The Complete Concordance to Shakspere

Daughter of the music publisher Vincent Novello, Mary Cowden Clarke (1809–98) grew up in London amid her father's literary and artistic circle. Charles and Mary Lamb were family friends, and their Tales from Shakespeare (1807) inspired the young Mary to become a scholar of the Bard. This monumental concordance – which took twelve years to compile and a further four to see through the press – was first published between 1844 and 1845 in eighteen monthly parts, and then in book form in 1845. The preface opens with a statement that reflects Cowden Clarke's great admiration and ambition: 'Shakspere [sic], the most frequently quoted, because the most universal-minded Genius that ever lived, of all Authors best deserves a complete Concordance to his Works.' It was to remain the standard work of its kind for half a century and is still a fascinating and diverting source of information on Shakespeare's extraordinary vocabulary. In this reissue, the original type size has been enlarged to improve legibility.
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The Complete Concordance to Shakspere

*Being a Verbal Index to All the Passages in the Dramatic Works of the Poet*

**Mary Cowden Clarke**
THE

COMPLETE

CONCORDANCE TO SHAKSPERE:

BEING

A VERBAL INDEX

TO

ALL THE PASSAGES IN THE DRAMATIC WORKS OF THE POET.

BY

MRS. COWDEN CLARKE.

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THIS WORK
IS
CONSECRATED TO THE MEMORY
OF
SHAKSPERE,
AND
TO THE USE OF THE BRITISH NATION,
WHOSE BRIGHTEST ORNAMENT IS HIS GENIUS,
BY
MARY COWDEN CLARKE.
Preface.

Shakspeare, the most frequently quoted, because the most universal-minded Genius that ever lived, of all Authors best deserves a complete Concordance to his Works. To what subject may we not with felicity apply a motto from this greatest of Poets? The Divine, commending the efficacy and "twofold force of prayer—to be forestalled, ere we come to fall, or pardoned, being down;" the Astronomer, supporting his theory by allusions to "the moist star, upon whose influence Neptune’s empire stands;" the Naturalist, striving to elucidate a fact respecting the habits of "the singing masons," or "heavy-gaited toads;" the Botanist, lecturing on the various properties of the "small flower within whose infant rind poison hath residence, and med’cine power," or on the growth of "summer grass, fastest by night, unseen, yet crescive in his faculty;" the Philosopher, speculating upon "the respect that makes calamity of so long life;" the dread of something after death, the undiscovered country, from whose bourn no traveller returns;" the Lover, telling his "whispering tale in a fair lady’s ear," and vowing the "winnowed purity" and "persistent constancy" of his "heart’s dear love;" the Lawyer, discussing some "nice sharp quicklet of the law;" the Musician, descanting on the "touches of sweet harmony;" the Painter, describing his art, that "pretty mocking of the life;" the Novelist, seeking an illustrative heading to a fresh chapter, "the baby figure of the giant mass to come at large;" the Orator, labouring an emphatic point in an appeal to the passions of assembled multitudes, "to stir men’s blood;" the Soldier, endeavouring to vindicate his profession, by vaunting the "pomp and circumstance of glorious war;" or the Humanist, advocating "the quality of mercy," urging that, "to revenge is no valour, but to bear;" and maintaining that "the earth is wronged by man’s oppression,"—may all equally adorn their page or emblazon their speech with gems from Shakspeare’s works.

To furnish a faithful guide to this rich mine of intellectual treasure, superadding what was defective in my predecessors, Twiss and Ayscough, has been the ambition of a life; and it is hoped that the sixteen years’ assiduous labour devoted to the work, during the twelve years’ writing,* and the four more bestowed on collating with recent editions and correcting the press, may be found to have accomplished that ambition, and at length produced the great desideratum—a complete Concordance to Shakspeare.

* I cannot refuse myself the pleasure of mentioning that the day which witnessed the conclusion of this task, was the birth-day of the best of mothers—Mary Sabilla Novello; she who forms the glory and happiness of her children; she who first inspired me with a love for all that is good and beautiful, and who therefore may well be said to have originated my devotion to Shakspeare.
PREFACE.

The appearance of a Preface with the concluding number of a periodically published work, though it possesses the advantage of affording an opportunity of commenting upon any thing that may have occurred in the course of printing; yet on the other hand, it involves a degree of disadvantage to the author, more especially in the present case, where there was judgment to be exercised in the admission or omission of certain words, and the right of that judgment to be vindicated and explained. The apparent inconsistency of omitting particular words when used in one sense, while they were retained in other instances, could only be accounted for by that discretionary power, which the author must claim in the Preface; where good and sufficient reason could be advanced why that power was not merely exercised for the sake of condensation, but likewise for perspicuity, and the especial benefit of the quoter. For instance, it might at first excite surprise to find so few examples of the word let; but by omitting it as an auxiliary verb (where the simple fact of its being universally joined to another verb of more importance, renders it less likely to suggest itself as a means of reference, as—“let me remember thee what thou hast promised.”) and retaining it merely in its more singular sense, the space gained is the enormous difference between 17 lines and 9284, or six printed pages of three columns each; while at the same time the few important instances in which the word occurs are thus rendered far more clearly apparent and easy of reference.

