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ELIZABETHAN DOMESTIC AFFAIRS
IN THE PLAYS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
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In an era of changing beliefs and customs, which we seem to have in sixteenth century England, it is almost surprising to find that most writers between 1500 and 1610 were in agreement on how the members of a household ought to act toward each other. Of course, there is a gap between what people ought to do and what these writers often say they did do. I have read a good selection of this advice to husbands, wives, parents, masters, children, and servants that was written or translated during this one hundred and ten year period and a few selections after 1610 in order to compare these sixteenth and early seventeenth century beliefs and customs with what appears in the plays of Shakespeare. For the most part Shakespeare offers the same situation sketched in the treatises on domestic life. His characters, whether Italian, Danish, English, contemporary, or ancient, know what is expected of them in terms of sixteenth century ideals. Some put these ideals into practise, and some did not, just as some Elizabethan wives obeyed their husbands and stayed at home, and some were disobedient or shrewish and went abroad at will with or without their husbands' permission. When Shakespeare portrays the ideal he humanizes it, puts it to the test in realistic situations, shows it practised or violated by people who are not ever completely perfect. His best wives are never perfect; his worst husbands meet the ideal at some point.
There are several values in making such a study. A knowledge of contemporary beliefs often clears up what have seemed to be inconsistencies in the plays. New interpretations are discovered for certain lines and situations. We come, perhaps, closer to what his original interpretations were of his dramatic situations, and what his audience thought about them.

Many of the sixteenth century opinions about family life have not changed much in the last three hundred and fifty years. Perhaps the greatest reason for this is that the western world is still nominally, at least, Christian, and the Elizabethans used the Bible as the starting point for family life. What has changed is the strength of belief, and the change started in our period. Much of the psychological advice offered then shows deep insight into human relations and would be helpful in any age. In many cases the things I point out in the plays will seem almost self-evident until we stop to think that there is a wider gap now between what we think or are told to think and what we do. The gap was not as wide then, and the person who ignored the beliefs was more to be frowned upon.

I have used very little secondary source material, preferring to know what the sixteenth century writer said rather than how a later writer interpreted what he said. Many aspects of family life that were emphasized in the treatises will not be discussed because they do not appear in the plays, and my primary concern is Shakespeare, not complete social
history. Briefly, the subjects I shall cover are the personal relations of the husband and wife, the running of the household, and the child-parent relationship with the duties of parents to their children and children to their parents.

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Chapter I. The Personal Relations of the Husband and Wife

A couple entering upon marriage in the sixteenth or early seventeenth century would have found a great abundance of printed material containing advice on how to found and maintain a good and godly marriage. In this first chapter I shall renumerate this advice and apply it to the couples we find in Shakespeare's plays.

As might be expected much is said of married love. This love is not of a frivolous romantic sort. It is to be based on the serious consideration of the virtues of the mate and long-term, self-sacrificing devotion. For instance, Francis Dillingham says that a wise husband will love his wife with judgment, not with "blinde affection." One might conjecture that if Albany did love his wife in the opening acts of *King Lear* he must not have applied judgment. France, on the other hand, shows good judgment when he says to Cordelia and the assembled company:

Thee and thy virtues I seize upon;
Be it lawful I take up what's cast away.
Gods, gods: 'tis strange that from their cold'st neglect
My love should kindle to inflamed respect.
(I.i.255-258)

Posthumus in *Cymbeline* shows the same love combined with respect and judgment. A Frenchman repeats this previous statement by Posthumus about his wife, "his to be more fair, virtuous, wise, chaste, constant-qualified and less attemptable than any the rarest of our ladies in France." (I.iv.65-68) Othello gives a fairly wise reason in an older man for
loving his wife when he says, "She loved me for the dangers I had pass'd, and I loved her that she did pity them." (I. iii.167-168) It might be noticed that both of these men who make serious, well considered statements of love become wildly jealous of their wives, but only under the most trying circumstances, for Iago, himself, says:

The Moor, howbeit that I endure him not,  
Is of a constant, loving, noble nature,  
And I dare think he'll prove to Desdemona  
A most dear husband,  

(Othello.II.ii.297-300)

In contrast to these men who were or might have been good husbands and express intelligent reasons for loving their wives, we have husbands such as Antony and Bertram in All's Well That Ends Well who do not love their wives at all. It is, of course, a duty for a husband to love his wife, as is generally pointed out with references to the Bible. Helena is a virtuous woman, well thought of by the King and Bertram's mother, and one might conjecture that Fulvia was also. We are told that Octavia is. Good judgment would have demanded that Antony and Bertram love their wives. The obvious clue to their lack of judgment lies in the direction they take in love. Love for them is in adulterous liaisons, though Bertram fails to win the lady.

Vives says that there are two things in a woman that make a happy marriage. Chastity is one, and the love of her husband the other. The wife is to "serve God with all hir hart, and love hir husband only." She is not only to love her husband above all men, but to love no other men at all
In *King Lear* Cordelia theorizes about love for the husband. She says:

Haply, when I shall wed,
That Lord whose hand must take my plight shall carry
Half my love with him, half my care and duty:
Sure I shall not marry like my sisters,
To love my father all. (I.i.102-106)

Desdemona faces approximately the same problem and acknowledges the duty to the husband. Both of these wives must inform their fathers of the husband's right to their love. This is reminiscent of the Bible quotation often cited by Elizabethan writers telling the wife to forsake her parents and cleave to her husband. It is interesting that Desdemona loved Othello for his dangers, which might seem a strange love motive. This is, no doubt, partially the result of womanly pity mentioned by Othello, but also carries a hint of youthful romanticism. To the young girl, who has probably seen little enough of the world, Othello's adventurous and dangerous career would no doubt be quite enough to inspire love when compared with any adventures the "wealthy curled darlings!" mentioned by her father, might have had to offer. Othello then is a romantic figure, and Desdemona's love seems to have been thus inspired. The Duke sees this lure when he consoles Brabantio by saying, "I think this tale would win my daughter too," (I.iii.171). One last statement of great love by a wife is that of Queen Katherine.

Have I with all my full affections
Still met the King? loved him next heaven? obey'd him?
Been, out of fondness, superstitious to him?
Almost forgot my prayers to content him?
And am I thus rewarded?
(King Henry VIII. III. i. 129-133)

This good woman, on the verge of being divorced, makes the ideal statement. She loved her husband next to God which is the dutiful position.

Proceeding from the ideal to what is, at least, believed to be common actuality, we find that women are always desirous of change and never love a man well with whom they are in close contact for any length of time. Iago is obviously of this school of belief. He several times says that Desdemona will soon tire of Othello and will then be fair game for Cassio and Roderigo. However, one can say fairly that Shakespeare was not of this school when he portrayed women, for his female characters are exceptionally constant.

One further point that might be brought out about the love of man and woman deals with the self-sacrificing nature of their love. The married pair are to love each other as they love themselves. Nothing, even life itself, should be so precious to one that he or she is not willing to give it to or for the other. This attitude is obviously good drama, and Shakespeare gives it much attention in lesser and greater situations. In Richard II the queen begs to be allowed to go with her husband into exile or to prison; wherever they send him she wishes to share the danger and sorrow he faces. In All's Well Helena sacrifices for a husband who has treated her most cruelly. Bertram will not return to France while she is there, and Helena feels that she will be
responsible for his death in the war if she remains. She says:

Poor lord! is't I
That chase thee from thy country and expose
Those tender limbs of thine to the event
Of the none-sparing war?

(III.ii.105-108)

She resolves to leave the comfort of home and the Countess:

Shall I stay here to do't? no, no, although
The air of paradise did fan the house
And angels officed all: I will be gone,
That pitiful rumour may report my flight,
To consolate thine ear.

(III.ii.127-131)

Glendower's daughter reacts in much the same way as Richard's queen when Mortimer makes ready to go to war. Her father, translating for her, says, "My daughter weeps: she will not part with you; she'll be a soldier too, she'll to the wars."

(I Henry IV. III.i.194-5) Mortimer, touched by the tears and kisses of his wife though he cannot understand her language, says:

But I will never be a truant, love,
Till I have learned thy language; for thy tongue
Makes Welsh as sweet as ditties highly penn'd.

(III.i.207-209)

This is perhaps a small offer in comparison to the resolve of the Welsh lady, but a loving one. Romeo and Juliet, though a bit hasty in their love, are yet so devoted that neither can face life without the other and choose death accordingly. In Julius Caesar Portia so loves Brutus that his peril drives her to suicide. Even King Claudius in Hamlet loves his ill-gotten wife so much that he puts up with a dangerous stepson, at least for a time, because he is dear to her. He says to Laertes:
The queen his mother
Lives almost by his looks; and for myself—
My virtue or my plague, be it either which—
She's so conjunctive to my life and soul,
That, as the star moves in his sphere,
I could not but by her. (IV.vii.11-16)

A spirit quite the opposite of this is expressed by Bas-
sanio and Gratiano when their friend Antonio is at the mercy
of Shylock in The Merchant of Venice. Bassanio says:

Antonio, I am married to a wife
Which is as dear to me as life itself;
But life itself, my wife, and all the world,
Are not with me esteem'd above thy life;
I would lose all, ay, sacrifice them all
Here to this devil, to deliver you.

Gratiano echoes him thus:

I have a wife, whom, I protest, I love;
I would she were in heaven, so she could
Entreat some power to change this currish Jew.

Portia shows a natural lack of enthusiasm for these noble sen-
timents by saying:

Your wife would give you little thanks for that,
If she were by, to hear you make the offer. (IV.1.282-292)

The feelings expressed by these two husbands are those trad-
titionally reserved for husband and wife, and expressed in
this context they give exceptional value to the love they
hold for Antonio.

Another aspect of the love between husband and wife is
physical love. Thomas Becon mentions three purposes of mar-
riage. Two of these deal with physical love. Men and women
marry in order to have children and to avoid "whoredome and
all maner of unclennes." However, this married love is not
to be lustful. Robert Cleaver warns that if the husband and
wife have physical relations to satisfy lust rather than to "increase the Church of Christ" and do not "sanctifie the marriage bedde with prayer" they can expect to beget "monsters, naturall fooles," and children who are wicked. Barnaby Rich bemoaned the degeneracy of the times in that marriages were made for "fornication" rather than "continencie."  

Obviously then there is to be no lust in the physical relations of husband and wife. A chaste Christian love is recommended. With this in mind Iago's comments on the marriage of Desdemona and Othello become even more distasteful. He stresses the theme of animal passion in the first scene when he speaks to Brabantio from the street, "you'll have your daughter covered with a Barbary horse" (111-112), "your daughter and the Moor are now making the beast with two backs." (118-119) Roderigo, taking up the same note, says Desdemona has been conveyed "to the gross clasps of a lascivious Moor." (127) Iago says later that Desdemona will want someone else when she is tired of the pleasures of Othello's body. Most of his comments on their marriage emphasize a primarily physical relationship. Othello himself denies any particular interest in the pleasures of the body to the council of Venice when he asks that his bride be allowed to accompany him to Cyprus. He says:

I therefore beg it not,  
To please the palate of my appetite,  
Nor to comply with heat—the young effects  
In me defunct—and proper satisfaction.  
(I.iii.251-264)

Certainly Desdemona gives no indication that she is a lustful
woman; so this unpleasant conception of married love seems to be completely in the mind of Shakespeare's most unpleasant character and is one more point against him.

In contrast to this imagined violation of chaste love Shakespeare also offers a real one. Gertrude and Claudius build a marriage on a previous adulterous attraction. When Hamlet speaks to his mother of her adultery and marriage he talks in terms of lust:

\begin{center}
Maj but to live
In the rank sweat of an ensued bed,
Stew'd in corruption, honeying and making love
Over the nasty sty—
\end{center}

(III.iv.91-94)

Earlier in the scene he marvels that an older woman should be subject to physical desires: "at your age/ The hey-day of the blood is tame, it's humble." (68-69). Of course, there is more wrong with this marriage than lust; it is incestuous and, as I said, founded on adultery, but this serves again to put unchaste love in an unpleasant setting.

Another idea concerned with physical love and offered by Elizabethan writers is that the husband and wife may not deny each other bed-rights. Cleaver refers to St. Paul to say that the power over the husband's body rests with the wife, and over hers with the husband. 10 Vives quotes St. Augustine that a woman may not abstain from marriage relations unless her husband also agrees. 11 This doctrine applies directly to one play by Shakespeare and is perhaps enlightening in two situations in other plays.

\textit{All's Well That Ends Well} deals very specifically with
this problem. Bertram dislikes his marriage and his wife and
denies her bed-rights. He says to Parolles, "Oh my Parolles,
they have married me! I'll to the Tuscan wars, and never bed
her." (II.iii.289-290). He does not tell Helena his plans,
but pleads business and sends her home. It is obvious that
this is not her wish and therefore is unlawful on his part.
When she receives the letter stating his intentions she says,
"This is a dreadful sentence." (III.i.64). His terms are
that she get from him a ring and a child begotten by him, and
he will accept her. Had he known what a good and determined
wife she was, he might have not thus sneeringly put forth
these terms, for Helena meets the terms through the bed trick
devised between herself and Diana. This procedure, which
seems rather distasteful to the modern reader, was quite de¬
fensible to the Elizabethans, and Helen does defend it in the
play. Having reached an agreement with the widow that she
will take Diana's place in bed, she says:

Why then tonight
Let us assay our plot; which, if it speed,
Is wicked meaning in a lawful deed
And lawful meaning in a lawful act,
Where both not sin, and yet a sinful fact.
(III.vii.43-47)

We notice that her speech is short and simple. Her actions
need little defense because Bertram was doubly in the wrong;
he has not only denied her his bed, but thought he was com¬
mitting adultery when he consorted with his wife.

Another instance where this doctrine would perhaps influ¬
ence audience reaction to the story is in Winter's Tale. Her¬
mione is unjustly accused by her husband of adultery. Her
child is taken away to be left on a desert. This abuse to her as a wife and a mother, no doubt, is a great provocation, but when she separates herself from her husband by being reported dead she puts herself in a bad position. Paulina must then keep Leontes from marrying while Hermione is awaiting the return of the daughter and punishing her husband. If Leontes married he would unwittingly be committing adultery. Now we must admit that Hermione's action is somewhat necessary to the plot, and also that the characters are not Christians in a Christian setting. On the other hand, Shakespeare never hesitated to put Christian beliefs and Christian oaths in a pagan setting, and there is a good probability that his audience would not hesitate to think less of Hermione for breaking rules of a religion she did not espouse. We may, at least, conjecture that Hermione, who is otherwise the model wife, may not have been thus viewed by the flawless judges in the pit and the balconies, as she indirectly denied her husband bed-rights for sixteen years.

One last situation that may refer to this doctrine is found in Richard II. When Richard and his wife are about to be unwillingly parted by Northumberland, Richard says to this lord:

Doubly divorced! Bad men you violate  
A twofold marriage, 'twixt my crown and me,  
And then betwixt me and my married wife.  
(V.1.71-73)

Richard has previously said frequently enough that his crown is the gift of God; in the same light he was also joined to his wife by God and should not be separated from her. There
are two minor cases when wives complain that their husbands have left their beds, both when the husbands are worrying or thinking about political conspiracies. Lady Percy in first Henry IV and Portia in Julius Caesar bring this subject up.

Barring Orsino's belief that the love of man is greater we find that the husband and wife have equal duties and powers in love. When we come to the question of authority the picture changes. The husband is the leader; the wife is his follower. Vives speaks of the husband as "heed, governor, ruler and instructor." Portia expresses this position when she gives herself to Bassanio in The Merchant of Venice:

but the full sum of me
Is sum of something, which, to term in gross,
Is an unlesson'd girl, unschool'd, unpractised;
Happy in this, she is not yet so old
But she may learn; happier than this,
She is not bred so dull but she can learn;
Happiest of all is that her gentle spirit
Commits itself to yours to be directed,
As from her lord, her governor, her king.
(III.ii.159-167)

Portia, as we gather from the play, is an intelligent woman, and her statement of the relative place of husband and wife is of the most conventional nature. In The Comedy of Errors we have the same idea voiced, but by the unmarried sister. Luciana says, "Men...Are masters of their females, and their lords; Then let your will attend on their accords." Earlier she has said, "O, know he is the bridle of your will." Adriana, the wife, is rather sceptical. She says, "There's none but asses will be bridled so," and suggests that her sister remains unmarried because she does not wish to be one of the "asses." (II.i.13-26). Perhaps this little dialogue reflects
the contrast of ideal and actuality, as English women were known to be allowed or to take great liberty with their subordinate position.

At any rate a man receives his sovereign position from God, and it was considered most undignified for him to resign it to his wife. As a warning to the husband Seneca is quoted thus: "Give thy wife no power over the; For if thou suffer her to daye to tredye upon thy foote, she wil to morowe tread upon thyne heade." We might note and compare two husbands that take up and maintain their authority. Bertram makes immediate use of his in All's Well by ordering his new wife home and demanding that she set off in all haste. Considering his purpose and other Elizabethan marriage beliefs already discussed, this order is an abuse of authority. In The Taming of the Shrew Petruchio does not give up his sovereignty for a minute. He drags Katharina away from her own wedding feast much against her will, and much against her will he continues to dominate her throughout the play in his comical manner. However, he explains to the audience that this domination is no abuse of authority. His purpose is "to make her come and know her keeper's call," (IV.ii.197). Her hard learned obedience bodes peace "and love and quiet life,/ And awful rule and right supremacy,/ And, to be short, what not, that's sweet and happy;" (V.ii.108-110). Kate learns her lesson well for, she informs less obedient ladies, "Thy husband is thy lord, thy life, thy keeper;/ Thy head, thy sovereign." (V.ii.146-147). The idea is, of course, traditional;
the happy marriage is the one in which the partners maintain their rightful positions with regard to each other.

Shakespeare also shows us the other side of the coin in *King Lear*. Albany is lax in maintaining his authority over his bold wife. Act one, scene four shows their relationship at an early stage. Albany enters to find Lear in a rage from the badgering of Goneril and the insolent servants. Albany says, "My lord, I am guiltless, as I am ignorant/ Of what hath moved you." (295-296). When he asks her the cause of the outburst she answers, "Never afflict yourself to know the cause," (313). Thus the husband does not know what is going on in his house and really gets no answer. When he attempts to suggest that his wife may be unduly concerned about the servant problem Goneril replies:

This milky gentleness and course of yours
Though I condemn not, yet, under pardon,
You are much more attack'd for want of wisdom
Than praised for harmful mildness.

(364-367).

At this point we might say he allows her to step on his hand, for she couches her criticism in polite terms. By act four she is ready to step on his head as she says, "I must change arms at home, and give the distaff/ Into my husband's hands." (IV.ii.17-18). In other words, she plans a complete change of position along with her new love for Edmund. When her husband takes opportunity to rebuke her she openly insults him and jeers at him. At this point Albany begins to reassert his authority, but it is actually too late for his marriage. Goneril plans his death so that she may have Edmund.
Albany ultimately emerges as the head of his house, but the house lacks a wife. Geoffrey Fenton warns the husband about this sort of situation:

Yea let him not thinke, since he instructes not his wife from the beginning, but leaveth hir to the liberty of hir fancy, with licencse to cherish hir own wil,...he shall see in his house a generall & natural Disorder, for then she wil aspire to the office of head, to direct, commaund, governe, & lead all,...so it cannot but bring malediction to the whole house, for want that the wife is not well instructed and governed by hir husband. 16

This family complication ties in neatly with the major theme of the play. Lear gives away his own sovereignty initially and begins the pattern of disruption that spreads in family and state, as in nature itself. We find somewhat the same situation when Cymbeline allows himself to be governed by his wife. The results of the war he and his countrymen fight at her instigation are nullified by his own wish.

In conjunction with his position of command the husband is admonished to govern his wife gently. A German Archbishop advises the husband to "overcome them with kyndnes." 17 One wonders at the value of the advice when considering Albany's kindness in the early parts of King Lear. He seems to have got along better when he returned her insults. The wife is not to be treated as a servant. The husband is to maintain his authority with gentle words and treat her as a companion. Furthermore, the husband is to guide his wife by the example of good life that he sets himself. 18 A good case of the husband who does not follow these directions is Antipholus in The Comedy of Errors. He sets a poor example for his wife by
associating with a courtezan, and he is frequently spoken of as an unkind husband. His wife says when her sister urges patience, "So thou, that hast no unkind mate to grieve thee,/with urging helpless patience wouldst relieve me;" (II.i.38-39). Complaining that he is not cheerful to her, she says, "His company must do his minions grace,/ Whilst I at home starve for a merry look." (II.i.87-88). The sister later says "he demean'd himself rough, rude and wildly." (V.i.88.).

The best use Shakespeare makes of this advice is for the purposes of comedy in The Taming of the Shrew. Petruchio makes a delightful travesty of the good Archbishop's suggestion that the husband overcome his wife with kindness. Poor Kate is indeed overcome. Her husband is so careful of her welfare that she cannot eat, sleep, or get a new cap and gown because he will have perfection or nothing where she is concerned. Petruchio retails his plans for her, which include tearing the bed apart, saying, "Ay, and amid this hurly I intend/ That all is done in reverend care of her;" and concludes "This is the way to kill a wife with kindness;" (IV.i.206-207, 211).

About chastising the wife there is some difference of opinion. One author advises that the husband should not chastise his wife for every small fault and should never chastise her or correct her in public. Various opinions are offered about beating the wife. Cleaver points out that there are no instances in the Bible of wife beating. William Heale maintains that it is an inhospitable thing to beat
your wife when you have taken her from her friends and family into your own protection. He also says there is no law that says a man can beat his wife; however, a book on law that is dated 1632, admittedly later than Shakespeare, says a man may beat his wife because she can have no action against him according to common law.

