip
 The anvil of my sword : and do contest
 As hotly and as nobly with thy love,
 As ever in ambitious strength I did
 Contend against thy valour. Know thou first, 2040
 I lov'd the maid I married ; never man
 Sigh'd truer breath ; but that I see thee here,
 Thou noble thing ! more dances my rapt heart,
 Than when I first my wedded mistress saw
 Bestride my threshold. Why, thou Mars ! I tell thee, 2045
 We have a power on foot ; and I had purpose
 Once more to hew thy target from thy brawn,
 Or lose mine arm for 't : thou hast beat me out
 Twelve several times, and I have nightly since
 Dreamt of encounters 'twixt thyself and me ; 2050
 We have been down together in my sleep,
 Unbuckling helms, fisting each other's throat,
 And wak'd half dead with nothing. Worthy Marcius
 Had we no quarrel else to Rome, but that
 Thou art thence banish'd, we would muster all 2055

From twelve to seventy ; and, pouring war
 Into the bowels of ungrateful Rome,
 Like a bold flood o'erbear. O, come, go in,
 And take our friendly senators by the hands ;
 Who now are here, taking their leaves of me, 2060
 Who am prepar'd against your territories,
 Though not for Rome itself.

Coriolanus. You bless me, gods !

Aufidius. Therefore, most absolute sir, if thou wilt have
 The leading of thine own revenges, take 2065
 The one half of my commission ; and set down,—
 As best thou art experienc'd, since thou know'st
 Thy country's strength and weakness,—thine own ways ;
 Whether to knock against the gates of Rome,
 Or rudely visit them in parts remote, 2070
 To fright them, ere destroy. But come in :
 Let me commend thee first to those that shall
 Say, " Yea," to thy desires. A thousand welcomes !
 And more a friend than e'er an enemy ;
 Yet, Marcius, that was much. Your hand : most welcome ! 2075

[*Exeunt* CORIOLANUS and AUFIDIUS.]

SCENE IV.—Rome. *A Public Place.*

Enter SICINIUS and BRUTUS.

Sicinius. We hear not of him, neither need we fear him ;
 His remedies are tame i' the present peace
 And quietness o' the people, which before
 Were in wild hurry. Here do we make his friends
 Blush that the world goes well ; who rather had, 2080
 Though they themselves did suffer by 't, behold
 Dissentious numbers pestering streets, than see
 Our tradesmen singing in their shops, and going
 About their functions friendly.

Enter MENENIUS.

Brutus. We stood to 't in good time. Is this Menenius? 2085

Sicinius. 'Tis he, 'tis he: O, he is grown most kind
Of late. Hail, sir!

Menenius. Hail to you both!

Sicinius. Your Coriolanus is not much miss'd,
But with his friends: the commonwealth doth stand;
And so would do, were he more angry at it. 2090

Menenius. All's well; and might have been much better, if
He could have temporiz'd.

Sicinius. Where is he, hear you?

Menenius. Nay, I hear nothing: his mother and his wife
Hear nothing from him.

Enter a Messenger.

Messenger. You are sent for to the senate:
A fearful army, led by Caius Marcius, 2095
Associated with Aufidius, rages
Upon our territories; and have already
O'erborne their way, consum'd with fire, and took
What lay before them.

Enter COMINIUS.

Cominius. O, you have made good work!

Menenius. What news? what news? 2100
You have made fair work, I fear me.—Pray, your news?—
If Marcius should be join'd with Volscians,—

Cominius. If!
He is their god: he leads them like a thing
Made by some other deity than nature,
That shapes man better; and they follow him, 2105
Against us brats, with no less confidence
Than boys pursuing summer butterflies,
Or butchers killing flies.

Menenius. You have made good work,
You and your apron-men; you that stood so much
Upon the voice of occupation, and 2110

The breath of garlic-eaters !

Cominius.

He will shake

Your Rome about your ears.

Menenius.

As Hercules

Did shake down mellow fruit. You 've made fair work !

Brutus. But is this true, sir ?

Cominius.

Ay ; and you'll look pale

Before you find it other. All the regions 2115

Do smilingly revolt : and who resist

Are mock'd for valiant ignorance,

And perish constant fools. Who is't can blame him ?

Your enemies, and his, find something in him.

Menenius. We are all undone, unless 2120

The noble man have mercy.

Cominius.

Who shall ask it ?

The tribunes cannot do 't for shame ; the people

Deserve such pity of him, as the wolf

Does of the shepherds : for his best friends, if they

Should say, " Be good to Rome," they charg'd him, even 2125

As those should do that had deserv'd his hate,

And therein show'd like enemies.

Menenius.

'Tis true :

If he were putting to my house the brand

That should consume it, I have not the face

To say, " Beseech you, cease."—You have made fair hands, 2130

You and your crafts ! you have crafted fair !

Cominius.

You have brought

A trembling upon Rome, such as was never

So incapable of help.

Both Tribunes.

Say not, we brought it.

Menenius. How ! Was it we ? We lov'd him ; but, like beasts

And cowardly nobles, gave way unto your clusters, 2135

Who did hoot him out o' the city.

Cominius.

But I fear

They'll roar him in again. Tullus Aufidius,

The second name of men, obeys his points
 As if he were his officer ;—desperation
 Is all the policy, strength, and defence, 2140
 That Rome can make against them.

Enter a troop of Citizens.

Menenius. Here come the clusters.—
 And is Aufidius with him?—You are they
 That made the air unwholesome, when you cast
 Your stinking greasy caps, in hooting at
 Coriolanus' exile. Now he's coming ; 2145
 And not a hair upon a soldier's head,
 Which will not prove a whip : as many coxcombs,
 As you threw caps up, will he tumble down,
 And pay you for your voices. 'Tis no matter ;
 If he could burn us all into one coal, 2150
 We have deserv'd it. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—*A Camp at a small distance from Rome.*

Enter AUFIDIUS and his Lieutenant.

Aufidius. Do they still fly to the Roman ?
Lieutenant. I do not know what witchcraft's in him, but
 Your soldiers use him as the grace 'fore meat,
 Their talk at table, and their thanks at end ; 2155
 And you are darken'd in this action, sir,
 Even by your own.

Aufidius. I cannot help it now,
 Unless, by using means, I lame the foot
 Of our design. He bears himself more proudlier,
 Even to my person, than I thought he would 2160
 When first I did embrace him : yet his nature
 In that's no changling ; and I must excuse
 What cannot be amended.

Lieutenant. Yet I wish, sir
 (I mean, for your particular), you had not

Coriolanus.

Join'd in commission with him ; but either 2165
 Had borne the action of yourself, or else
 To him had left it solely.

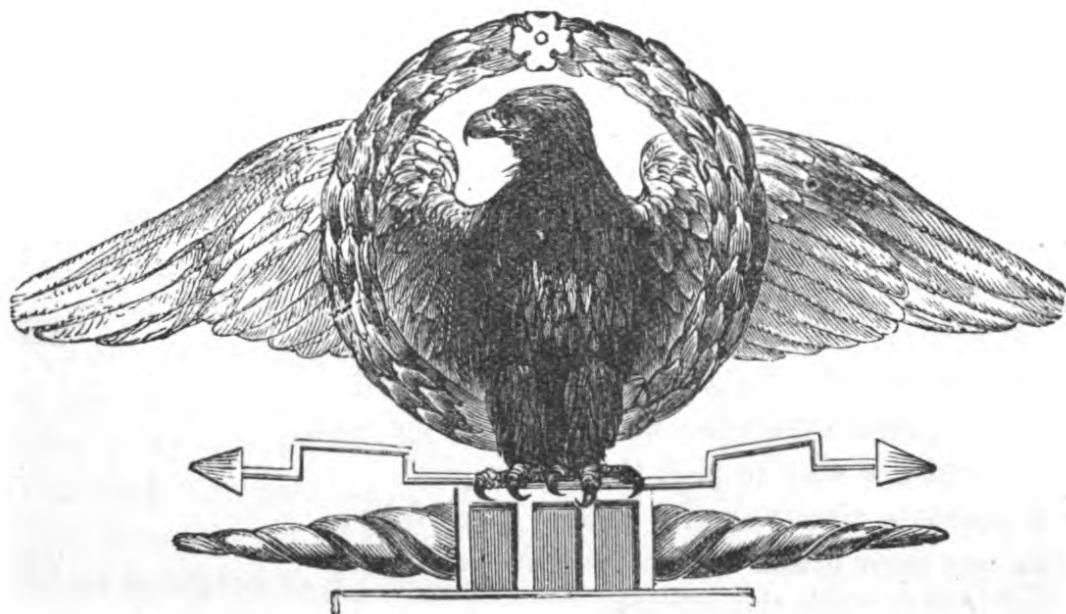
Aufidius. I understand thee well ; and be thou sure,
 When he shall come to his account, he knows not
 What I can urge against him. Although it seems, 2170
 And so he thinks, and is no less apparent
 To the vulgar eye, that he bears all things fairly,
 And shows good husbandry for the Volscian state
 Fights dragon-like, and does achieve as soon
 As draw his sword ; yet he hath left undone 2175
 That which shall break his neck, or hazard mine,
 Whene'er we come to our account.

Lieutenant. Sir, I beseech you, think you he'll carry Rome ?

Aufidius. All places yield to him ere he sits down ;
 And the nobility of Rome are his : 2180
 The senators and patricians love him too :
 The tribunes are no soldiers ; and their people
 Will be as rash in the repeal, as hasty
 To expel him thence. I think he'll be to Rome
 As is the osprey to the fish, who takes it 2185
 By sov'reignty of nature. First he was
 A noble servant to them ; but he could not
 Carry his honours even : whether 'twas pride,
 Which out of daily fortune ever taints
 The happy man ; whether defect of judgment, 2190
 To fail in the disposing of those chances
 Which he was lord of ; or whether nature,
 Not to be other than one thing, not moving
 From the casque to the cushion, but commanding peace,
 Even with the same austerity and garb 2195
 As he controll'd the war ; but one of these
 (As he hath spices of them all, not all,
 For I dare so far free him,) made him fear'd,
 So hated, and so banish'd : but he has a merit

To choke it in the utt'rance. So our virtues 2200
 Lie in the interpretation of the time :
 And power, unto itself most commendable,
 Hath not a tomb so evident as a chair
 To extol what it hath done.
 One fire drives out one fire ; one nail, one nail ; 2205
 Rights by rights fouler, strengths by strengths do fail.
 Come, let's away. When, Caius, Rome is thine,
 Thou art poor'st of all ; then shortly art thou mine.

[*Exeunt.*]



A ROMAN EAGLE.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—Rome. *A Public Place.*

Enter MENENIUS, COMINIUS, SICINIUS, BRUTUS, and others.

Menenius. No, I'll not go ; you hear what he hath said,
 Which was sometime his general ; who lov'd him 2210
 In a most dear particular. He call'd me father :
 But what o' that ? Go, you that banish'd him ;
 A mile before his tent fall down, and knee

The way into his mercy : nay, if he coy'd
To hear Cominius speak, I'll keep at home. 2215

Cominius. He would not seem to know me.

Menenius. Do you hear ?

Cominius. Yet one time he did call me by my name :
I urg'd our old acquaintance, and the drops
That we have bled together. Coriolanus
He would not answer to : forbade all names ; 2220
He was a kind of nothing, titleless,
Till he had forg'd himself a name i' the fire
Of burning Rome.

Menenius. Why, so,—you have made good work !
A pair of tribunes, that have rack'd for Rome,
To make coals cheap,—a noble memory ! 2225

Cominius. I minded him, how royal 'twas to pardon
When it was less expected : he replied,
It was a bare petition of a state
To one whom they had punish'd.

Menenius. Very well : could he say less ? 2230

Cominius. I offer'd to awaken his regard
For his private friends : his answer to me was,
He could not stay to pick them in a pile
Of noisome musty chaff : he said 'twas folly,
For one poor grain or two, to leave unburnt, 2235
And still to nose the offence.

Menenius. For one poor grain or two ?
I am one of those ; his mother, wife, his child,
And this brave fellow too, we are the grains ;
You are the musty chaff ; and you are smelt
Above the moon : we must be burnt for you. 2240

Sicinius. Nay, pray, be patient : if you refuse your aid
In this so never-needed help, yet do not
Upbraid 's with our distress. But, sure, if you
Would be your country's pleader, your good tongue,
More than the instant army we can make, 2245

Might stop our countryman.

Menenius. No, I'll not meddle.

Sicinius. Pray you, go to him.

Menenius. What should I do ?

Brutus. Only make trial what your love can do
For Rome, towards Marcius.

Menenius. Well, and say that Marcius
Return me, as Cominius is return'd, 2250
Unheard ; what then ?

But as a discontented friend, grief-shot
With his unkindness ? say 't be so ?

Sicinius. Yet your good will
Must have that thanks from Rome, after the measure
As you intended well.

Menenius. I'll undertake it : 2255
I think he'll hear me. Yet, to bite his lip,
And hum at good Cominius, much unhearts me.
He was not taken well ; he had not din'd :

The veins unfill'd, our blood is cold, and then
We pout upon the morning, are unapt 2260

To give or to forgive ; but when we 've stuff'd
These pipes and these conveyances of our blood
With wine and feeding, we have suppler souls
Than in our priest-like fasts : therefore I'll watch him
Till he be dieted to my request, 2265
And then I'll set upon him.

Brutus. You know the very road into his kindness,
And cannot lose your way.

Menenius. Good faith, I'll prove him,
Speed how it will. I shall ere long have knowledge
Of my success. [Exit.

Cominius. He'll never hear him.

Sicinius. Not ? 2270

Cominius. I tell you, he does sit in gold, his eye
Red as 'twould burn Rome : and his injury

The gaoler to his pity. I kneel'd before him ;
 'Twas very faintly he said, " Rise ; " dismiss'd me
 Thus, with his speechless hand : what he would do, 2275
 He sent in writing after me ; what he would not
 Bound with an oath to yield to his conditions ;
 So that all hope is vain,
 Unless his noble mother, and his wife ;
 Who, as I hear, mean to solicit him 2280
 For mercy to his country. Therefore, let's hence,
 And with our fair entreaties haste them on. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—*An advanced post of the Volscian Camp before
 Rome. The Guard at their stations.*

Enter to them, MENENIUS.

