

CHAPTER V

GREETINGS AND FAREWELLS

Courtesy, with Shakespeare is a multilateral dramatic weapon. He does not use courtesy only to effect a dramatic contrast between characters, to draw the patterns of light and shadow, that we noticed in the preceding chapter. He uses with equal skill even the most ordinary forms of courteous behaviour, like greetings and farewells, in order to produce a variety of artistic effects. The men and women in the plays commonly greet each other when they meet and bid farewell when they depart. It is a form of behaviour, which in the ideal, as a condition of good breeding, would bespeak genuine good feeling and become an expression of inner grace. Used as a mere formality of conduct,

it is apt to become mechanical and lifeless. Shakespeare puts it to the maximum dramatic use. He uses the expressions of these formalities in all their many varieties and diversities; and indeed so frequent is their use in the plays that we find one on almost any page we may open at random. Often the literal structure of the expressions is retained but every time they are used they are given a new tone, a new inflexion, a new dimension, ~~some~~ so as to render ~~some~~ new artistic effect. Shakespeare so tunes these expressions to the character, to its tone of speech, and to the occasion that every time we find them new and fresh. What is more, we cannot tear them away from their context. The dramatist makes them flow from the characters, so spontaneously, yet so distinctly, that we never confuse them. This is true of the expressions used by the genuinely 'virtuous' characters as also by the dissembling ones. We have already seen the dignity with which Claudius can welcome, thank and bid farewell all in the same breath; how Lady Macbeth greets Duncan with the most gentle ladylike sweetness. The difference between their characters is also the difference between their

expressions of greetings. The dissemblers too can be distinguished one from the other; we cannot confuse them, so authentically characteristic the utterances are of the persons using them.

Richard of Gloster, despite his devilry, is one of those characters of Shakespeare, which have from time to time fascinated eminent Shakespearian actors,¹ because this 'Hell's black intelligence' has an elemental force in him which ^{he} often exhibits in the most theatrical way. His general pose is one of bold plainspeaking, even impudence, with which he will snub any one, as he does a whole royal assembly in Act. I, Sc. 2, (Lines 47-50 quoted in the preceding chapter). Yet he can also greet in a tone full of grace and fairness when his intentions are of the darkest, even with a liveliness which may easily deceive and cog others.

"Brother, Good day", he greets Clarence, (King Richard III, i, 1,42), whom he accosts on the way to the tower, whither Richard himself has contrived to send him, there to meet his doom. There is a stress

¹ Margaret Webster : Shakespeare Without Tears, p.123.

on 'brother' for the discerning ear. He assures the unsuspecting Clarence that they are 'the Queen's abjects' and therefore are made to suffer, that his imprisonment cannot be long. Thus he promises the foredoomed brother : 'Brother, farewell ! I will undo the king..... to enfranchise you' (107-110). Clarence's 'farewell' in the end with all its sincerity is tame and ineffectual. As Clarence's ghost describes it, he was,

'Washt to death with fulsome wine
 Poor Clarence, by thy guile betray'd to death'
 (V, iii, 133-134)

Richard's greetings and farewells are short, sometimes sudden, but they have a force in them like that of his personality and are part of it. His welcome to the Prince of Wales, his 'dear cousin, my thoughts' sovereign' is equally stagey as he himself confesses :

"Thus like the formal Vice, Iniquity,
 I moralize two meanings in one word.
 (III, i, 82-83)

By far the biggest dupe of his courtesy is Hastings. Richard has set afoot his plot to obtain the crown for himself. He is now the Lord Protector. The Queen's relatives are executed. The Prince of Wales and his brother are virtually his prisoners :

Buckingham, Stanley, the Bishop of Ely, Hastings and other lords are conferring in the Tower to fix the date for the coronation of the Prince of Wales.

Richard has already decided to put an end to Hastings.

Lustily he comes to where the lords have assembled and greets every one with a cheer :

"My noble lords and cousins all, good morrow!

(III, iv, 23)

The Bishop of Ely is so impressed by his cheerfulness that he says :

"His Grace looks cheerfully and smooth today;
There's some conceit or other likes him well,
When he doth bid good-morrow with such a spirit.
I think there's never a man in Christendom
That can less hide his love or hate than he;
For by his face straight shall you know his¹
heart".