Antipholus in The Comedy of Errors sends his servant for a rope with which to beat his wife and whoever is with her because he has been locked out of the house. Later he becomes so angry when she denies having locked him out that he threatens to pluck her eyes out. Of course, the situation in which he is involved is most trying and quite apt to make a milder man violent, but from early comments on his character we know him to be a husband not given to much gentleness. One could not say he is private in his complaints; his violence is carried on, after the manner of Roman comedy, in the street. Earlier in the play he complains about her shrewishness to a merchant. Iago does the same thing. He tells Desdemona and Cassio that Emilia always chides him, especially when he wishes to sleep. Both Emilia and Desdemona protest at this public slander, but Iago goes on to criticize women in general. It is interesting to note that Desdemona obviously considers Iago a poor husband and unfit for his rightful office as instructor to his wife, for she says to Emilia, "Do not learn of him, Emilia, though he be thy husband." (II.i.163-4). In act four Othello's jealousy is raised to a terrible pitch when his wife innocently says
that she is glad Cassio has been appointed governor. He strikes her in front of the deputation from Venice, and the various reactions are interesting and indicative of the various beliefs of the time. Desdemona says, "I have not deserved this." (IV.i.252). One might conjecture that she acknowledges a husband's right to strike his wife, but only for an extreme offense, which she is not aware of having offered. Lodovico is shocked. He feels he would not be believed in Venice if he were to tell what he has seen, that this cannot be the same noble man he knew. The only explanation he can offer is that the Moor must be mad. We gather from his comments that he feels a man of nobility and stable emotions would never strike his wife in public.

Petruchio offers the most interesting solution to chastising the recalcitrant wife who offers provocation in public and private. He never touches Katharina with an obviously violent hand; he never, in fact, reprimands her in an out-and-out manner. When Kate refuses to leave the wedding feast and commands the others to go in, Petruchio tells them to obey the bride and assures her that no one shall lay a hand on her, that he and his servant will see that she is safely conducted away from the dangerous wedding guests. He continues this sort of treatment by beating servants and destroying comforts that are supposed to be offensive to her. When she manages to get a word in to object, she is deprived of the first thing at hand and finally becomes obedient in everything in self-defense against her husband's kindness.
Having looked briefly at the husband's place in marriage as an absolute ruler whose sovereignty is to be tempered with kindness and consideration, the place of the wife is obvious. In an early sixteenth century book we find her duty stated: "The wyfe is bounde to obey her husbonde in all thynges lawfull." The German Archbishop, quoted before, amplifies this position by suggesting that a good wife is as obedient to her husband as to Christ himself in anything that is proper and virtuous. The last reservation is an important one. If a husband demands something unlawful of his wife, it is not her duty to obey; in fact, it is her duty to disobey unless the husband offers her violence. If he does this, any sin she incurs is attributed solely to him. Vives points out a rather interesting idea in connection with the obedience of the wife. The husband is head of his house by virtue of his wife's obedience. She sets the example for the rest of the household, makes him great by making herself subservient. It is often said that the wife receives honor through her husband. If this theory is acceptable, then we can justify Vives' contention that by making the husband supreme with her obedience the wife is honorable herself in reflecting the honor she has given him.

Adriana expresses a similar thought in The Comedy of Errors when the man she takes to be her husband denies her.

Thou art an elm, my husband, I a vine,
Whose weakness married to thy stronger state
Makes me with thy strength to communicate:
If aught possess thee from me, it is dross.
Usurping ivy, brier, or idle moss;
Who, all for want of pruning, with intrusion
Infect thy sap and live on thy confusion.  
(II.ii.176-182)

In the first three lines she suggests her own dependence on him; he is her strength. In the last lines, however, she shows him the other side of the relationship; he is as much dependent on her, and when he allows others to separate them he allows himself to be debased.

Helena in *All's Well* is the model of the obedient wife when Parolles delivers her husband's instruction. She says, "What's his will else?" and, "What more commands he?" and at last, "In everything I wait upon his will." (II.v.48,52,55). When she speaks with Bertram she says, "Sir, I can nothing say,/ But that I am your most obedient servant," and "I shall not break your bidding, good my lord." (II.v.76-77,93).

Katharina in *The Taming of the Shrew* opens her marriage by defying her husband's orders and rebuking his immediate assertion of authority.

You may be jogging while your boots are green;  
For me, I'll not be gone till I please myself;  
'Tis like you'll prove a jolly surly groom,  
That take it on you at the first so roundly.  
(III.ii.213-216)

By the time act four is drawing to a close the shrew is tamed and says:

And be it moon, or sun, or what you please;  
And if you please to call it a rush-candle,  
Henceforth I vow it shall be so for me.  
(IV.v.13-15)

When Othello brings Desdemona to testify to her father and the council of Venice she acknowledges her duty to her husband to Brabantio:
but here's my husband,
And so much duty as my mother show'd
To you, preferring you before her father,
So much I challenge that I may profess
Due to the Moor my lord.  

(Othello I. iii. 185-189)

Later when Othello asks her to leave him she says, "Shall I
deny you? no; farewell, my lord." (III. iii. 36). We have a
situation similar to this between Iago and Emilia when she
gives him the handkerchief. She wishes to have it back or
know the reason he wants it; he simply orders her to leave,
and she does so without a word. When Othello strikes Desde-
mona he orders her away, and she leaves saying, "I will not
stay to offend you." Ludovico says, "Truly; an obedient
lady." Desdemona justifies his opinion by returning and
leaving once more, though undoubtedly in great emotionaltur-
moil by now, because Othello commands it.

The qualification of the wife's obedience when her hus-
band commands something unlawful is presented twice by Shakes-
peare in most interesting fashion. Queen Katherine faces
this problem in Henry VIII. First, we should notice that she
refers to her own good record. She says to the king, her
husband:

Heaven witness,
I have been to you a true and humble wife,
At all times to your will conformable;

when was the hour
I ever contradicted your desire,
Or made it not mine too?...
... Sir, call to mind
That I have been your wife, in this obedience,
Upward of twenty years;  

(II. iv. 22-24, 27-29, 34-36)

She then cites the judgments of their fathers that their
marriage was lawful. When the king bids her to be called to court, she leaves, disobeying him on the basis of her belief that it is not lawful for their marriage to be questioned. She is not constrained by force, and so she disobeys and does what she considers right, though she risks her husband's displeasure. Henry grants her claim to the title of virtuous wife and lets her go.

Perhaps more complicated and interesting is the relation between Iago and Emilia. As I pointed out before, Emilia obeyed Iago when he commanded her to leave. This, however, does not explain this difficult scene. Emilia finds the handkerchief and tells us Iago has often told her to steal it. This she obviously has not done at his command and does not plan to do when she finds it, for she knows its value to Desdemona. She plans to have the work copied for her husband. She says that she does not know why he wants it, but hopes to "please his fantasy." Emilia obviously has no suspicions of sinister intent on her husband's part, and as he had mentioned the handkerchief before, he may have had none himself earlier. When Iago asks if she has stolen it, she hastens to defend herself, "No 'faith, she let it drop by negligence,/
And, to the advantage, I being here, took't up." (III.iii. 311-312). In other words, she would not obey a command to steal, an unlawful command, but she does feel justified in satisfying his desire by happy coincidence. Still she does not wish to cause her mistress sorrow by losing the handkerchief entirely, and she asks that he return it. At this point
she is told to leave and obeys. Thus far I think we can call
Emilia a good wife to an evil husband and a good woman. I do
not think she shares her husband's guilt. Later she witnesses
Othello's fury about the handkerchief but does not tell Des-
demona what happened to it. There are several reasons for
this. First, of course, she does not wish to reveal that she
gave it to her husband. She may even believe that she will
get it back from Iago and return it. Secondly, she does not
really connect Othello's jealousy with the handkerchief and
certainly not with her husband. Emilia's explanation of
jealousy is this:

They are not ever jealous for the cause,
But jealous for they are jealous: 'tis a monster
Begot upon itself, born on itself.

(III.v.160-162)

She is not being hypocritical here; she is speaking out of
her own experience. At this point she may feel herself in
an embarrassing position because she tried to please her hus-
band, but not guilty. In the last scene when Emilia realizes
her husband has set Othello on, because he tells her himself
and commands her to be silent, to go home, she disobeys, for
now it is most obvious that she would sin by obeying him.
She says, "Good gentlemen, let me have leave to speak:/ Tis
proper I obey him, but not now." (V.ii.195-196). In other
words, it is proper for me to obey him, but not if he com-
mands what is unlawful. When Othello speaks of the handker-
chief she cries, "Let heaven and men and devils, let them all,/All, all, cry shame against me, yet I'll speak." (221-222).
Now she may be speaking of the shame of having taken the
handkerchief, which is a common interpretation, but, in view of her earlier plea to speak, she may very well be afraid of the opinion that would be formed of a woman who not only disobeys her husband, but does so to call him a liar and an accessory to murder. I believe that this is a logical explanation for what is often termed an inconsistency in the character of Emilia.

In this placing of the husband and wife, one commanding and the other obeying, there is one disrupting factor often mentioned by Elizabethan writers, and this is inequality of birth and fortune. George Whetstone warns that a man who marries above his own station may expect his wife to rule him. Vives advises women who marry below their fortune to remember that civil law rules that the woman has the dignity of her husband and not her father. In Kyd's translation of Torquato Tasso's *The Householders Philosophie* the husband is told to give his wife more honor and esteem, especially in public, and the wife is told to remember nature makes a woman inferior to a man no matter what her rank. For the man who marries below his station Tasso offers this advice: "Matrimonie maketh equall many differences: and further, that he hath not taken her for a slave or servaunt, but for a fellow and companion of his life."

Shakespeare gives us several examples of unequal marriages and the results thereof. One that we have considered before is that of Goneril and Albany. We might compare it with that of Cornwall and Regan. Cornwall, though married to a king's daughter, manages to keep his sovereign place or,
at least, share authority with his wife. Albany is dominated until late in the play. While Goneril holds the whip we have no particular indication that higher birth may be a factor in her desire and success in domination. However, at the end of the play when Albany takes her in hand and threatens her with the evidence of her planned evil she says, "Say, if I do, the laws are mine, not thine:/ Who can arraign me for't?" (V.iii. 178-179), indicating perhaps that she has always felt her place and power superior to his.

Another instance where difference in rank is more clearly the disrupting factor in the husband-wife relationship is in All's Well. Bertram objects to the marriage because Helena is just a poor physician's daughter and refuses to have anything to do with her because of the insult done him, though he does not hesitate to make immediate use of the dowry provided by the King. In two Shakespearian marriages the wives are of higher rank but defer completely to their husbands. Imogen in Cymbeline marries against her father's wishes but stoutly defends her choice on grounds of her husband's virtue and learning. A casual conversation between two gentlemen of the court early in the play adds validity to her defense. Portia in The Merchant of Venice marries a man who has no wealth while she is a great heiress. Her speech, which has already been quoted, giving herself gladly into his hands for instruction, shows conclusively that she considers her own fortune no reason for usurping her husband's place of sovereignty.
Aside from general wifely obedience there are other virtues, attitudes, and duties expected by Elizabethans in the wife. Helena in *All's Well* is praised for wisdom and virtue, which are qualities in a wife recommended by Robert Copland. Patience is a wifely virtue claimed by Queen Katherine in *Henry VIII* and recommended highly by Luciana in *The Comedy of Errors*. Sir Thomas Elyot praises, through Zenobia, a wife who can sustain affliction patiently. A virtue often desired, as in *Penelope's Web* by Robert Greene, but not of much use in drama (unless we consider Jonson's *Epicoene*) is silence. When Shakespeare's wives appear they usually have something to say. There is, however, the following reference. When Coriolanus returns in triumph from his wars he greets his wife thus, "My gracious silence, hail!" (II. i.192). The lady is undoubtedly very retiring, but in this instance she is crying and cannot speak. She doesn't say anything at all in this scene after her husband returns, and very little in the whole play. Her mother-in-law, on the other hand, has something to say on all occasions.

Moving from virtues to attitudes, we find that the Elizabethan wife is to esteem no man so highly as her husband. Fenton says she is never to "Imagine a deeper perfection, then in his person," and elaborates on this idea in another work by advising, "Let her esteeme no man more faire, more wise, nor more perfect then her husband." She is to love him regardless of his faults.

I will again use Goneril as the example of the wife who
does not meet the ideal. In chiding Albany for his meekness, she claims not to criticize him herself, but hints that others do. Later she falls in love with Edmund and tells herself that she is thrown away on a man like her husband. This criticism and dissatisfaction is certainly not judging well of the husband. Another such example is Gertrude in Hamlet. Her son makes the comparison of her two husbands by holding up their miniatures to her, and rebukes her, not only for having preferred another before her first husband, his father, but for having had such poor judgment in choosing Claudius.

Desdemona and Emilia provide us with examples of women who always give their husbands the benefit of the doubt. A frequent question is how Emilia could live with her husband and yet not be aware of his evil nature. There are two answers to this. First, we see Iago dissemble his evil nature and fool everyone else. Second, her duty is not to suspect him, not to look for faults. She apparently has no suspicions about his desire for the handkerchief. When Othello says her husband has accused Desdemona she is struck with amazement and can only say over and over again, "My husband." She begs Iago to say Othello lies, says that she knows he could not be such a villain. Iago, of course, must admit that he accused Desdemona. Emilia cries incoherently:

Villany, villany, villany!
I think upon't, I think: I smell't: Oh villany!—
I thought so then:—I'll kill myself for grief:
(V.ii.190-192)

When she says, "I thought so then," does she mean she thought Iago was the informer? I think not. There is no indication
that she has ever thought him evil. She means, I believe, that she thought someone was setting Othello on, which she said earlier to Iago and Desdemona. The sudden realization that this someone was her own husband makes her say, "I'll kill myself for grief." Desdemona is quite as steadfast in thinking the best. When Emilia suggests that Othello is jealous Desdemona explains that it is probably some matter of state that upsets him. She blames herself saying:

_Beshrew me much. Emilia_
_I was, unhandsome warrior as I am,_
_Arraigning his unkindness with my soul;_
_But now I find I had suborn'd the witness,_
_And he's indicted falsely._

_(III.i.150-154)_

After Othello has called her a whore she still maintains that she will love him if he puts her away with "beggarly divorce ment." She says shortly before she is strangled:

_my love doth so approve him,_
_That even his stubbornness, his checks, his frowns,—_
differences to be overcome in marriage before perfect companionship is achieved. For just such a reason Cleaver says that the husband should not go to war during the first year of marriage so that he and his wife can get to know each other's "conditions and qualities."  

One might conjecture that if Bertram in All's Well had not run off to war immediately he might have come to appreciate his wife's virtues and saved himself and the lady much trouble, for in the end of the play he accepts her and seems to admire her. When Bassanio leaves his wife immediately after they agree to marry (Shakespeare includes hasty marriage plans but no ceremony) he brings about some trouble, for Portia does not appreciate his statement of preference for his friend and punishes him by claiming the ring she gave him and later claiming she slept with the lawyer and got it back. Romeo and Juliet are separated immediately after their marriage and become victims of a tragedy of circumstance. In Cymbeline Imogen is imprisoned and her new husband banished; this separation leads Posthumus into the toils of Iachimo and almost proves fatal to their marriage. Another separation that works out poorly is that of Octavia and Antony. As soon as she leaves he goes right back to Cleopatra, not only destroying his marriage but ultimately his own life and career. Coriolanus and his wife are frequently separated and her worries for him are rather pathetic, especially since he and his mother are so insensitive to her fear. Othello is called to Cyprus the very night he and Desdemona are married, and she
asks to be allowed to go with him:

That I did love the Moor to live with him,  
My downright violence and storm of fortunes  
May trumpet to the world

She goes on to say she loved him for his "valiant parts" and concludes:

So that, dear lords, if I be left behind,  
A moth of peace, and he go to the war,  
The rites for which I love him are bereft me,  
And I a heavy interim shall support  
By his dear absence. Let me go with him.  
(I.iii.249-260)

Othello urges them to grant her wish, and, as we know, they both go.

An obvious bit of advice is offered to the married couple so that they may get along well, and that is to avoid contention. Becon says that the greatest efforts should be made by both parties in a new marriage to avoid any cause for quarreling because early damage done may never be made up. In The Taming of the Shrew we notice that Petruchio practically refuses to quarrel with Kate; he rules, but rarely gives her the satisfaction of argument. Kate, once tamed, offers this advice to the other wives about how useless it is to quarrel with your husband:

But now I see our lances are but straws,  
Our strength as weak, our weakness past compare,  
That seeming to be most which we indeed least are.  
Then vail your stomachs, for it is no boot,  
(V.ii.173-176)

A treatise of 1608 points out to the wife how foolish it is for the weaker to contend with the stronger, as does Katharina. Petruchio's method of taming his shrew is similar in theme to a story set down by a student named Thomas Blage in a book of such oddities. A certain man who had a "scold"
to wife hit upon the idea of playing the bagpipes every time his wife began to chide. His playing drove her to greater fury than ever until finally she promised never to scold again, if he would stop playing the pipes. The moral attached to this story is, "Malaperte women by divers wayes must be charmed." 40

Greene, in The Royal Exchange, names among four things that drive a man from his house, a brawling woman. This situation is perhaps reflected in The Comedy of Errors for the husband tells friends his wife is a shrew, and she complains to her sister that he is forever from home. A common opinion seems to be that the fault of contention lies with the wife, for the husband may give cause, but the duty of the wife, though the provocation may be unlawful, is never to argue or chide. 42 There is an interesting scene in The Comedy of Errors that upholds this doctrine. Adriana thinks her husband is mad and is trying to get him out of a religious house where he has taken refuge. She complains that her husband has been drawn from home by some love and says she chided him at night, at meals, in public, and in private about it. The Abbess says this is the reason he is mad and reprimands her; so, though he gave cause, the wife is to blame for chiding. Another example is Desdemona. She keeps after Othello to reinstate Cassio, which she considers a cause in her husband's own interests. She irritates him before he is jealous, but he is gentle with her and agrees. Afterward he is obviously angry, but she still keeps talking
about it. We might excuse her as being young and not fully instructed, but she makes herself much trouble, and theoretically the fault lies with her. Emilia seems pretty careful about not arguing with Iago. When he complains of her talking, she says little to defend herself. It is Desdemona who rebukes Iago for doing his wife an injustice. In *King Lear* it is usually Albany who tries to avoid controversy. Goneril, as we have observed, is constantly chiding and really with little reason.

Another good piece of advice is offered by a fictitious wife in a dialogue by Robert Snawsel. She says when her husband looks happy so does she, when sad she puts on a "sad countenance" and looks "heavily." When he is angry she tries to appease him. Kate in her long advice-to-wives speech in *The Taming of the Shrew* tells them not to frown at their husbands, to give them "fair looks." Katherine in *Henry VIII* says:

Have I not been your true and humble wife

Ever in fear to kindle your dislike,
Yea, subject to your countenance, glad or sorry
As I saw it inclined.

(II. iv. 23-27)

In *Henry IV* Lady Percy matches her husband's mood with a sort of rough, gay, teasing manner as Mortimer's wife prepares to sing in act three. Lady Macbeth tries to cheer her husband when he is troubled by stricken conscience, ghosts, and fears though she is rather more chiding than gentle and hasn't always the best success. Portia in *Julius Caesar* tells how
when questioning her husband he became impatient and angry so that she left, "Fearing to strengthen that impatience," (II.i. 243). A wife we find too often insensitive to her husband's mood is Desdemona. She badgers him about Cassio until he gives in and asks her to leave him alone for a while. Then, with such pathetic innocence she says, "Be as your fancies teach you; Whate'er you be, I am obedient." (III.iii.88-89).

This is quite typical of Desdemona. She never realizes until too late that she plays with fire in keeping after her husband. At this point he is not jealous, but later when he is jealous and asks for the handkerchief, instead of trying to pacify his obvious anger she keeps talking of Cassio.

Another problem that can affect the relations of the husband and wife involves their families. First, there is the mother-in-law situation. Wives points out that the wife should be on good terms with her husband's family, and should love her mother-in-law as her own mother. The mother-in-law in turn should instruct her son's wife in her duties. Shakespeare gives us two relationships between mother and daughter-in-law. In All's Well Helena is obviously on good terms with Bertram's mother, who has brought her up and approves of the marriage. When the Countess reads Bertram's ultimatum to Helena she says, "I do wash his name out of my blood./ And thou art all my child." (III.ii.70-71). In Coriolanus the mother-in-law, Volumnia, is rather over-bearing, but certainly takes it upon herself to instruct her son's wife. She advises Virgilia to rejoice rather than weep that
her husband is away winning honors though endangering his life. She tries to talk her into going out while he is away but fails. During the rest of the play Virgilia usually appears with her mother-in-law but is completely overshadowed.

Vives also says that the wife should want her husband to love and sustain his mother. If we can assume that the husband is to have such feelings for his wife's parents, there are several more examples in Shakespeare. Mortimer, for instance, in I Henry IV rebukes Percy for being rude to Glendover and seems most courteous and loving to this rather odd father-in-law. Albany rebukes his wife harshly for her treatment of Lear and marvels that Cornwall would allow it when his father-in-law has been so kind.

Though the married couples are to maintain good relations with their families their first duty is to each other. The Bible is frequently quoted by these Elizabethan writers to the effect that the married couple leave their parents and cleave to each other. This idea is clearly acknowledged in Othello and King Lear in the speeches of Cordelia and Desdemona to their fathers, which have already been quoted. When Desdemona feels that Othello is angry at her because of some action of her father she rightly points out:

If haply you my father do suspect
An instrument of this your calling back,
Lay not the blame on me: if you have lost him,
Why, I have lost him too.

(IV.iv.44-47)

Shakespeare also presents the problem of the wife with divided loyalties which theoretically should be no problem, but in actuality presents some most tragic situations. In King John
Blanch is faced with a war between her husband and her relations on her wedding day and laments her unfortunate position:

The sun's o'ercast with blood: fair day adieu!  
Which is the side that I must go withal?  
I am with both: each army hath a hand;  
And in their rage, I having hold of both,  
They whirl asunder and dismember me.  
Husband, I cannot pray that thou mayst win;  
Uncle, I needs must pray that thou mayst lose;  
Father, I may not wish the fortune thine;  
Grandam, I will not wish thy wishes thrive:  
Whoever wins on that side shall I lose;  
Assured lose before the match be playd.