1 *Guard.* Stay : whence are you ?
 2 *Guard.* Stand, and go back.
Menenius. You guard like men ; 'tis well : but, by your leave,
 I am an officer of state, and come
 To speak with Coriolanus.
 1 *Guard.* From whence ?
Menenius. From Rome.
 1 *Guard.* You may not pass, you must return : our general
 Will no more hear from thence. 2286
 2 *Guard.* You'll see your Rome embrac'd with fire, before
 You'll speak with Coriolanus.
Menenius. Good my friends,
 If you have heard your general talk of Rome,
 And of his friends there, it is lots to blanks, 2290
 My name hath touch'd your ears : it is Menenius.
 1 *Guard.* Be it so ; go back : the virtue of your name
 Is not here passable.
Menenius. I tell thee, fellow,
 Thy general is my lover : I have been
 The book of his good acts, whence men have read 2295

His fame unparallel'd, haply, amplified ;
 For I have ever verified my friends
 (Of whom he's chief), with all the size that verity
 Would without lapsing suffer : nay, sometimes,
 Like to a bowl upon a subtle ground, 2300
 I have tumbled past the throw ; and in his praise
 Have almost stamp'd the leasing. Therefore, fellow,
 I must have leave to pass.

1 *Guard.* 'Faith, sir, if you had told as many lies in his behalf,
 as you have uttered words in your own, you should not pass here ;
 no, though it were as virtuous to lie, as to live chastely. There-
 fore, go back. 2307

Menenius. Pr'ythee, fellow, remember my name is Menenius,
 always factionary on the party of your general.

2 *Guard.* Howsoever you have been his liar (as you say you
 have), I am one that, telling true under him, must say, you cannot
 pass. Therefore, go back. 2312

Menenius. Has he dined, canst thou tell ! for I would not
 speak with him till after dinner.

1 *Guard.* You are a Roman, are you ? 2315

Menenius. I am as thy general is.

1 *Guard.* Then you should hate Rome, as he does. Can you,
 when you have pushed out your gates the very defender of them,
 and, in a violent popular ignorance, given your enemy your shield,
 think to front his revenges with the easy groans of old women, or
 with the palsied intercession of such a decayed dotant as you
 seem to be ? Can you think to blow out the intended fire your
 city is ready to flame in, with such weak breath as this ? No, you
 are deceived ; therefore, back to Rome, and prepare for your
 execution : you are condemned, our general has sworn you out of
 reprieve and pardon. 2326

Menenius. Sirrah, if thy captain knew I were here, he would
 use me with estimation.

2 *Guard.* Come, my captain knows you not.

Menenius. I mean, thy general. 2330

1 *Guard.* My general cares not for you. Back, I say, go ; lest I let forth your half pint of blood ;—back—that's the utmost of your having ;—back.

Menenius. Nay, but, fellow, fellow,—

Enter CORIOLANUS and AUFIDIUS.

Coriolanus. What's the matter ? 2335

Menenius. Now, you companion, I'll say an errand for you : you shall know now that I am in estimation ; you shall perceive that a Jack guardant cannot office me from my son Coriolanus ; guess, but by my entertainment with him, if thou stand'st not i' the state of hanging, or of some death more long in spectatorship, and crueller in suffering ; behold now presently, and swoon for what's to come upon thee.—The glorious gods sit in hourly synod about thy particular prosperity, and love thee no worse than thy old father Menenius does ! O my son, my son ! thou art preparing fire for us ; look thee, here's water to quench it. I was hardly moved to come to thee ; but being assured none but myself could move thee, I have been blown out of your gates with sighs ; and conjure thee to pardon Rome, and thy petitionary countrymen. The good gods assuage thy wrath, and turn the dregs of it upon this varlet here,—this, who, like a block, hath denied my access to thee. 2351

Coriolanus. Away !

Menenius. How ! away ?

Coriolanus. Wife, mother, child, I know not. My affairs
Are servanted to others : though I owe 2355

My revenge properly, my remission lies

In Volscian breasts. That we have been familiar,

Ingrate forgetfulness shall poison, rather

Than pity note how much. Therefore, be gone.

Mine ears against your suits are stronger than 2360

Your gates against my force. Yet, for I lov'd thee,

Take this along ; I writ it for thy sake. [*Gives a letter.*

And would have sent it. Another word, Menenius,

I will not hear thee speak.—This man, Aufidius,

Was my belov'd in Rome : yet thou behold'st ! 2365

Aufidius. You keep a constant temper.

[*Exeunt* CORIOLANUS and AUFIDIUS.]

1 *Guard.* Now, sir, is your name Menenius ?

2 *Guard.* 'Tis a spell, you see, of much power : you know the way home again.

1 *Guard.* Do you hear how we are shent for keeping your greatness back ? 2371

2 *Guard.* What cause, do you think, I have to swoon ?

Menenius. I neither care for the world, nor your general : for such things as you, I can scarce think there's any, you are so slight. He that hath a will to die by himself, fears it not from another : let your general do his worst. For you, be that you are, long ; and your misery increase with your age ! I say to you, as I was said to, Away ! [Exit.]

1 *Guard.* A noble fellow, I warrant him. 2379

2 *Guard.* The worthy fellow is our general : he is the rock, the oak not to be wind-shaken. [Exit.]

SCENE III.—*The Tent of* CORIOLANUS.

Enter CORIOLANUS, AUFIDIUS, and others.

Coriolanus. We will before the walls of Rome to-morrow Set down our host.—My partner in this action, You must report to the Volscian lords, how plainly I have borne this business.

Aufidius. Only their ends 2385
You have respected ; stopp'd your ears against
The general suit of Rome ; never admitted
A private whisper ; no, not with such friends
That thought them sure of you.

Coriolanus. This last old man,
Whom with a crack't heart I have sent to Rome, 2390
Lov'd me above the measure of a father ;
Nay, godded me, indeed. Their latest refuge

Was to send him ; for whose old love, I have
 (Though I show'd sourly to him) once more offer'd
 The first conditions, which they did refuse, 2395
 And cannot now accept ; to grace him only
 That thought he could do more, a very little
 I have yielded to : fresh embassies and suits,
 Nor from the state nor private friends, hereafter
 Will I lend ear to.—[*Shout within.*] Ha ! what shout is this ?
 Shall I be tempted to infringe my vow 2401
 In the same time 'tis made ? I will not.—

*Enter, in mourning habits, VIRGILIA, VOLUMNIA, leading
 young MARCIUS, VALERIA, and Attendants.*

My wife comes foremost.—I melt, and am not now
 Of stronger earth than others.—My mother bows ;
 As if Olympus to a molehill should 2405
 In supplication nod : and my young boy
 Hath an aspect of intercession, which
 Great nature cries "*Deny not.*"—Let the Volsces
 Plough Rome, and harrow Italy : I'll never
 Be such a gosling to obey instinct ; but stand 2410
 As if a man were author of himself,
 And knew no other kin.

Virgilia. My lord and husband !

Coriolanus. These eyes are not the same I wore in Rome.

Virgilia. The sorrow, that delivers us thus chang'd,
 Makes you think so.

Coriolanus. Like a dull actor now, 2415
 I have forgot my part, and am out,
 Even to a full disgrace. Best of my flesh,
 Forgive my tyranny ; but do not say,
 For that, "*Forgive our Romans.*"—You gods ! I prate,
 And the most noble mother of the world
 Leave unsaluted : sink, my knee, i' the earth. [*Kneels.* 2420
 Of thy deed duty more impression show
 Than that of common sons.

Volumnia. O, stand up bless'd!
 Whilst, with no softer cushion than the flint,
 I kneel before thee : and unproperly
 Show duty, as mistaken all this while 2425
 Between the child and parent. [*Kneels*]

Coriolanus. What is this ?
 Your knees to me ? to your corrected son ?
 Then let the pebbles on the hungry beach
 Fillip the stars ; then let the mutinous winds
 Strike the proud cedars 'gainst the fiery sun ; 2430
 Murd'ring impossibility, to make
 What cannot be slight work.

Volumnia. This is a poor epitome of yours,
 [*Pointing to the child.*]
 Which by the interpretation of full time,
 May show like all yourself.

Coriolanus. The god of soldiers, 2435
 With the consent of supreme Jove, inform
 Thy thoughts with nobleness ; that thou mayst prove
 To shame invulnerable, and stick i' the wars
 Like a great sea mark, standing every flaw,
 And saving those that eye thee !

Volumnia. Your knee, sirrah. 2440
Coriolanus. That's my brave boy !
Volumnia. Even he, your wife, this lady, and myself,
 Are suitors to you.

Coriolanus. I beseech you, peace :
 Or, if you'd ask, remember this before :
 The things I have forsworn to grant may never 2445
 Be held by you denials. Do not bid me
 Dismiss my soldiers, or capitulate
 Again with Rome's mechanics ; tell me not
 Wherein I seem unnatural : desire not
 To allay my rages and revenges with 2450
 Your colder reasons.

Volumnia. O, no more, no more !
 You have said you will not grant us any thing ;
 For we have nothing else to ask, but that
 Which you deny already : yet we will ask ;
 That, if you fail in our request, the blame 2455
 May hang upon your hardness : therefore hear us.
Coriolanus. Aufidius, and you Volsces, mark ; for we'll
 Hear nought from Rome in private.—Your request ?
Volumnia. Should we be silent and not speak, our raiment,
 And state of bodies, would bewray what life 2460
 We have led since thy exile. Think with thyself,
 How more unfortunate than all living women
 Are we come hither : since that thy sight, which should
 Make our eyes flow with joy, hearts dance with comforts,
 Constrains them weep, and shake with fear and sorrow ; 2465
 Making the mother, wife, and child, to see
 The son, the husband, and the father, tearing
 His country's bowels out. And to poor we
 Thine enmity 's most capital : thou barr'st us
 Our prayers to the gods, which is a comfort 2470
 That all but we enjoy ; for how can we,
 Alas, how can we for our country pray,
 Whereto we are bound,—together with thy victory,
 Whereto we are bound ? Alack, or we must lose
 The country, our dear nurse ; or else thy person, 2475
 Our comfort in the country. We must find
 An evident calamity, though we had
 Our wish, which side should win ; for either thou
 Must, as a foreign recreant, be led
 With manacles thorough our streets, or else 2480
 Triumphantly tread on thy country's ruin,
 And bear the palm, for having bravely shed
 Thy wife and children's blood. For myself, son,
 I purpose not to wait on fortune, till
 These wars determine ; if I cannot persuade thee 2485

Rather to show a noble grace to both parts,
 Than seek the end of one, thou shalt no sooner
 March to assault thy country, than to tread
 (Trust to 't, thou shalt not) on thy mother's corse.

Boy. He shall not tread on me ; 2490
 I'll run away till I am bigger, but then I'll fight.

Coriolanus. Not of a woman's tenderness to be,
 Requires nor child nor woman's face to see.
 I have sat too long.

[*Rising.*

Volumnia. Nay, go not from us thus. 2495
 If it were so, that our request did tend

To save the Romans, thereby to destroy
 The Volsces whom you serve, you might condemn us,

As poisonous of your honour : no ; our suit
 Is, that you reconcile them : while the Volsces
 May say, "*This mercy we have show'd ;*" the Romans, 2500
 "*This we receiv'd ;*" and each in either side

Give the all-hail to thee, and cry, "*Be bless'd*
For making up this peace !" Thou know'st, great son,

The end of war's uncertain : but this certain,
 That, if thou conquer Rome, the benefit 2505
 Which thou shalt thereby reap is such a name,

Whose repetition will be dogg'd with curses ;
 Whose chronicle thus writ,—"*The man was noble,*

But with his last attempt he wip'd it out ;
Destroy'd his country ; and his name remains 2510
To the ensuing age abhorr'd." Speak to me, son :

Thou hast affected the fine strains of honour,
 To imitate the graces of the gods ;

To tear with thunder the wide cheeks o' the air,
 And yet to charge thy sulphur with a bolt 2515
 That should but rive an oak. Why dost not speak ?

Think'st thou it honourable for a noble man
 Still to remember wrongs ? Daughter, speak you :

He cares not for your weeping.—Speak thou, boy :

Perhaps thy childishness will move him more 2520
 Than can our reasons.—There is no man in the world
 More bound to his mother ; yet here he lets me prate
 Like one i' the stocks. Thou hast never in thy life
 Show'd thy dear mother any courtesy ;
 When she (poor hen !), fond of no second brood, 2525
 Has cluck'd thee to the wars, and safely home,
 Loaden with honour. Say, my request's unjust,
 And spurn me back : but if it be not so,
 Thou art not honest ; and the gods will plague thee,
 That thou restrain'st from me the duty, which 2530
 To a mother's part belongs.—He turns away :
 Down, ladies ; let us shame him with our knees.
 To his surname, Coriolanus, 'longs more pride,
 Than pity to our prayers. Down : an end ;
 This is the last :—so we will home to Rome, 2535
 And die among our neighbours.—Nay, behold us :
 This boy, that cannot tell what we would have,
 But kneels and holds up hands for fellowship,
 Does reason our petition with more strength
 Than thou hast to deny 't.—Come, let us go : 2540
 I am hush'd until our city be afire,
 And then I'll speak a little.

Coriolanus. [*Holding VOLUMNIA by the hand.*] O, mother,
 mother !

What have you done ? Behold the heavens do ope,
 The gods look down, and this unnatural scene
 They laugh at. O my mother ! mother ! O ! 2545
 But, for your son,—believe it, O, believe it,—
 Most dangerously you have with him prevail'd,
 If not most mortal to him. But, let it come.—
 Aufidius, though I cannot make true wars,
 I'll frame convenient peace. Now, good Aufidius, 2550
 Were you in my stead, would you have heard
 A mother less ? or granted less, Aufidius ?

Aufidius. I was mov'd withal.

Coriolanus. I dare be sworn you were :

And, sir, it is no little thing to make
Mine eyes to sweat compassion. But, good sir, 2555
What peace you'll make, advise me : for my part,
I'll not to Rome, I'll back with you ; and pray you,
Stand to me in this cause.—O mother ! wife !

Aufidius. [*Aside.*] I am glad thou hast set thy mercy and thy
honour

At difference in thee : out of that I'll work 2560
Myself a former fortune. [*The Ladies make signs to CORIOLANUS.*

Coriolanus. Ay, by and by ;

But we will drink together ; and you shall bear
A better witness back than words, which we,
On like conditions, would have counter-seal'd.
Come, enter with us. Ladies, you deserve 2565
To have a temple built you : all the swords
In Italy, and her confederate arms,
Could not have made this peace. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—Rome. *A Public Place.*

Enter MENENIUS, SICINIUS, and a Messenger.

Messenger. Sir, if you'd save your life, fly to your house :
The plebeians have got your fellow-tribune, 2570
And hale him up and down ; all swearing, if
The Roman ladies bring not comfort home,
They'll give him death by inches.

Enter a second Messenger.

Sicinius. What's the news ?

2 Messenger. Good news, good news :—the ladies have prevail'd,
The Volscians are dislodg'd, and Marcius gone ; 2576
A merrier day did never yet greet Rome,
No, not the expulsion of the Tarquins.