(III, iv, 49-54)

It is remarkable that a few words of common courtesy should produce such effect but as Richard speaks them in his abrupt characteristic way delivering them in small firm strokes, we can understand how the effect is produced. Duncan is not alone in being deceived by this stagey courtesy. Here is Hastings, whose fate Richard has already carved out, being similarly affected, as his agreement with the Bishop indicates,

¹ Other Editors attribute these lines to Lord Hastings : that would appear to be dramatically a better reading, for, it would then convincingly illustrate Richard's powers and make the irony involved in Hastings's doom more effective.

when he says :

" - with no man here he is offended
For, were he, he had shown it in his looks"
(57-58)

Dramatic irony, perhaps; because a few lines later Hastings is led to his death by Richard. But more pertinent it is to observe how Shakespeare makes greetings, a mere gesture of courtesy, yield such effect, appropriate both to the character and occasion. It shows how much aware Shakespeare must have been of courtesy as a dramatic device to reveal a character when he wrote the plays, because, if in this instance he was not consciously portraying Richard's dissembling gesture, the Bishops and Hastings' reaction to it would have been pointless; indeed it would not have been there at all.

Richard's farewells in the play are as dissembling as his greetings and thoroughly consistent with his character. After the crown is offered to him and, as pre-arranged, most maidenlike, he has refused it and finally accepted it, he bids farewell to Buckingham and others, in words short and swift, like his greetings :

greetings :

"Come let us to our holy work again. (To the Bishop)
Farewell, good cousin; farewell, gentle friends.
(III, vii, 216-217)

With all the dissemblance of love he has won
Anne and she now leaves the burial of her father-in-law to be looked after by Richard. Gloster, though he has not yet discarded his lover's role, commands :

" Bid me farewell". (I, ii, 222)

and in the same way in which she agreed to marry him, Anne replies :

" 'Tis more than you deserve;
But since you teach me how to flatter you,
Imagine I have said farewell already."
(I, ii, 222-224)

On all these occasions the courteous expressions are typically Richardian, and it would be a grave fault in an actor if he fails to render them as such on the stage.

Scene I, Act IV of the play might be thought to be tedious with the whimpering talks of the wailing, cursing, weebegone royal females but the dramatist saves the tedium at the end of the scene by dramatising the farewell, one of the most theatrical and yet one

of the most pathetic things in Shakespeare. Again, it is appropriate to both the characters and the situation, which makes it more than a mere ceremonious formality.

Q. Eliza : (to Anne) Poor heart, adieu ! I pity
 thy complaining.

Anne : No more than from my soul I mourn
 for yours.

Q. Eliza : Farewell, though a woful welcomer of
 glory !

Anne : Adieu, poor soul, that takest thy
 leave of it !

Duchess of York : (to Dorset) Go thou to
 Richmond, and good fortune guide thee ! -

(to Anne) Go thou to Richard,
 and good angels tend
 thee ! -

(to Q. Eliza) Go thou to
 sanctuary, and good
 thoughts possess
 thee ! -

I to my grave, where peace and
rest lie with me !

Eighty odd years of sorrow
have I seen,

And each hour's joy wrackt with
a week's teen".

(I, iv, 87-96)

Queen Elizabeth's farewell to the tower is most
touching, if somewhat sentimental :-

Q. Eliza : Pity, you ancient stones, those tender babes
 Whom envy hath immured within your walls !
 Rough cradle for such little pretty ones !
 Rude, rugged nurse, old sullen playfellow
 For tender princess, use my babies well !
 So foolish sorrow bids your stones farewell.

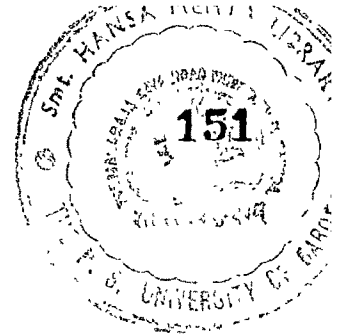
(I, iv, 98-103)

This whole scene of farewell, despite its stagey character, has about it the sense of tragedy of the lives of several royal women of England, and we are left with the poignant pity of the situation.