Her husband replies, "Lady, with me, with me thy fortune lies." (III.i.326-337). Octavia is torn between her brother and her husband and says:

A more unhappy lady,  
If this division chance, ne'er stood between,  
Praying for both parts;  
The good gods will mock me presently,  
When I pray, 'O, bless my lord and husband!'  
Undo that prayer, by crying out as loud,  
'O, bless my brother!' Husband win, win brother,  
Prays, and destroys the prayer; no midway  
'Twixt these extremes at all.

Antony, ironically enough, says:

Gentle Octavia,  
Let your best love draw to that point, which seeks  
Best to preserve it:  
(III.iv.12-22)

Since he does not love his wife it is obvious that her brother would "best preserve it."

One of the purposes of marriage, as commonly stated in Elizabethan texts, is that the wife and husband can and should be a help and comfort to one another. An early seventeenth century writer says that the wife is to do her husband good, and no evil, by working for his quiet, health,
credit, wealth, and happiness. There are many Shakespearian wives that strive thus for the sake of their husbands. Desdemona, for instance, when she pleads Cassio's cause does it for Othello's credit. When he grants her request as a favor she says:

Why this is not a boon;
'Tis as I should entreat you to wear your gloves,
Or feed on nourishing dishes; or keep you warm,
Or sue to you to do a peculiar profit
To your own person:

(III.iii.76-80)

In Henry VIII Queen Katherine reminds her husband that she has always loved his friends for his sake though she knew them to be her enemies, and dismissed her own friends if they displeased him. Portia leaves her home disguised to plead the case of a man she has never seen because he has done her husband great favors in The Merchant of Venice. Helena in All's Well leaves France because her husband will not return home while she is there. Lady Macbeth would do anything to make her husband king, though one suspects her own ambition was a great motivating force. On the other hand, we have such a wife as Dionyza in Pericles, who does her husband great evil by attempting the death of Marina because of her jealousy on her own daughter's behalf; Cleon is not over pleased, though there is nothing he can do. When the word gets out, the people of his own city burn him and his family in his palace, as we are informed by Gower at the end of the play.

Though the wife is to be helpful to her husband, there are many reservations put forth by Elizabethan writers when it comes to taking the wife into confidence and accepting or
asking her counsel. In Francesco's Fortunes, by Robert Greene, the husband is advised to confide in a wise wife, but if she is not wise he is to keep his secrets to himself "for women are seldom silent." Vives tells the wife that she must always keep her husband's secrets. In a treatise of 1607 the husband is told to take his wife into his secret thoughts because it is a sign of love. William Baldwin says a man is a fool who takes a woman's advice, more so if he asks it, and most if he follows it. Vives says that an old woman, past childbearing, will give good counsel to her husband. Cleaver suggests that a wise husband will not disdain to hear his wife's counsel and follow it if it is good, but if he does not choose to follow her advice, though it is excellent, she must not be troublesome about it.

We have several examples of wives who wish to know their husband's secrets. Portia in Julius Caesar wishes to know what is bothering Brutus and gives some good reasons why she should to be told. First, she appeals to his love. Then she grants that she is a woman, but indicates that she is wiser being Brutus' wife and Cato's daughter. She then makes proof of her ability to keep a secret by telling him of the wound on her thigh. Brutus is quite convinced and agrees. She does, however, prove to be somewhat weaker than we would imagine, for she sends a boy to the Senate after her husband on the fatal day and says to herself:

0 constancy, be strong upon my side,
Set a huge mountain 'tween my heart and tongue!
I have a man's mind, but a woman's might,
How hard it is for women to keep counsel!

(III.iv.6-9)
We have exactly the same situation in *Henry IV* between Kate and Hotspur. He is involved in a rebellion, and his wife realizes from his sleeplessness and dreams that he is keeping something from her. She also begs to know on grounds of his love for her; as did Brutus he tries to put her off. His final answer is different; perhaps he is wiser in the ways of women. He says:

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I know you wise, but yet no farther wise
Than Harry Percy's wife; constant you are,
But yet a woman and for secrecy,
No lady closer; for I well believe
Thou wilt not utter what thou dost not know;
And so far will I trust thee, gentle Kate.
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(II.iii.110-115)

A play that presents the problem of the wife's secrecy and her counsel is *Macbeth*. Lady Macbeth counsels her husband to murder, tells him to "look like the innocent flower,/ But be the serpent under't." (I.v.66-67). At one point he asks her to urge him no more, but she continues to give him this counsel and convinces him. When Macbeth has Banquo killed he does not tell his wife, nor does he confide in her any more after that, though for a time she continues to give him counsel about covering his crimes. She is indeed secret, more than he in the beginning. She has a man's mind and resolution until her woman's weakness betrays her, and she betrays the crimes to the doctor in her sleep. While her husband becomes more resolute in crime, she gives in at the end to conscience. We have two instances of good wifely counsel refused to the disaster of the husbands, for Calpurnia in *Julius Caesar* and Andromache in *Troilus and Cressida*, both have
dreams and try to keep their husbands from death. Both fail because their husbands feel their honor would be blemished by accepting womanly counsel. Desdemona offers Othello good counsel about Cassio, which partially brings about her own destruction and her husband's.

Another example of evil counsel by the wife is found in 2 Henry VI. Eleanor, Duchess of Gloucester, wants her husband to be king and speaks of it to him. She is rebuked but goes on plotting and brings about her own disgrace and her husband's murder. In Cymbeline the queen and her son chide the king into going to war with the Romans rather than paying the tribute. He fights, though he speaks to the ambassador of the honor done him by Caesar. At the end of the play when the Britons have won the battle Cymbeline says to the ambassador:

Although the victor, we submit to Caesar,  
And to the Roman Empire; promising  
To pay our wonted tribute, from the which  
We were dissuaded by our wicked queen.  
(V. v. 460-463)

As the wife has duties in helping her husband, we find the husband also has a duty beyond maintaining her, which will be discussed in the next chapter. He is to protect her from danger and to remember that an injury done to his wife is also done to him. It is rather hard to decide, in the light of this, whether Posthumus in Cymbeline was remiss or noble in pardoning Iachimo for the injury he did to Imogen. As for protecting the wife, Coriolanus seems to be unfeeling of this duty when he attacks Rome. He agrees later to spare the city, but he seems to be responding more to his mother's
pleas for his honor than to any tenderness for his wife and family. A good Shakespearian case for the husband's lack of protection is in Macbeth. Lady Macduff is quite angry when her husband leaves Scotland. She says to Ross:

Wisdom! to leave his wife, to leave his babes,
His mansion and his titles in a place
From whence himself does fly? He loves us not;
He wants the natural touch: for the poor wren,
The most diminutive of birds, will fight,
Her young ones in her nest, against the owl.
All is the fear and nothing is the love;
As little is the wisdom, where the flight
So runs against all reason.
(IV.ii.6-14)

She and her children are murdered in the same scene, and Macduff is stricken when he hears. He says such things as, "And I must be from thence," and "Did heaven look on, / And would not take their part? Sinful Macduff, / They were all struck for thee!" (IV.iii.212,223-225).

All the duties of the husband and wife are as much demanded in bad times as in good. Vives says that a woman should not love her husband for his fortune, for then she will no longer love him, if he loses it. She will be all the more honored for loving and being a comfort to her husband in times of misfortune. For instance, he says that if her husband is sick she should take care of him herself with words of comfort and nursing. Richard II's wife is touchingly loyal when her husband is deposed. Desdemona allies herself with her husband when she thinks he is being called back to Venice at the instigation of her father; when Othello has a headache she wishes to bind his head with her handkerchief. Adriana in The Comedy of Errors states her right to
nurse her husband in his madness. She says to the Abbess:

I will attend my husband, be his nurse,
Diet his sickness, for it is my office,
Therefore let me have him home with me.
(V. i. 98-101)

Shakespearian husbands also worry about their wives in times of trouble. Macbeth, when he is about to be attacked by the English and his own lords, takes time to question the doctor about his wife's illness. Duke Humphrey of Gloucester in 2 Henry VI must renounce his wife because of her treason to the king, yet cries to see her led through the streets in shame.

The last subject I shall deal with under what might be called personal relations in marriage is faithfulness, marital chastity, and adultery. Batty said that the first and most important aim of marriage is to avoid "fornication and all uncleanness." 53 As to the man's chastity Kyd translates Tasso to say chastity and shamefastness are not the peculiar virtues of men, but a good husband should violate his marriage vows as little as possible. 59 The woman is, of course, to be completely faithful, but St. Augustine deprecates the situation that a man thinks unchastity lawful for himself but not for his wife, and Anthony Gibson rebukes men for expecting what they themselves cannot manage. He says men are strict with their wives because of their own evil. 61 In Shakespeare we have the case of Bertram, who does his best to be unfaithful. Two lords speak of Bertram's bragging of his affair with Diana and not only deplore his casting off his
good wife and seducing a chaste young lady, but bemoan the situation in general when men are "trumpeters" of their own "unlawful intents." Diana and her widowed mother do not think much of the would-be adulterer either. In The Comedy of Errors Adriana feels that her husband violates her honor and stains her with his philandering. Gloucester in King Lear says to Kent that he blushes to acknowledge his adultery and its result. Edmund, though there was "good sport at his making," but Kent does not seem at all upset at what he hears. Thus we see Shakespeare goes along with this rather vague popular opinion. A man's faults may be frowned on but are accepted.

With the woman it is much different. It is not enough for her to be chaste; she must avoid even the suspicion or occasion of blame. 

Tilney says a married woman's good name is one of her most precious possessions and is easily lost, for men judge not only what they see but what they suspect. In order to keep her good name she should always maintain an air of gravity and never talk to other men unless someone else is present, especially if her husband is out of the house. Queen Katherine says in Henry VIII that she is a woman "Never branded with suspicion." (III.1.23). Hermione in The Winter's Tale is suspected because she spent so much time with her husband's guest and sometimes alone. Iago uses the argument on Othello that Cassio was alone with his wife; however, Emilia was always with them, and she tells Othello so. In The Comedy of Errors Antipholus becomes
furious when he thinks his wife is in the house with another man and won't let him in. The merchants beg him not to make a scene and ruin her reputation, which has always been good. He agrees.

It was thought that a man's honor depended to a great extent on his wife's faithfulness, and to be made cuckold was most embarrassing. One writer against marriage says a man is a fool who commits his honor to a woman who is too frail a creature. Fenton says "I hold it the greatest wound that can happen to a man." Edward Gosynhill holds marriage next to the gout among diseases because the pain of being called cuckold is so "fervent." Ford in The Merry Wives of Windsor speaks of woman's frailty thus:

I will rather trust a Fleming with my butter, Parson Hugh the Welshman with my cheese, an Irishman with my aqua vitae bottle, or a thief to walk my ambling gelding, than my wife with herself. (II.iii.317-321)

Of being cuckolded he cries "Cockold! the devil himself hath not such a name." (II.iii.314-315). Leontes in The Winter's Tale speaks of the adultery of a wife as "goads, thorns, nettles, tails of wasps." (I.ii.329). Iago suspects the Moor has usurped his marriage rights and says, "The thought where-of! Doth, like a poisonous mineral, gnaw my innards." (II.i.305-306). Othello says, "A horned man's a monster and a beast." (IV.i.63).

Since a man's honor depended on his wife's faithfulness, it was his duty to keep her chaste. William Heale writes that a man whose wife was unfaithful was ridden through town and subjected to ridicule in Paris and a similar custom
prevailed in some places in England because he had failed to guard his wife's chastity. 69 There are various methods recommended to the husband to guard his wife. First, the man should set an example for his wife by being chaste and faithful himself. 70 In The Comedy of Errors Adriana tells her philandering husband that he would not like it if she were unfaithful to him; he does not later when he suspects her. Emilia tells Desdemona that "The ills we do, their ills instruct us so." (IV.iii.104). Iago himself admits that he would not mind having Desdemona, though he is very angry to think someone else may have been free with his own wife. Iachimo tries to seduce Imogen by telling her that Posthumus has been untrue.

Socrates says a good way to keep a wife chaste is not to be suspicious of her. 71 It is said that women are chaste when they are trusted, but wanton when unjustly suspected. 72 Emilia tells Desdemona that women will revenge the "peevish" jealousies of their husbands by unfaithfulness, and we notice no one is worse than Iago about unfounded jealousy. Though both Mistresses Ford and Page were true wives, we might compare the behavior of their husbands. Page trusts his wife; Ford says he is a fool to do so and makes a fool of himself by suspecting his in The Merry Wives of Windsor. In The Comedy of Errors the merchants warn Antipholus not to be suspicious of his good wife.

Another suggestion is that the husband give his wife a great deal of liberty so she will not have any delight in
breaking a rule. Perhaps this is Page's philosophy, for he not only trusts his wife, but lets her run around at will.

In a late sixteenth century tract the husband is told that it is wrong to bring men friends into the house and then suspect the wife of ill doings. How much at fault then are Othello, and Leontes, and particularly Posthumus, who sent Iachimo to Imogen to test her. Another piece of advice is not to woo by ambassador and make a friend too familiar with your wife. Othello then is at fault, for he brought Cassio with him to woo and made him friends with Desdemona; Iago cleverly uses this bit of information to advantage. It is quite noticeable that all these husbands, Ford, Othello, Leontes, and Posthumus, who are jealous and suspect their wives, have been bad husbands in some respect or other. None of them have unfaithful wives, perhaps only guilty consciences.

All of these precautions on the part of the husband are not only to avoid adultery but to avoid jealousy. The Elizabethans considered jealousy one of the strongest and most violent passions and a thing most detrimental to marriage. Shakespeare certainly portrays it in this manner. His depictions of jealousy are dramatic and, for the most part, conventional. We might note some of these beliefs that appeared in a book of wise sayings and compare them with situations in the plays. Jealousy drives out love and brings in hate and distrust after which comes bloody revenge. Leontes, through jealousy, comes to hate his wife. He plans Polixenes' death, and when Polixenes escapes Leontes brings Hermione to trial.
Othello tries to have Cassio killed and kills Desdemona himself, though he never stops loving her. Posthumus plans Imogen's death. All of these men, however, repent their jealousy and violence when they find they have been mistaken. Iago plots the fall of three people partially because of his jealousy, but he, of course, never repents. A jealous man always judges the worst on every occasion, interprets suspiciously every mood and conversation. Leontes and Othello, once jealous, are given to suspicion on every occasion. Leontes when his wife talks to Polixenes is sure they speak of love. All courtesy between them has lascivious meaning to him. Desdemona innocently mentions Cassio to Ludovico, and Othello strikes her. The jealous man is constantly vexed and thinking of his passion. Leontes, Othello, and Ford are continuously in a state of emotional turmoil after they conceive their jealousy. Jealousy suppresses reason and incites rage. Certainly Leontes is irrational; he has no reason at all to suspect his wife, nor has Iago. Othello, once aroused, accepts his wife's guilt on proof that seems flimsy to a rational person, and Ford accepts the word of a lecherous old knight. Jealousy seeks its own ruin. Luciana in *The Comedy of Errors* says several times to her sister that jealousy is self-harming. Iago, Othello, and Leontes all come to harm because of their jealousy. If you counsel a jealous man you increase his rage. Iago uses the precept constantly. Through counsel he keeps Othello in a great rage. Camillo counsels Leontes, and the king becomes even more angry and demands that he murder
Polixenes. In another source we find that the jealous person believes every word that is spoken concerning the person of whom he is jealous, whether it has the appearance of truth or not. 

This is most true of Ford for he should have suspected Falstaff's word rather than his wife's honor. Iago and Iachimo are both clever enough to make their stories sound good and thus more convincingly dupe Othello and Posthumus.

As far as a wife's jealousy goes Vives says she should remember her husband is not required by the world to be chaste, though he is by God, and she should not chide him. It is better for her to cover his faults than to disclose them. Shakespeare gives us only one jealous wife, Adriana, and she is warned against jealousy by her sister, and the Abbess rebukes her for jealous chiding.

There are various reasons mentioned why people are jealous of their mates. A man is often jealous if he is or has been evil himself, because he suspects others of his own ways. This is probably a good explanation for Iago's otherwise unfounded jealousy, as he admits lusting slightly after Desdemona and has every other appearance and action of evil. An old man is said to be frequently jealous of a young wife. Othello is not old, but he is much older than Desdemona; Iago baits him with this and enlarges his suspicions with reasons for her unfaithfulness. Another motive offered for jealousy is too much love of the mate. This might apply to Othello and Posthumus, and perhaps to Leontes. At least with the first two their love and faith is so great that slander of
their wives once driven home seems to affect them doubly. "Jelousie is the fruite of rash election," 83 might again apply to Posthumus and Othello. Both married their wives secretly against the wishes of the ladies' fathers. Othello is twice reminded that if Desdemona could fool her father she could fool him. The last cause of jealousy is, of course, the obvious one; someone tells the husband or wife the other is unfaithful, which applies to Othello, Ford, and Posthumus. To the husband who has someone whispering nasty stories in his ear St. Paul is called upon for advice. He tells the husband and wife to listen to no back-biters even though they are near friends or kin, but take them as "yll-wyllers" to both. 84 This would have been good advice for Othello who put too much faith in "honest Iago." Ford and Posthumus should certainly have known better by considering their sources of information, though poor Posthumus had to put up with such terrible evidence as the description of the mole under his wife's breast. One last piece of wisdom that husbands should keep in mind deals with other bragging men. Anthony Gibson says:

I have knowne divers who but admitted to the sight of a Ladies sleeve, presently have made theyr vaunte of her maidenheades victory, when (God knows) they durst not intreate so much favour as a kisse. 85

Othello, even believing Iago's proof, might have kept this in mind for Cassio; certainly, Ford should have remembered this pertinent fact about the male ego. We do have two Shakespearean examples of people who refuse to listen to back-biters.
Page doesn't worry about the warnings of Falstaff's friends because he trusts his wife. Imogen does not believe Iachimo when he says Posthumus has been untrue. So among five jealous husbands and one wife there is much passion, some motivation, some native stupidity, and Leontes. Leontes is really set apart. There is no satisfactory motivation for his jealousy. It is the kind Emilia speaks of, born of itself.

The next question one might ask is, what is the wife to do if her husband is jealous and accuses her unjustly. Cleaver says she must bear all patiently, never give her husband unkind words, look always loving and cheerful, and never seem displeased. Vives says the wife should be careful never to feign or dissemble and to love no other man unless it is for her husband's sake. Earlier in the chapter I mentioned that the wife was to love no man but her husband. Vives' statement here uses love in a different sense. We must distinguish between the strong abiding love between husband and wife and the general sort of love, or better liking, that a wife may offer another man because her husband desires that she do so. He recommends that the wife defend herself, if accused, with silence as St. Susan did. Nashe in The Unfortunate Traveler says that a wife will seldom be patient enough to take unjust abuse without some revenge.

The only wife who is unjustly accused who takes what might be called revenge is Hermione, for she separates from her husband, letting him think her dead and letting him mourn her until her daughter grows up and returns. However, one
hesitates to ascribe revenge as a motive or to point out any motives at all in this play because the plot is so contrived and improbable. The other wives conduct themselves very well on the whole, if we consider that Shakespeare deals, for the most part, with human beings, and it is rather hard to be completely cheerful and self-abasing when one's husband is raging about the house flinging accusations of the most unpleasant sort. Desdemona falls a bit short of Vives' advice by not telling her husband she does not have the handkerchief. When she does realize her husband is jealous she does not become angry, acts modestly, obeys him punctiliously, and hopes for the best. She rightly says she never loved Cassio, "But with such general warranty of heaven/ As I might love." (V.ii. 60-61). Even when he is about to kill her she asks to be allowed to pray, and she dies taking the blame of her death on herself. Hermione also holds up well under accusation. When she is accused she says her husband is no villain, but mistakes, and she will wait patiently for better stars. At her trial she pleads her record of chastity and says she loved Polixenes as his honor required and her husband commanded. She does not even fear death; having lost her husband's favor, she has nothing to live for. Imogen, when she hears of her husband's order for her death, thinks a Roman courtesan has deceived him, and he is tired of her. This reaction from the idealistic point of view, is a poor one, but quite human. She comes over to the idealists' side immediately and goes to find her husband and set everything straight. Mistress Ford cannot
be looked at from the idealist's point of view except that she defends her honor vigorously. The fact that she twice makes a dreadful fool of her husband while duping Falstaff is not exactly showing respect, patience, and cheerfulness.

With all this talk of imagined unfaithfulness one might wonder how prevalent actual adultery was thought to be in Shakespeare's time and what sort of attitude we find in the plays. A sermon of 1547 claimed that adultery was so common that it was hardly looked upon as a sin anymore. John Downmane, a minister, said in 1608 it was obvious that there were many cases of adultery because supposedly good women were wearing lewd clothing for which there could be no other reason than to attract men for wicked purposes. Thomas Nashe claimed that he saw a number of wives cuckolding their husbands. On the other hand, Edward More said in 1560 that English women were more chaste and English men less jealous than Romans because of the colder climate. There are several statements in the plays about the prevalence of adultery. Iago intimates that women of Venice are commonly unfaithful. Later he says:

There's many a beast then in a populous city,
Many a civil monster...

There's millions now alive
That nightly lie in those unprober beds.

(Winter's Tale, I.ii.198-200)

Even Emilia thinks there are women who are unfaithful though Desdemona can hardly believe it. Leontes says:

Should all despair
That have revolted wives, the tenth of mankind
Would hang themselves.
Of course, we might notice that all these comments are made by people of warm countries. In the plays there are only a few actual adulteries. Of the women we have Gertrude, and the mother of Faulconbridge in *King John*, and several men such as Gloucester in *King Lear*. Goneril is at least a would-be adulteress, and Bertram thinks he has had Diana though it was really his wife, Helena. In *The Merchant of Venice* Portia and Nerissa claim they have slept with other men to punish their husbands for preferring Antonio to themselves and giving their wedding rings to the lawyer and clerk who saved him, but of course they have not.