Sicinius. Friend,
Art thou certain this is true? is it most certain?
2 Messenger. As certain as I know the sun is fire: 2580
Where have you lurk'd, that you make doubt of it?
Ne'er through an arch so hurried the blown tide,
As the recomforted through the gates. Why, hark you!

[*Trumpets and hautboys sounded, and drums
beaten, all together. Shouting also within.*]

The trumpets, sackbuts, psalteries, and fifes,
Tabors, and cymbals, and the shouting Romans, 2585
Make the sun dance. Hark you! [*Shouting again.*]

Menenius. This is good news:
I will go meet the ladies. This Volumnia
Is worth of consuls, senators, patricians,
A city full; of tribunes, such as you,
A sea and land full. You have pray'd well to-day: 2590
This morning for ten thousand of your throats
I'd not have given a doit. Hark, how they joy!

[*Shouting and music.*]

Sicinius. First, the gods bless you for your tidings; next,
Accept my thankfulness.

2 Messenger. Sir, we have all
Great cause to give great thanks.

Sicinius. They are near the city? 2595

2 Messenger. Almost at point to enter.

Sicinius. We will meet them,
And help the joy. [*Going.*]

*Enter the Ladies, accompanied by Senators, Patricians,
and People. They pass.*

1 Senator. Behold our patroness, the life of Rome!
Call all your tribes together, praise the gods,
And make triumphant fires; strew flowers before them: 2600
Unshout the noise that banish'd Marcius;
Repeal him with the welcome of his mother;
Cry,—“Welcome, ladies, welcome!”

All. Welcome, ladies,
 Welcome ! *[A flourish with drums and trumpets.* 2604
[Exeunt

SCENE V.—Antium. *A Public Place.*

Enter TULLUS AUFIDIUS, with Attendants.

Aufidius. Go tell the lords of the city I am here.
 Deliver them this paper : having read it,
 Bid them repair to the market-place ; where I,
 Even in theirs and in the commons' ears,
 Will vouch the truth of it. Him I accuse,
 The city ports, by this, hath enter'd, and 2610
 Intends to appear before the people, hoping
 To purge himself with words : dispatch. *[Exeunt Attendants.*

Enter three or four Conspirators of AUFIDIUS' faction.

Most welcome !

1 Conspirator. How is it with our general ?

Aufidius. Even so,

As with a man by his own alms empoison'd,
 And with his charity slain.

2 Conspirator. Most noble sir, 2615
 If you do hold the same intent, wherein
 You wish'd us parties, we'll deliver you
 Of your great danger.

Aufidius. Sir, I cannot tell :
 We must proceed, as we do find the people.

3 Conspirator. The people will remain uncertain, whilst 2620
 'Twixt you there's difference ; but the fall of either
 Makes the survivor heir of all.

Aufidius. I know it ;
 And my pretext to strike at him admits
 A good construction. I rais'd him, and I pawn'd
 Mine honour for his truth : who being so heighten'd, 2625
 He water'd his new plants with dews of flattery,

Coriolanus.

Seducing so my friends ; and, to this end,
 He bow'd his nature, never known before
 But to be rough, unswayable, and free.

3 *Conspirator*. Sir, his stoutness 2630
 When he did stand for consul, which he lost
 By lack of stooping,—

Aufidius. That I would have spoke of :
 Being banished for 't, he came unto my hearth ;
 Presented to my knife his throat : I took him ;
 Made him joint-servant with me ; gave him way 2635
 In all his own desires ; nay, let him choose
 Out of my files, his projects to accomplish,
 My best and freshest men ; serv'd his designments
 In mine own person ; help to reap the fame
 Which he did end all his ; and took some pride 2640
 To do myself this wrong : till, at the last,
 I seem'd his follower, not partner ; and
 He waged me with his countenance, as if
 I had been mercenary.

1 *Conspirator*. So he did, my lord :
 The army marvell'd at it ; and, in the last, 2645
 When we had carried Rome, and that we look'd
 For no less spoil than glory,—

Aufidius. There was it ;—
 For which my sinews shall be stretch'd upon him.
 At a few drops of women's rheum, which are
 As cheap as lies, he sold the blood and labour 2650
 Of our great action : therefore shall he die,
 And I'll renew me in his fall. But, hark !

[*Drums and trumpets sound, with great shouts of the people.*]

1 *Conspirator*. Your native town you enter'd like a post,
 And had no welcomes home ; but he returns,
 Splitting the air with noise.

2 *Conspirator*. And patient fools, 2655
 Whose children he hath slain, their base throats tear

With giving him glory.

3 Conspirator. Therefore, at your vantage,
Ere he express himself, or move the people
With what he would say, let him feel your sword,
Which we will second. When he lies along, 2660
After your way his tale pronounc'd shall bury
His reasons with his body.

Aufidius. Say no more :
Here come the lords.

Enter the Lords of the city.

Lords. You are most welcome home.

Aufidius. I have not deserv'd 't,
But, worthy lords, have you with heed perus'd 2665
What I have written to you ?

Lords. We have.

1 Lord. And grieve to hear 't
What faults he made before the last, I think,
Might have found easy fines : but there to end
Where he was to begin, and give away
The benefit of our levies, answering us 2670
With our own charge, making a treaty where
There was a yielding,—this admits no excuse.

Aufidius. He approaches : you shall hear him.

*Enter CORIOLANUS, with drums and colours ; a crowd of Citizens
with him.*

Coriolanus. Hail, lords ! I am return'd your soldier ;
No more infected with my country's love 2675
Than when I parted hence, but still subsisting
Under your great command. You are to know,
That prosperously I have attempted, and
With rapid passage, led your wars even to
The gates of Rome. Our spoils we have brought home, 2680
Do more than counterpoise, a full third part,
The charges of the action. We have made peace,
With no less honour to the Antiates,

Than shame to the Romans ; and we here deliver,
 Subscrib'd by the consuls and patricians, 2685
 Together with the seal o' the senate, what
 We have compounded on.

Aufidius. Read it not, noble lords ;
 But tell the traitor, in the highest degree,
 He hath abus'd your powers.

Coriolanus. Traitor ! How now ?

Aufidius. Ay, traitor, Marcius.

Coriolanus. Marcius ! 2690

Aufidius. Ay, Marcius, Caius Marcius : dost thou think
 I'll grace thee with that robbery, thy stol'n name
 Coriolanus in Corioli ?

You lords and heads of the state, perfidiously
 He has betray'd your business, and given up, 2695
 For certain drops of salt, your city Rome
 (I say your city) to his wife and mother ;

Breaking his oath and resolution, like
 A twist of rotten silk ; never admitting
 Counsel o' the war ; but, at his nurse's tears, 2700

He whin'd and roar'd away your victory ;
 That pages blush'd at him, and men of heart
 Look'd wondering each at other.

Coriolanus. Hear'st thou, Mars ?

Aufidius. Name not the god, thou boy of tears !

Coriolanus. Ha !

Aufidius. No more. 2705

Coriolanus. Measureless liar, thou hast made my heart
 Too great for what contains it. Boy ! O slave !—
 Pardon me, lords, 'tis the first time that ever

I was forc'd to scold. Your judgments, my grave lords,
 Must give this cur the lie : and his own notion 2710
 (Who wears my stripes impress'd upon him ; that

Must bear my beating to his grave) shall join
 To thrust the lie unto him.

1 *Lord.* Peace, both, and hear me speak.

Coriolanus. Cut me to pieces, Volsces; men and lads,
Stain all your edges on me.—Boy! False hound! 2715
If you have writ your annals true, 'tis there,
That, like an eagle in a dove-cote, I
Flutter'd your Volscians in Corioli:
Alone I did it.—Boy!

Aufidius. Why, noble lords,
Will you be put in mind of his blind fortune, 2720
Which was your shame, by this unholy braggart,
Fore' your own eyes and ears?

Conspirators. Let him die for 't.

Citizens. [*Speaking promiscuously.*] Tear him to pieces; do it
presently; he killed my son;—my daughter;—he killed my cousin
Marcius;—he killed my father,—

2 *Lord.* Peace, ho!—no outrage:—peace! 2725
The man is noble, and his fame folds in
This orb o' the earth. His last offence to us
Shall have judicious hearing.—Stand, Aufidius,
And trouble not the peace.

Coriolanus. O that I had him,
With six Aufidiuses, or more, his tribe, 2730
To use my lawful sword!

Aufidius. Insolent villain!

Conspirators. Kill, kill, kill, kill, kill him!

[*AUFIDIUS and the Conspirators draw, and kill
CORIOLANUS, who falls: AUFIDIUS stands on him.*]

Lords. Hold, hold, hold, hold!

Aufidius. My noble masters, hear me speak.

1 *Lord.* O Tullus!

2 *Lord.* Thou hast done a deed whereat valour will weep.

3 *Lord.* Tread not upon him.—Masters all, be quiet.— 2735
Put up your swords.

Aufidius. My lords, when you shall know (as in this rage,
Provok'd by him, you cannot) the great danger

Which this man's life did owe you, you'll rejoice
 That he is thus cut off. Please it your honours 2740
 To call me to your senate, I'll deliver
 Myself your royal servant, or endure
 Your heaviest censure.

1 *Lord.* Bear from hence his body,—
 And mourn you for him!—let him be regarded
 As the most noble corse that ever herald 2745
 Did follow to his urn.

2 *Lord.* His own impatience
 Takes from Aufidius a great part of blame.
 Let's make the best of it.

Aufidius. My rage is gone ;
 And I am struck with sorrow.—Take him up ;—
 Help, three o' the chiefest soldiers ; I'll be one.— 2750
 Beat thou the drum, that it speak mournfully :
 Trail your steel pikes.—Though in this city he
 Hath widow'd and unchilded many a one,
 Which to this hour bewail the injury,
 Yet he shall have a noble memory.

Assist. 2756

[*Exeunt, bearing the body of CORIOLANUS.*
A dead march sounded.

NOTES.

ACT I.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF ACT I.

THE play of *Coriolanus* opens with a picture of a street in Rome at a time when the common people, weighted by the heavy imposts necessary to carry on numerous wars, and suffering from a scarcity of provisions, had broken out in mutiny against the patricians. They were especially indignant at the conduct of Caius Marcius, a noble Roman, but no friend to the masses; and events were growing serious, for they, having refused to serve in the army, the enemies of Rome were busily engaged laying waste her territory with fire and sword.

The senators, in this crisis, sent Menenius Agrippa to pacify the mob, and decreed that five tribunes should be appointed to represent the people.

The mob having dispersed, an army, under the command of *Cominius*, the consul, with *Caius Marcius* and *Titus Lartius* as generals of divisions, was dispatched against the Volsces. The remaining scenes of the Act detail the progress of the war, showing, in rapidly changing scenes, the bravery of Caius Marcius, by whose exertions the city of Corioli fell into the hands of the Romans. The chief in command, who delighted to shower honour where honour was due, conferred on Rome's successful soldier the title of CORIOLANUS, in recognition of his splendid services in the siege of Corioli.

In the course of this Act we are also introduced to the general of the Volscian army, *Tullus Aufidius*, who, enraged at suffering five successive personal defeats at the hands of Coriolanus, swears to be revenged on him either in fair fight or by foul means.

SCENE I.

[Notes to page 16.]

5. **Chief enemy.** We should say the chief enemy; but Shakespeare often omits the article. In Act ii., Sc. 3, we have "The gods give him joy, and make him good friend to the people."
7. **We know't; Is't a verdict? No more talking on't.** No doubt the common people in Shakespeare's day used 'know't' for know it, 'Is't' for is it, and 'on't' for of it, as rustics do in the present day.

[Notes to page 17.]

11. **Good citizens = wealthy citizens.**

Compare *Merchant of Venice*, Act i., Sc. 3, "Antonio is a good man."

12. **Accounted = reckoned.**

Patricians. The noblemen of ancient Rome who traced their descent from the '*Fathers*' or first Roman senators. (L. *pater*, *patris*, a father.)

13. **Authority.** Used for those in authority.

Surfeits = eats overmuch.

14. **But,** modifies '*yield.*'

15. **Guess = think, suppose, believe.**

16. **Object = aspect.**

17. **Particularise = emphasise.**

Sufferance = sufferings or distress; and so in *Julius Caesar*,

- Act ii., Sc. 1 : "The sufferance of our souls."
18. **Pikes, rakes.** Pikes = pitchforks. "As thin as a rake" is a well-worn proverb.
22. **A very dog.** As cruel as a dog. Compare *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Act ii., Sc. 3 : "He is a stone, a very pebble-stone, and has no more pity in him than a dog."
- Commonalty.** The common people. So used in *Henry VIII.*, Act i., Sc. 2 :—
- "Bid him strive
To gain the love o' the commonalty."*
- The term is still used in many parts of England.
25. **Could be content** = should be willing ; and so in *Julius Caesar*, Act v., Sc. 1, and in line 29, "can be content" for shall be content.
26. **Give him good report**, or, as we should say, give him credit for it.
27. **Maliciously.** With ill-will.
28. **He did it to that end.** He did it to gratify his pride.
30. **He did it to please his mother.** Shakespeare borrowed this idea from North's "Plutarch."
31. **And to be partly proud.** That is, and, partly, to be proud. Shakespeare often transposes the adverb. See Note to 'but,' line 14, and compare "*At your only choice*," Act i., Sc. 8.
- Virtue** is here used in its original meaning of manliness or courage. (L. "*vir*," a man ; and Sanscrit "*vira*," a hero.)
33. **Must** = can.
37. **Prating** = idly talking. (Low German "*prate*," to tattle.)
- Capitol.** The castle of Rome in which was the Temple of Jupiter, where thanks for victories were offered. It stood on the summit of a hill ; hence the name Capitolium, from the L. "*caput*," "*capitis*," the head.
- [Notes to page 18.]
42. **Would** = I would that.
45. **Bats** = cudgels. (Celtic "*bat*," from the root of beat, in imitation of the sound of a blow.)
47. **Inkling** = a hint. (Middle English verb "*to inkle*" = to mutter.)
55. **For your wants** = as for your wants.
56. **Dearth**, allied to dear, originally meant costliness ; hence it came to mean scarcity, want, famine.
58. **The Roman state** = the Roman government.
- Will on** for will go on. Shakespeare constantly omits the verb of motion when it is followed by a preposition or adverb of direction.
60. **More strong link** = stronger link.
61. **Your impediment** = the impediment you can make. Similar expressions are to be found in the Authorised Version of the Bible and in *King John*, Act ii., Sc. 1 : "Vexed with thy impediment."
- For the dearth.** See note to "*for your wants*," line 55.
63. **Your knees to them, not arms**, etc. You must bend your knees to them (the gods), not raise your arms against the patricians.
- Alack.** A sorrowful exclamation from the Middle English "*A*" = Ah ! and "*lac*" = loss.
64. **You are transported . . . attends you.** You are carried away by your calamity to a spot where more calamity attends you.
66. **The helms o' the state.** Meaning those at the helm of the state ; the patricians.