For Shakespeare, the Roman or the Greek world is not far away from the Elizabethan in so far as courteous behaviour is concerned. In the Roman plays, we may find not only crowds and common people acting like the Elizabethans but also the Greek and Roman nobility behaving like Elizabethan courtiers. Indeed by investing them with the quality of courtesy Shakespeare so refines them that they lose much of the raw and barbarous mould in which they are found in the original sources, however closely Shakespeare may have followed them. There is much of the heroic in Antony and Cleopatra; yet there is much in it also of the chivalrous and the courtly which lends a peculiar atmosphere of grace and good breeding to the play.

Shakespeare's conception of both Antony and Cleopatra is different from that of Plutarch; he gives them both a courtly refinement which cleanses the play of much - though not all - of the cruelty, even the ignoble debauchery and vulgarity of these characters in Plutarch. Incidents like Cleopatra beating the servant who brings her the news of Antony's marriage with Octavia must remain because Shakespeare is often very faithful in his borrowings of plots and incidents. When we study the greetings and farewells in the play we come to realise how much even these contribute to the atmosphere of grace and refinement in the play.

The Roman nobles in the play greet and bid farewell exactly as the courtiers do in other plays, not Roman. Pompey has stirred war again and Antony, of necessity, has to return to Rome. Octavius, the suave politician, has his misgivings about Antony. Yet political necessity makes it incumbent on him to be friendly with the latter. Even the offer of his sister Octavia in marriage to Antony is, perhaps, secretly planned by him to strengthen their relations. There is between him and Antony a wall of suspicion, distrust and uncertainty. This is how they dissemble a greeting to each other when they meet :



Caesar : Welcome to Rome.

Antony : Thank you.

Caesar : Sit.

Antony : Sit, Sir.

Caesar : Nay, then.

(Antony and Cleopatra :
II, ii, 28-32)

And with this sparse greeting, they begin to pull down the wall of distrust. Cunningly the proposal, that Antony take Octavia to wife, is put forward by Agrippa and Antony perhaps out of his natural propensity for the amorous accepts it. With customary grace. For the time being the breach between Caesar and Antony is healed and the latter agrees to fight Pompey, though

" he hath laid strange courtesies and great
Of late upon me : I must thank him only,
Lest my remembrance suffer ill report;
At heel of that defy him.

(II, ii, 159-162)

The greeting between Antony and Caesar brought about by political necessity, is yet consistent with both the situation and the characters; their sentimental parting when Antony and Octavia leave Rome, is even more so. Shakespeare uses this farewell to accentuate the situation between Antony and Caesar and to give a hint of what is to follow. It is a unique farewell

Antony : "No further, Sir.

Caesar : You take from me a great part of myself;
Use me well in't. - Sister, prave such a wife
As my thoughts make thee, and as my

Shall pass on thy approof. - Most noble

Antony,
Let not the piece of virtue, which is set
Betwixt us as the cement of our love
To keep it builded, be the ram to batter
The fortress of it; for better might we
Have loved without this mean, if on both
parts

This be not cherisht."

(III, ii, 21-31)

But Antony is a gallant !

Antony : Make me not offended.

In your distrust.

Caesar : I have said.

Caesar : I have no more to say.
 Antony : You shall not find,
 Though you be therein curious, the least cause
 For what you seem to fear : so, the gods
 And make the hearts of Romans serve your
 ends:

We will here part.

Caesar : Farewell, my dearest sister, fare thee well :
The elements be kind to thee, and make
Thy spirits all of comfort ! fare thee well.

Octavia : My noble brother ! -

Octavia : My noble brother : -
Antony : The April's in her eyes : it is love's spring,
And these the showers to bring it on. -
be cheerful.

Octavia : Sir, look well to my husband's house; and -

Caesar :

Octavia : I'll tell you in your ear.

(31-44)

Caesar has simulated so much feeling on his face that it appears he might cry : Enobarbus observes :

Eno : (aside to Agrippa) Will Caesar weep ?

Agri: (aside to Eno) He has a cloud in's face.

Eno : (aside to Agri) He were the worse for that were
he a horse;

So is he being a man.

Agri: (aside to Eno.) Why, Enobarbus,
When Antony found Julius Caesar dead,
He cried almost to roaring; and he wept
When at Philippi he found Brutus slain.