The Elizabethan writers worked out the dire results of adultery presumably to frighten off the Gonerils and Bertrams of their time. First they believed that since an adulterous vow was made without conscience it was broken without care. In other words, a person that was unfaithful to marriage vows could not be expected to be long faithful to an adulterous vow. In the case of Antony and Cleopatra this precept does not prove true, but even an Elizabethan, perhaps even a Puritan, would grant that the love of these two was exceptional.

The case of Bertram and Diana is perhaps more typical. Diana is warned about lover's vows. Bertram promises her when his wife is dead he will marry her, and he thinks he has committed adultery with her. When she comes to claim him, Helena being supposed dead, he denies her, says she was a common woman and so forth.

Another result of adultery is guilty conscience and fear
of exposure. In *King John* Faulconbridge's mother is very upset when she finds that one son is challenging the birth of the other and that her affair with the late King Richard has been exposed. Gertrude is conscience-stricken when Hamlet has finished talking to her in her chamber. She says later:

> To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,
> Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss:
> So full of artless jealousy is guilt,
> It spills itself in fearing to be spilt.

(IV.v.17-20)

There are several problems presented when the husband or wife has a child by a partner in adultery. If a woman commits adultery she will usually not be certain who the father of her child is. Whether she knows or not Fenton calls it theft to let a dubious child be supported by her husband and made his heir. If the husband suspects that a child of his wife was fathered by someone else, he should consider whether he was out of the country at the time of conception. In the case of Faulconbridge, his mother claimed that he was his father's true heir, but his father, having considered that he was out of the country on king's business at the time of probable conception, believed him to be the king's son and on his death bed desired his second son, who resembled him, to be his heir. This case is brought before King John, and Faulconbridge is given his choice. He decides to forgo inheritance and stand with the Plantagenets. His mother later reluctantly admits that King Richard was his father. Leontes, when he suspects Hermione, tells Camillo that her sin makes suspect the birth of his son, though he believes that Hamillius
is his own child. He is sure that the new daughter is a bastard and has her abandoned.

There were various beliefs about illegitimate children. They were thought to be lecherous because of the lust of their father and mother in breeding them. They were called natural because they were born of nature, not God. It was thought that bastards would not live long and if they did would ultimately be without honor. They were subject to vices because of poor up-bringing, though Vives suggests that a bastard brought up by virtuous people might live a good life. Last: a bastard cannot inherit the name or wealth of his father.

Shakespeare's bastards are quite conventional. Edmund is lecherous and wicked, doesn't live long, and dies without honor. Even his religious sense is perverted, for he worships nature under whose auspices he was born. It is certainly a fault in Gloucester that he made Edmund his heir. Even if Edgar had been worthy of disinheriting, Edmund could not inherit theoretically, a fact which he does not recognize himself, for he complains of not being the heir because he was a second son. Don John in Much Ado About Nothing is another example of the evil natured bastard. Faulconbridge presents quite another problem. He is exposed by his brother and disinherited by his own choice but proves to be quite a loyal Englishman. Vives provides one answer to this virtuous example of bastardy. He was brought up in a regular family with no knowledge and therefore no shame in his position. As there was
not any extensive association between mother and son after
the son reached school age, his mother could not corrupt him.
Another explanation is, no doubt, his kingly blood. The Plantagenets do not see his conception as a sin at all, nor does he, for he was begotten by King Richard, the flower of the royal family.

A frequent theme of writers on adultery is the punishment of it and the murders that result from it. Fenton says more murders result from adultery than from fornication. Heale says a husband may lawfully kill his wife, if he takes her in adultery, but it is a "hainous offense." St. Augustine says it is worthier for a Christian man to spare the blood of his adulterous wife. Adultery was the only grounds for separation. Shakespeare gives us many instances of violence connected with adultery and suspected adultery. Othello kills Desdemona, though she begs for a separation, and those present are shocked even before it is proved that she was innocent. Antipholus in The Comedy of Errors wishes to tear his wife's eyes out. Leontes tries to kill Polixenes and his wife. Posthumus tells Pisano to kill Imogen. Claudius kills the elder Hamlet after defiling his marriage bed. His motive was, no doubt, partially the desire for the crown, but it was partially due to his love for Gertrude. He in turn is killed by the younger Hamlet and many others die more or less accidentally. Goneril, because of her adulterous desire, plans the death of her husband; she kills her sister for jealousy and finally herself in despair.
There is one last type of adultery that I might mention, and that is adultery of the marriage itself. Under certain conditions people cannot marry. If these impediments are ignored, and they do marry, they are officially living in sin. I will mention only those impediments that appear in Shakespeare's plays. No one may marry any relative within the fourth degree of a former husband or wife. This is why the marriage of Claudius and Gertrude is called incestuous and why Henry VIII has a trial to determine the legality of his marriage to Katherine. Both men married wives of dead brothers. If a wife makes a contract or promise of marriage and commits adultery with another man while her husband is still alive, she may not marry him after her husband's death. This is the sort of situation Goneril is planning with Edmund. If this theory holds for men, it would also apply to any marriage between Bertram and Diana. It is perhaps another count against the marriage of Claudius and Gertrude, though it is doubtful that she made such a promise to Claudius before the death of her husband, for she does not seem to be aware that her husband was murdered.


5. Politeuphia, Wits Common wealth (London, 1598), fol. 28r.


11. Vives, sig. X1r.


18. Ibid., sig. F4v.

19. Ibid., sig. F4v.


22. Ibid., p. 28.


24. W. Harrington, In this boke are conteyned the commen-
dacions of matr^omr Tl^S^yq SigV ffiSva


31. Robert Copland, Here begynmeth the complaynte of them that ben to late maryed (1535?), sig. Alv, B2v.


35. Fenton, Christian Pollicie, p. 266.


38. Becon, sig. I5r.


40. Thomas Blage, A schole of wise Conceytes (London, 1572), sig. B7r.

41. Greene, VII, 249.

42. Ste. B., p. 70.

44. Vives, sig. 02r-04v.
45. Vives, sig. 02r-03r.
46. Becon, sig. E4v, E5r.
47. Ste. B., pp. 46-47.
49. Vives, sig. E3r.
52. Vives, sig. Plv-P2r.
53. Cleaver, p. 38.
57. Vives, sig. A2v-A3r.
61. Anthony Gibson, A Womans Woorth, defended against all men in the world (London, 1599), fol. 30r.
64. Elyot, sig. D3v, D4r.
65. Fenton, Christian Pollicie, p. 266.
67. Fenton, Monophylo, fol. 31v.
68. Edward Gosynhill, Here begynneth a lytle boke named the Schole house of women (London, 1561), sig. B3.

69. Heale, p. 45.

70. St. Augustine, sig. H3r.


72. Politeophilia, fol. 26r.

73. The Court of good Counsell, sig. C3v.


76. Politeophilia, fol. 20r-22v. (all references in this paragraph up to this footnote are from this source)

77. Cleaver, p. 185-186.

78. Vives, sig. F2v-F3r.

79. The Court of Good Counsell, sig. D4v.

80. Tilney, sig. C7r-C7v.


82. Politeophilia, fol. 21v.

83. Politeophilia, fol. 201v.


85. Gibson, fol. 7r-8v.

86. Cleaver, pp. 219-220.

87. Vives, sig. F1v-F2r.

88. Vives, sig. 04r.


90. Certayne Sermons, or Homilies, appoynted by the Kynges Majestie, to bee declared and readde (London, 1547), sig. S4v.


94. Politeuphuia, fol. 16v.


100. Batty, fol. 95v.


105. Heale, p. 50.

106. St. Augustine, sig. J7r.


108. Harrington, sig. B3r.

Chapter II  Household Affairs

The Elizabethan household was conceived of as a small state with authority carefully delegated on all levels. If a household was run by a husband and wife they both had specific duties, which I will discuss in relation to the plays. There were some households where a daughter takes up the duties of mistress, or where a woman is sole head of the house. All these will also be included in the discussion along with the place and duties of servants, pastimes of wives aside from their household duties, and the hospitality offered to guests by the householders.

As I have said the husband or householder is to regard his household as a petty commonwealth, to make provision for the welfare and activities of the members, and to set down rules and orders to be followed.  

1 Cleaver says that a man who cannot govern his own house can never expect to have a successful reign over a state.  

2 The wife is not to meddle in the husband's affairs of city and state, nor is he to take over her functions in the house.  

3 Shakespeare gives us various examples of neglect of duty and assumption of duty by the wrong person. Albany does not even know what goes on in his own house. He is quite at sea when Lear asks whether his wife's actions are his wishes. Certainly, if anyone was to speak to Lear about his knights it would have been the husband.  

4 Also we notice that Oswald and through him the servants look to Goneril for orders, never to the husband. Not
until Albany takes command of his wife and household can he take command of his political responsibilities. Henry VI has much the same problem. His wife meddles in political affairs, and he cannot control her or her family and friends. He never does gain control either of his household or kingdom. Juliet's father cannot seem to run his household very efficiently; he cannot control his daughter, and he must take over some of his wife's household functions during the confusion of the night before the wedding. Olivia in *Twelfth Night* is, on the other hand, very efficient about her house, and Sebastian comments that she goes about her business with "smooth, discreet and stable bearing." (IV.iii.18).

As the husband rules the household he also controls the wealth. Cleaver says marriage makes goods common between husband and wife, but the husband controls them. In Greene's *Morando Pantia* says the husband can do whatever he likes with his own wealth and also his wife's dowry and patrimony. A book on women's rights gives the husband power to sell, keep, or bequeath at death what was hers before marriage in any way he pleases. In *All's Well* we see that Bertram uses the money the king gave as dowry for Helena to go to war and leave her, and she does not know or think to ask what happened to it. Bassanio becomes the master of all of Portia's fortune when they marry; Petruchio marries Katharina for her dowry and expectations.

Thus the husband has ultimate control of the wealth, and he also is responsible for bringing money home.
responsible for keeping close watch on how things are saved or spent. In *Euphues and His England* Euphues tells Philautus that the wife should keep the keys, presumably to the supply stores, and the husband should keep the purse so he will know what is spent. In *The Comedy of Errors* we notice that Antipholus must send a key to his wife so that she can get money to help him. In the *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, on the other hand, Falstaff says that the wives hold the purse, and he plans to seduce them to get at their husband's money.

However, whoever controls the money, Cleaver advises the householder never to live above his means, for he will be overcharged and then scorned when he comes to financial ruin. This is the case we find in *Timon of Athens*. Timon lives in high style and pays little attention to where the money is coming from until he finds that all his land and goods are gone. Then his friends speak of his improvidence and forsake him. Shylock, on the other hand, is somewhat too frugal. He tells his daughter "bind fast" is a good proverb for a thrifty mind, but he is so thrifty that he is more sad over the loss of his money than over the loss of Jessica when she runs away.

The wife's place in the household is like that of a second lieutenant. The husband gives orders, and she sees that they are executed. As I shall point out later on, she not only oversees work in the house, but does some herself. When her husband is away she is to see that his orders are still followed and keep good care of everything. In *Euphues The*
Anatomy of Wyt Ferardo commits the care of his house to his daughter in his absence and warns her to use her "accustomable courtesie." In *The Merchant of Venice* Shylock leaves the house in Jessica's care giving her the keys and telling her to lock up the house while he is gone. Portia, when she leaves her estate, commits the "husbandry and manage" of it to Lorenzo. She also indicates that she has told the servants to follow his orders.

The householders have certain responsibilities to the servants and other members of the household. First, they must provide food and clothes. Cleaver says thrift does not mean giving servants too little to eat and drink. This problem comes up in *The Merchant of Venice*. Shylock thinks Gobbo eats too much, and Gobbo tells his father that Shylock is starving him to death. Considering the Jew's love of money, we might imagine he would stint a bit too much on his servants' rations. In *Timon of Athens* Timon is the most generous of masters. In the first scene he provides money for one of his servants so that he may marry the girl of his choice. Orlando in *As You Like It* goes out into the forest in search of food for Adam, a faithful family servant, when Adam has advised him to leave him and go on.

The master is also responsible for the health of the members of the household, both in seeing that it is preserved with rest and recreation, and restored in sickness. Again Shylock complains that Gobbo is lazy and sleeps too much. Brutus, on the other hand, tells his boy servant Lucius, "I
should not urge thy duty past thy might;/ I know young bloods
look for a time of rest." (IV.iii.261-262). When the boy
falls asleep at his music he does not wake him. Olivia in
Twelfth Night is a careful mistress and tells the other mem-
ers of the household to see that Malvolio receives good care
when she believes him mad. She says, "Let some of my people
have special care of him: I would not have him miscarry for
the half of my dowry." (III.iv.67-70). She also sees that
Toby is taken care of when he is wounded in a fight with her
betrothed.

The master is to hold himself responsible for the morals
of the members of his household. For instance, "swearing, un-
cleanness, drunkenness or riot" are to be punished or the guilty
party sent away. In The Tempest King Alfonso seems rather
more amused than upset at the drunken condition of his ser-
vants. Olivia is more strict; she complains of Sir Toby's
drunken conduct several times. Finally when he and Andrew
are having a midnight party in the house she sends Malvolio
to tell them to stop their rioting or leave her house. Since
Fabian mentions that Malvolio got him in trouble with Olivia
about going to bear baitings, she evidently did not approve
of them. Goneril claims that Lear's attendants are rowdy and
uncontrollable, and Regan agrees though there is no evidence
that the knights are troublesome. If there had been, it
might be considered a legitimate excuse for complaint.

Besides taking care of the members of the household the
master must see that the work gets done. An Elizabethan
husband reminds his wife in a letter that servants are naturally careless, and she must oversee their work all the time and not go out while he is away. Cleaver says unless you have rare, God-fearing servants with good consciences you should not trust them farther than you can see them. One Shakespearian master, notable for paying no attention to his affairs, is Timon. He leaves everything in his servants' hands, and then becomes upset when he finds he has nothing left, though it is no fault of his loyal servants. The fault is entirely his own, for he would not even listen to their attempts to give him an accounting. Mistress Quickly might be the example of the servant who sits down on the job as soon as her master is out of the way. She has to hide her guest in the closet when Dr. Caius comes home. Petruchio is a master who keeps excellent track of his servants. He complains violently about everything they do and demands perfection to the extent of dressing his own meat.

William Baldwin observes that a master who is gentle will have proud servants who are reluctant to work, while a fierce master need but wink at his servant for immediate action. Again, Petruchio is the fierce master whose servants must give perfect service and are beaten for being malapert. He demands the same unquestioning obedience from his wife. In Twelfth Night we have an interesting situation with Malvolio. He is overcome with self-love as his mistress observes, but she is also very kind to him. Her kindness makes him doubly proud, and his pride makes him doubly vulnerable to the fall
planned for him by Maria and Toby.

Becon says that the rule and punishment of male servants is the husband's duty, while the wife is to take care of the female servants. In *The Comedy of Errors* the poor man servant has many hard words and beatings because Antipholus and Adriana both give him orders, and by obeying one he often gets into trouble with the other. We have noted before that Albany has no command over any of the servants in the house, and Goneril is probably closer to Oswald than she is to her husband. Oswald is disobedient and rude to Lear as Goneril has commanded. There are two ways to look at this. If we consider Lear only a guest, the conduct of Goneril and Oswald is a breach of hospitality. However, as her father and benefactor and as a man, he should have some command in the household, and in this light Goneril's command and Oswald's disobedience are another perversion of natural order and right rule. Othello, we might notice, has little to do with Emilia. Mistress Ford directs the men servants in order to trick her husband into thinking Falstaff is again in the laundry basket, and she even instructs them to obey her husband as if they might not have otherwise.

The duty of the wife is to see that her house is well ordered, her maids busy, and good meals served, among other things. She is to know how to do all the things about the house herself so that she will better be able to direct her maids and point out errors. She should also do some work herself though, if she is noble, nothing as soiling as
kitchen work. She should see to the food, and be sure it is what will delight her husband. Weaving is one of the chief functions of the wife, and Margaret Hoby wrote in her diary of dying wool, winding yarn, spinning, and embroidering with her maids.

In Shakespeare references to housewifely activities are rather incidental but do serve to provide some realistic glances into the home life of the characters. We find many of the women directing and doing work at one time or another. As mentioned before, Mistress Ford sends out the laundry, once with Falstaff, once without. In Henry VIII Queen Katherine is discovered at work with her women, probably sewing, while one maid sings and plays the lute. She says to the two Cardinals that visit her, "Your graces find me here part of a housewife." (III.i.24). In The Winter's Tale Perdita is mistress of the shepherd's household, and is obviously in charge of the feast as she sends her brother off for provisions, thus showing her knowledge of cookery. Very likely she is preparing the feast herself which would be consistent with her lower station. In Coriolanus Volumnia and Virgilia are found at home sewing, and Valeria comes to visit and comments on the work. She desires them to put away their sewing and "play the idle huswife" for an afternoon. In Romeo and Juliet we have some suspicion that Lady Capulet cannot quite command an orderly house, for once a servant calls them to dinner and says all is confusion below. When they prepare for the wedding feast in the middle of the night Lady Capulet,
the nurse and old Capulet all bustle about giving orders to each other and the servants while the cooks call for firewood, spices, dates, and quinces. In Cymbeline we have another rather housewifely queen who sends ladies for flowers, and professes an interest in poison under the veil of necessary knowledge in medicine which the wife and mother was to have.

The master or mistress is advised to have patience in reforming and correcting a servant who is at fault. He should hear any excuse that can be made, judge it fairly, and not act rashly or with bitterness. Contrary to this advice many of Shakespeare's masters are hot-headed and violent. Petruchio is given to beating his servants as is Antipholus. Even the shrewish Katharina tries to excuse the servant who spilled water and to calm her irate husband. Petruchio's servants find this treatment more amusing than does Dromio in The Comedy of Errors.

In Kyd's translation of Tasso we find a good explanation of the duties of the steward. He often handles the other servants for the master and mistress. He is in charge of the household under the master's command, though he may carry on any business for the head of the house. He gives the other servants their wages and maintenance, and supervises their activities. Shakespeare has five fairly important stewards. Cleopatra's steward handles her money and other wealth. Oswald not only commands the other servants and carries important messages for Goneril, but is in her confidence about some
rather personal matters. He is allowed, in fact commanded, to bully her father and write her letters to her sister. Malvolio seems to run the house, announce guests as a butler would, carry messages, and even chide Olivia's riotous relatives and guests. In All's Well Rinaldo, the steward of Countess Rousillon, informs her of Helena's love for Bertram. The Countess later rebukes him for not realizing Helena's letter meant she was leaving, and she bids him write to her son and tell him of Helena's virtue and her own grief at her departure; this steward is obviously quite intimate in family affairs. Flavius, the steward of Timon of Athens, sadly meditates on his master's ebbing fortunes as he is bidden to bring and make gifts to all the friends and provide entertainment. The debt-collectors go to him, and he runs the whole estate because Timon will not look at the books. When all is lost Flavius divides his fortune with the other servants and wants to support his lord.

The servant, in certain respects, has the same duties to a master as a child does to a parent. He must obey unless ordered to do evil and honor and be loyal to his master. Many of Shakespeare's servants obey but are somewhat reluctant, as, for instance, Dromio in The Comedy Of Errors, who does not wish to obey his mistress because he will be beaten by his master. Then there is the servant who does not obey because he is bidden to do evil. Pisano, for instance, will not kill Imogen at Posthumus' command. Some of Shakespeare's servants are not very respectful to their masters, but their
malapert conduct is usually in line with their comic parts and so does not particularly fall into this study. There are various instances in which the master or mistress assumes the function of a parent. In *All's Well* the clown asks the Countess's permission to marry as a son would. Lucilius, a servant in Timon's house, has been wooing the daughter of an old Athenian who thinks the servant too poor a match for his daughter. The old father appeals to Timon to put a stop to the courtship. Timon pledges an amount equal to the girl's dowry and expectations so that his servant can marry, and the father is pacified. The significance of the incident is that the master can demand a voice in his servant's affairs in even so personal a matter. /Shakespeare gives many interesting and some rather touching examples of the loyalty of servants to their masters and mistresses. The last thought of Oswald before death is that Goneril's letter must be delivered and his duty discharged. He may not be loyal to a good cause, but his whole-hearted devotion is undeniable. A horse-keeper comes to see Richard II just before the king's death, and tells him of the grief he felt to see Bolingbroke riding on the king's horse. Timon's servants rebuke the creditors fiercely for their ungrateful actions and are heart-broken over their master's fall from fortune. As I mentioned before, the steward wishes to give Timon his money and continue being his steward while it lasts. Even Timon, at that time in the depths of misanthropy, relents enough to admit there is one honest man in the world. Adam, the faithful old servant in
As You Like It, warns Orlando of his brother's plans to murder him, and, giving him the money he saved for his old age, runs away with him. There are two interesting examples of treacherous servants. Cleopatra's steward betrays her to Caesar and is severely tongue-lashed. Cornwall's servant challenges him when he puts out Gloucester's eye. Cornwall and Regan are both shocked that a peasant would dare rebel, but the man's bravery in a good cause is very dramatic. The servant says:

Hold your hand, my lord:
I have served you ever since I was a child;
But better service have I never done you
Than now to bid you hold.  
(III.vii.73-76)

For his trouble he gets stabbed in the back by Regan and thrown on a dung-hill, but his sword gives Cornwall his death wound. Perhaps Cornwall's death at the hands of his servant is yet another example of the disorder on all levels in the play, for this faithful servant feels morally obligated to defy his master. Cornwall's actions are so evil in his eyes that he is forced to judge and to act in a manner which would, except for the master's own evil, be most unnatural.

A last duty of servants is to keep peace among themselves. Masters should see that there are none given to talking too much of the infirmities of others, slandering, backbiting, or taunting. This admonition brings up an interesting bit of human psychology in Twelfth Night. Malvolio is given to just this sort of thing. He makes an enemy of the clown by taunting him and of Fabian by telling tales. He
obviously cannot stand for anyone to be in his mistress's favor but himself and even threatens Maria that he will tell Olivia that she condones the revelry of Sir Toby and Andrew. No one in the house thinks well of him but Olivia, and I believe it is fair to say he brings about his own undoing, as Fabian explains at the end of the play in his rather diplomatic speech to Olivia.