68. **They ne'er cared for us . . . poor.** They ne'er cared for us yet. *They* suffer us to famish while their storehouses are crammed with grain; *they* make edicts for usury, to support usurers; *they* repeal daily any wholesome act established against the rich; and *they* provide more piercing statutes daily, to chain up and restrain the poor.

[Notes to page 19.]

77. **I shall tell you.** In modern English "I will tell you."

80. **To stale't a little more.** To make it still more stale by repeating it once again; *stale* meaning old, worn-out, or trite.

81. **To fob off** = to put off or play with. In the folio edition the word is spelt "fop," and no doubt it is connected with the Dutch "*foppen*," to mock, and "*fopper*," a wag.

82. **An't** = if it.

Deliver = communicate.

The story of the members of the body is related in North's "Plutarch."

85. **Gulf.** An abyss or whirlpool, or a name used to designate anything insatiable.

86. **Unactive** for inactive. In Act iv., Sc. 4, we have 'unseparable' for inseparable.

87. **Viand**, like victual, is nearly always used in the plural. It literally means food necessary to life.

88. **Where** = whereas.

90. **Mutually participate** instead of mutually participant. *Participate* = participant, adjective, qualifying '*they*' understood; *they*, of course, standing for instruments.

Minister is here used in its original sense of 'to serve.'

(L. "*minister*," a servant, from "*minor*," less.)

91. **The appetite, affection common . . . body.** Meaning unto the appetite and desire common to the whole body.

95. **Which ne'er came from the lungs.** Not indicating pleasure but contempt, according to Dr. Johnson. Plutarch, who tells the same story, says that the "belly laughed at their folly."

Even thus. We must picture Menenius here with a scornful smile upon his lips.

99. **His receipt** = the good things he received.

100. **For that** = because. And so used in Act i., Sc. 8 :—

"For that I have not wash'd
My nose that bled."

And Act iii., Sc. 3 :—

"For that he has,
As much as in him lies, from
time to time
Envied against the people."

103. **Counsellor heart.** Shakespeare often uses nouns, and especially proper names, as adjectives.

Soldier is here a trisyllable.

"The coun'- | sellor heart', | the
arm' | our sol'- | dier'."

100. **Muniments** = defences; from L. "*munimenta*," fortifications.

What then? Menenius has grown impatient at having the application of his story taken from him.

106. **'Fore me.** An exclamation of impatience.

108. **Cormorant.** The cormorant is a sea-bird noted for its voracity; hence it is here used adjectively to mean gluttonous.

[Notes to page 20.]

115. **Your most grave belly.** The word *your* is similarly used in

Antony and Cleopatra, Act ii.,
Sc. 7 :—

“*Your serpent of Egypt is bred
now of your mud by the opera-
tion of your sun; so is your
crocodile.*”

For ‘most grave’ compare the
well-known line in *Othello* :—

“*Most potent, grave, and reverend
signiors.*”

124. **Cranks** = winding passages. In
Venus and Adonis Shakespeare
uses the verb ‘to crank’ when
he says of the hare—

“*How he outruns the wind, and
with what care
He cranks and crosses with a
thousand doubles.*”

125. **Nerves** = sinews.
138. **Weal** = welfare. (A.-S. “*wela*,”
wealth.)
Common = the common people.
Compare ‘commonalty,’ line
22.

[Notes to page 21.]

142. **Assembly** is here a quadrisyl-
lable :—

“*You’, the | great toe’ | of this’ |
assem’- | b-ly’.*”

146. **Rascal**. Shakespeare has bor-
rowed here a figure from the
language of the hunter, to
whom a rascal meant a lean
and worthless deer.

In blood. Another hunting term
equivalent to in condition.

148. **Bats**. See note to line 45.
150. **Bale**. An obsolete word, old-
fashioned even in Shakespeare’s
time, meaning woe, or evil.
We still use the adjective
‘baleful,’ to mean injurious.
152. **Dissentious**. Used in a bad sense
for seditious.
156. **Nor . . . nor** = neither . . .
nor. Compare *Julius Caesar*,
Act ii., Sc. 2 :—

“*Nor heaven nor earth have been
at peace to-night.*”

159. **No surer** = no more lasting.
You fly at the approach of
danger as rapidly as a hot
coal burns its way through
ice, or as a hailstone melts in
the sun.

162. **Whose offence subdues him**.
Whose crime brings its punish-
ment.

163. **Curse that justice did it** =
curse that justice *which* did
it.

Who = he who, and so in
Othello, Act iii., Sc. 3 :—

“*Who steals my purse steals
trash.*”

171. **Garland**. Your crown or hero.
Roman heroes were crowned
with garlands.

[Notes to page 22.]

175. **What’s their seeking?** This
question is addressed to Me-
nenius; it means, “What is
their suit?”

178. **Fire**, is a dissyllable here :—

“*They’ll sit’ | by the fi’- | re and’
| pre-sume’ | to know’.*”

180. **Side** = to embrace the opinion
or cause of one party against
another. An active verb not
often used except in common
talk.

182. **Feebling** = enfeebling.

183. **Cobbled** = patched. (O. F.
“*cobler*,” to join together,
from the L. “*copulo*,” I join.)
Below their cobbled shoes. A
figure of speech equal to tramp-
ling under foot.

184. **Ruth**. This word, now obsolete,
means pity. It survives in the
adjective ‘ruthless.’

185. **Quarry** = a heap of dead game ;
another word derived from the
hunter’s vocabulary.

186. **Quartered** = cut to pieces. Compare *Julius Caesar*, Act iii., Sc. 1: "Their infants quarter'd with the hands of war."
192. **A hungry**. A common expression in Shakespeare's time, and one frequently used by him.
- Sighed forth proverbs**. Archbishop Trench, in his "*Proverbs and their Lessons*," remarks: "In a fastidious age, indeed, and one of false refinement, proverbs may go nearly or quite out of use among the so-called upper classes. No gentleman, says Lord Chesterfield, or 'no man of fashion,' as I think is his exact phrase, 'ever uses a proverb.' And with how fine a touch of nature Shakespeare makes Coriolanus, the man, who, with all his greatness, is entirely devoid of all sympathy with the people, to utter his scorn of them in scorn of their proverbs, and of their frequent employment of these."
201. **Emulation** here means rivalry in a bad sense.
202. **Five Tribunes**. See notes on the government of Rome, page 13.
[Notes to page 23.]
204. **'Sdeath**. An abbreviation for God's death.
206. **Ere so prevailed** = ere they so prevailed.
207. **Win upon power** = overcome authority.
209. **Fragments**. Used contemptuously to indicate the mob.
211. **Volsces**. The Volscians, or Volsces, were a powerful tribe who dwelt to the north of Rome. Their chief cities were Corioli and Antium, and their general was Tullus Aufidius.
204. **That** = as.
220. **By the ears** = quarrelling.
226. **Constant**. Here means fixed or true. See *Julius Caesar*, Act iii., Sc. 1:—
"But I am constant as the northern star."
228. **Stiff** = obstinate.
[Notes to page 24.]
233. **Right worthy you**. *Worthy*, adjective, qualifying you.
237. **Garners**. A word allied to granaries, and having the same meaning.
243. **Gird**. Originally meant to strike or pierce, and hence came in time to mean to strike with a jest—that is, to taunt.
244. **Bemock**. The prefix be- has an intensitive force, as in be-speak, be-troth, be-quest, etc.
246. **Too proud to be so valiant** = too proud of being so valiant.
247. **Good success**. We use the phrase ill success, but the corresponding expression good success has died out with us owing to the narrower meaning attached to the word 'success.'
249. **Brook**, endure; O.E. *brucan*, to enjoy or use. See *Julius Caesar*, Act i., Sc. 2:—
"There was a Brutus once that would have brook'd
The eternal devil to keep his state
in Rome
As easily as a king."
To be commanded = to hold a command.
250. **The which**. Although the definite article is not now used with the neuter relative pronoun, such a usage is common in Shakespeare's works, and in the Authorised Version of the Bible.
[Notes to page 25.]
254. **Shall be** = will be.
258. **Opinion**. Meaning public opinion.

259. **Demerits.** Merits. The word is used in this contradictory sense in *Othello*, Act. i., Sc. 2 :—

“ *My demerits*
May speak unbanned to as proud
a fortune
As this that I have reach'd.”

SCENE II.

267. **Entered in** = acquainted with.
 270. **Whatever have been thought on** = whatever *things* have been thought on.
 272. **Had circumvention.** That is, being forewarned, were ready to defeat the attack.
Four days gone. Gone and ago are both shortened forms of the A.-S. “*agan*,” to pass away.
 275. **Press'd** = impressed.
Power = an army.

[Notes to page 26.]

285. **Pretences** = intentions.
 290. **Take in** = capture.
Ere, almost = almost ere = almost before.
 291. **Afoot.** The prefix ‘*a*,’ short for the A.-S. “*an*” = on. The form ‘*afoot*’ is still used colloquially.
 292. **Hie** = hasten. (A.-S. “*higian*,” to hasten.)
 294. **If they set down before . . . army.** If they attempt to besiege us, do you bring up your army to raise the siege.
 298. **Parcels**, parts or portions. This word was used in a much wider sense than at present. In the rural districts of the east of England one may hear of a parcel of boys and girls, meaning a number of boys and girls; or of a nice parcel of fruit when a tree bears a good crop, etc.
Are forth. Here the verb of motion is omitted.

SCENE III.

[Notes to page 27.]

309. **Spoke.** Shakespeare employs both forms of the participle, ‘*spoke*’ and ‘*spoken*,’ in his plays.
 313. **’Larum**, *alarum* or *alarm*, the call to arms, is derived through the French “*alarme*,” Italian “*all’ arme*,” from the Latin “*ad*,” to, “*arma*,” arms.
 314. **Mars.** The old Roman god of war; the son of Jupiter and Juno.
Pr’y thee = pray thee.
 316. **Fielded.** This adjective, although it ends in *ed*, is formed not from a verb, but the noun *field*.
 318. **That fears you less than he.** Shakespeare should have written—
 “No, nor a man that fears you
more than he.”

[Notes to page 28.]

327. **Issue forth their city.** Shakespeare sometimes omits the preposition from after the word ‘*forth*’ preceded by a verb.
 328. **More proof.** Proof armour was armour that had been tested, and hence proof as an adjective means strong and resisting.
 334. **Ope** = open; and so in *Julius Caesar*, Act i., Sc. 2 :—
 “*He plucked me ope his doublet.*”
 341. **Clapp’d-to** = shut suddenly.
 345. **Carbuncle.** The name applied to the garnet. Here it must mean some much more valuable stone; perhaps the ruby.
 [Notes to page 29.]
 350. **As if the world . . . tremble.** A very similar expression may be found in *Macbeth*, Act ii., Sc. 3 :—

“*Some say, the earth*
Was feverous and did shake.”

352. **Make remain** = remain. Shakespeare also uses 'make repair,' and 'make compare,' for repair and compare.

SCENE IV.

353. **Movers.** This term may be used contemptuously by Marcius for the camp-followers seeking plunder, or for the agitators in the army; or may simply mean the living as distinguished from those who had fallen in battle, or all of these. But the context shows that most likely the first meaning is the correct one.

Prize their hours = value their time.

354. **Drachma.** A Roman coin worth $9\frac{3}{4}d.$ of our money.

355. **Doit.** A small Dutch coin worth about half-a-farthing; hence a thing of little or no value.

Doublets. In Shakespeare's time the Roman heroes appeared on the stage in doublet and hose like Englishmen. Historical accuracy in dress is a modern theatrical improvement.

The doublets that the camp-plunderers tore from the bodies of the dead were of so little value that the executioner, whose perquisite the clothes of his victim became, would not have taken the trouble to remove them.

358. **To him** = go to him. Verb of motion omitted.

361. **To make good** = to hold.

367. **Physical** = beneficial. It must be remembered that the literal meaning of physical is natural, from the Greek "*physicos*," nature.

371. **Opposers.** Opponents would be a more familiar word to us, but Shakespeare never uses it.

372. **Prosperity be thy page!** = may prosperity follow thee.

[Notes to page 30.]

Thy friend no less . . . highest.
May she be no less thy friend than the friend of those she places highest.

SCENE V.

378. **Breathe you** = you breathe = take breath.

381. **Whiles.** The word '*while*' was originally a noun, meaning time, and '*whiles*' was an inflection of while, meaning 'of the time' or 'during the time.'

Have struck = have been striking.

382. **Interims** means the same as intervals.

We have struck *at* intervals, and the gusts of wind have conveyed to us the sounds of our friends' attacks.

Gusts. Sudden blasts of wind.

393. **Briefly.** Here used to mean a little while ago.

394. **Confound.** Here means waste. It bears the same meaning in some other plays, as in *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act i., Sc. 1:—

"*Let's not confound the time with conference harsh.*"

396. **To wheel** = to circle or go round.

[Notes to page 31]

399. **As** = as if.

402. **Tabor.** A small drum played with one stick. Compare '*tambourine*.' Coriolanus had a voice of thunder.

404. **From every meaner man.** Strictly correct construction demands from every meaner man's. The phrase as it stands is idiomatic.

412. **Leash.** The lash or line by which a hawk or hound is led. This

is another allusion borrowed from rural field sports.

414. **Which** = who. The neuter form used for the masculine. We have only to read the Authorised Version of the Bible to see how loosely pronouns were used in Shakespeare's time.

416. **He did inform the truth.** A peculiar construction for 'He did inform *you of the truth.*'

But for our gentlemen. The impatient Coriolanus leaves his meaning to be understood, for he does not finish his sentence. To make the clause capable of being parsed we must read, 'But *had it not been* for our gentlemen.'

Some commentators, however, take a different view of this passage. They think that Coriolanus is speaking ironically. If so, '*gentlemen*' and '*common file*' are in apposition.

417. **Tribunes for them!** See line 202.

418. **Budge** = give way.

420. **I do not think** = I do not think *it will.*

[Notes to page 32.]

425. **Battle** = army; and so in *Julius Caesar*, Act v., Sc. 3: "*Set our battles on.*"

427. **Vaward** = the front rank. In *Henry V.*, Act iv., Sc. 3, the Duke of York says:—

"*My lord, most humbly on my knee I beg
The leading of the vaward.*"

Antiates. The men of Antium, a warlike city of the Volsces.

432. **To endure** = to continue.

434. **Not delay** = delay not. The negative is transposed.