Eno : (aside to Agri.) That year indeed he was
troubled with a rheum;
What willingly he did confound
he wail'd,
Believe't, till I wept too.
(51-59)

The last moment for the parting has come :

Caesar : No, sweet Octavia,
You shall hear from me still; the time shall
not
Out-go my thinking on you.

Antony : Come, Sir, come;
I'll wrestle with you in my strength of love:
Look, here I have; thus I let you go,
And give you to the gods.

Caesar : Adieu; be happy !

Lepidus : Let all the number of the stars give light
To thy fair way !

Caesar : Farewell, farewell ! (Kisses Octavia)

Antony : Farewell !
(60-66)

The adieu's and the farewells here, the near-
weeping and embracing and kissing, leave us guessing;
Will Caesar's fears come true ? Will Octavia be the
cementing tie between brother and husband ? Was it

proper for Enobarbus to be so ironical ? Will Antony keep his word ? And we find that Shakespeare has subtly drawn the maximum dramatic significance out of a farewell.

The rift between Antony and Caesar widens and Octavia fails to bridge it. With the honest purpose of dissuading Caesar from waging a war, Octavia returns to her brother, unannounced and unceremoniously, like a 'market-maid' to Rome. Caesar reproves her for having

" prevented
The ostentation of our love, which left, unshown
Is often left unloved : we should have met you
By sea and land; supplying every stage
With an augmented greeting".

(III, vi, 51-55)

Octavia's polite excuse that she had come of her free will in that manner does not convince. Caesar tells her that she had been deceived, that Cleopatra 'hath nodded' Antony to her and that he had kissed an empire away to a whore. Octavia is made sharply aware of her wretchedness. The astute Caesar increases her discomfiture by dissembling for her a warm welcome - he uses the word 'welcome' five times in twenty lines :

It is as necessary for Caesar now to withdraw Octavia from Antony as it once was necessary to 'bequeath' her to him. Political necessity is thus satisfied by this chorus of welcome. Octavia herself when she left Antony, did not think there was anything amiss in his relations with her, and was aware only of going on a peace mission. After the welcome and because of it she now finds herself a "most wronged" woman, "most pitiable in Rome". Shakespeare has thus used this welcome as a three-pronged dramatic device. Octavia's withdrawal from Antony helps him to advance the plot : the element of astuteness in Caesar's character is subtly revealed in the way he offers the welcome, and Octavia lives on in our mind after this scene as a creature to be pitied. Our feeling for Octavia is somewhat like our feeling for Ophelia, a wronged woman who leaves the stage for good, for Octavia never returns to Antony, never appears again in the play.

If this welcome is so dramatically used, there is a leave-taking later in the play which is used as a dramatic device to reveal Antony in a true yet brilliant colour and to impress upon us the desperation of the

situation in which he finds himself on the eve of the battle against Caesar. A true warrior, inclined to the pleasures of the senses, the war-drum beating in his ears, his obligations as soldier jarring bitterly with his instinct for pleasure, the uncertainty of the morrow with the odds against him, the fateful sense of death hanging over him, all these together drive his spirits to a point of desperation, which brings out most vividly the loftiness, native to his character. Shakespeare makes the finest artistic use of courtesy by presenting this desperation and loftiness in a farewell scene.

Antony who has decided to fight next day 'by sea and land', will fulfil his warrior's calling ;

" Or I will live,
Or bathe my dying honour in the blood
Shall make it live again".

"Come on", he says,

"Call forth my household servants : let's tonight
Be bounteous at our meal"

Enter three or four servitors.

Give me thy hand,
Thou hast been rightly honest; - so hast thou;
Thou, - and thou, - and thou; you have
served me well,
And Kings have been your fellows."

Meanwhile Antony continues :

Servants : The gods forbid !

Cleopatra, still puzzled perhaps suspecting a

and Enobarbus, because he ought to say something, and something that might appeal to the sentimental side of a woman replies : "To make his fellows weep".

The servants start weeping and the exasperated

Eno : "What mean you, Sir,
To give them this discomfort ? Look, they weep;
And I, as ass, am onion-eyed : for shame,
Transform us not to women".