Having looked at the more practical aspects of housekeeping, it is in order to investigate what Elizabethan wives did when they weren't superintending the house work, for Shakespeare gives some attention to their pastimes. I shall skip over the extra-curricular activities of husbands. These activities were not, for the most part, carried on in the home, except for those things connected with hospitality, which will be discussed next. Lyly in *Euphues and His England* says that English ladies spend their mornings in prayer unlike ladies of Greece and Italy who don't get up in the morning. Othello speaks of Desdemona as being always at her prayers, and Queen Katherine in *Henry VIII* speaks of almost neglecting her prayers for her husband. A foreigner observed that England was a paradise for married women because they had so much freedom. He describes English women as going about all the time visiting their friends and neighbors and merry-making at child-births, churchings, christenings, and funerals with the permission of their husbands. Shakespeare gives us one instance of this in *Coriolanus* when Valeria comes to visit Volumnia and Virgilia. She admires and talks about
Virgilia's son, and then suggests that they all go to visit a woman who is lying in. Virgilia takes the old-fashioned attitude that a wife should stay home while her husband is away from the house or city. In *The Merry Wives of Windsor* Mistresses Ford and Page are always visiting back and forth and running about town, nor do their husbands seem to mind a bit, though Ford is an extremely jealous man. Witness a conversation between Ford and Mistress Page on the street.

> Ford. Well met, Mistress Page. Whither go you?
> Mrs. Page. Truly sir, to see your wife. Is she at home?
> Ford. Ay; and as idle as she may hang together, for want of company. I think if your husbands were dead, you two would marry...
> Mrs. Page. ...Is your wife at home indeed?
> Ford. Indeed she is.
> Mrs. Page. By your leave, sir; I am sick till I see her.

(III.ii.9-32)

Hospitality is a last important responsibility of the householder. The master of the family was expected to give entertainment to strangers and guests not of the family, if they were "Christians and Believers." Antipholus in *The Comedy of Errors* invites Balthazar home for dinner, and they speak of the spirit of welcome being more important than what is served at the table. Antipholus is most angry when his hospitality is smirched because his wife will not let him in the house, but Balthazar begs him not to make a scene, and they go off to have dinner elsewhere. Othello, by way of hospitality, insists on walking Ludovico on his way after he has visited his house. In *Love's Labour's Lost* the Princess rather chides Navarre for poor hospitality when he welcomes
her party but refuses them entrance to his palace. Leontes' hospitality to Polixenes in The Winter's Tale is much praised. When Polixenes wishes to leave, Leontes urges Hermione to prevail upon him to extend his visit; she does so, but her husband then shows his hospitality to be feigned and plans the murder of his guest. After the trial of his wife he bemoans these plans and praises Camillo, the would-be poisoner, for revealing the plot to the already suspicious guest. Macbeth also extends gracious hospitality with plans of murder behind it, though he meditates before hand over the sin of murdering a guest in his house. Lady Macbeth, when the murder is discovered, does a fine bit of dissembling by crying, "What in our house?" and then fainting at this stain on her hospitality.

A foreigner writes that in an English household a guest was received and welcomed by the master, mistress, and perhaps the daughter of the house and even expected to kiss the women. This custom perhaps explains Cassio's kissing the ladies for courtesy, which he explains as such to Iago. The welcoming of the guests in Shakespeare's plays is usually quite elaborate. Capulet in Romeo and Juliet gives his guests a merry welcome telling the ladies to dance if they have not corns on their toes, reminiscing about his own dancing days, calling for light, tables, less warmth, more dancing. When Tybalt wants to challenge Romeo, Capulet will not have it in his house among his guests and gives his hot-headed relative a good talking down. This scene is a masterly depiction in dialogue of confusion, gaiety, and profuse hospitality. At the shepherd's feast in The Winter's Tale Perdita welcomes
her guests charmingly by giving them flowers and sprightly banter. Lady Macbeth gives Duncan a most stately welcome to her house, and conducts him, at his request, to his host. At the feast of Macbeth when he is king he gives his guests a rather simple, cheerful welcome. In comparison with these it is interesting to note Othello's welcome to Lodovico. He is so overcome with jealousy and rage that he can give his guest but the most curt of greetings and invitations. He says, speaking alternately to Lodovico, Desdemona, and himself:

I am commanded home. Get you away; I'll send for you anon. Sir, I obey the mandate, And will return to Venice. Hence, avaunt! (Exit Desdemona)

Cassio shall have my place. And sir, tonight, I do entreat that we may sup together; You are welcome, sir, to Cyprus. — Goats and monkeys! (Exit Othello) (IV.i.269-274)

Following this amazing dialogue Lodovico asks, "Is this the noble Moor whom our full senate/ Call all in all sufficient?"

There are various bits of advice and hints given about feeding guests. First, it is the duty of the hostess to serve good meals and to treat her guests according to rank. When Lord Capulet in *Romeo and Juliet* tells his wife she must prepare for a wedding with less than a day's notice, the poor lady is quite worried about lack of provision. Her husband tells her not to worry, for he will play the housewife which he does, and even greater confusion than usual reigns. In *The Merry Wives of Windsor* the daughter helps out in entertaining the guests. She bids them to dinner and politely but unsuccessfully urges Slender to enter. Finally her father must
prevail upon this reluctant guest to stop keeping the other members of the party waiting. Perdita is responsible for preparing a hearty feast for her father's guests in *The Winter's Tale*. As for treating guests according to rank, King and Queen Macbeth observe this convention at their feast. Macbeth tells his guest to sit down, observing that they know their places at the table; his wife, when he sees the ghost of Banquo, finally tells her guests to go without observing any order of rank.

Another point in polite feasting was to excuse the poor fare when the guests came to eat. Pompey and Antipholus make this apology part of their invitations to dinner. Good cheer and pleasant conversation were necessities at the dinner table. This observation is made by Antipholus and Balthazer, as I have already mentioned. Capulet and Pompey urge their guests to enjoy themselves. Pompey in particular plies Lepidus with wine and proposes toasts to all by way of hospitality. In *Macbeth* Lady Macbeth must keep after her husband to be a good host. When they are feasting Duncan Macbeth leaves the hall, and she must call him back at her guest's request. At the feast after he is king he plans to "mingle with society,/ and play the humble host" (III.iv.3-4). However, he immediately goes off to talk to the murderers. His wife reminds him of his duties by saying:

> My royal lord,
> You do not give the cheer; the feast is sold
> That is not often vouched, while 'tis a-making,
> 'Tis given with welcome: to feed were best at home;
> From thence the sauce to meat is ceremony;
> Meeting were bare without it.  
> (III.iv.32-37)
After the first appearance of the ghost, he is again cheerfully drinking healths. After the second appearance, Lady Macbeth gives up trying to be hospitable, accuses her husband of ruining the good cheer of the guests, and dismisses them.

Besides feasting, other forms of entertainment were provided by good hosts for their guests. Walking in the garden is one pastime mentioned in a book by Tilney. In *The Winter's Tale* Hermione entertains Polixenes by walking in the garden with him. Other entertainments mentioned by Tilney are hunting and dancing. Timon is entertained by a friend with a hunting party. There is dancing at Perdita's feast in *The Winter's Tale* and at Capulet's feast in *Romeo and Juliet*. Even Pompey's feast is graced by a Bacchanal in which Enobarbus directs the intoxicated guests. In Greene's *Philomela* the hostess and her guest play chess after dinner. Miranda and Ferdinand are discovered playing chess in *The Tempest*.

One last question we might ask is, how is the guest to take all these hospitable offerings. Strangely enough little is said of this. Erasmus does mention that it is very rude to offer criticism of the food at a feast or dinner. Fortunately none of Shakespeare's guests commit this unpardonable breach of manners. In fact, they are all very appreciative. Perdita's guests thank her for her flowers and admire her charm. Lodovico thanks Desdemona for her hospitality. Polixenes is very appreciative until he hears that his murder is being planned by his host. Banquo speaks of Duncan's delight in the hospitality he receives from Macbeth and shows Macbeth the diamond intended for Lady Macbeth as thanks for her trouble.
NOTES CHAPTER II


13. Cleaver, p. 60.


29. Tasso, sig. D4r-D4v.


31. Fenner, sig. E4v, F4r.

32. Lyly, II, 198.

33. Emanuel Van Meter (1614), in William Brenchley Rye's *England as See by Foreigners in the days of Elizabeth and James the First* (London, 1665), pp. 72-73.

34. Greene, VI, 95.


36. Rye, p. 89.


40. Tilney, sig. A5v.
41. Tilney, sig. A5r.
42. Greene, XI, 154.
43. Erasmus, sig. C4v.
Chapter III  The Child-Parent Relationship

One of the purposes of marriage was to have children. Bringing these children up was quite a serious undertaking to the Elizabethans. Most books containing pertinent advice view the situation from a religious and ethical point of view. The parent's duty is, briefly, to have children, to bring them up to be good Christians, to be unsparing in discipline, to educate them in letters and for a profession, and to marry them wisely. Also the parent is to leave the eldest son the family estate. The duty of the child to his parents is to be obedient, reverent, loving, and helpful in their old age if necessary. There are many facets of the parent-child relationship that do not appear in the plays and these, of course, I shall not discuss.

To begin with pregnancy and birth, the Elizabethans emphasized the pain and torment of the mother while she carries the child and the danger and pain of labor and birth. During pregnancy she is to avoid any excess emotion or movement for her own good as well as the child's. Various factors were believed to cause greater pain at the time of birth. If the mother was too young, had never had a child before, or gave birth to a girl, she could expect a more painful labor. While in labor the mother is advised to cry out loudly, and the mid-wife is to comfort her with kind and encouraging words and refresh her with meat and drink. There are four births in Shakespeare that receive special mention. When
Anne Bullen gives birth to Elizabeth in *Henry VIII* Lovell says, "The queen's in labour,/ They say, in great extremity; and fear'd/ She'll with the labour end." (V.i.17-19). Various reasons given above would account for the danger of this birth. The queen is young; it is her first child; and the child is a girl. When the King hears that she has asked him to pray for her he says, "What, is she crying out?" As the King does not yet know that the birth is any more difficult than usual, he probably means, is she in labor. Later an old woman, evidently the mid-wife, comes to tell him of the birth of a daughter. In *The Winter's Tale* Shakespeare presents Hermione toward the end of her pregnancy. Possibly she is experiencing some discomfort, for she asks the ladies to entertain her son as he "troubles" her "past enduring." When she is sent to prison, she asks that her women be allowed to accompany her, but Leontes evidently denies her the attendance of anyone of rank. Emilia tells Paulina that the queen was delivered "something before her time." The prematurity of birth would probably be explained by the unhappy emotions experienced because of her husband's accusations. In *Pericles* Gower says that the terrible storm at sea causes Thaisa to "fall in travail with her fear." (III.52). Thaisa, after the child is born, is taken for dead. No doubt, the audience would consider it a miracle that even the child was alive after such a birth. All things here combine for a disastrous birth: an over-young mother, afraid, having her first child under the worst conditions, and that child a girl. The
last notable birth is that of Macduff who "was from his mother's womb/ Untimely ripp'd." (V.viii.15-16). There are two possibilities for this kind of birth. John Alday says, "Sometime it behoveth to open the poore innocent mother alive, and yron tooles in hir bodie, yea to murther hir." 5 Roesslin says, if the woman dies in labor, she must be turned on her left side and cut open so the child can be taken out. He goes on to explain that these children are called "cesares" because this was the manner in which Caesar was delivered.

After the child is born it is the duty of the father to present it for baptism on the next Sunday or Holy Day. 6 Shakespeare dramatizes in Henry VIII the splendid baptism of Elizabeth shortly after her birth.

The first duty of the mother after the birth of the child is to nurse it. 7 If she cannot do this herself, a cleanly, moral woman must be chosen, for a bad nurse was believed to bring the child to evil both because the child drinks her milk and because of the bad example she may set. 8 Roesslin says the English custom was to wean the child after a year. 9 In The Winter's Tale Leontes, when he thinks he has caught his wife in adultery, speaks to her of their son:

I am glad you did not nurse him
Though he does bear signs of me, yet you
Have too much blood in him.
(II.1.56-58)

He feels that her milk would have augmented the evil transmitted to Mamilius through her blood. He also denies her the child's company, to further counteract the effect of her blood.
When she has had her second child and is brought to trial, she rebukes her husband for depriving the child of her milk and then murdering it. There are two instances in Shakespeare of women who continue many years as companions of the girls they nursed as babies. This/probably explains the worry over getting a good nurse so that her companionship will not have ill effects on the child. In Pericles, at the beginning of act four, Marina is mourning Lychorida, the woman who was with her mother at her birth, nursed her, and brought her up. The effect of her milk and her companionship was evidently excellent, for Marina is an admirable young woman. Juliet had her nurse as a companion till she was almost fourteen. In one scene the nurse reminisces and tells us that Juliet was not weaned until she was almost three, quite contrary to the English custom of weaning the child after one year. One might conjecture that this woman was not the best companion for a young girl. She delights in telling how Juliet as a toddler answered "Ay" to a rather improper question by her husband. Thus in the first case the nurse is an excellent choice; in Juliet's case the nurse is a bad influence.

The mother has charge of the children while they are young; Harrington says she deals with them until they are three; others set the age as late as seven. She is in charge of the daughters, for the most part, until they are married, but I will speak of that in more detail later. The mother is told to try to speak well because the child learns first from her. She is advised not to tell the children
idle tales, lies, or any other "vayne nor lyght communica-
cation." In a work by Chelidonius Tigurinus we find that at
least some Elizabethans delighted in the prattle of young
children. He says that the first talk and the fantasies of
the young child are a source of pleasure and content to the
parent and seem a gift of nature to alleviate some of the mis-
eries of life. In *Macbeth* we have a conversation between
Lady Macduff and her son. Since the boy is called a prattler
and a babe, he is probably not more than ten years old. Lady
Macduff does not follow the advice that a woman should talk
seriously to her children. In her bitterness over Macduff's
departure she tells her son that his father is dead and a
traitor. The boy does not take her very seriously but makes
witty answers, almost too witty for a young child, and even
in her grief she takes delight in his talk. It is quite ob-
vious in *Romeo and Juliet* that the nurse considered Juliet a
delightful baby. In *The Winter's Tale* Polixenes speaks of his
young son thus:

> He makes a July's day short as December.
And with his varying childness cures in me
Thoughts that would thick my blood.
(I.ii.169-171)

Leontes also takes joy in his young son, Mamillius, and is
diverted temporarily from his jealousy by the boy. This de-
light in little children somewhat tempers the severe and ser-
ious attitude recommended to parents. These two kings indeed
escape some of life's miseries by enjoying their young sons.
There is another charming scene in *The Winter's Tale* where
Mamillius jokes in a rather adult way with the queen's ladies,
and then wants to whisper a tale of "sprites and goblins" in his mother's ear so softly "Yond crickets shall not hear it." (II.1.31). Though someone has obviously been telling him idle tales, he seems none the worse for it.

Parents have four primary duties to their children. The first is to love them, said to be the law of nature, but this love is to be hidden to a certain extent so that the children do not take advantage of it. Step-parents are also to love their step-children. Vives says that step-mothers are given to hating their step-children, but never step-fathers, and advises step-mothers who hide this hate with a pretended love that they will fool no one. In Richard III we have an example of a mother who comes to hate her son. The Duchess, when she last sees Richard, tells him roundly that she hopes death is in store for him, so abhorrent are his crimes to her. Thus the natural love of a parent is destroyed by the unnatural wickedness of the child. When Queen Katherine is dying in Henry VIII she sends a message to her husband to love their daughter for her sake. Perhaps she feels that if her husband could cease to love a good wife, herself, he might also neglect to love a virtuous daughter. In The Winter's Tale the two kings have great love for their sons. Polonius in Hamlet is, I believe, an example of a parent who loves but dissembles his love for his children. He is rather stern and formal with them though he obviously worries about them and wishes them well. To the Elizabethan "step-mother" was synonymous, as it still is, with unkindness; the queen in
Cymbeline is the epitome of the evil stepmother. She acts friendly to Imogen, who sees through her and realizes that she cares for nothing but the advancement of her own son. Cymbeline is certainly a good stepfather to the obnoxious Cloten, for he is willing to marry Cloten to his own daughter. Claudius has, I believe, a sincere interest in Hamlet at the beginning of the play and would probably have proved a good stepfather, if only for Gertrude's sake, if Hamlet had not been set on over-turning him. Other parents in Shakespeare are loving though they usually become angry when scorned, as in King Lear, or tricked, as in Othello, or refused obedience, as in Romeo and Juliet.

The second duty of the parents is to give the child a good up-bringing, and they should begin early to give them godliness, learning, and manners. If this training is begun too late the child will not respond as well to teaching and reforming. Erasmus says that good parents usually beget good children, but that the children, no matter how well-born, will turn out according to their rearing. Batty observes that children commonly believe as their elders believe and do as they do. Thus Queen Katherine, when she is dying asks Henry not only to love their daughter but to "give her virtuous breeding." (IV.ii.134). In All's Well the Countess emphasizes blood and the example of a virtuous parent when she tells Bertram that he looks like his father, and she hopes will have his manners. The King later marks the resemblance and hopes Bertram will also have his father's moral nature.
They both seem to expect him to live up to the example and blood of this noble parent. In *Henry IV* the king tells his son that he is not living up to his royal blood. He feels his son's evil conduct must be a punishment from God for his own misdeeds. Lear tells his daughter Regan that he would consider his dead wife an adulteress if Regan proved unkind as her sister had, thus showing that he felt children of his blood could not be so wicked. Lear and *Henry IV* both emphasize blood over rearing, which is somewhat significant as both seem to fail to a certain extent in rearing. *Henry IV* is too easy on Hal (I shall elaborate on this point later), and Lear sets a poor example of self-willed action which is remarked by Goneril and Regan. If good parents commonly have good children, Coriolanus seems to have had a characteristically ferocious one with whom neither the schoolmaster nor his gentle mother could do much. The son is described as neglecting his books to chase and tear butterflies apart. In *All's Well* the Countess speaks of Helena as a fine combination of inherited honesty and virtuous upbringing provided by herself. In *Cymbeline* we have an example of blood triumphing over upbringing; though Cymbeline's sons are brought up away from courts, they long for bravery and knightly deeds. Thus Shakespeare often emphasizes the effects of blood over rearing.

That children usually follow the beliefs and doings of elders is shown particularly in *Laertes*, who is overly dependent on the judgments of his elders, having had a dominating
father. When Hamlet apologizes for killing Polonius, Laertes says he is satisfied for himself but must await some elders' opinion about the requirements of his honor. He is so much dependent on the example and opinion of elder people that he is almost incapable of acting or deciding for himself. Laertes' personality is the extreme point of the idea that a young person will do and believe as his forefather's have. Coriolanus is another much given to following parental advice. He has his mother's valorous spirit. This spirit makes him blunt, straight-forward, and haughty; thus she must counteract her own blood and teachings in him when she gives him political advice, which he tries to follow but without success.

Before I discuss the specific advice on how to bring up the son and daughter, I shall recount a few of the general aspects of the subject. The parent is not only to instruct the child in virtuous living, but to set a good example in his or her own life. Thus when Gertrude calls Hamlet into her room to give him some motherly admonition she finds that it is she who is rebuked as a bad example, and Hamlet will not allow her to change the subject back to himself. Some of Jessica's comments in *The Merchant of Venice* lead us to think she little admires the example of her father, and she runs away with a Christian in the middle of the play.

Parents are also admonished not to spoil their children or to be over generous with them. Mothers are believed to be more given to this offense, especially if they have few children. Polonius hints to Claudius that Gertrude will
probably be too easy on her only son as mothers often are. Lear is an example of the overly generous parent; he gives all to his daughters and brings himself to grief. After Desdemona has eloped Brabantio says if he had another daughter he would be harder on her, hinting that perhaps he has given Desdemona too much freedom, that he has spoiled her.

Parents are admonished to see that there are no evil servants who might be lewd by word, deed, or gesture around their children. Lady Capulet is too indifferent to her duty by allowing the comments that the nurse makes in front of Juliet. The Countess, on the other hand, is quite worried about Bertram's association with the unsavory Parolles in All's Well, for she realizes the effect that evil companionship can have on her son. In Much Ado Hero's maid Margaret not only makes a comment that shocks Hero, "Twil be heavier soon by the weight of a man" (III.iv.25), but also ruins her marriage by consorting with her own lover in Hero's clothes. Hero's father and Lady Capulet are both negligent about the associations of their children, while the Countess is aware of the danger to her son of a bad servant but does nothing about it.

Parents must punish any evil in their children in order to bring them up well, and never laugh or smile at them when they are naughty. When administering correction, the father should be sure who committed the fault, how bad it is, whether it was a continuing evil or just a slip, and why it was committed. He should also have patience to hear the
defense of the accused. The parent must remember that his
duty does not end when the child is fifteen or sixteen, but
continues as long as he or she is alive. Shakespeare includes
several cases in child discipline. Polonius offers his son
Laertes much advice but doesn't seem to expect too much when
we hear him talking to Reynaldo. He more or less laughs at
the sins of youth. Henry IV is a better father than Polon-
iius in that he complains through three plays about Prince
Hal's conduct; his error is in never disciplining him ex-
cept with words. According to the doctrine he is also at
fault because he is impatient with Hal's defense, but the de-
fense is so flimsy one can not blame him. Gloucester in *King
Lear* is over hasty in judging Edgar by his bastard brother's
opinion and forged evidence. As our authors said the parent
should investigate the crime, and Gloucester never gives his
son a hearing. Polonius realizes that his daughter's fault
is one of innocence, which seems to make him chide poor
Ophelia all the more. Thus he runs counter to all the ad-
vice, for he is impatient, blames her for a fault only once
committed and then in innocence. Had he stopped to give the
matter further thought he should have reached the conclusion
that the real fault was his for not protecting her innocence.