Present stands for present time.

435. **Advanced** = raised.

436. **Prove.** 'Try our skill' or 'prove

our prowess.' It is necessary to supply an object to prove.

Balms. Balsams to heal the wounds of Coriolanus.

442. **Painting.** The blood of his enemies.

450. The meaning of this line is very obscure.

452. **Four Volsces.** Compare *Henry V.*

"*I thought upon one pair of
English legs
Did march three Frenchmen.*"

[Notes to page 33.]

457. **As cause will be obeyed** = as necessity may demand.

460. **Ostentation** = display of your courage. (L. "*ostendo*," I show.)

SCENE VI.

462. **Ports** = gates. (L. "*porta*," a gate.)

464. **Centuries.** A century was a company of one hundred men. (L. "*centuria*," from "*centum*," one hundred.)

SCENE VII.

471. **Afric.** The word is three times found in this form in Shakespeare's works, while *Africa* occurs but once.

473. **Budger.** A term of reproach. See note to line 418.

[Notes to page 34.]

475. **Halloo.** A hunting cry; an onomatopoeic word.

476. **Corioli walls.** Shakespeare often employs proper names as adjectives. In this play we have '*Corioli gates*,' Act ii., Sc. 1; '*Rome gates*,' Act iii., Sc. 3; '*Tiber banks*' and '*Philippi fields*' in *Julius Caesar*; '*Pisa walls*' in the *Taming of the Shrew*, etc. It must not be forgotten that we still say '*Turkey carpet*,'

'*Stilton cheese*,' and '*London stout*.'

480. **Wrench up thy power.** Use all thy force.

Hector was a famous Trojan leader. The Romans claimed descent from the Trojans.

SCENE VIII.

490. **Quak'd.** Made to tremble.

491. **Fusty.** Literally means smelling of the wood of the cask (O.F. "*fust*," the wood of a cask). Here it means ill-smelling. Compare *Julius Caesar*, Act i., Sc. 2, where Casca describes the offensive smell of the mob.

Plebeians. The common people. (L. "*plebs*," "*plebis*.") The accent is on the first syllable:—
"That with' | the fus'- | ty
ple'- | bians hate' | thine
honours'."

Sometimes it falls on the second in Shakespeare's verse.

496. **Caparison.** The rich cloth laid over a war-horse on state occasions.

[Notes to page 36.]

498. **Charter.** Privilege.

To extol. To praise. (L. "*ex*," up, and "*tollo*," I lift or raise.)

501. **Country.** A trisyllable here:—
"As you' | have been'— | that's
for' | my coun'- | t-ry'."

502. **Effected his good will,** Done his best.

503. **Has overta'en mine act.** Has done as well as I.

506. **Traducement.** Calumny; literally a leading across. (L. "*trans*," across, and "*duco*," I lead.)

508. **Vouch'd.** Warranted.

514. **'Gainst ingratitude.** When exposed to ingratitude. Compare with this the common expression "*against the fire*."

515. **Tent.** A tent is a plug or roll of lint used to dilate a wound

and so prevent it festering. Hence, to tent = first to probe, and secondly, to cure.

516. **Good, and good.** The first good relates to the quality of the horses taken, the second to the quantity.

[Notes to page 37.]

528. **Soothing** is here used in its original sense of flattery. (A.S. "*gesoth*," a flatterer, from "*ge*" for "*gegan*," against, and "*soth*," true.)

529. **Parasite's silk.** A parasite originally indicated a diner at other men's tables, where clothed in silk he graced the festive board.

530. **Overture** = ovation. This is a disputed passage, some commentators thinking Shakespeare wrote "*coverture*."

532. **Debile** = weak. (L. "*debilis*," weak.)

533. **Without note** = unnoticed.

539. **Give** = represent.

541. **Proper harm** = self-mutilation, the action of a madman.

Manacles, handcuffs. (L. "*manus*," the hand.)

544. **Garland.** See note to line 171.

546. **Trim.** Caparison.

548. **Clamour** is used here in its original sense for acclamations, and not in its modern meaning of unlawful riot.

552. **Go wash.** Compare with this '*go tell*,' '*go sleep*,' and '*go pray*.'

Go wash = I will go, and *I will wash*.

554. **Howbeit** = how be it, be it how it may.

555. **Stride** = bestride.

556. **Undercrest,** to bear it proudly as a crest.

[Notes to page 38.]

561. **The best . . . articulate.** The noblest men of Corioli with

- whom we may discuss the terms of peace.
566. **Sometime** = once on a time.
lay = lodged.
574. **Jupiter**. The chief god among the Romans.
577. **Visage**. Face. (L. "*visus*," seen.)
- SCENE IX.
580. **Condition** = terms.
[Notes to page 39.]
586. **Beat** = beaten.
588. **The elements**, according to the ancients, were four in number — namely, *earth, air, fire, and water*.
589. **Beard to beard** = face to face.
591. **Where** = whereas.
592. **In** = with.
593. **Potch**. Related to *poke*, from the Irish "*poc*," a blow. There are also two corresponding nouns, '*pouch*' and '*poke*,' similarly related.
595. **Subtle** = sly or artful.
596. **Suffering stain** = being blotted out.
597. **Sanctuary**. A sacred place, where the avenger could not enter. Shakespeare has in his mind an old English custom.
598. **Fane**. A temple.
600. **Embarquements** = hindrances.
- A word peculiar to Shakespeare, probably derived from "*embargo*," a prohibit from leaving port.
603. **Upon my brother's guard**. My brother's guest.
604. **Canon**. A sacred law ; *the hospitable canon* means the sacred law of hospitality, which protected even a mortal enemy from harm.
607. **Hostages**. Persons remaining with the enemy as pledges for the fulfilment of the conditions of a treaty.
608. **Attended** = waited for.
Cypress. An evergreen coniferous tree.
609. **'Tis south the city mills**. Malone says : "Shakespeare frequently introduces these minute local descriptions, probably to give an air of truth to his pieces." He may have been thinking of the City Mills, which stood in his time close to the Globe Theatre.
610. **How the world goes** = how public affairs are speeding. Compare *Julius Caesar*, Act I., Sc. 3 :—
" *Till then, think of the world.*"

ACT II.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF ACT II.

THIS Act opens with the return of the victorious Coriolanus in triumph to Rome. The senators, proud of the brave soldier, elected him consul for the ensuing year. After much persuasion, he consented to stand in humble garb, as the custom was, and receive the votes of the plebeians he despised so much.

Subsequently, however, the citizens, led away from their allegiance to Coriolanus by the intrigues of the tribunes Brutus and Sicinius, agreed to muster in force at the Capitol and refuse the confirmation of the election of Coriolanus.

SCENE I.

[Notes to page 40.

612. **Augurer**, or *augur*, among the Romans, was one who foretold events by observing the flight and cries of birds. Etymology uncertain, but probably from L. "*avis*," a bird, and "*garrere*," to chatter.

[Notes to page 41.

649. **Should** = would.
Unmeriting = undeserving.
 650. **Testy** = headstrong, peevish, literally heady. (L. "*testa*," the skull.)
Alias = otherwise. (L. "*alias*.")
 652. **Humorous**. Used in its literal meaning, "full of fancies."
 654. **Something** = somewhat.
Something imperfect . . . case. Somewhat hasty in forming an opinion, not consuming time over trifles like the tribunes.

[Notes to page 42.

655. **Trivial**. Trifling; literally three cross roads, from L. "*tres*," three, and "*via*," a way; hence a very common occurrence that may be found anywhere.
Motion = cause at law.
 656. **Converses more** = is more familiar with.
Buttock = the rump of an animal. Diminutive form of *butt-end*, hence the latter end.

Coriolanus.

657. **Spend** = expend.
Malice = ill-will. (L. "*malus*," bad.)
 658. **Wealsmen**. Sound men, meaning statesmen.
 659. **Lycurguses**. *Lycurgus*, the king of Thrace, was a wine hater, who abolished the worship of Bacchus, and ordered all the vines in his dominions to be cut down. Hence the term *Lycurguses* may mean enemies of luxury.
 662. **The ass in compound**. The ass united with.
 665. **Microcosm**. Literally *the little world*, from Gr. "*micros*," little, and "*kosmos*," the world; hence man, who was regarded by the ancient philosophers as an epitome of the universe.
 666. **Bisson**, dimsighted. (A.S. "*bisen*," blind.)
Conspicuities. Some commentators think that Menenius has here coined a word to bewilder the ignorant tribunes; others say the word is a corruption of "*conspicuities*," things clearly seen.
 670. **Knave's Caps and Legs**. The bowing and reverence of the multitude.
Knave. Literally lads. (A.S. "*knafa*," a youth); its bad meaning is of modern growth.

672. **Fosset-seller.** A tap-seller; from "faucet," to draw wine.
- Rejourn.** Adjourn.
675. **Colic.** Acute pain in the stomach.
- Mummers.** Literally maskers; Old Dutch "mom," a mask; hence buffoons. Some authorities trace the origin of the word to the Latin "Momus," the god of mockery.
676. **Bleeding.** Unhealed.
677. **Knaves.** Seems here to be used in its more modern sense of cheats.
679. **Perfecter.** All adjectives, at one time, were compared regularly; thus Milton uses 'excellenter,' 'miserablest,' and Shakespeare elsewhere has 'violentest.'
680. **Giber.** Scoffer.
685. **Botcher.** A mender of old clothes.
687. **Deucalion** was the son of Prometheus. He and his wife were said to be the only survivors of the Deluge. Deucalion is, in fact, the Noah of the Greek fables.
688. **Peradventure.** Perhaps.
689. **Good-den.** Good-evening.
- [Notes to page 43.]
695. **Juno.** The wife of Jupiter, and the protecting goddess of women.
699. **Take my cap, Jupiter.** Here Menenius throws his cap into the air towards the residence of Jupiter, who was the god of the sky.
702. **The state.** The senate.
707. **Make a lip.** Sneer at.
708. **Galen.** A celebrated physician, who did not live till about 650 years after the time when these events were supposed to happen. This is one of Shakespeare's anachronisms.
- Empiricuteic.** Experimental; a corruption of empirical. (Gr. "em," in, and "peira," a trial.)
709. **Horse-drench** = horse-drink; that is, medicine for a horse.
710. **Wont.** Accustomed. The past participle of the Old English "wone," to dwell.
716. **The oaken garland.** The reward of bravery.
717. **Disciplined.** Beaten.
- [Notes to page 44.]
721. **An'. If.**
723. **Possessed.** Informed; the word is used in the same way elsewhere:—
- "Is he yet *possess'd*,
How much you would?"
Merchant of Venice, Act i., Sc. 3.
725. **Name.** Credit.
728. **Not without his true purchasing.** Not without being dearly bought by him.
730. **Pow, wow.** Pooh, pooh.
736. **Cicatrices.** The scars over a wound when it is healed.
- His place.** As consul.
737. **Tarquin.** A cruel king of Rome, who was expelled for his enormities.
742. **Ushers.** Forerunners.
744. **Nervy arm.** Sinewy arm. See line 125.
745. **Advanced.** Raised. See line 435.
- Declines.** Falls. (L. "de," down, and "clino," I bend.)
- A Sennet** was a musical phrase, played on a trumpet when a procession approached or departed.
- [Notes to page 45.]
747. **Corioli gates.** See note to line 476.
758. **Silence.** Used here for *silent œe*.
768. **At very root.** The definite article *the* is again omitted here.
- On's.** Of his. See note to line 7.
- [Notes to page 46.]
781. **Change of honours.** New honours.
782. **Inherited.** Literally means possessed.

783. **The buildings of my fancy.** The events pictured in my mind.
786. **Sway.** Govern.
Capitol. See note to line 37.
788. **Bleared.** Inflamed.
Sights. Eyes.
789. **Spectacles.** Shakespeare is thinking of his own time, for the ancient Romans had no spectacles.
Prattling. Talkative; *prattle* is the frequentative form of *prate*.
790. **Rapture.** A fit.
791. **Chats.** Talks idly. This is a doubtful reading, as Shakespeare does not employ this word as a transitive verb in any other place.
791. **Malkin.** An abbreviation of Matilda, which got into disrepute, and finally descended so low as to indicate a dirty slut.
792. **Lockram.** A kind of coarse linen, so called from *Locrenan*, in Bretagne, where it is made.
Reechy. Literally means *reeky*, hence its secondary meaning of filthy.
793. **Bulks.** The projecting parts of a butcher's or fishmonger's shop, on which goods were displayed for sale.
794. **Ridges horsed.** With men sitting astride them.
796. **Seld.** Seldom (A.S. "*seld*," "*seldan*," "*seldon*," "*seldum*," = rare.)
Flamens in ancient Rome were priests devoted to one particular god. (L. "*filamen*," from "*filum*," a fillet of wool, as the flamen wore a fillet round his head.)
799. **Damask.** Red in colour like a damask rose; from *Damascus*, whence the damask rose originally came.
800. **Gawded.** Adorned. (O.E. "*gaude*," an ornament.)
- Wanton.** Unrestrained.
801. **Phœbus.** A name given to Apollo as god of the sun; hence the sun.
Pother. Confusion (O.E. "*pote*," to push.)
[Notes to page 47.]
802. **As if that . . . him.** "As if that god who leads him, whatsoever god he be. '*That*' is a demonstrative pronoun."—*Dr. Johnson*. Other commentators look on '*that*' as a redundant word.
806. **Go sleep.** Preposition '*to*' omitted. See note to line 552.
808. **From where he should . . . end.** From where he should begin to where he should end.
814. **As** = as that.
817. **Napless.** Threadbare.
I heard him swear . . . breaths. "It was the custom for those who were candidates for the consulship to solicit and caress the people in the Forum, and at those times to be clad in a loose gown without the tunic; whether that humble dress was thought more suitable for suppliants, or whether it was for the convenience of showing their wounds as so many tokens of valour."—*Plutarch*.
824. **Like** = likely.
825. **As our good wills.** As we wish.
827. **For an end.** To bring matters to an end.
828. **Suggest.** Remind.
[Notes to page 48.]
829. **Still.** Ever.
To his power. If he could.
830. **Pleaders.** Defenders.
831. **Dispropertied.** Taken away.
834. **Provand.** Dry food for beasts. (O.E. "*provende*.")
838. **Touch.** Some read '*teach*' and others '*reach*.'
839. **Put upon't.** Persuaded to it.

840. **His fire.** Another reading is 'as fire.'
852. **Hearts for the event.** Courage to bear what will happen.
Have with you = come on.

SCENE II.

[Notes to page 49.]