This morning like the spirit of a youth
 That means to be of note, begins betimes. -
 So, so; come, give me that : this way; well said.-
 Fare thee well, dame, whate'er becomes of me :
 This is a soldier's kiss : rebukable, (kisses her)
 And worthy shameful check it were, to stand
 On more mechanic compliment; I'll leave thee
 Now, like a man of steal. - You that will fight,
 Follow me close; I'll bring you to't. - Adieu.

(IV, iv, 24-34)

It is a desperate emperor's soldierly farewell.
 We have Cleopatra's at the end of the play, the fare-
 well of 'a princess descended of so many royal kings'
 whether she took the decision to die out of love or
 because she was afraid to be shown to the Roman
 'mechanic slaves with greasy aprons' 'extemporarily
 presented on the stage by quick comedians in the
 posture of a whore', she goes to her end unquestionably
 in all regal dignity. Shakespeare has so dramatised
 the final moment of her life in a series of farewells
 that we remember Cleopatra more by her regality in the
 last scene than perhaps by anything that precedes it.

She has accepted her fate with calm and dignified
 reserve. Her 'desolation' makes her feel 'a better
 life' for, herself jilted by Fortune, she can now look
 upon Caesar as 'paltry', 'he is but Fortune's knave, a

minister of her will'; in that the beggar and her conqueror and her lover are alike. Secretly, she has half decided to die and to die like a queen. If, in the meantime, an emissary from Caesar comes she can feign humility; if, as a queen, she has to beg, she would beg an empire, and kneel to Caesar in gratefulness. When she finds that she has been surrounded in her monument by Caesar's men and virtually made prisoner, she quickly draws her dagger out. She would not be pinioned at Caesar's court, nor 'be chastised with the sober eye of dull Octavia' nor, shown to the 'shouting varletry of censuring Rome'. Rather aditch in Egypt to be her grave, her country's high pyramids her gibbet. When Dolabella comes to her she can squeeze out of him Caesar's secret plan to carry her to Rome in triumph. When Caesar himself comes to visit her she can feign all humility to him and yet remain unimpressed by all his show of sweet consideration. Throughout these events, her decision to die has hardened and she immediately dispatches Charman to bring the aspen. Dolabella then comes again to inform her of Caesar's plan to dispatch within three days Cleopatra and her children to Rome before him. She takes the news with imperturbable dignity as her own

course of action is by now determined. From this point, the farewells begin :

Cleo : Dolabella,
I shall remain your debtor.
Dola : I your servant.
Adieu, good queen, I must attend on Caesar.
Cleo : Farewell and thanks
(V, ii, 103-106)

The two plain words 'farewell' and 'thanks' pack in considerable restraint and dignity - the latter a quality we had not seriously suspected in Cleopatra before. The thought of her possible humiliation, if she were to be dispatched to Rome, still troubles her; but with her decision to die, the consciousness of her royalty has also deepened. To die like a queen, she must dress like one; therefore :

" Show me, my woman, like a queen, go fetch
My best attiras :
..... Bring our crown and all".
(227-8-232)

Then comes the clown with the aspens. But instead of leaving the basket and retire, perhaps with simple thanks, he lingers on before her. With his clownish talk he is a most unnecessary intruder upon the serenity of the tragic moment. How is Cleopatra to suffer him at this moment, the Cleopatra, who once

nearly mauled the messenger that brought to her the news of Antony's marriage to Octavia. The clown of course has come now to render the most necessary and secret service; besides a clown has his special priveleges and cannot be roughly treated. But here at this grave moment, his prolonged stay and clownish talk do seem a nuisance. The queen on her part repeatedly but politely asks the clown to go, as we sometimes have to do to an unwelcome and unwanted visitor :

Cleo : "Get thee hence, farewell.

Clown : I wish you joy of the worm.

Cleo : Farewell.

Clown : You must think this, look you, that the worm will do his kind.

Cleo : Ay, ay; farewell." (256-264)

The clown persists in his glib talk and though a little amused at one point, the queen finally says :

Cleo : "Well, get thee gone; farewell.