A last piece of general advice to parents is to stop
children immediately if they "murmur or grudge against
precaution thee." This is probably what Gloucester thinks he is tak-
ing when Edmund tells him that Edgar thinks his father is
too old and should turn over the handling of the inheritance
to him. King Lear, on the other hand, is too slow to act when Goneril and her household slight him. His servant must point out to him what is happening, but then it is too late. When Claudius hears Hamlet make an indirect threat against him he decides immediately to ship him off to England. His quick action is, of course, the wisest procedure, though I doubt that the Elizabethan counselors would recommend murder as a good remedy for a rebellious son.

The parent who brings his child up well by following all these precepts has great joy in him, but if the child proves to be wicked or ungrateful the parent has much grief, more so than if the child were a fool or deformed. Thus we see Volumnia proud and happy over her son's valor, while the mother of Richard III tells him that he has always caused her pain and grief from the time of his birth to his kingship. Brabantio, a second disappointed parent, says, when Desdemona has married the Moor, "I had rather to adopt a child than get it" (I.iii.190). We later hear that he dies of a broken heart over the defection of his daughter.

These general rules apply to both boys and girls, but there are more specific precepts for bringing up each. First, I shall discuss rules for training a male child as they apply to the plays. Cleaver says it is a parental duty to provide a child with a knowledge of reading and writing, and that learning is good for rich and poor alike. If the parents cannot teach the children themselves, they are to provide a good schoolmaster for them.
Euphoebus parents are reprimanded when they take no trouble to find out how the child is taught. Fathers should examine their sons on what they learn so that the schoolmaster will be careful what he teaches. Various years between five and seven were acceptable to start the child to school depending on the parent's judgment of his aptness. Richard Mulcaster recommends public school over private instruction for the boy because he will learn to get along well with other boys his age, and what is taught will be for the public good because the teacher will be in the public eye. As for subject matter, the son should learn to read English and Latin and to write. Mulcaster also recommends music as pleasant and healthful for body and soul. He mentions that the schoolmaster should teach the boy good manners, but the parents must enforce the lesson at home with discipline.

Shakespeare gives us two examples of the value of learning to poor men. In *Cymbeline* two gentlemen speak of Posthumus in the first scene as a poor gentleman who was educated by the king and prospered so rapidly in his learning that he became an object of great admiration in the court. In *Love's Labour's Lost* we find that the clown, who is not only poor (as was Posthumus) but also a lowly person, would have profited by being able to read. He is given two letters to deliver and, as he cannot read, fails in his duty by delivering them to the wrong people. An example of a boy going to school occurs in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. William, the
young son of the Page's, goes to school under Master Slender. Mistress Page says that her husband worries about the boy, feels that he is not doing well. Considering what we know of Slender, Page does well to wonder. The mother has Parson Hugh quiz William on his Latin and concludes, with the parson, that he seems a better scholar than previously imagined. Here we have a small glance at what goes on in the public school and of two parents who do not neglect their duty in having their son educated and keeping an eye on his progress. Volumnia takes a grandmotherly interest in her grandson's education when she remarks that he would rather see a sword and drum than his schoolmaster. Shakespeare even presents a schoolmaster, the ridiculous Holofernes in Love's Labour's Lost, who is complimented by the parson for the fine service he renders the children of the parish. Holofernes gives a preview of the accomplishments he passes on by speaking with many Latin and poetic flourishes. We have thus seen one child learning Latin and one foolish schoolmaster who spices his talk with an over abundance of it. As for the boy learning music, in Hamlet Polonius seems to indicate that Laertes occupies himself with music, for Polonius tells Reynaldo not to disturb him in this endeavor. We might conjecture that Harry Percy's schoolmaster had little luck in the recommended teaching of manners; Worcester, his uncle, reprimands him for his unmannerly treatment of Glendower. Hotspur replies, "Well I am school'd: good manners be your speed!" (I Henry IV. III. i.190).
Another aspect of a boy's education is learning to fence. Mulcaster says that he should be able to handle a weapon, and that the exercise of practice is good for the body. In *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* Panthino tells Antonio to send his son to court, so he will have the practice of tilts and tournaments among other advantages. Henry IV is very happy when he hears that his wayward son Hal will fight in a tournament. He feels it is a good sign. There is also much talk of fencing ability in *Hamlet*. Laertes is praised for ability learned and displayed in France. *Hamlet* practises frequently and is said to be anxious to try a bout with Laertes. Shakespeare presents this bout in the last scene.

One of the last phases in the education of a son is travel away from home. Batty says he has known many young men who have come home learned from their travels and others who have returned not only unlearned but wicked. He feels, however, that it is better to send them abroad to gain wisdom than to let them stay home in unprofitable idleness. Mulcaster thinks young men should stay at home unless they go abroad on a mission for their country. When a son is sent abroad he should be mature enough to judge between good and evil, and some sort of teacher or governor should be sent with him. Cleaver says the young man should be given good advice and warnings before he leaves, and Becon provides an example of advice to the young man abroad:

> and in so travaylynge holde thyselfe modest, styl
> and sobre, medlynge not beyonde thyn own facultye,
> Be gentle, freundely, fathfull and curteous to them,
conformynge thyself unto theyr honest fashions and
godly manners. Beware of eveil company and dronk-
ennes, beware of lyght & wanton women, learne no
vyce nor eveil maners of them...40

There are four plays in which young men go abroad to
further their education. In The Two Gentlemen of Verona Val-
entine leaves for the emperor's court and advises Proteus to
do the same. He recognizes that it is better to see the
world than to spend unprofitable time at home.

I would rather entreat thy company
To see the wonders of the world abroad
Than, living dully sluggardized at home,
Wear out thy youth in shapeless idleness.
(1.i.5-8)

Proteus's father is advised to send his son away to war, to
discover islands, or to study in a university, for it would
be "great impeachment to his age; / In having known no travel
in his youth" (1.i.15-16). The father agrees and sends him
with "good company" who travel to court the next day. He
thus recognizes the need for travel and the advisability of
providing a prudent escort. In The Taming of the Shrew Lucentio comes to Padua from his home to study philosophy. When
his father comes to visit and finds Lucentio's servant wear-
ing silk he begins to question the value of sending the boy
abroad:

0, I am undone! I am undone! while I play the good
husband at home, my son and my servant spend all
at the university.
(IV.i.69-71)

In All's Well when Bertram goes off to court, his mother wor-
ries because he is an "unseason'd courtier" and begs Lafeu
to watch over him. She tries to season her son's immaturity
by offering him this advice, which corresponds at some points with that offered by Becon:

Love all, trust few,
Do wrong to none: be able for thine enemy
Rather in power than use, and keep thy friend
Under thy own life's key; be checked for silence,
Never tax'd for speech.

(I.i.73-77)

In Hamlet we have three young travelers; Hamlet and Horatio were fellow students at Wittenburg. They evidently did not spend their university days tutoring young ladies or their fathers' money attiring their servants in silken disguises as did Lucentio, for both show the effects of good education, being thoughtful, sober, intelligent young men. The King and Queen, for some unexplained reason, desire Hamlet not to go back to school and prevail upon him to remain at court. This enforced idleness is galling to Hamlet and unfortunate in its results. Ophelia describes Hamlet as a scholar, among other things, when she grieves for his madness. We also see him reading and musing on more or less intellectual subjects. Laertes is a third traveler; he begs permission to return to France in the second scene. Polonius offers his son much good advice before he leaves, which, as in Becon, deals with being friendly, quiet, and conforming to custom, in this case clothes. Becon advises the young traveler not to fall into evil companionship, but Polonius reveals that a bit of drunkenness and "drabbing" does not bother him too much. The activities that Polonius describes as typical of young men abroad explain why some of our writers thought it better to keep them home.
Whether a son is at home or abroad the parent is responsible for policing his morals. Becon advises parents to keep track of what their children are doing in their absence and not to let them go out without permission. Parents should also be sure that the children do not consort with evil companions. Tasso retails sins of sons that cause parents grief. He mentions going to taverns, losing money gambling, injuring other persons, quarreling, being imprisoned, disgraced, or banished. Cicero is quoted, "they that think and judge that it is meete to pardon young mens faults are much deceived." He says the sins of the young are to be imputed to their elders, and so they, the children, should be punished severely for them. Dillingham says that fathers, instead of punishing the sins of their sons, give them money for gambling, repair the damage they do, and consider it a small matter if they consort with prostitutes. Philip Stubbes pronounced whoredom so little feared in England that "every scurvie boy of twelve, sixteen, or twenty yeeres of age" had half a dozen women with child at the same time. Henry IV, a father who has the grief and responsibility of an immoral son, frequently bemoans the sins of Prince Hal. He doesn't see him for days but hears that he consorts with low companions in taverns and even gets into trouble with the law for robbery. Henry obviously and correctly disapproves of his son's conduct and gives him several long lectures, but we never see him do anything else about the situation. He does not, as he should, keep Hal home or give him any
punishment beyond words; he just worries and talks; according to Cicero, he thus bears part of the guilt. Polonius is even more at fault than Henry IV, for he not only plans no punishment for the anticipated faults of Laertes, but has a sort of "boys will be boys" attitude toward the follies of youth. He keeps track of his son's activities, as is advised, by sending Reynaldo to slander Laertes a little to find out what he is really doing. He says:

...put on him
What forgeries you please; marry, none so rank
As may dishonor him; take heed of that;
But, sir, such wanton, wild and usual slips
As are companions noted and most known
To youth and liberty.

(II.1.19-24)

These things that will not dishonor Laertes are "gaming.../drinking, fencing, swearing, quarreling,/Drabbing" (II.1.19-24). One wonders what Polonius thought would dishonor his son. We might conclude that he is a little too liberal and worldly in what he expects of Laertes. Polixenes in The Winter's Tale worries about his son, who is often missing from the court. He has people getting information on Florizel and remarks that kings are as unhappy when their children prove "ungracious" as when they are virtuous but die. Henry IV would certainly agree with this; The Countess in All's Well says her son is corrupting his nature by associating with Parolles. Some of the gentlemen also warn Bertram against this dishonorable companion. Another grief to parents that was mentioned was the banishment of a son. Voltumnia suffers this grief when Coriolanus is banished; she is
even more upset when he attacks Rome, for when he was banished she felt the sentence was unjust, but when Coriolanus turns against his country it is treason, and she must mourn for his sin.

When bringing up a girl the duties are somewhat the same, but education is less important and moral discipline more important. The girl's education is in two fields. Vives says that when she is between four and seven years of age she should begin learning to run a house and to handle wool and flax. He points out that spinning and sewing were part of the education of Katherine, first wife of Henry VIII. The girl should also learn cooking so that she can dress meat for her parents and later for her own family. When she gets older she should relieve her mother of some of the work in the house. Two general examples of housewifely proficiency are Portia in *The Merchant of Venice* and Olivia in *Twelfth Night*, who have obviously been trained well in running a house, for both, though young, manage their households efficiently. More specific talents are seen in *Pericles* when Gower speaks of Marina weaving silk and sewing cambric as a girl in Cleon's house and when Perdita seems to have learned the arts of cookery in *The Winter's Tale*. In *The Merry Wives of Windsor* we find Anne Page taking over some of her mother's duties around the house. She serves wine to her father's guests and later calls them in to dinner.

Mulcaster says it was the custom in England to teach girls reading and writing, singing and playing music, and the
learned languages. They were not taught so that they could preach or expound at the bar, according to this gentleman, but so that they could read religious books and improve their morals and conversation. This education was to make them better companions for men and better able to raise children when the time came. One of the purposes of teaching music was so that the young lady could give pleasure to her parents. There were various ways in which the girl received this education. She might be placed out, that is sent to another household for her training. Mulcaster said there were no public provisions for feminine education unless a professor made some, but that the young lady could be taught privately at home, preferably by a woman, though men, he felt, were better teachers. Vives particularly says a girl should not be taught by a man unless he is old. In Euphues and His England, however, Camilla manages to spend time with Philautus by saying he is her tutor.

Most of Shakespeare's young heroines give the impression of a good education, but there are specific references to what and by whom the young ladies are taught. For instance, in Pericles Marina is said to have been trained in music and letters in Cleon's household, in other words, placed out. She sings to the lute better than his own daughter with whom she was educated. Portia in The Merchant of Venice is one of the women who show the results of a good education in their conversation; this young scholar, however, uses her education to the wrong ends, according to Mulcaster, when she pleads at
the bar. Baptista in *The Taming of the Shrew* says of Bianca:

And for I know she taketh most delight  
In music, instruments and poetry,  
Schoolmasters will I keep within my house,  
Fit to instruct her youth...  

I will be very kind, and liberal  
To mine own children in good bringing up;  

(1.1.92-95,98-99)

We see Bianca being taught; she is immediately provided with tutors. Lucentio, in disguise, is to teach her Greek, Latin, other languages, music, and mathematics. Hortensio is presented to teach music and mathematics, and Traino presents Baptista with a lute and some Greek and Latin books for her. Thus the young ladies are well instructed, but by young men, not the recommended instructors except by example in Lyly's fictional account. Miranda in *The Tempest* has been educated by her own father, and he says that she has had a better education than most princesses because of it. This procedure would be highly thought of, in all probability, because it is often pointed out that Cato taught his children himself. 57

There is one reference in Shakespeare that is somewhat puzzling. In *Love's Labour's Lost* Holofernes, the schoolmaster, says he teaches both boys and girls. Mulcaster does not mention any co-educational schools. The only way this can be explained is to assume that he did private tutoring. As for the aims of feminine education, we see Ophelia profiting by reading some sort of devotional book when she is set out as bait for Hamlet. Most of Shakespeare's ladies are good conversationalists and companions for their men, and this was another expected result of education. In *The Merry Wives of*
Mrs. Page evidently has enough education to make a judgment on her son's Latin performance, and the parson agrees with her judgment. Thus her education makes her a better mother. The values of musical accomplishments are seen when Glendower's daughter entertains her father and husband with singing. Her accomplishments, unfortunately, do not extend to any language but her native Welsh.

The problem of primary importance in raising a daughter is seeing that she is and stays virtuous. There are all sorts of methods for secluding and protecting the daughter from evil. Vives recommends that a girl from the time she is weaned be only in the company of women so that she will not learn to delight in the company of men. Perhaps this theory explains the fact that Miranda in The Tempest, who has seen only her father (I do not think we could call Caliban a man), likes and admires every man she sees in her innocent way. Prospero certainly cannot be blamed for this flaw in his daughter's rearing, but Cymbeline can and is told his mistake. When he is furious with his daughter for loving and marrying Posthumus, Imogen gives him an answer that cannot be denied. She says, "It is your fault that I have loved Posthumus: you bred him as my playfellow." (I.i.144-145). Vives also recommends that a girl be brought up with no knowledge of evil, only good. Many of Shakespeare's young ladies are very innocent. Desdemona gives this impression; her reaction to accusation is surprise and uncomprehending dismay. The same is true of Hero in Much Ado when she is accused of
ill-doing. The innocence of Miranda in *The Tempest* is delightful. She might be a character out of the Garden of Eden, so unworldly-wise is she. Ophelia is another laudably unworldly maiden; when she tells of Hamlet's vows the contrast of her innocence and her father's cynicism is most dramatic. He is sharp with her for being what she should be, innocent.

"Affection! pooh! you speak like a green girl, unsifted in such perilous circumstance. Do you believe his tenders, as you call them? (I.iii.101-103)"

The young maiden is to go seldom outside the house and then with her mother. Except in the disguise plots, we find very few of Shakespeare's heroines in the streets. When they do leave the house it is usually to go to a priest and arrange to elope or actually to elope. Silvia in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* goes to a priest in order to meet Eglamour, who is to escort her to Valentine. Juliet meets Romeo by going to her priest. All these incidents show why young ladies should not go out of the house. They never do so for good purposes. Thus Brabantio cannot believe it when he is told Desdemona is not in the house. He wonders how she got out; so evidently it was not an easy matter. A girl was not even supposed to be left alone in the house without a good woman as a companion. 61 We notice Juliet always has the nurse with her, but, as the nurse was not the best of women, it did not help. Various fathers ignore this good advice and lose their daughters. Jessica is left at home by Shylock and elopes; Desdemona has no female companion and so has opportunity to fall in love right under her father's nose; Polonius has
evidently neglected to set a woman with Ophelia and finds that she has been giving private interviews to Hamlet. The parents are also advised to see that the daughter has no favorite among her maids to whom she whispers secrets and no women about her who talk of lovers. We see the danger of this in various plays. Julia in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* talks to her maid of the men who come to woo her. The maid favors Proteus, and Julia is influenced and falls in love with this unfaithful young man. Her maid delivers his letters and helps Julia get ready to run away after him. Portia in *The Merchant of Venice* is influenced by Nerissa, but she does not let her love lead her to disobey her dead father's wishes. Juliet's nurse likes to talk of men to her charge and forwards the secret romance with Romeo. Hero's maid Margaret is another given to discussing amorous topics.

Vives says that a maiden must be very careful of her reputation, which is easily destroyed and only regained with great difficulty. The mother is to see that she has no liberty and does not talk to men. Also girls should shun any women who are hired by lovers to argue for them. Polonius is thus quite right in telling Ophelia that she should not be talking to men even if Hamlet had good intentions, which Polonius did not think he had. Poor Julia in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* is free, as was Ophelia, with her presence. Both girls fall in love and are forsaken by their lovers, though Julia gets Proteus back at the end of the play. Juliet, Desdemona, and Silvia all are given the opportunity of conversation with men, and they all fall in love and elope, to the
dismay of their parents. Another negligent father is Baptista who loses Bianca in *The Taming of the Shrew* by letting her talk to her young tutors. As for women solicitors, we have only one who is paid. Mistress Quickly accepts money from Fenton to push his suit with Anne Page in *The Merry Wives*. Anne, at the end of the play, marries him against her parent's wishes.

It is the father's duty to see that his daughter retains her chastity, and he is not even to be cheerful to her. Vives says that no matter how many virtues a girl has, if she is not a virgin she will have no honor, and he goes on to say that her whole family will be angry, dishonored, and sorrowful for her shame. Thus in *The Tempest* we find Prospero as the defender of his daughter's chastity. He tells of an attempt on the part of Caliban that he once foiled and now guards against. Polonius is quite harsh with his daughter, as was recommended, when he fears that Hamlet has evil intentions, which she doesn't know enough to stave off. In *Troilus and Cressida* the spectacle of Pandarus must have been disgusting to Shakespeare's audience. As Cressida's father is not in the city, Pandarus' duty, as her only male relative, would have been to protect her, not lead her into sin. A mother is the defender in *All's Well*, for the widow protects and advises Diana against thewooing of Bertram, and Mariana warns her how serious the loss of virginity is. In *Measure for Measure* Isabella defends her own chastity bravely when even her brother, whose cowardly wishes in this situation
are a shocking breach of his moral duty as Isabella's protector, would have her give in to Angelo. She rebukes Claudio and tells him that she would gladly give her life for him but not her honor. In Much Ado when Hero is accused of immorality, her father is horror-stricken in the manner predicted by Vives; he wishes her dead, feels that she cannot be his true daughter, and bemoans the dishonor to his house. Hero denies the accusation, and he says:

I know not. If they speak but truth of her, These hands shall tear her; if they wrong her honor, The proudest of them shall well hear of it. 

(IV.i.192-194)

Children have four duties to their parents. First, they must love their parents. This love is to be tendered regardless of whether the parents are loving and pleasant or rigorous. In King Lear Shakespeare gives us the love contest in the first scene. The older sisters profess great love and prove to be unnatural and unloving. Cordelia makes the statement that she loves her father according to her duty, which seems rather unemotional but is quite rational, as loving her father was her duty, and she performs it creditably later in the play. Laertes and Ophelia have a rigorous father, stern and formal, but their grief at his death is, I think, ample evidence of their dutiful love.

The second duty is obedience. The child is to obey any command that is not wicked and never to make a harsh answer when rebuked. Some writers feel that the child is not obligated to obey if the parents have not provided any virtuous instruction. Most of the disobeying in Shakespeare
occurs in connection with marriage, and that is to be discussed later. One comment that might be made at this point, however, concerns Shylock and Jessica. Jessica, in eloping with a Christian, proved herself a disobedient daughter. Her feelings about her father may have stemmed from lack of good instruction by example, and perhaps her action is thus defensible. A similar problem occurs when Celia in As You Like It runs away from her wicked father when he banishes Rosalind and will not let her defend her cousin. Her disobedience can stem from his wicked command and the poor example he sets. The case in Hamlet is more clear cut. His father's ghost commands him to avenge his death, but Hamlet is not immediately galvanized into action because he must determine whether the command is lawful, whether the ghost is really his father's, and whether Claudius really murdered his father. When he does determine that the ghost was his father's and the command is lawful, he obeys. In another sense Hamlet is in error; his father commands him to leave his mother alone, but he disobeys. When his mother begins to rebuke him he answers her harshly with an account of her own sins. Goneril and Regan also answer their father harshly, when rebuked for unkindness. Katharina in The Taming of the Shrew talks back to her father at the slightest provocation; she is the epitome of ill-tempered, inexcusable disobedience.

The third duty of the child is to honor the parents. This honor is to be tendered whether the parent is virtuous or not, because it is God's command. The child is always
to judge well of his parents; if they are sometimes in error, their faults are to be excused and hidden. The children are never to speak any evil of the parents, never to despise them or allow others to do so. This honor is to be preferred by the child, remembering the love and care of the parents in bringing him up.