This was felt to be so valuable an arrangement, that, even during the course of printing, several thousand lines of MS. were cancelled—thus: well, omitted as an adverb, saves about 1550 lines, and leaves clearer the word as a noun, and where it indicates health; it is also retained where a pun is involved, as—“would not this ill do well?”

It must be borne in mind that these omitted references are so frequent, as well as of such insignificance, that their retention would but have encumbered, and (so to say) hidden the other references to the same word of more distinct and unquestionable importance: as an example of this, “my lord,” as a mere title, occurs in the play of Hamlet alone, no fewer than 192 times!

Come, look, marry, pray, truth, truly, and well, when used merely interjectionally, and still and well, as adverbs, are omitted. Like, as an adverb merely conveying a simile, as—“he receives comfort like cold porridge,” from the multiplicity of examples, and because such passages invariably contain words more striking—is omitted. Toward and towards are only retained when used peculiarly.

Titles: as master, mistress, lord, lady, king, count, don, signior, etc., when joined to proper names, are omitted; as are also lord and lady, when used merely as sir and madam. A few verbs and adverbs, as, to be, to have, to do; and beyond, some, never, etc., are omitted, on account of their insignificance, and frequent recurrence; also, oaths and exclamations of small importance, a few peculiar ones only, such as avoint, avaint, etc., being retained.

All nouns and verbs spelt alike are placed under one heading; and all plural nouns will be found under the same headings with their respective singulars. A few words, such as naught and nought, salted and sallet, spelt indiscriminately in various editions, are placed under one heading.
PREFACE.

When a word recurs on the same subject, and with but little variation of context, in the course of a scene, or stands so closely repeated as inevitably to catch the eye in looking out the passage in the Play, as—“my poverty but not my will consents. I pay thy poverty, and not thy will;” the repetition is merely indicated by the word (rep.) in the Concordance.

The size of the Work has been selected with a view to its ranging with Mr. Charles Knight’s popular and beautiful Pictorial Edition of Shakspere; but it will admit of being cut down so as to conform with the usual octavo volumes.

In Mr. Payne Collier’s edition of Shakspere, he divides the second act of the Midsummer Night’s Dream, into two scenes only; but in most editions it is divided into three, I have adopted the latter mode of reference, merely pointing out the variation here, to avoid any confusion. I availed myself of the present opportunity to offer my thanks publicly to the above-named gentleman, for the kind and handsome manner in which he entrusted me with the then unpublished MS. of his concluding volume, when I took the liberty of applying to him, though unknown, for the purpose of collating his edition with the others, in order to complete my Concordance. Such a mark of confidence was a worthy type of the fraternity of feeling inspired by a close study of our immortal Poet; and it is one of the not least agreeable concomitants of my task, that it has been the means of my receiving generous testimonies of sympathy and encouragement from many of the cleverest men of our age, between whom and myself I could never have hoped for any assimilation, had it not been for the mutual existence of profound veneration and love for the genius of Shakspere.

Let me not likewise omit to acknowledge (after the fashion of dramatic authors in the preface to their Plays, towards the actors who embody their conceptions) my obligations to my co-mates and brothers in ‘labour’—the Printers; for though the public can judge of the typographical beauty and accuracy of the pages of the Concordance which they have produced, no one but myself can appreciate their care, minute correctness, and patient assiduity.

Shakspere himself says: “Most poor matters point to rich ends;”—I trust my humble labour may tend to the “rich end” of furthering a universal study and appreciation of his genius;—in this hope, it only remains for me to take leave of those for whom I have been working so many years (I cannot call them my readers), with an assurance that it has been a labour of love, and that it has been productive of many happy thoughts and aspirations to

Their faithful and obedient servant,

Mary Cowden Clarke.
ABBREVIATIONS.

(art.) articles.
(chao.) chorus.
[Col.] or [Col.] Collier.
(epil.) epilogue.
(epit.) epiph.
(Gow.) Gower.
(indict.) indictment.
(ind.) or (induc.) induction.
(let.) letter.
(pet.) petition.
(procl.) proclamation.
(prol.) prologue.
(rep.) repeated.
(ver.) verses.

ERRATA.

LINES OMITTED.

[Col.] far and wide abroad—goose ... "Romeo & Juliet", ii. 4, page 2
the matter being gos ... "Measure for Measure", iv. 5, 9
ENFOLDING—court, in these enfoldings? "Winter's Tale", iv. 2, 213
[Col.] an open et cetera ... "Romeo & Juliet", ii. 1, 221
troubled with thick-coming fancies ... "Macbeth", v. 3, 241
got them in the Gallis ward ... "Henry IV", v. 1, 293
on such ground, and to such wholesome end ... "Lear", ii. 4, 333
I have heard my grandsire say ... "Titus Andronicus", iv. 1, 352
and I know wherefore they do it ... "Julius Caesar", v. 1, 418
or I'll seize thy life ... "Winter's Tale", ii. 3, 441
forces at Bridgnorth shall meet ... "Henry IV", iii. 2, 497
so noble a friend on vain suppose ... "Titus Andronicus", i. 2, 785

After the heading of GIVE, insert [see HAND and LEAVE]...... 901