

presents nothing to be added or explained. It is simply this: *bethink you with whom you are arguing.* It is not a term of supposition or of opinion, not as Iago nor as Othello's *think*—

"I did not *think* he had been acquainted with her."

"What dost thou *think*?"

"My Lord, you know I love you.—  
I *think* thou dost;"

but of recollection:—

"We come to have the warrant.—  
Well *thought upon*; I have it here about me."

"I have *bethought* me of another fault."  
*Richard III.*  
*Measure for Measure.*

And as Shakspeare elsewhere uses *mind* for *re-mind*—

"Let me be punished, who have *mind*ed you  
Of what you should forget."

Noticing these differences, "stint your question," appears to me as needless as it is harsh.

One slight substitution, *a* for *the*, would materially effect—*improve*, I venture to say, the whole passage.

"I pray you think you question with *a* Jew," exemplifying Antonio's general scorn and hatred of the whole race. "With *a* Jew," with HIM, then and there present, its type and monograph, than whom, in the Christian merchant's vehement *exergesia*, waves, wolves, and winds, are less unpersuadable. If this reading be not, as possibly it is, in some early edition of our poet, I willingly accept the peril of its suggestion.

Agreeing with MR. KEIGHTLEY in the evident loss of a syllable—

" . . . from which lingering penance  
Of such misery doth she cut me off,"

I think the simple article a preferable to any epithet for its suppletion. If one there must be, let it be reasonably relative to its subject, not vague and general.

I am glad to conclude with the ready acceptance of MR. KEIGHTLEY's emendatory *of* for *or*, so happily enforcing Portia's denunciation, Act IV. Sc. 1. Never was the effect of *one* letter's change made more evident than in this, and his almost equally concise substitution of *we* for *who* in Lenox's fine irony (so fine as to be positively transparent), *Macbeth*, Act III. Sc. 6. Were a French newswriter or pamphleteer to be half as ironical, Monsieur Persigny's successor would not be slow in sending him a caution.

EDMUND LENTHAL SWIFT.

**BACKARÈ.**—This strange word was in use in the sixteenth century, but apparently without any just idea of its origin:—

"Ah Sir! Backarè, quod Mortimer to his sowe."  
*Roister Doister*, Act I. Sc. 2.

"Backarè, quoth Mortimer to his sow:  
Went that *sow* back at his bidding, trow you?"  
*Heywood, Epigrams.*

"The masculine gender is more worthy than the feminine.

Therefore, Licio, Backarè."

Lyly, *Mydas*, Act I. Sc. 2.

"Backarè, you are marvellous forward."

*Taming of the Shrew*, Act II. Sc. 1.

As would appear from Heywood and Lyly, *Backarè* was supposed to signify "go back!" This, however, would account only for the first syllable; and I suspect that the original meaning may have been quite different. May not Mortimer's sow have been a brindled one? and he have called her *bigarrée*, i. e. brindle, which, being corrupted into *backarè*, may then have been thought to come from *back*?  
THOS. KEIGHTLEY.  
Belvidere, Kent.

"ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL" (3<sup>d</sup> S. iv. 107.)—MR. EASY'S conjecture as to the meaning of the initials E. and G., in the stage directions of the first folio of *All's Well that Ends Well*, has been anticipated by Capell in his notes on the play. As one of the editors of the Cambridge Shakspeare, I may be permitted to add that we had independently come to the same conclusion as MR. EASY with regard to the meaning of the names "Charbon" and "Poysam," and that our note containing this conclusion was in the printer's hands several days before MR. EASY'S note appeared.  
W. ALDIS WRIGHT.

Trin. Coll., Cambridge.

"ET TU, BRUTE!": CÆSAR'S DEAFNESS.—Can any of your correspondents tell me whence Shakspeare derived the expression, "Et tu, Brute!" which he puts into the mouth of Julius Cæsar? I cannot find them in any ancient writer. Plutarch, from whom most of the materials for this play are taken, does not give them; and Suetonius gives a somewhat similar expression, but in *Greek*.

Shakspeare makes Cæsar say:—

"Come on my right hand, for this ear is deaf."

Is there any authority for this? F. G.

[Shakspeare's authority for this exclamation, 'Et tu, Brute!' would appear to have been in the old play entitled *The True Tragedy of Richard, Duke of Yorke, &c.*, printed in 1600, on which he formed his *Third Part of King Henry VI.*:—

"Et tu, Brute! wilt thou stab Cæsar too?"

The same line is also found in *Acolastus his Afterwitte*, by S. Nicholson, printed in the same year. So in "Cæsar's Legend," *Mirror for Magistrates*, 1587:—

"And Brutus thou, my sonne, quoth I, whom erst I loved best."

Malone conjectures that the Latin words appeared originally in the old Latin play, *Epilogus Cæsaris Interfecti*, by Richard Eedes; played at Christ Church, Oxford, in 1582.]

LETTERS OF SHAKSPEARE AND NELL GWYNNE.—  
Can any reader of "N. & Q." throw light upon