Clown : Yes, forsooth; I wish you joy o' the worm".
(278-279)

The worm to Cleopatra was certainly a source of real relief, if not a joy. In the meantime, Iras comes with the crown and other queenly vestures. The sense

of impending death seizes Cleopatra. Immortal longings fill her, she wants to be quick about the business, because she is about to accomplish a noble deed. She remembers her lover, 'husband' she calls him, who will praise 'my noble act'. She is rising above the element of earth. The earthly has no attraction for her now :

" I am fire and air; my other elements
I give to baser life. - So, - " (289-290)

So the final leave taking :

" Come then, and take the last warmth of my lips,
Farewell, kind Chairman; - Iras, long farewell".

(91-92)

(Kisses them : Iras falls and dies)

Iras dies easily, as if death's stroke was like a lover's pinch, 'which hurts and is desired'. Then why go through a prolonged leave-taking ? Says Cleopatra :

"If thus thou vanishest, thou tell'st the world
It is not worth leave-taking". (297-298)

One asp is applied to her breast and 'the eastern star' is setting : almost the last word on her lips is 'Antony' :

"As sweet as balm, as soft as air, as gentle, -
O Antony ! - Nay, I will take thee too : -

(Applying another asp to her arm)

What should I stay - (dies)

(311-314)

She dies before the final utterance is completed.
Chairman picks up the cue !

"In this vile world ? - So, fare thee well. (315)

Without these final farewells, the concluding act of Cleopatra's life would have been much less dramatic and our last impression of her much less majestic than it is.

These illustrations of greetings and farewells from a single play ought to show us, however, how Shakespeare has made use of these ordinary formalities of behaviour. He uses them variously; sometimes to dramatise and deepen a given situation, sometimes to reveal or strengthen a particular aspect of a character. They are with him like a device which he uses every time with a specific intention, and produces a different artistic effect.

For a change we may now turn to Troilus and Cressida, from the Roman to the Greek world. This 'dark' play, again, is a strange mixture of the courtly, the chivalrous and the heroic, and it is in this play, that we find expounded the great idea of 'degree', on which Shakespeare bases his ideal of

Achilles, the elephant who has joints but none for courtesy.

Agamemnon, Nestor, Ulysses, Ajax and Menelaus are passing by Achilles' tent. They see Achilles and Patroclus enter in their tent. Ulysses hits upon an idea to make Achilles' vanity, see itself in its own mirror by parading before him a neglect of greeting. So he briefs the general :

"Achilles stands i'th' entrance of his tent :-
Please it our general to pass strangely by him,
As if he were forgot, and, princess all,
Lay negligent and loose regard upon him :

(III, iii, 38-41) .

The general agrees to execute the scheme, 'to greet him not or else disdainfully' and they pass by Achilles' tent, Agamemnon leading the way. Achilles thinks in his vanity that the general is coming to speak to him, so, swelled by his pride, he says :

"What comes the general too speak with me ?
You know my mind, I'll fight no more against Troy."

(55-56)

Agamemnon pretends as if Achilles wanted a word with him !

Agam : "What says Achilles, would he ought with
me ?"

And Nestor asks Achilles if he wanted to speak to the general, a question which must have stung the self-centred warrior. That Shakespeare should use a form courtesy to do this is significant. The mischief goes on :

Nestor : Would you, my lord, ought with the
general ?

Achi : No

Nestor : (to Agam.) Nothing, my lord.

Agam : The better (Exit Agam. and Nestor)

Achi : Good day, good day.

Mene : How do you ? How do you ? (Exit)

Achi : What, does the cuckold scorn me ?

Ajax : How now, Patroclus !

Achi : Good morrow, Ajax.

Ajax : Ha !

Achi : Good morrow.

Ajax : Ay, and good next day too.

Ulysses' purpose is served : a dent is made into Achilles' vanity to make him ask "What am I so poor of late ?" It is an unusual procession of greetings, used to serve as a direct commentary on a character which no doubt the Elizabethan audience must have enjoyed on the stage as we do in print.

Ulysses completes the scheme by moralizing on Achilles later in the scene when the latter bitterly complains to him :

" they passt by me,
As misers do by beggars, - neither gave to me
Good word nor look : what are my deeds forgot ?
(142-144)

Here is a list of all courtly qualities¹, the sum-total of which would be 'grace'; does not Shakespeare seem to hint that the ideal of behaviour shaped in the Elizabethan age should be kept in use age after age, as the knights of chivalry kept theirs by constant and vigilant practice. Perhaps, lest civilisation decay ?