856. **'Tis thought.** It is the thought.
860. **'Faith** = in faith.
865. **In.** The modern usage would lead us to say 'of.'
871. **Affect.** Aim at.
875. **As those.** As *the ascent* of those.
876. **Bonneted.** Doffed their hats.
Lictors. Officers who attended the Roman magistrates, each bearing an axe and a bundle of rods to symbolise the power of the magistrates to scourge and kill.
[Notes to page 50.]
885. **Having determined . . . Volsces.** Having determined *the business* of the Volsces.
897. **And make us think . . . stretch it out.** And make us rather think that our state is too poor (deficient in means) to reward his services, than that we are behindhand (slack) in stretching its power to the uttermost.
900. **After.** Afterwards.
901. **Your loving motion . . . here.** Your friendly influence with the common body to grant whatever the senate may decree.
902. **Convented.** Convened.
903. **Treaty.** Proposal.
904. **Inclinable.** Willing to be inclined.
906. **Bless'd to do.** Pleased to do.
908. **Hereto.** Hitherto.
That's off. That is, out of order.
911. **Pertinent.** To the point.
[Notes to page 51.]
195. **Never shame.** Never be ashamed.
919. **Disbench'd.** Caused you to rise from your seat.
921. **Sooth'd.** Flattered. See note to line 528.
922. **As they weigh.** According to their deserts.
924. **Alarm, or Alarum.** See note to line 313.
925. **To hear . . . monster'd.** To hear my little deeds made much of.
Masters of the people. Senators.
926. **Your multiplying spawn.** The plebeians.
927. **That's thousand to one good one.** Only one in a thousand is good for anything.
932. **Chiefest.** See note to line 679.
933. **Haver.** The possessor.
If it be. If it be *so*.
935. **Singly counterpoised.** Equalled by any one man. (*Counterpoised*; L. "*contra*," against, and O.F. "*poiser*," from the L. "*penso*," the intensitive of "*pendo*," I weigh.)
936. **Made a head.** Led an army against.
937. **Mark.** Power.
939. **Amazonian chin.** Beardless chin, like that of a female warrior. The *Amazons* were a fabled nation of warlike women.
[Notes to page 52.]
940. **Bestrid.** Shakespeare uses this form for both the past tense and past participle of the verb 'to bestride.'
942. **Opposers.** See note to line 371, and compare the well-known line in *Hamlet*, Act i., Sc. 3 :—
"Bear't that the *opposèd* may beware of thee."
944. **When he might act the woman in the scene.** In Shakespeare's time there were no actresses on the stage; the female characters were taken by boys.
945. **Meed.** Reward. (A.S. "*med*.")

946. **Brow-bound with the oak.** See note to line 716.
His pupil age man entered thus. Being thus trained up to manhood.
947. **Waxed.** Grew or increased. (A.S. "*weaxan*," to increase.)
948. **Brunt.** Heat of the contest; allied to burn.
949. **Lurched all swords . . . garland.** Wrested the garland from all comers.
For this last. *With regard to this last exploit.*
951. **I cannot speak him home.** I cannot do him full justice.
Fliers. Those who turned to fly.
956. **It took.** It took effect.
958. **Was tim'd with dying cries.** Dr. Johnson says, "The cries of the slaughtered regularly followed his motion, as music and a dancer accompany each other."
959. **The mortal gate.** "The gate that was made the scene of death."—*Dr. Johnson.* (*Mortal*, from the L. "*mors*," "*mortis*," death.)
Painted is supposed by some to be a corrupt reading. "*Gained*" and "*haunted*" have both been proposed instead. It may, however, mean that, just as the doors of plague-stricken houses were painted with a red cross, so Coriolanus set his mark of blood on the gates of doomed Corioli.
960. **Aidless came off.** He came out of the city without aid.
962. **Struck Corioli like a planet.** In Shakespeare's time the popular belief, that men were under the influence of the planets, was general. He often alludes to it.
963. **Gan.** Began. Old verb, "*ginnan*," begin, "*gannan*," began.
964. **Straight.** Straightway, at once.
965. **Fatigate.** Old form of fatigued.
972. **Kicked at.** Spurned contemptuously.
[Notes to page 53.]
973. **As they were.** As *though* they were.
977. **Spend the time to end it.** All this is means of killing time.
985. **Put on the gown.** See note to line 817.
Suffrage. A vote. (L. "*suffragor*," to vote for.)
987. **Pass.** Pass by.
988. **Voices.** Votes.
Bate. Abate.
989. **Jot.** The least quantity. (L. and Gr. "*iota*," from the Hebrew "*yod*," equivalent to the English *i*, the smallest letter in alphabet.)
Put them not to't. Do not ask them to.
992. **Your honour with your form.** Take the honour after having gone through the proper forms to obtain it.
[Notes to page 54.]
998. **Do not stand . . . purpose to them.** Do not insist upon it. We request you, tribunes of the people, to communicate our wishes to them.
1004. **Require.** Request.
1005. **Contemn.** Despise. (L. "*con*," and "*temno*," I slight.)

SCENE III.

1009. **Once.** Once for all.
1016. **Ingrateful.** Ungrateful.
1020. **Once.** Once when.
Stuck not. Did not hesitate.
1022. **Of many.** By many.
[Notes to page 56.]
1026. **Consent.** Agreement.
1031. **'Twould sure southward.** Note the omission of the verb of motion

- Southward.** From whence diseases and unwholesome vapours were imagined by the Romans to come.
1036. **You may, you may** = go on, have your joke!
1043. **By particulars.** One at a time.
1052. **Some certain.** One of these words is unnecessary. It seems, however, to be a favourite phrase with Shakespeare. Compare *Julius Caesar*, Act i., Sc. 3 :—
 "I have moved already
Some certain of the noblest-minded Romans."
- [Notes to page 57.]
1056. **I would they would . . . lose by them.** Theobald explains this passage as follows :—"I wish they may forget me as they do those virtuous precepts which the divines preach up to them, and lose by them, as it were, through their neglecting the practice."
1059. **Wholesome.** Reasonable.
1060. **Brace.** A couple.
1076. **Adieu.** Literally *I commend you to God*. (French "*à Dieu*," to God.)
1078. **An.** If. See note to line 82.
1079. **If it may stand with.** If it be agreeable.
- [Notes to page 58.]
1082. **Enigma.** A riddle. (L. "*ænigma*," Gr. "*ainigma*," to speak darkly.)
1087. **Sworn Brothers.** In the Middle Ages sworn brothers were persons who took an oath to share each other's fortunes through life.
1089. **Condition.** Disposition.
1091. **Be off.** Take my hat off.
1104. **Wolvish.** Wolfish.
Toge. A long robe; the mantle of a Roman citizen was called a *toga*.
1105. **Hob.** A nickname for *Robert*.
1106. **Vouches.** Votes. (Old French "*voucher*," to call, from the L. "*voco*," I call.)
1107. **Antique.** Ancient. (Fr. and L. "*antiquus*," old.) This word is always accented on the first syllable when it occurs in Shakespeare's works.
1110. **O'er peer.** *Peer*, to peep. Hence *o'er peer*, to peep over.
Fool it. Play the fool.
- 1102—1113. This is the longest passage of rhyming verse in the play.
- [Notes to page 59.]
1117. **Two dozen odd.** Generally we have two dozen and odd.
1124. **Good friend.** See note to line 5.
1125. **Amen.** So be it. (Gr. and Hebrew "*amen*," firm, true.)
1127. **Limitation.** Appointed time.
1128. **Endue.** An older form of *endow*.
Remains. It remains.
1129. **Official marks.** The proper garb of your office.
1130. **Anon.** Immediately. (A.S. "*on-an*," literally in one, meaning in one *instant*.)
1131. **The custom of request.** The custom of requesting the votes of the people.
1134. **Upon your approbation.** To confirm your election.
1137. **Straight.** Straightway, at once.
1139. **Will you along?** Will you come along? The verb of motion is frequently omitted by Shakespeare, especially when it should occur before adverbs of direction.
- [Notes to page 60.]
1141. **By his looks . . . heart.** I think, by his looks, his election has given him great satisfaction.
1143. **Weeds.** Garments. (A.S. "*wæd*,"

- clothing.) We still speak of 'widows' weeds.'
1144. **Chose.** Shakespeare uses the two forms *chose* and *chosen* indiscriminately.
1149. **Flouted.** Jeered. (Old Dutch "*fluyten*," to play the flute, to jeer.)
1151. **Save.** Except.
1156. **Aged custom.** As a matter of fact, the custom alluded to was new in Rome, but Shakespeare either did not know or did not care for that.
1161. **Most sweet.** For very sweet.
1162. **No further.** No further *business*.
1166. **Lesson'd.** Taught.
1170. **Weal.** The state; see '*wealsman*,' line 658.
1171. **Potency.** Power. (L. "*potens*," "*potentis*," being able; the present participle of "*posse*," "*potis*," able, "*esse*," to be.)
1172. **Malignantly.** Maliciously. (L. "*malignus*," which stands for "*mali-genus*," of evil disposition, from "*malus*," bad, and "*genus*," birth.)
1173. **Plebeii.** Shakespeare generally uses plebeians.
1178. **Translate.** Transform.
1180. **Foreadvised.** Advised beforehand.
1181. **Plucked.** Snatched.
1184. **Gall'd.** Embittered.
Surly. Uncivil, literally sour-like, from the A. S. "*sur*," sour, and "*lic*," like.
1185. **Article.** Condition. We have articulate = to make conditions, in line 561.
1186. **Aught.** Anything, an abbreviation of A. S. "*an*," one, and "*wiht*," a thing.
1187. **Choler.** Anger, from the Gr. *cholé*, bile, because anger was in ancient times supposed to arise from excess of bile.
1189. **Free contempt.** Contempt freely expressed.
1190. **And do you think . . . crush?** And do you think he will spare you when he hath power to crush? A similar meaning seems to be conveyed by the expression—
"*Hates any man the thing he would not kill?*"
in the *Merchant of Venice*.
1193. **Heart.** Courage. The word heart is often used in this sense by Shakespeare, and we must remember that courage is derived, through the French, from the L. "*cor*," the heart.
1194. **Rectorship of judgment.** Ruling of your judgment. The word *Rector* literally means a ruler, being derived from the L. "*rego*," "*rectum*," I rule.
Have you . . . tongues? Have you *not* ere now denied the asker? And do you now bestow your votes that should be sought on one who would not ask but mocked you?
1197. **He's not confirmed.** His election is not confirmed.
1201. **To piece 'em.** To join them.
- [Notes to page 62.]
1203. **Chose.** See note to line 1144.
1206. **Therefore** is a redundant word here.
1208. **Enforce.** Exaggerate. Compare *Julius Cæsar*, Act iii., Sc. 2 :
"His glory not extenuated wherein he was worthy; nor his offences *enforced* for which he suffered death."
1213. **Portance.** Carriage. (L. "*porto*," I carry.)
1214. **Gibingly.** Contemptuously.
Ungravely. Lightly.
Fashion. Behave.
1215. **Lay.** *You may lay.*
1217. **But.** Is a redundant word.

1223. **To voice.** To vote.
1225. **Youngly** occurs as an adjective in the works of several old writers.
1231. **Conduits.** Pipes to convey water. (Fr. "*conduit*," from the L. "*con*," with, and "*duco*," I lead.)
- [Notes to page 63.]
1233. **Censor.** The censor in ancient Rome was an officer who kept account of the property of the citizens, imposed taxes, and watched over their morals. (L. "*censeo*," I weigh.)
1238. **Scaling.** Weighing.
1241. **Harp on that.** Dwell on that. **Putting on.** Persuasions.
1244. **Repent in their election.** Repent that they voted for Coriolanus. **This mutiny . . . anger.** We had better run the risk of this mutiny than stay for greater troubles which Coriolanus will, without doubt, bring upon us. If, as is most likely, he fall into a rage, we must observe him closely, and take advantage of it.
1251. **This.** This mutiny.

ACT III.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF ACT III.

In this Act we see how the people, incited by their tribunes, who dreaded Coriolanus's accession to power as consul, rescinded the election they had so lately made, and even attempted to seize his person, with a view of hurling him from the Tarpeian Rock.

The senate, by making a concession to the will of the masses about the price of the corn, averted a popular revolt, but the people insisted that Coriolanus should appear and answer to their charges against him of conspiring against their privileges, beating their ædiles, and attempting to set himself up as a tyrant.

Persuaded by his friends and his mother, Coriolanus consented to answer the charges with mildness and moderation ; but, being goaded on to anger by the tribunes of the people, he flew into a passion, lashed the people with his rough eloquence, and was, by them, condemned to life-long banishment.

SCENE I.

[Notes to page 64.]

1253. **Made a new head.** Raised another army.
1255. **Our swifter composition.** Our quicker peacemaking.
1257. **To make road.** To invade.
- [Notes to page 65.]
1259. **In our ages.** In our time.
1261. **On safeguard.** Under a promise of safe conduct.
1262. **For** = because.
1264. **How? what?** How *did he speak of me?* What *did he say?*
1268. **To hopeless restitution.** So that redemption would be hopeless.
1275. **Prank.** Display ; the word is used derisively.

1276. **Noble sufferance.** Endurance of the nobles.
 1282. **He shall to.** Verb of motion omitted.
 1284. **Fall in broil.** This phrase sounds strangely to us, but we still say 'fall into a rage.' *Broil*, a noisy quarrel.

[Notes to page 66.]

- Herd.** Used contemptuously of the plebeians.
 1294. **When corn was given them gratis . . . nobleness.** "But Marcius stood up, and severely censured those that spoke in favour of the commonalty, calling them demagogues and traitors to the nobility."—*Plutarch.*
 1298. **Sithence.** Since. (O.E. "sin," "sith," "sithence," from the A.S. "sith-than," after that, from "sith," late, and "than," the dative case of the article.)
 1300. **Each way to better yours.** In every way to do better than you.
 1309. **Abus'd.** Deceived.
Set on. Prompted.
Paltering. Hagglng over trifles; literally, *ragged.*
 1311. **Dishonour'd.** An adjective formed from the noun *dishonour.*
Rub. An obstacle. In the game of bowls any impediment in the path of the bowl was called a *rub.*

[Notes to page 67.]

1317. **Mutable.** Inconstant. (L. "*mutabilis*," changeable.)
Many. The people.
 1320. **Soothing.** Flattering.
 1321. **The cockle of rebellion.** The phrase is from Plutarch, alluding to the corn-cockle, a weed well known to English agriculturists.

1329. **Meazels.** Literally *lepers*, hence *dirty wretches.*
 1330. **Tetter.** The noun 'tetter' is the name given to an eruption on the skin; the verb here means *infect.*
 1334. **Choler.** Anger. See note to line 1187.
 1337. **Jove.** Jupiter, the god of heaven.

[Notes to page 68.]