In the light of this doctrine, Hamlet is again found to be at fault. Though his mother sinned it was not his place to despise her and certainly not to talk to Horatio about it. For all her faults, he should have remembered her love for him. Jessica is another one at fault for bringing her father's shortcomings to light and judging him. On the other hand, Celia in As You Like It has a more proper attitude than Hamlet and Jessica; she is much hurt by her father's rudeness but tries to cover it up by her own gracious conduct. In Macbeth Macduff's son challenges the murderers when they call his father a traitor, though his mother has just finished telling him that. Thus he refuses to despise his father or to let others do so as was recommended. Desdemona acknowledges her duty and respect to her father for the gift of life and education that he has bestowed upon her, showing that she knows the recommended ground on which the child properly bases a profound respect for the parent. Lear's elder daughters leave themselves open to criticism on all points mentioned above by showing their father little honor after they have his property, criticizing his faults both to himself and to others, and ignoring his reminders of what they owe him.
The fourth duty of children is to take care of their parents in their old age. If in their old age the parents fail in understanding, the child is to have patience and pay no attention if the parent does something unpleasing. In I Henry VI we have an example of a child protecting an aged parent; Talbot begs his son to leave the battle field. He says he is old and soon to die anyway, but the son refuses to leave his father to defeat and death, and they both die in the battle. Lear is, of course, the best example of the parent forsaken and treated cruelly in old age. His daughters refuse to maintain him in the agreed manner and do not even care when he goes out into the storm at night with no place to stay. Their claim that his understanding is impaired is not true, and then they show little of the patience that is their duty if such were the case. Cordelia and Edgar, on the other hand, do all they can to sustain the needs of their old fathers.

The most repugnant thing in nature is said to be the child who does evil to his parents, who seeks their lives. St. Matthew is quoted as saying God always takes vengeance on a child who does his parents harm. In two instances Henry IV accuses Hal of desiring his death. In I Henry IV he suggests that his son is his nearest enemy and will join the rebels, but he changes his opinion when Hal defends him on the battle field. Hal is much saddened that his father could believe he would desire Henry's death. In II Henry IV when the king is dying he awakes angrily to find Hal has
taken the crown away and accuses him of wishing his hasty death. Hal, in tears, answers that since the crown seemed to be that which was depriving his father of life, he took it away. They are reconciled then for the last time. In *King Lear* the daughters certainly do their father evil but only seek his life indirectly. Edmund, by betraying his father, hopes to bring his death about so that he will gain the inheritance. With blatant hypocrisy he bemoans his unnatural conduct to Cornwall. All three of these filial villains die, perhaps justifying the Christian view of divine vengeance. Such unnatural monsters as Goneril, Regan, and Edmund were not to be trusted by anyone. A philosopher is quoted:

\[
\text{doe not put thy trust in hym, whyche loveth not his father and his mother or hys kyn folkes. For if he doe not love them, it is in maner imposyble that he shoulde love thee.} \text{ Sl}
\]

This advice certainly holds true for Lear's older daughters and Edmund, for they betray not only their fathers and relatives, but even each other. Regan and Goneril are both in love with Edmund, and he makes promises to both. The pattern of treachery is continued when Goneril plans the death of her husband and kills her sister because of this love.

The symbol of the success or failure of the child-parent relationship is perhaps the tradition of the parental blessings and curses. Children are warned that the blessing of the parent "dothe fyrme and make stable the possessyons & the kyndred of the chyldern" and that they should never take pride in a rebuke given by their parents. So important is this
blessing that the parent is to punish a child that will not ask it. On the other hand, the curse of a parent, according to Soloman, brings the downfall of the child. Shakespeare inserts many parental blessings into the plays and a few important curses. We find such varied characters as Richard III, Bertram, Cordelia, and Laertes asking and receiving blessings. Laertes, before he goes to France, is happy because he can twice receive the blessing of his father. Lear, on the other hand, curses all of his daughters at one time or another though he repents having cursed Cordelia and begs her forgiveness at the end of the play. It is interesting to note the cycle in the play; Cordelia begins with a curse and ends with a blessing while Goneril and Regan begin with a blessing and end with a curse. Lear's curses, however, seem to be more effective than his blessings for all of the daughters meet violent deaths. The Duchess curses her son, Richard III, and wishes his death. He is impatient and scornful of her abuse as are Goneril and Regan of Lear's. The Duchess's curse is also effective, for Richard dies in battle shortly thereafter.

The third duty of parents is to find a marriage partner for their children. This duty in the plays and in the treatises is most important for daughters: that is, a parent may find a wife for his son but is supposed to take the initiative on his daughter's part. The parents must agree to the marriage of either. As I have said before, there should be few words between young men and women and no gifts exchanged.
Vives remarks that it is common opinion that a girl will marry better if she meets young men, sings, dances, and talks well. He says this opinion is erroneous, that love developed before marriage will cause jealousy or hate after. Thus we see that in theory courtship opportunities are limited, while in practice they are not. In Shakespeare we have practice rather than theory; Shakespeare's fathers usually expect to do the choosing for their daughters but give them freedom to meet and fall in love with men other than their choices. This situation is the cause of problems for Silvia in The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Bianca in The Taming of the Shrew, Juliet, Imogen, Anne Page, Desdemona, and Hermia in The Midsummer-Night's Dream.

When a daughter comes to marriageable age the father should see that she gets married to avoid such inconveniences as the "green sickness." He also should see that the child has a virtuous mate. One author tells of the woes of the father who has a daughter of marriage age; sometimes no one wants to marry her, or perhaps the father cannot pay a good dowry. If both of these are not circumstances to cause worry, then he must consider that his daughter becomes no more than a servant or slave to her husband when she marries. One author says a parent cannot force a child to marry, if it is not necessary, or compel them to marry someone they don't like, nor may they refuse them the right to marry at all. Marriages that are forced against the liking of the parties are said to bring much woe. Cornelius Agrippa condemns
not only fathers but monarchs who force subjects to marry against their wills. 91

We see various parents taking provision for the marriage of a daughter. Capulet picks Paris for Juliet; Cymbeline chooses Cloten for Imogen; in The Two Gentlemen of Verona the Duke of Milan proposes Thurio for Silvia; and Egeus insists on Demetrius for Hermia in The Midsummer-Night's Dream. All these gentlemen are furious when their daughters have other ideas, and all insist that the daughters marry the parental choice. Silvia's father is a slight exception; he denies her Valentine, her own choice, but tries to win her consent to a match with Thurio instead of forcing her. Simonides, on the other hand, is pleased with his daughter's choice in Pericles and sets about to win the knight for her; however, he cannot resist frightening her a bit because she was so positive in her demand. Prospero also pretends to dislike Ferdinand for a while, though he approves of Miranda's choice and agrees to the marriage. Polonius curses himself when he discovers that he has failed his daughter by breaking up a possibly happy and prosperous marriage for her with Hamlet. In The Taming of the Shrew Baptista does Bianca an injustice by not allowing her to marry any of her many suitors; on the other hand, he is in the embarrassing position of having no one who wants to marry Kate. Considering Kate's previously suitorless condition, it is interesting and amusing that Baptista pays hardly more than lip service to the necessity that both parties agree to the match. When a suitor turns up he tells him that Kate
must agree, but her complaints are more or less ignored by both the groom and her father. Another father who as good as denies marriage to his daughter is Lear, who takes away Cordelia's dowry and tries to discourage her suitors. The final grief of the father, the idea that a woman marries into slavery, is indirectly expressed by Iago when he says that the best woman in the world is good for nothing but brewing small beer and raising children. We have one instance in which a monarch forces a marriage. Bertram is married against his will to Helena at the king's command; and this forced marriage is an offense against God; there seems to be guilt on all sides before and after this marriage.

The children's reaction to marriage plans has various ramifications. They are to remember not to like anyone or talk of marriage to anyone without the consent of their parents because they are too young to choose a mate with wisdom and because they owe their parents this duty. If they do not like the choice of their parents, they are to change their own minds or to change their parents through humble petition and obedient conduct. A girl is to take no part in her parents' discussions of her marriage, not even to show any interest in the subject. Also a woman should never take the initiative in proposing marriage to a man, and a man should propose it to the father not the daughter. If a marriage is being proposed there should be no lies or discord connected with it. Juliet, at first, shows a maidenly disinterest and obedience when the subject of marriage
is mentioned, but later she falls in love with Romeo although she knows her parents would disapprove. She tops this unnatural act off by refusing Paris, though, of course, by this time she has married Romeo secretly. We notice here that Paris correctly asks Capulet, not Juliet, for permission to marry while Romeo of necessity and wrongly asks Juliet. She is a little forward in the balcony scene, but not as forward as Helena and Miranda. Helena in All's Well pursues a man who does not want her and thus makes two mistakes by asking him and marrying when he does not wish it. We must, however, give her credit for trying to back out, though the King would not have it. Miranda also takes the initiative and asks Ferdinand to marry her, that is, she indicates that she would like to marry him. In any other setting or person this would be open to criticism, but as she is completely free of worldliness and guile, it only adds to the delightful aura of innocence that surrounds her. Except for Kate's reluctance we have a more or less proper wooing sequence in The Taming of the Shrew. Petruchio asks Baptista for Kate, and Baptista is completely honest about his daughter by revealing that she is a shrew. Under such trying circumstances Baptista is to be commended for being truthful, as the writers advise, in this matter. In The Merry Wives of Windsor, on the other hand, we have an interesting situation. Slender has Page's permission to woo Anne Page, and Dr. Caius has Mistress Page's. Fenton, for Anne's sake, tries to get permission but fails; she dislikes both of the parent-approved
suitors and runs off with him anyway. In Much Ado Don Pedro woos Hero for Claudio and then gains her father's permission. Before this she is advised to encourage the suit, which was thought by her father to be Pedro's own, and she does. Two other obedient ladies are Octavia, who agrees to marry and love Antony because it is her brother's wish, and the French Princess in Henry V, who loves him when and because her father approves the match. In The Midsummer-Night's Dream Hermia must follow her father's wishes in marriage or die or become a nun. She is advised by Theseus to submit to her father, but she elects to become a nun and then elopes.

Much attention is paid to the correct sort of person to marry and the proper reasons to marry. People are not to marry for lust as Gertrude and Claudius did. Married love should grow slowly, for hasty love is said to be soon gone. Most of Shakespeare's lovers fall in love rapidly, sometimes at first sight. This situation is explained in two ways. Love at first sight is more romantic, and the Elizabethans seemed to have believed in it. Love bred by enchantment or witchcraft is supposed to be not only unreal but actually abhorrent. Shakespeare gives two situations that are conflicting in this area. Brabantio claims that Othello used some kind of enchantment to win Desdemona, and the general opinion seems to be that this is a serious offense if true. In The Midsummer-Night's Dream, on the other hand, the lover's are enchanted by fairies, but it is quite acceptable in this supernatural setting and because it makes possible a
happy ending.

Money is not to be a criterion for choosing a mate. Parents should not marry their children for gain or forbid them to marry someone only because the loved one is not wealthy. It should be considered, however, whether a man can support a wife. Thus Page in *The Merry Wives* objects to Fenton because he says the man is a spendthrift and wishes to marry Anne for her money. Fenton admits to Anne that this was his first object, but after knowing her he came to love her. Petruchio also is very frank about marrying for money, but continues to feel that it is the prime motive after he meets Kate. Baptista himself sells his other daughter to the highest bidder, although his plans do not materialize.

Age is another factor to be considered in choosing a mate. Fenton says the legal minimum ages for marriage are twelve for the girl and thirteen for the boy; however, I believe fourteen is correct for the boy according to most secondary sources. Cleaver does not recommend marriage at this early age because of the dangers in having children. He says children should also be old enough to know what they are taking on and to choose wisely. Another piece of advice is that the partners not differ in age more than four or five years. A man is to choose a young wife because she will be easier to teach and govern. Many of Shakespeare's young lovers are legally old enough but actually rather young for marriage. Juliet, for instance, is not yet fourteen, and Miranda could not be much more than that. Orsino in *Twelfth*
Night says that a man should be older than the woman, but Othello is led to fear that he is too old for Desdemona. In The Taming of the Shrew Gremio also is ridiculed as too old to court Bianca. Hortensio in the same play marries an older widow and has trouble governing her.

Elizabethan writers usually state that there should be equality between the husband and wife in blood and estate. They also urge that there be a likeness in manners or temperament. A man who aspires to marry above his station is warned that he will earn the hate and disdain of the woman's family. We remember, therefore, that the marriage of Othello and Desdemona is suspect for two reasons. There is not only a difference in blood, which is several times deplored, but there is also a difference in manners between this blunt sometimes violent military man and his gentle, innocent wife. On the other hand, in Hamlet Polonius tells his daughter that Hamlet is of too high a birth for her. The difference in their own natures is, however, a more important chasm between them, for Ophelia is meek and dependent, and Hamlet is very independent and cannot understand her complete domination by her father. If we turn to The Merry Wives we find that Page objects to Fenton as a husband for Anne partially because he is of a higher class. Similarly, Toby says in Twelfth Night that Olivia will not marry above her station, and when Malvolio aspires to her Toby objects strenuously from behind a bush. We recall, too, that Bertram despises Helena because she is below him in rank.
There are various criteria suggested by Elizabethan writers for choosing a good husband. Parents are advised to choose virtuous men for their daughters, and they should remember that a man's speech, manners, clothing, and the company he keeps are all signs of what kind of person he is. Parents should also consider by whom he was brought up. Turning to the feminine side, we find that ladies are warned against men who go about with frizzled locks making love and falling in love as a pastime.

Imogen wisely chooses Posthumus, who was brought up by her own father and is a virtuous man of great learning, and Katharina also shows good sense by objecting to Petruchio because of his strange speech and the old clothes he wears to their wedding, but her father approves of his father. On the other hand, Helena should probably have considered before she choose Bertram that he associated with Parolles, who was not exactly the best company. Turning again to the young ladies who follow the advice mentioned before, in Twelfth Night Olivia is captivated by the appearance and speech of Viola in disguise and infers good birth and breeding from them. Considering the advice about the habitual lover, Desdemona refuses the "curled darling" of Venice, but Juliet, perhaps not so wisely, falls in love with Romeo who has just fallen out of love with another girl.

The man also is to be very circumspect in choosing his wife; he too should consider whether her parents are good and what kind of education she has had. As a father should
not marry his daughter off until she proves herself able to manage a house, we assume that a man should take housewifery into consideration when choosing his wife. 116 Turning from background to temperament, one author thinks no man would be so foolish as to marry a shrew. 117 Also it is better to marry a maid than a widow, for she will be easier to govern. 118 Last, the prospective bridegroom must not marry a woman who has been deflowered. 119 Almost all of Shakespeare's heroines have acceptable parents except Jessica, and Lorenzo ignores her parentage to marry her. Bertram, on the other hand, does just the opposite; his mother speaks of Helena's good criterion education, but he does not let this impress him. Using better judgment, Sebastian is impressed by Olivia's abilities as a housekeeper in Twelfth Night. Petruchio, against all advice, marries a shrew, and Benedict more wisely tries to avoid Beatrice in Much Ado. When he does propose she is less sharp-tongued that before. Another unwise wooer is Hortensio, who lives to regret marrying a widow rather than a maid in The Taming of the Shrew. As for the prospective wife not being a virgin, Shakespeare gives us two situations in which such an accusation is made. Claudio rejects Hero at the altar in Much Ado because he believes she is not pure, and Angelo in Measure for Measure is said to have broken his marriage contract with Mariana by attributing dishonor to her.

It is recommended by Cleaver that the couple not decide on marriage until they know each other well; he feels that three or four meetings are not enough to strike up a life-
time bargain. 120 What then must we think of Romeo and Juliet who marry after two meetings, or Petruchio and Kate after one, or Ferdinand and Miranda who know each other one day?

The marriage contract is a promise between two people to marry, both being free to engage themselves and both having the consent of their parents. 121 A de praesenti contract, "I doe take thee," is one made without any conditions, and only in that way are the couple to be called man and wife. 122 A de futuro contract, "I will take thee," is not binding. However, no contract is binding unless both parties give free consent to it. 124 R. Warwick Bond, the editor of _Euphues and His England_, remarks that the contract was esteemed in this time about as valid as the marriage which took place later. 125 There is a controversy as to whether parents could break a contract made by children when it was made without their consent. Evidently the Catholics believed they could not, and the Protestants believed they could. 126 It was, however, generally felt in England that the parents' consent should be had, and ministers were admonished to keep young people from contracting without consent. 127 Fenton objects to the wicked custom of consumating the union between the handfasting and the marriage. 128 However, if there is a physical consumption the contract cannot be broken, 129 just as it can be broken if the girl is found unchaste. As for the dowry, which was usually discussed when the contract was made, there is some disagreement about whether it was a good custom, but most writers agreed that a woman without a dowry
Shakespeare, being full of love stories, is full of contracts and other pre-marriage situations. The contract between Petruchio and Katharina is the briefest of ceremonies and somewhat dubious, for the father and husband agree, but the bride does not agree. Petruchio insists that she has agreed privately; Baptista takes their hands and says it is a match; the guests say amen; and Kate is contracted. In *The Winter's Tale*, on the other hand, we have two willing children and one unwilling parent; the shepherd is about to contract Perdita and Florizel before the guests of the feast when Polixenes asks Florizel whether he has his father's consent. He says he cannot tell his father, and Polixenes says, "Mark your divorce, young sir." He then threatens Perdita and the shepherd and breaks up the feast. Yet a different case appears in *Twelfth Night*; the priest joins Olivia and Sebastian in a de praesenti contract, and Olivia later claims Viola for her husband and rebukes her for denying this binding match. When Prospero contracts Miranda and Ferdinand he warns the boy not to "break her virgin-knot" before the marriage, and Ferdinand agrees. Turning to another problem of consent, in *The Merchant of Venice* Portia binds herself to her dead father's will concerning her marriage, though she loves Bassanio. The situation is rather strange contract here. There is never any marriage presented or mentioned, but after Bassanio chooses the right casket he and Portia refer to each other as husband and wife. There are two explanations;
either Shakespeare just did some careless work here, or they consider themselves contracted, which would make them husband and wife, and marry before Bassanio leaves her. Unlike Portia, Romeo and Juliet exchange vows without considering their parents wishes and then marry without consent. On the other hand, Rosalind in As You Like It, though never really contracted, does have her father's consent to immediate marriage. In Much Ado, Pedro woos for Claudio and wins the father's consent. Claudio accepts the match, and Hero says nothing. Thus we never really see a contract, though we go to the ill-fated wedding. Claudio breaks the contract, claiming she is not a virgin, just as Angelo did in Measure for Measure. Valentine in The Two Gentlemen of Verona tells Proteus that he and Silvia are betrothed, but her father breaks the contract and banishes Valentine. In Measure for Measure, Angelo is tricked into consumating his contract with Mariana so that he cannot forsake her again. His original reason for breaking it was because her dowry was lost at sea. This reason, of course, was not one he admitted. Another heroine who suffers for lack of dowry is Cordelia. Her father takes hers away, and one of her suitors withdraws his favor. When France takes her anyway her sisters warn her not to scant her duty since he marries her at "fortune's alms."
The dowries of Anne Page and Katharina make them more attractive to Fenton and Petruchio, and the King gives Helena a substantial dowry in All's Well when Bertram complains that she is below him in fortune.
After the contract there is a marriage, and between the
two there is to be some time, though one author advises
not too much. In most of Shakespeare's plays there is
very little time intervening as in the marriages of Petruchio
and Katharina, Olivia and Sebastian, and Hero and Claudio.
The marriage itself is a solemn affair and is to take place
in the church with witnesses present. A Greek Bishop
judged clandestine marriages unlawful. These secret
marriages had no witnesses to them, and the person that per-
formed such a marriage was to be suspended from office for
three years in England. If such a marriage was performed and
one of the parties later married another person, the second
marriage would be invalid if the first could be proved.
The Catholics believed a marriage without the consent of the
parents that was consumated could not be broken. This pro-
position was challenged by William Perkins in 1609. Thus
there is some question about whether the Capulets could have
broken the secret marriage of Romeo and Juliet, which was con-
sumated before the proposed marriage of Paris. Perhaps Juliet
thought her parents could dissolve it, for she chose to give
her consent to the second marriage and take the sleeping po-
tion. It is interesting that the priest agrees to marry
them. His reason is that it will put an end to the feud of
the two families, and it does. There are other secret mar-
riages that later receive parental consent, for instance that
of Anne Page and Fenton, and of Bianca and Lucentio in The
Taming of the Shrew. Only two marriage ceremonies are
presented; Petruchio's marriage is described as a hilarious affair of curses and blows, and we see the beginning of the marriage of Hero and Claudio. The friar asks if they have come to marry, and Claudio says no, Hero answers yes. Then the friar asks if there are any impediments, and Claudio brings up the question of her chastity, thus putting an end to the wedding.

One irate Puritan talks of the scandalous wedding feasts that followed Elizabethan marriages, comprised of drinking, dancing, eating, and other sorts of deplorable gaiety. Shakespeare is aware of such a custom but does not seem to deplore it, for there is a lavish wedding feast in *The Midsummer-Night's Dream*. Katharina is dragged away from a merry gathering in *The Taming of the Shrew*, and the Capulets plan one for the marriage of Juliet and Paris.

Not only are parents responsible for dealing with the problems of each child individually, but they must also see that their children are peaceful and loving to each other. Thus parents are advised to love and deal with their children equally so that there will be no hard feelings among them. However, fathers must consider that they have to be severe to bad children and more considerate of good ones. They must also see that their children do not fight for any reason and foster love and peace among them. There are three fairly prominent Shakespearian examples of strained relationships between children. Baptista, for instance, in *The Taming of the Shrew* is harsh with Kate and kind to Bianca as we would
expect. Kate, in turn, is very cruel to her sister and complains that Bianca is her father's favorite. This seems to be an interesting glimpse of jealousy between sisters. Another such situation occurs in King Lear; the older sisters remark that Cordelia has always been her father's favorite, though Lear does divide the inheritance equally. There is little good feeling between these sisters, which may be the result of jealousy on one side and disapproval on the other. On the other hand, in the Henry IV plays the king often rebukes Hal and compares him unfavorably with John, but Hal is gracious enough not to resent this; in fact, he compliments his brother's bravery at the end of the first part. In the second part the king seeks concord among sons and advises one of the brothers to cultivate Hal, who will be king after his death.

Another interesting facet of the brother-sister relationship involves the responsibilities of the inheriting son. He should more or less assume his father's responsibilities in taking care of his brothers and sisters when his father is dead. Thus we find Prince Hal taking a paternal attitude toward his brothers when he becomes king and assuring them that all will be well. Also in Antony and Cleopatra Octavius dictates the marriage of his sister, and she obeys him as she would a father. Even before the death of his father Laertes gives advice to Ophelia, and, as was mentioned before, Claudio in Measure for Measure commits a shocking act when he suggests that Isabella give up her virginity for his life. The best
example of a brother who neglects this duty, however, is in *As You Like It*. Oliver, the heir, is rebuked by his youngest brother, Orlando, because he denies him a decent education. The ungracious Oliver then plans his death. Finally Orlando is forced to run away from home. Oliver is doubly in the wrong because not only was it his natural duty to bring his brother up well, but his father specifically demanded it before he died.

Speaking of the inheriting son suggests the fourth and last duty of a parent, to leave his money and goods to his children. The estate, of course, is to go to the first son of the first wife, though the father may give smaller portions to other children. If he has no son, his property is to go to his daughter. An inheriting daughter does not have to be in ward after the age of fourteen and may go to court to gain control of her inheritance at sixteen. As an example of neglect of duty, Henry VI is much criticized for promising to give the kingship away from his son in *Henry VI*. Turning to a different problem, Bolingbroke in *Richard II* has an undeniable argument with York when he comes to claim his inheritance which has been taken by the king. York had earlier warned Richard that he did evil by taking the inheritance away from the elder son of his uncle. In *King John* Lady Faulconbridge is much upset that her first son loses his inheritance, and King John says that he may have it because his brother cannot prove he was not the true first born of his father. On the other hand, there are
various women heirs in the plays, and we have a clue to their ages by the fact that they are not in ward. Olivia inherits her father's estate when her brother dies, and Portia is her father's heir. Lear plans to divide his estate equally between his three daughters but disinherits Cordelia. The situation in King Lear raises two more questions, the giving of the estate before death of the father and disinheritance.

Fenton says that God commanded fathers not to give their goods to their children before death, but to maintain their authority over them while they live. Batty comments on the foolishness of turning over the inheritance to the children and planning to live more comfortably on their benevolence and love. He says the children are often found careless and negligent of the parent's welfare. Lear is, of course, the main example here and comes to grief through his foolish generosity and his desire to spend his old age in ease. Gloucester, on the other hand, sees this danger and becomes very angry when Edmund tells him Edgar believes he should turn over the estate.

There is no doubt that a father may disinherit an heir, though it should be for great causes. Among the causes that merit disinheritation are seeking the life of the parent, not showing reverence, keeping bad company forbidden by the father, or refusing marriage proposed by the father. Thus Gloucester, at least, thought himself justified in disinherit-ting Edgar, who was supposed to be seeking his life. Henry IV would have been justified in disinherit-
for the bad company he kept. However, Lear was undoubtedly wrong in disinheriting Cordelia, though he thought she did not show him proper reverence. Shylock may have been justified because Jessica married secretly and very much against his will, though we do not know that he had proposed any other marriages to her. Similarly, we hear in the last scene in Othello that Desdemona inherited from her father, which is rather surprising.
NOTES  CHAPTER III

3. Roesslin, sig. D2r-D3r.
5. Boaystuan, p. 49.
9. Roesslin, sig. P3r.
10. W. Harrington, In this boke are conteyned the commendations of matrimony (1528), sig. E1v.
16. Batty, fol. 10r-11v.
18. Batty, p. 16.


23. Cleaver, pp. 54-56.


27. Cleaver, p. 332.

28. Batty, fol. 17r


31. Richard Mulcaster, Positions Wherin those Primitive Circumstances be examined, which are necessarie for the training up of children (London, 1581), p. 185.


33. Mulcaster, p. 28.

34. Mulcaster, pp. 78-79.

35. Batty, fol. 51r

36. Batty, fol. 18v.


38. Batty, fol. 52r-52v.


40. Becon, sig. M4v.

41. Becon, sig. M2r.
42. Becon, sig. L3v.


44. Batty, fol. 23v.

45. Dillingham, fol. 38r-39v.


47. Vives, sig. C3r-D1v.


49. Mulcaster, p. 168.

50. Mulcaster, pp. 177, 181.


52. Mulcaster, p. 178.


55. Vives, sig. E2r.

56. Lyly, II, 129.

57. Batty, fol. 9v.


60. Vives, sig. K4r.


65. Vives, sig. L1r.
66. Batty, fol. 8r.


69. Baldwin, p. 111.

70. Cleaver, p. 344.


73. Dillingham, fol. 31r-31v.

74. Batty, fol. 63r.

75. Cleaver, pp. 346-348.

76. Baldwin, p. 110.

77. Dillingham, fol. 33r-33v.


79. Averell, sig. C1v-C2r.


81. Larke, sig. D3v.

82. Whytforde, sig. D4v-E1v.

83. Larke, sig. D4r.

84. Vives, sig. 02v, 01v.


88. Hercules and Torquato Tasso, sig. F2v.

90. Whetstone, sig. Flv.


92. Cleaver, pp. 152, 352.

93. Whetstone, sig. F2r.

94. Gibbon, pp. 9-10.

95. Vives, sig. B4r.

96. Vives, sig. T2v-T3r.


98. Cleaver, p. 100.


102. Cleaver, p. 320.

103. Becon, fol. 44v.


105. Cleaver, p. 320.

106. Tilney, sig. B4r.


110. Whetstone, sig. Q3v.

111. Vives, sig. S2v.

113. Becon, sig. H1v.

114. Leon Baptist Alberto, Hecatonphila The Arte of Love (London, 1598), fol. 10r-10v.

115. Averell, sig. F4r-F4v.


117. Erasmus, sig. D2r.

118. Batty, fol. 98v.


120. Cleaver, p. 110.


123. Griffith, p. 270.

124. Perkins, p. 68.

125. Lyly, II, 218.


127. Interrogatories, sig. A2r-A2v.


129. Perkins, p. 23.

130. Politeunhia, fol. 205v.


132. Becon, sig. H8r.

133. Harrington, sig. A5v.

134. Batty, fol. 100r.


137. Becon, sig. I3r, I3v.
140. Cleaver, pp. 324-325.
145. Batty, fol. 77r, 78v.
146. Dillingham, fol. 40r-40v.
147. Batty, fol. 27r, 28v.
Chapter IV  Conclusion

In order to utilize the material in this thesis for analysis of Shakespeare's artistry it may be profitable to look briefly at some individual plays to see what light these Elizabethan family customs and beliefs shed on characterisation and dramaturgy in general. I shall single out fifteen plays in which my material is especially significant for this purpose.

First we might consider the comedy *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and the characterization of Page in particular, for in the light of my studies I have come to believe that he is quite well done. Page is an almost perfect husband, father, and master of his household. We see him first as a very genial host; then as a sober and thoughtful husband, who is wise enough to trust his good wife though he is told that her virtue is to be attempted; and finally we see him as a father. In most respects he is a very good father to his two children; he takes an interest in his son's education, and he wants to arrange a good match for his daughter, Anne. However, it is as a match-maker that "perfect" becomes "almost." Page has good reasons for objecting to Fenton, who is a spendthrift fortune hunter of a class too high for Anne. On the other hand, there is no indication that he can justify his desire to have her marry Slender, for Slender gives the impression of being a rather pathetic idiot. Anne herself gives her father's motive, which is not one approved
by our Elizabethan writers, when she says, "O, what a world of vile ill-favour'd faults/ Looks handsome in three hundred pounds a year!" (III.iv.32-33). Thus Page, who is otherwise a model man in a merry but everyday middle-class way, has one flaw, avarice, but even this avarice is in his daughter's interest.

Another play is of interest for the characterization of a married couple and the portrayal of their marital problems. In The Comedy of Errors Shakespeare shows an early hint of the great understanding of human nature that is to come. He manages to add an extra touch of humanity to this Latin comedy by bringing out the problems of Adriana. This poor wife is accused by her much-less-than-perfect husband of being a shrew, reprimanded by her sister for lack of patience, and rebuked by an Abbess for scolding; yet Shakespeare shows us why Adriana is not a perfect wife and also that she could be if given a chance. No one in the play sympathizes with her, unless it is the author, who seems to know that all the lectures in the world on wifely patience are not enough to soothe the heart of a woman who is ignored and ill-treated by a man she loves.

From a rather sad situation in a farcical comedy, we move to a hilarious satire on the whole relationship of the dominant but gentle husband and his humble and loving wife. I believe a knowledge of these Elizabethan customs adds greatly to the comedy in The Taming of the Shrew, for every method that Petruchio uses to subdue his rich but shrewish
wife is quite within the bounds of kind husbandly treatment, but quite unthought of by such sober men as the good Archbishop Hermion. I would venture to say that Shakespeare had in mind a satire on the ideal training of the wife, for he contrasts Petruchio's highly comic antics with the most sober and serious of speeches on marriage; for instance, Petruchio himself speaks of the happiness that ensues from right rule, and Katharine makes a concluding speech on the place and duties of the ideal wife. Even the introduction to the situation suggests satire when Baptista makes the statements of a thoughtful father and then proceeds to get the most unpopular member of his family off his hands as fast as he can and with only the slightest token consideration for her feelings on the matter.

*All's Well That Ends Well* presents quite a different problem. As I said once before, there is guilt on all sides before and after the marriage of Helena and Bertram, but we usually, and somewhat unfairly, tend to give Bertram most of the blame for this unpleasant situation. There can be no doubt that Bertram is not the most admirable of heroes, but in many ways he is quite human and believable. Countess Rousillon opens the play by worrying about her son's immaturity, and this immaturity is, I believe, the root of Bertram's troubles. Being young and proud, it is quite natural for him to rebel against an unwanted marriage that is forced upon him. Three considerations help to redeem Bertram: First, the King, from the religious point of view,
had not the right to force the marriage. Secondly, it was quite improper for Helena to solicit marriage. Last, most writers advise against marriage before the parties are mature enough to enter it with wisdom, and Bertram was hardly ready to be married. He was interested in wars and bravery, and he was interested in sowing wild oats, but he was not interested in marriage unless perhaps it was some noble match to feed his youthful ego. Thus before the marriage anyone but Bertram was to be blamed; after Helena becomes his wife his actions are reprehensible. He refuses to appreciate her virtues, puts her away, and goes off in search of glory, ending his quest in attempted adultery. Again immaturity is the telling factor; Bertram was probably not old enough to appreciate virtues unless they are connected with a renowned family name, nor does he really consider himself married, if we accept his own statements, and so the attempt of Diana would be, as he says in the last scene, just a youthful misstep, not adultery. I am, of course, looking at this situation from Bertram's point of view, but I believe this is justifiable because Shakespeare does not seem to feel any need to make excuses for him. As I have already said, Helena's actions were quite defensible to an Elizabethan; although Bertram was not mature enough to make the best of a bad situation, Helena is quite practical and takes action as soon as the opportunity presents itself.

To leave the upper classes for a while, we might devote some attention to Malvolio and the servant problem in Twelfth
Night. He seems to be another of these puzzling, and therefore all the more interesting, tragi-comic characters.

Three Elizabethan ideas complicate an interpretation of Malvolio's character and his relations with the other members of Olivia's household. He is proud, and a servant should not be proud; he is a tattle-tale, and a servant should not be a tattle-tale; but, on the other hand, he is Olivia's steward and therefore is responsible for running the house smoothly and keeping the other servants in line. Thus our first problem is to decide whether Malvolio is doing his duty in telling Olivia that Fabian goes to bear-baitings, and Maria condones the riots of Andrew and Toby or whether he is just being spiteful. We can argue effectively that the former motive is a real one, for Olivia, as head of the house, is responsible for the morals of the members, and Malvolio, as her steward, is responsible for keeping her posted on everything that goes on in the house. Whatever his motives, it would be quite natural for Maria, Toby, and Fabian to dislike him, and quite cleverly choose his weak spot, his pride, to aid them in retaliation. To conclude it is quite possible that Malvolio is victimized for doing his duty, and thus we add a clear tragic note to the comic melody provided by Maria's adroit fingering of the strings of his self-love.

I mention The Winter's Tale next, not because I think it a good example of Shakespeare's use of family and household lore, but because it is one of the few plays in which an understanding of these conventions does practically no good
at all. Jealousy, for instance, was one of the most talked about, thought about problems in marriage during Shakespeare's time, and yet there is practically no standard explanation for the jealousy of Leontes and also no motivation. The only applicable Elizabethan idea we can offer is that it was quite unfair of him to force Polixenes on Hermione and then accuse her of ill-doing. Similarly, Hermione is practically a perfect wife, but she separates herself from her husband for sixteen years with no explanations whatever. I believe we must conclude that in the case of The Winter's Tale Shakespeare could not quite overcome the obstacle of an exceptionally improbable plot.

A more interesting situation is the father-son relationship in the Henry IV plays. The king is most dramatic and most human when we see him worrying over and remonstrating about the sins of his son. Shakespeare attains excellent dramatic contrast between the flamboyant young prince, who is gay and careless in the company of Falstaff and yet sincerely repentant before his father, and the old king, who is so conscience-stricken that he see Hal's youthful ill-doings as divine retribution for his own sins. Henry's impatience with Hal is doubly effective because it stems from his knowledge that his own days are growing fewer, and he must leave his hard won kingship in the hands of a young ruffian. He is pathetically grateful for any good sign from Hal; for instance, when he hears in Richard II that Hal will come to the tournament he has hope, and when Hal defends him on the battle
field in *I Henry IV*, he is overjoyed at his simple, natural act. In their final scene together in *II Henry IV* there is a complete understanding between the king and his son. At this point the impulse that drove Hal to seek pleasure in the taverns of London, the desire to escape the burden of political responsibility, has abated, and he sympathizes with his father's burden. His explanation of the taking of the crown is a source of great joy to the dying king, who then gives him the last bit of serious advice before he dies.

Another example of good characterization in a history play occurs in *Henry VIII*. Shakespeare gives a most sympathetic portrait of Queen Katherine; she is, by her own admission and her husband's affirmation, an ideal wife caught in the toils of an unfortunate political situation. In her dying speech she remembers all the considerations of a good wife, mother, and mistress by forgiving Henry and sending him her best wishes and her love, by soliciting his love and protection for their daughter, and by asking him to provide for her faithful women. The sympathy we feel for the tragic divorce and death of this brave and gentle queen is enhanced by the sympathetic expressions of those about her in the play. The fact that Shakespeare creates such a picture of Katherine is something of a tour de force when we remember that he could not make Anne Bullen unattractive because she was Elizabeth's mother. However, in walking this dramatic tight-ropes, he successfully characterizes both women with sympathy and human insight.
Turning to Latin tragedy, the mother-son-wife relationship in Coriolanus deserves brief mention. Volumnia and her son are exceptionally close; in fact, we might say that Coriolanus sees himself through his mother's eyes. He is so willing to meet her expectations that he even agrees to debase himself before the people of Rome in order to gain a political office that is valued only by his mother, not by himself. Virgilia, his wife, stands outside this charmed circle of valor, honor, and desire for renown. She loves the man and not the laurel wreaths of his victories. Thus though she is a minor character, she is quite pathetic, for her mother-in-law chides her when she worries about the dangers her husband faces, and Coriolanus, with similar insensitivity, asks her why she weeps over his victorious return to Rome. However, Virgilia is not the only victim of this triangle, for Coriolanus himself comes to grief through Volumnia's ambitions. The last time that he follows the advice of his mother by sparing Rome he says:

(O my mother, mother! O!
You have won a happy victory to Rome;
But, for your son,—believe it, O, believe it,
Most dangerously you have with him prevail'd,
If not most mortal to him.
(V.iii.185-189)

He realizes at last that more has been demanded of him than he can safely provide; his last act for Volumnia's sake delivers him into the hands of his enemies, as did his sojourn with the plebs when he stood for political office. His attempts to follow the advice, opinions, and examples of his
elders are thus disastrous.

We have a very different type of family tragedy in *Romeo and Juliet*. Many Elizabethan writers predict disaster for young marriages contracted without the counsel and consent of the parents, and Shakespeare gives us an example of such a disaster in this early tragedy of impulsive, impatient, youthful lovers. The idea of the sober, well-considered marriage falls before the force of the love of Romeo and Juliet. They marry in haste and die in haste; neither can wait to see what the next moment will bring, and their slower, more careful elders can never catch up with them in time to avert tragedy. Perhaps an Elizabethan would have seen this play as a tragedy of youthful action unrestrained by the slower wisdom of age.

In *Hamlet* we have another problem of youth restrained and unrestrained, but it takes quite a different form here. The children of Polonius are held in by the bonds of obedience; on the other hand, Hamlet's youth is restrained by his own intellectuality and his own maturity. Thus he is not held by the fetters of obedience to age, but by the attributes of age in himself. Thus he is capable of individual action, while Laertes and Ophelia are not. Perhaps it would be considered a flaw in Hamlet that he does not tender respect to his mother and other elders and depend more upon their opinions, but this independence of his explains the glimpse we have of the blind side of his character, the Hamlet that cannot understand Ophelia and forgive her for obeying
her father scrupulously. Laertes and Ophelia stand as character foils to Hamlet. In a sense we must choose between them, and one wonders what choice an Elizabethan would have made. Is the overly dependent youth more desirable, or the completely independent youth? Perhaps a clue is offered in the common opinion that a father should not be so fierce with his children that they are afraid to do or say anything. Laertes may be the product of such a situation; the very sternness and positiveness of Polonius may account for his dependent character, which could be called a flaw in the son stemming from a fault in the father. Both Laertes and Ophelia are conceivably open to suggestion from any unscrupulous elder who cares to exert influence upon them. Thus Claudius is able to use Laertes as a tool to eliminate Hamlet, and Laertes's gullability is not to be desired. Some defense can be made for Ophelia because she obeys only her father, and a daughter's strict obedience was expected. However, if we choose and if the Elizabethans chose, I believe Hamlet would be the preferable example because his youth is tempered by maturity, and he has thus earned his independence.

In *King Lear*, the greatest of Shakespeare's tragedies, domestic affairs receive their fullest treatment. Shakespeare builds up his pattern of universal disruption mostly on the domestic level, in the family. The chains of command and responsibility are destroyed, and the edifice of society, the family, is pulled down through the errors of various male characters. Lear begins the cycle by giving
away his authority over his children and augments his error by disinheriting a loving daughter and giving all to two evil daughters, who in turn treat his unnatural generosity with unnatural unkindness. Gloucester then violates all the rules of inheritance by putting away a virtuous true-born son to enable a base-born villain, who in turn betrays him. The third basic maladjustment involves the domination of Albany by Goneril. When authority is completely taken from its rightful owners, unnatural chaos ensues. Goneril and Regan dominate their father, Oswald insults him, and Cornwall stocks his messenger. Cornwall blinds his host and is in turn killed by his faithful servant. Goneril plans to kill her husband and poisons her sister; Edmund, having betrayed his father and brother, proceeds to trick his ally, Albany, by taking charge of the prisoners and ordering Cordelia's death. When chaos has run full cycle domestic affairs begin to return to normal; the three deceived male characters realize their errors through suffering. Gloucester and Edgar and Cordelia and Lear are reunited but separated by death soon after. The final regeneration lies with Albany, who assumes, at last, his rightful position of authority over Goneril on the domestic level and over Edmund on the political level; he loses a wife to win a kingdom.

I have already spoken extensively of the domestic problems in Othello. I believe a production of Othello would have been more convincing to an Elizabethan audience than to a modern one because so much of the motivation is based on
ideas typical of Shakespeare's time. For instance, without considering Iago's proofs of Desdemona's infidelity, his arguments on the probability that she will be or is untrue are most convincing and quite enough to plant a hardy seed of jealousy in the Moor's mind. Iago simply points out that everything about their marriage is unfavorable: the differences in blood, rearing, age, and manners, the propensity of Italian women to err, and Desdemona's willingness to deceive her father are all causes or forecasts of infidelity. Desdemona herself aids Iago's campaign, but her ineptitude is an inevitable result of the ideal humility and innocence of the Elizabethan wife. Emilia's part in the tragedy is also quite defensible when we grant that she is trying to be both a good wife and a good woman and cannot quite reconcile the two.

One last observation can be made on the character of Lady Macbeth. When we observe Lady Macbeth as a counselor to her husband and as a hostess, we find that she is what might be called an other-directed person; she is interested in prestige, external appearance, and ceremonious gestures. For instance, her counsel is almost heartless; she has little interest in the tortures of Macbeth's mind, for she cares mostly about his external appearance. He is to look the innocent part, no matter what he really is. We get the impression that she feels one is not a murderer unless one looks like a murderer. Thus she says, "A little water clears us of this deed."(II.i.67). This suppression of emotion
betrays her at the end of the play, but even when her guilty
mind dwells in sleep on the crimes in which she is involved,
the external appearances are still of primary concern as she
says, "Out, damned spot!" and "What, will these hands ne'er
be clean?" (V.i.39, 47-48). Her concern with externals
determines to a great extent her character as a hostess. We
have already noted her formal, elaborate greeting of Duncan.
When Duncan is murdered her dissembling is quite in character;
she exclaims, "Woe, alas! What in our house?" thus inadvert-
ently giving the impression that the most distasteful thing
about the murder is that it occurred in her own house. Later
at the feast when she is a queen she again emphasizes cere-
mony and appearance by pointing out to her husband and guests
that it is better to eat at home unless the feast away from
home is graced with ceremonious trappings. When Macbeth des-
troys her hospitable efforts by seeing Banquo's ghost, she is
furious and rebukes his foolishness soundly. It matters not
that he is frightened half out of his wits, for he is again
guilty of spoiling her efforts as hostess and making an em-
barrassing scene. Her concern with appearances causes her
to be stout hearted for a time, but it makes her insensitive
to the mental agonies of her husband.

Thus we see that this domestic material not only gives
us information of the footnote type, but also enhances and
sometimes modifies our understanding and appreciation of
Shakespeare's dramatic art.
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