1340. **Triton of the minnows.** In mythology the *triton* was a marine demi-god, one of the trumpeters of Neptune, his trumpet being a wreathed univalve shell. The *minnow* is a very small fresh-water fish; hence the '*triton of the minnows*' is the trumpeter of the small fry.
 1341. **Canon,** law. See line 604.
 1344. **Hydra.** In mythology, the *hydra* of the Lernæan marsh was a water-serpent with many heads, which when cut off were succeeded by others. This monster was destroyed by Hercules. Hence the word *hydra* came to mean any manifold evil.
 1347. **In** = into.
 1349. **Vail.** Lower. Compare *Merchant of Venice*, Act i., Sc. 1 :—
 "And see my wealthy Andrew dock'd in sand,
 Vailing her high-top lower
 than her ribs
 To kiss her burial."

1352. **You are plebeians . . . theirs.** If they rise to be senators you must sink to take their place; and when both your voices are blended they will have the greatest power.
 1361. **Confusion.** Ruin.
 1362. **Gap.** An opening made by a rupture or parting.
 1363. **On.** Verb of motion omitted.

1366. **Sometime.** Once on a time. See line 566.
 [Notes to page 69.]
1371. **More worthier.** A double comparative is not unfrequently found in Shakespeare's plays.
1372. **Our recompense.** Wages or reward given by us.
1373. **Press'd to the war.** Pressed to serve in the war.
1374. **Even when the navel of the State was touched.** Even when *Rome, the very centre* of the State, was *threatened*.
1375. **They would not thread the gates.** They would not pass through the gates in single file even, let alone rush willingly to serve.
1380. **All cause unborn.** Without a cause.
Native is perhaps a misprint for *motive*; or it may mean the source in the sense of place of origin, that is, native place.
1382. **Bosom multiplied.** The multitudinous bosom of the people.
1385. **Poll.** Number of heads. (Old Dutch "*pol*," a ball.)
1393. **Double worship.** Double authority.
1395. **Without.** Beyond.
Gentry. Gentle birth.
 [Notes to page 70.]
1399. **Unstable slightness.** Ever-varying trifles.
1403. **Doubt.** Fear.
1404. **A long.** A long one.
1405. **To jump.** To jeopardise.
1414. **Despite.** Violent malice.
1415. **Bald.** Here is a term of reproach, meaning foolish.
1418. **What's what.** For these words read the equivalent *that which*.
1420. **Let what is meet . . . meet.** Let it be said that which is meet must be meet.
1423. **The Ædiles** or *Ediles* were Roman magistrates who had the charge of public buildings and public works. (L. "*ædilis*," from "*ædes*," a building.)
1425. **Attach.** Arrest.
Innovator. In Shakespeare's works '*innovation*' always indicates a change for the worse.
1427. **Thine answer.** Thy punishment.
1428. **We'll surety him.** We will be sureties for him.
 [Notes to page 71.]
1438. **Confusion.** Ruin.
1442. **At point to lose.** On the point of losing.
1444. **Late** = lately.
 [Notes to page 72.]
1454. **Which yet distinctly ranges.** Which yet ranks in authority.
1456. **Or** = either.
1459. **Is worthy.** Deserves.
1461. **Rock Tarpeian.** A high cliff on the Capitoline Hill, near Rome.
1469. **Helps.** Remedies.
1473. **Come, try . . . me.** Come, endure yourselves, what you have seen me *inflict upon others*.
 [Notes to page 73.]
1479. **All will be naught else.** All will be lost if you do not.
1481. **Shall it be put to that?** Will it come to that?
1484. **Tent.** See note to line 515.
1486. **One time will owe another.** We must take the bad with the good; it is their turn now, it will be ours some day.
1488. **Take up.** Fight.
1492. **The tag.** The rabble; in *Julius Cæsar* we read, '*the tag-rag people*.'
1500. **Neptune.** The god of the sea.
Trident. The three-pronged spear or sceptre of Neptune. (L. "*tres*," three, and "*dens*," dentis, a tooth).

- [Notes to page 74.]
1506. **Tiber.** For *the Tiber*, and so it appears in *Julius Caesar*, Act i., Sc. 1 :—
 “*That Tiber trembled underneath her banks.*”
1511. **Resisted law.** Article omitted.
1512. **Scorn.** Disdain.
1517. **Cry havoc.** Henry V. published a work on the laws of warfare, in which we read, “For them that cry havoc ; also that no man be so hardy as to cry havoc, for fear he be the first to die therefrom.” Sir William Blackstone informs us that this word was formerly used in time of war to signify that no quarter should be given. The origin of the word is doubtful. It has been traced by some to the O.E. “*hafoc*,” a hawk, and to the Welsh “*havog*,” destruction.
1518. **Warrant.** As an officer who comes to seize, not to kill.
1519. **Holp.** A shortened form of the old participle *holpen*.
- [Notes to page 75.]
1528. **Peremptory.** Determined.
1534. **Deserved.** Deserving.
1535. **In Jove’s own book.** Shakespeare was thinking of the lessons read in church, and of the recording angel’s book.
1539. **Mortal** = death.
1540. **Worthy death.** See “*worthy you*,” line 233.
1546. **Clean kam.** Quite crooked. *Clean*, completely, as in Psalm lxxvii. 8 : “Is His mercy *clean* gone for ever ?” “*Kam*” is Welsh for crooked.
1547. **Merely.** Altogether, or absolutely. (L. “*merus*,” un-mixed.)
1549. **Gangren’d.** Mortified.
1555. **Unscann’d.** Ill-considered, like a halting line of verse.
- [Notes to page 76.]
1561. **Smote.** The older form of smitten.
1564. **Bolted** is here used in its literal meaning of sifted or refined.
1574. **Attend.** Await.
- SCENE II.
- [Notes to page 77.]
1582. **That the precipitation . . . sight.** So that the space through which I must fall be further than the eye can pierce.
1585. **I muse** = I wonder.
1587. **Vassals.** Servants.
1588. **To buy and sell with groats.** To deal with things of little value.
1590. **Ordinance.** Order or rank.
1596. **Let go** = let it go ; that is, never mind.
- [Notes to page 78.]
1607. **Apt.** Pliable.
1609. **Vantage.** Means the same as *advantage*.
1611. **The violent fit.** This violent outbreak of the people.
1615. **Repent.** Recant.
Spoke. Spoken.
1617. **Absolute.** Unalterable.
1619. **When extremities speak.** When extremes are demanded.
1620. **Unsever’d.** Inseparable.
1623. **Tush.** Be silent ! An exclamation of scorn and impatience.
1625. **The same you are not.** What you are not.
1629. **Why force you this ?** Why do you enforce this argument ?
1630. **It lies you on . . . people.** It is necessary that you address the people.
- [Notes to page 79.]
1631. **Not by your own instruction.** Not according to your knowledge.

1632. **Nor by the matter . . . you.**
Nor according to the promptings of your desires.
1633. **Roted.** Learnt mechanically. (O. E. "*rote*," to hum a tune.)
1634. **Though but bastards . . . truth.** Though such words be not the legitimate offspring of your thoughts, and cannot meet with acknowledgment in your heart. *Allowance* = acknowledgment.
1637. **Take in.** Capture. The phrase is used in the same manner in line 290.
1638. **Your fortune.** The chances of war.
1640. **Dissemble with.** Disguise.
1642. **I am in this . . . nobles.** I, your wife, your son, these senators, the nobles, are those whose lives and fortunes are at stake.
1644. **General louts.** The plebeians. *Lout*, a clown, a mean fellow.
1645. **Spend a fawn.** Expend some flattery.
1646. **Inheritance.** Possession. See *inherited* in the sense of possessed, line 782.
1648. **Salve.** Heal; literally an ointment.
1649. **Not what is dangerous present.** Not *only* what is dangerous *in the present*.
1650. **Pr'y thee.** Pray thee.
1652. **Stretched it.** Stretched your inclination.
1653. **Bussing.** Kissing. (O.G. "*bussen*," to kiss.)
1655. **Waving thy head.** Bowing thy head.
1656. **Thus correcting thy stout heart.** Striking thy breast, thus.
Which in this line is equivalent to *and*.
Waving thy head . . . heart.
Waving thy head often, and correcting thy stout heart thus.
1663. **Forsooth,** in truth. (A.S. "*forsothe*" = for truth.)
[Notes to page 80.]
1666. **For they have pardons . . . purpose.** For they give pardons when asked as freely as they speak words that mean but little.
1671. **'Tis fit you make . . . anger.**
You must either raise a strong party to resist, defend yourself with calmness, or absent yourself. All the people are angry.
1677. **Unbarbedsconce.** Unarmoured head. *Sconce* is a contemptuous expression for the head.
1680. **Plot.** Coriolanus uses this word figuratively to mean his own person.
1684. **Discharge.** Perform.
1691. **Quired.** Sang in concert. Quire is the old form of choir. See the Church of England Book of Common Prayer: "In *Quires* and places where they sing."
[Notes to page 81.]
1694. **Tent.** Encamped.
1695. **The glasses of my sight.** The eyes. In *Richard II.*, Act i., Sc. 3, we have:—
"Uncle, even in the glasses of thine eyes
I see thy grieved heart."
1697. **Who.** We should say which, but in Shakespeare's time the pronouns were used more loosely than is the custom now.
1698. **An Alms.** This peculiar phrase *an alms* is not confined to Shakespeare's works. Compare Acts, chap. iii. v. 3 (Authorised Version of the Bible). *Alms*, from the A.S.

- "*almāsse*," from the Greek *eleēmosynē*," compassion.
1699. **Surcease.** Cease. (French "*sur-sis*," the past participle of "*sur-seoir*," to leave off.)
1701. **Inherent.** Innate.
1702. **To beg of thee . . . them.** To beg of thee is more to my dishonour than *it is for* thou to beg of them.
1703. **Let thy mother . . . stoutness.** Let me rather feel the utmost extremity that thy pride can bring upon us, than live thus in fear of thy dangerous obstinacy.
1706. **List.** Please. (A. S. "*lystan*," to desire.)
1708. **Owe** = possess.
1710. **I'll mountebank their loves.** I'll win their loves by tricks.
1711. **Cog.** Cheat; to cog dice is to load them, so that they must fall in the required position.
1716. **Arm.** Prepare.

SCENE III.

[Notes to page 82.]

1726. **Enforce.** Urge.
1727. **Got on.** Obtained from.
1740. **Prerogative.** Privilege; literally a first request. (L. "*pre*," before, and "*rogo*," I ask.)
1742. **When suchtime.** When *at* such time.
1744. **Present.** Instant. See line 1735, where *presently* means *instantly*.

[Notes to page 83.]

1748. **To choler.** Compare "*to rage*," in line 1186, Act ii., Sc. 3.
1749. **His worth of contradiction.** His full quantity of opposition.
1750. **Chaf'd.** Angered.
1751. **Temperance.** Moderation.
1752. **Which looks with us . . . neck.** Which appears likely, if we take advantage of it, to break his neck.

1755. **Ostler.** This word originally indicated one who kept a house for strangers. (O. F. "*hostelier*," L. "*hospes*," a host.) Here it is used in its modern sense, meaning the servant who takes charge of horses at an hotel.
1756. **Will bear the knave . . . volume.** Will submit to be called 'knave' enough times to fill a book. The word *knave* at first meant a boy, or a youth. (O.E. *knafa*.) But, like many other words, it has, in time, lost its original meaning, and acquired a worse one in its place. At first it meant merely a boy or youth; then, a common fellow; next, a deceitful fellow; and, lastly, as in the play, a rogue.
1763. **Say.** Speak.
1764. **Determine.** Terminate.
- Demand.** Simply to ask. This word did not acquire its modern meaning till after Shakespeare's time.
1766. **Submit you.** Submit yourself.
1767. **Allow their officers.** Acknowledge the authority of their tribunes.
1768. **Censure.** Punishment.
1769. **Proved upon you.** Proved against you.
1772. **Show.** Look.

[Notes to page 84.]

1776. **Do not take . . . you.** Do not consider his unpolished speeches as evil words aimed against you, but rather as the bold language of a soldier, not spoken out of envy or hatred to you.
1783. **You take it off again.** Coriolanus compares the office of consul to a garment which can be put on and taken off.

1785. **Contrived.** Is here used in a bad sense for conspired.
1786. **Season'd** here implies time-honoured, ripened, or suitable.
To wind. To *insinuate*, as a snake winds itself among the herbage.
1791. **Injurious** is not unfrequently used by Shakespeare for *insolent*.
1792. **Within thine eyes . . .** *If within thine eyes sat twenty thousand deaths, if in thy hands were clutched as many million deaths, if in thy lying tongue the sum of both numbers sat, I would say unto thee, thou liest, with a voice as free as that with which I pray to the gods.*
[Notes to page 85.]
1805. **Prate.** Tattle.
1806. **I talk of that that know it = I, that know it, talk of that (it).**
1810. **Pent.** Imprisoned. (A.S. "*pen-nan,*" to shut up.)
1816. **Envied against the people.** Shown his enmity against the people.
1817. **As now, at last.** Till now, *he hath*, at last.
1818. **And that not in the presence.** And that not *only* in the presence.
1825. **Rome gates.** See note to line 476.
1835. **Reek.** Vapour. (A.S. "*rec,*" smoke.)
[Notes to page 86.]
1838. **And here remain . . . uncertainty.** And *I condemn you here to remain with your vacillation.*
1839. **Let = may.**
1841. **Have the power . . .** May you still have the power to banish your defender; till, at length, your ignorance (which you know not of till you feel the want of those you banished when thinking only of yourselves, proving that you yourselves were your own foes), deliver you as humiliated captives, to some nation that won you without blows.
1853. **Despite.** Contempt.
1854. **Vexation.** Vex and vexation had a much stronger meaning in Shakespeare's time than they have now. Here *ve-ration* seems to mean discomfiture.

ACT IV.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF ACT IV.

IN this Act we see the exiled Roman, a wandering outcast, in mean and humble garb, resorting to the house of his greatest enemy, Tullus Aufidius, to compass his revenge on his own people, or to die.

The Volscian general embraced his old enemy, introduced him to the nobles of Antium, and obtained for him a joint command in the Volscian army.

Before the ever-victorious Coriolanus the Romans could make no head; his bravery made him very popular with his new followers; and he was soon on his way to invest Rome itself. But, meanwhile, his uninterrupted series of successes, and his great popularity with the Volscian soldiers, had won for him the envy of Tullus Aufidius.

SCENE I.

[Notes to page 87.

1858. **The beast with many heads.**
The people. See note to line 1344.

1864. **Fortune's blows . . . cunning.**
When Fortune's blows are most struck home, it craves a noble cunning to be gentle under the pain of the wounds. The sentence as it stands in the text is ungrammatical. *Cunning* is used in its old sense of knowledge. (A.S. "*cunnan*," to know), and not in its modern bad meaning of *craft*.

1868. **Conn'd.** Carefully studied. (A.S. "*cunnan*.")

1872. **Lack'd.** Wanted.

1873. **Wont.** Accustomed. (Past participle of O. E. "*wone*," to dwell.)

[Notes to page 88.

1881. **Venomous.** Injurious.

Sometime. Former.

1884. **Fond.** Foolish. (O.E. "*fon*," a fool.)

1885. **Wot.** Was originally a perfect tense, but it afterwards became the present tense indi-

cative of the A. S. "*witan*," to know.

1886. **Still** = constantly.

1888. **Lonely dragon.** See note to line 1344.

1890. **Or . . . or** = either . . . or.

1891. **Cautelous.** Deceitful.

First = first-born.

1904. **War's surfeits.** Sickness or satiety caused by indulgence in war.

[Notes to page 89.

1907. **Friends of noble touch.** Friends who have been tested by the touchstone and proved noble. The touchstone was used to test gold, the noble metal.

SCENE II.

1921. **Save you, sir.** *God save you, sir.*

1923. **Lies, lives.** See line 566.

[Notes to page 90.

1930. **Are still together.** Are still spent together.

Who twin. Resemble twins.

1931. **Unseparable.** Shakespeare also uses '*un*' in '*unactive*,' '*uncurable*,' '*unconstant*,' where we now prefix '*in*.'

1932. **Doit.** Trifle. See note to line 355.
 1933. **Fellest.** Fiercest. (A.S. "*fel*," fierce.)
 1937. **Interjoin.** Intermarry.
 1939. **Enemy.** Shakespeare also uses '*neighbour*' as an adjective.
 1940. **If he give me way** = if he give me *my* way.

SCENE III.

1946. **Entertainment.** Reception.
 1949. **Companions.** Used contemptuously here for *fellows*.
 1954. **Anon.** See note to line 1130.
 1955. **Avoid.** Literally, get out of.

[Notes to page 91.]

1964. **Batten.** Fatten.
 1968. **Canopy.** The sky.
 1974. **Daws.** Jackdaws were looked upon as the emblems of fools.

[Notes to page 92.]

1988. **Tackle.** Rigging, clothes.
 1998. **But** = only.
 1999. **Memory.** Memorial.
 2002. **Dastard.** Cowardly.
 2012. **Wreak.** Vengeance.
 2013. **Maims.** Wounds.
 2014. **Straight.** Straightway.
 2018. **Canker'd.** Corrupted.
Spleen. Rage.

[Notes to page 93.]

2035. **Grainèd ash.** The ash wood shaft of my lance.
 2036. **Clip.** Embrace. (A.S. "*clyppan*.")
Here I clip . . . sword. Here I embrace thy body upon which my sword has fallen like a hammer on an anvil.
 2043. **Rapt.** Enraptured; literally carried away by joy.
 2045. **Mars** was the Roman god of war. Aufidius could not have selected a higher title for his newly-made friend.

2046. **Power.** Army.
Purpose. Purposed, intended.
 2047. **Target.** A small shield.
Brawn. Muscle. We have lost the noun, but retained the adjective '*brawny*.' Here it means the muscles of the arm.
 2049. **Several.** Separate.
 2052. **Helms.** Helmets. (A.S. "*helms*.")
 2054. **To Rome.** Against Rome.

[Notes to page 94.]

2064. **Absolute.** Perfect.
 2071. **Ere destroy.** Ere we destroy.
 2073. **Commend.** Introduce.

SCENE IV.

2077. **Remedies.** Means of revenge.
 2082. **Pestering.** Disturbing.
 [Notes to page 95.]
 2085. **We stood to't.** We stood firm.
 2087. **Hail.** May you be in health; allied to *hale, healthy, heal,* and *whole*.
 2097. **Have.** *They* have.
 2098. **O'erborne.** Borne down.
 2109. **Apron-men.** Working men, mechanics.
 2110. **The voice of occupation.** The vote of the workmen.

[Notes to page 96.]

2115. **Other.** Otherwise.
 2130. **You have made fair hands.** You have made fair *handiwork*.
 2131. **Crafts.** Trades. (A.S. "*craeft*.")
Craft was formerly an honourable appellation for a trade. The word has, in modern times, fallen into disrepute.
 2133. **Help.** Cure.
 [Notes to page 97.]
 2138. **Points.** Signals and commands.
 2147. **Coxcombs.** Fools. A cock's comb cut in cloth was the headgear of the professional fool or jester.

SCENE V.

2157. **Own.** *Own soldiers.*
 2159. **More proudlier.** A double comparative.
 2164. **For your particular.** For your own interest.
 [Notes to page 98.
 2166. **Of yourself.** By yourself.
 2173. **Husbandry.** Management.
 2179. **Sits down.** To besiege them.
 2183. **The repeal** of Coriolanus' banishment.
 2185. **Osprey.** The fishing eagle, that was believed in Shakespeare's time, first to fascinate the fish on which it fed.
 2188. **Even** = evenly.
 2189. **Daily fortune.** Constant success.
 2193. **Or whether nature . . . war.** Or whether his natural obstinacy in not changing his warlike and imperious manner in time of peace to one of gentleness and persuasion.
 2197. **Spices.** Small quantities enough to flavour his conduct.
Not all. Not all of them.
 2199. **But he has a merit . . . utt'rance.** But his merits ought to have choked his judges when they banished him.
 [Notes to page 99.
 2201. **Time.** The age in which we live.
 2202. **And power . . . done.** This passage has most likely been corrupted by transcribers.
 2205. This scene closes with four rhyming lines.

ACT V.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF ACT V.

WE now find the victorious Coriolanus encamped within five miles of the very walls of Rome. The citizens, in a panic, were willing to do anything or to suffer anything if only they could induce their banished hero to withdraw from their vicinity.

In this dilemma they sent first the consul Cominius and afterwards Menenius to plead with Coriolanus for the liberation of Rome. They both failed to soften him, and, as a last resource, the Romans sent his mother, wife, and son, accompanied by the noblest ladies of Rome.

The women prevailed, the terms of peace were concluded, and Coriolanus marched his victorious army back to Antium, where he met with a cordial reception from the people. But his grand successes in the field and his immense popularity with the Volscian soldiers had caused Aufidius to be very envious of the brave Roman.

Aided by a band of conspirators, Aufidius treacherously murdered Coriolanus, who was about to explain to the Volscian lords the reasons which led him to conclude a truce with his defeated fellow-citizens.

SCENE I.

[Notes to page 100.]

- [Notes to page 99 (continued).
 2210. **Sometime.** At one time. See line 1881.
 2211. **In a most dear particular.** As his own dearest friend.
 2214. **Coy'd.** Disdained.
 2224. **Racked.** In the sense of stretched. But probably the passage is corrupt. Various readings have been proposed,

Coriolanus.

- such as 'sack'd,' 'wreck'd,'
'work'd.'
2226. **Minded.** Reminded.
2228. **A bare petition . . . punish'd.**
A bare petition of a state,
including no offer of justice
to one they had unjustly
punished.
2231. **Offer'd.** Tried.
2234. **Noisome.** Unwholesome.
Musty. Mouldy.
2236. **Nose.** #Smell.
[Notes to page 101.]
2249. **Towards.** With.
2252. **Grief-shot.** Equal and similar
to the modern *sorrow-stricken*.
2254. **That thanks.** Such thanks.
2255. **As.** That.
2257. **Unhearts.** Disheartens.
2271. **Sit in gold.** Sit in a chair of
state.
2272. **His injury . . . pity.** The
ever present sense of the
injury he hath suffered keeps
his pity imprisoned in his
breast.
[Notes to page 102.]
2276. **What he would not . . . con-
ditions.** Most commentators
believe that a line has been
omitted here in transcribing
the play. Farmer, one of
our many Shakespearean an-
notators, says:—"I suppose
Coriolanus means that he
had sworn to give way to
the conditions into which
the ingratitude of his coun-
try had forced him."
- SCENE II.
2290. **Lots to blanks.** Everything to
nothing.
2292. **The virtue of your name . . .
passable.** Your name has no
virtue as a password here.
[Notes to page 103.]
2294. **Lover.** Friend. The word is
so used repeatedly in *Julius
Caesar*.
2296. **Haply.** It may be.
2297. **Verified.** Probably a corrup-
tion; 'magnified,' 'glorified,'
and 'amplified' have all been
proposed as substitutes.
2300. **Subtle.** Slippery. This is the
second allusion to the game
of bowls in this play. See
line 1311.
2302. **Have almost stamp't the leas-
ing.** I have almost stamped
the false coin of lying with the
genuine appearance of truth.
2309. **Factionary.** Active.
2310. **Howsoever.** Although.
2311. **True** = truth.
2318. **Out** = out of.
2321. **Dotant.** Same as *dotard*, an
old fool. (O. E. "*doten*," to
be silly.)
2327. **Sirrah** = sir. Used in anger,
in contempt, or to an inferior.
2328. **Use me with estimation.** Treat
me with distinction.
[Notes to page 104.]
2333. **Of your having.** You may
have.
2336. **Companion.** A contemptuous
term.
Say an errand for you. Tell
a tale of you.
2338. **Jack guardant.** Jack in office.
Office. Order.
2342. **Synod.** Council.
2345. **Hardly.** With difficulty.
2350. **Varlet.** Low fellow. Literally
a little vassal.
2355. **Servanted.** Subjected.
Though I owe . . . breasts.
Although my revenge is my
own affair, all forgiveness lies
with the Volscians.
2358. **Ingrate.** Ungrateful.
2361. **For** = because.
[Notes to page 105.]
2370. **Shent.** Disgraced.
2375. **Slight.** Unimportant.
2380. **The.** Is used here emphatically
= the *one*.

SCENE III.

2383. **Plainly.** Honestly. See *Julius Caesar*, Act iii., Sc. 2: 'A plain blunt man.'
2392. **Godded me.** Idolised me.
[Notes to page 106.]
2399. **Nor . . . nor** = neither . . . nor.
2405. **Olympus.** A mountain on the borders of Thessaly and Macedonia on which the gods sat enthroned.
2417. **Best of my flesh.** Compare with this the familiar phrase of 'better half' applied to a wife.
[Notes to page 107.]
2424. **Unproperly** for improperly. See note to line 1931.
2428. **Fillip.** Strike. Literally to jerk the finger suddenly from the thumb.
2431. **Murd'ring impossibility.** Violating nature.
2435. **God of soldiers.** Mars.
2436. **Inform.** Inspire.
2438. **Unvulnerable.** See unproperly, line 2424, and note to line 1931.
- Stick.** Stand steadfast.
2439. **Flaw.** A sudden gust of wind.
2447. **Capitulate.** Come to terms.
[Notes to page 108.]
2455. **Fail in our request.** Fail in granting our request.
2460. **Bewray.** Betray. (A.S. "be," intensive, and "wregon," to accuse.)
2468. **To poor we.** To be grammatically correct we should read 'to poor us.'
2469. **Capital.** Fatal. Compare 'capital punishment.'
- Barr'st.** Excludes.
2473. **Whereto we are bound.** Which we are in duty bound to do.
2474. **Alack.** A sorrowful exclamation = Ah! a loss. (O.E. "lok," loss.)
- Or . . . or, either . . . or.**

2479. **Recreant.** Apostate. (L. "re," back, and "credo," I believe.)
2480. **Manacles.** Handcuffs. (L. "manus," the hand.)
2482. **The palm** of victory.
2485. **Determine.** Terminate.
[Notes to page 109.]
2502. **All hail.** The greeting of a king.
2512. **Strains.** Dispositions.
2515. **Sulphur.** Gunpowder; an anachronism.
[Notes to page 110.]
2522. **Prate like one i' the stocks.** To whom nobody pays any attention.
2527. **Loaden.** Shakespeare uses *loaden* and *laden* indiscriminately.
2535. **We will home.** Verb of motion omitted.
2541. **A-fire,** or o-fire = on fire.
2548. **Mortal.** For mortally.
[Notes to page 111.]
2555. **Sweat compassion.** Shed tears.
2558. **Stand to me.** Stand by me.
2561. **A former fortune.** A fairer fortune, as in former times.

SCENE IV.

2572. **Hale.** To drag; another form of haul.
[Notes to page 112.]
2582. **Blown tide.** Tide swollen by the wind.
2584. Compare this list with that in the Book of Daniel, chap. iii. v. 7.
Sackbut, a kind of trombone.
Psalteries. Stringed instruments.
Tabor, a small drum.
Hautboys, or Oboes. Wooden wind instruments.
2592. **Joy.** Rejoice.
2601. **Unshout.** Shakespeare has also 'unspeak,' 'unsay,' 'unpay.'
2602. **Repeal.** Recall.

SCENE V.

[Notes to page 113.]

2609. **Him** = he whom.
 2610. **Ports.** Gates. (L. "*porta*,"
 a gate.)
 2614. **Empoison'd.** Killed.
 2617. **Parties.** Partakers.
 2624. **Construction.** Explanation.
Pawn'd. Pledged.
 [Notes to page 114.]
 2639. **Holp.** *Helped* is the modern
 form.
 2643. **Waged me with his coun-**
tenance. Repaid me with
 his favour.
 2644. **Mercenary.** A paid soldier.
 2649. **Rheum.** Tears.
 2653. **Post.** Messenger bearing dis-
 patches.
 [Notes to page 115.]
 2657. **'Vantage.** Opportunity.
 2660. **When he lies along . . . body.**
 When he lies dead you can
 pronounce the tale in your
 own way, and his reasons will
 be buried with his body.
 2667. **Made.** Committed.
 2670. **Answering us . . . charge.**
 Making us answerable for the
 cost of the war.

2676. **Parted.** Departed.
 2680. **Our spoils . . . action.** Our
 spoils, *which* we have brought
 home, do more than counter-
 poise the charges of the action
by a full third part.
 [Notes to page 116.]
 2686. **Compounded on.** Agreed upon.
 2710. **Notion.** Knowledge.
 [Notes to page 117.]
 2716. **Annals.** History.
 2720. **Will you be put in mind . . .**
ears? Will you be reminded
 of your defeats by the action
 of this braggart against the
 evidence of your own senses?
 2726. **Folds in.** Encircles.
 2728. **Judicious.** Judicial.
Stand. Stay.
 2739. **Which this man's life did owe**
you. Which this man's life
 did expose you to.
 [Notes to page 118.]
 2740. **Please it.** If it please.
 2741. **I'll deliver myself.** I will sur-
 render myself.
 2743. **Censure.** Punishment.
 2746. **Urn.** Grave.
His. Meaning Coriolanus.