If time, in abstract personification, can be a host, here is a group of the greatest heroes playing host to the enemy in the true chivalric mode. Like a knight of the chivalric romances, Hector has thrown a challenge to the Greeks' Ajax is deputed to answer it, but the 'issue' of the duel when they meet is 'embracement'. Ajax then invites his famous cousin to 'our grecian tents' to dine with him and to meet the Greek generals. Hector accepts the invitation. Then follows for over a hundred lines the greeting severally of Hector by the Greeks, each, in tone and

¹ Curiously enough it is Pandarus, who in the play gives a list of courtier's qualities :

Pandarus : (to Cressida) "Well, well ! - Why, have you any discretion ?

have you any eyes ? Do you know what a man is ?
Is not birth, beauty, good shape, discourse,
manhood, learning, gentleness, virtue,
youth, liberality, and such like, the spite
and salt that season a man ?

(I, ii, 253-258)

content, characteristic of the speaker. The great Agamemnon greets him with lofty and eloquent dignity, consonant with his status and character :

Agam : "Worthy of arms ! as welcome as to one
That would be rid of such an enemy;
But that's no welcome : understand more clear,
What's past and what's to come is strew'd
 with husks
And formless ruin of oblivion;
But in this extant moment, faith and truth,
Strain'd purely from all hollow bias-drawing,
Bids thee, with most divine integrity,
From heart of very heart, great Hector,welcome."
(IV, v, 163-171)

With equal dignity Hector returns the greeting:
Hector : "I thank thee, most imperious Agamemnon".
(172)

Then follows Menelaus, whose wife is the cause of the great contention ! he can only confirm what has gone before, instead of coining something of his own :

Men : "Let me confirm my princely brothers' greeting;
You brace of warlike brothers, welcome hither".
(174-175)

Hector is told it is the noble Menelaus greeting.

Then, should Helen be mentioned ?

Hector : "O, you, my lord ? by Mars his jauntlet,
thanks !
Mick not that I affect th'untraded oath;
Your quondam wife swears still by Venus' glove;
She's well but bade me not commend her to you".
(176-179)

Menelaus is hurt but courteous.

Mene : "Name her not, sir; she's a deadly theme".

The offender must apologise.

Hector : "O pardon, I offend." (180-181)

Then follows the aged Nestor, reminiscent in tone and reverend in poise, vividly pictorial, classical in compliments :

Nestor : "I have, thou gallant Trojan, seen thee oft,
Labouring for destiny, make cruel way
Through ranks of Greekish youth; and I have
 seen thee,
As hot as Perseus, spur thy Phrygian steed,
Despising many forfeits and subduements,
When thou hast hung thy advanced sword
 i'th'air,
Not letting it decline on the declined;
That I have said to some my standers-by,
'Lo, Jupiter is yonder, dealing life!'.
And I have seen thee pause and take thy
 breath,
When that a ring of Greeks have hemm'd
 thee in,
Like an Olympian wrestling; this have I seen;
But this thy countenance, still lockt in steel,
I never saw till now. I knew thy grandsire,
And once fought with him : he was a soldier
 good;
But by great Mars, the captain of us all,
Never like thee. Let an old man embrace thee;
And worthy warrior, welcome to our tents".

(180-201)

To each greeting Hector makes an appropriate reply.

So to this parental embrace, how befittingly ?

Achi : I am Achilles.

Hector : Stand fair, I pray thee ! let me look on thee.

Achi : Behold thy fill.

Hector : Nay, I have done already.

Achi : Thou art too brief : I will the second time,
As I would buy thee, view thee limb by limb".
(232-239)

Hector retorts in the same vein and for twenty lines they go on contending where the one would hack the other, till Hector realizes that he has become unmannerly. He quickly corrects himself :

Hector : "You wisest Grecians, pardon me this brag,
His insolence draws folly from my lips".
(257-258)

Achilles will meet him the next day in battle, fell as death, but they are "To-night all friends".

Each greeting here spontaneously follows from the character. The whole gamut of greetings occupies over a hundred lines. Is such a long sequence of welcome dramatically necessary ? Characterisation of course is there. Each character speaks with a distinct voice, and we may marvel at Shakespeare's ability thus to execute the business in such a variety of tones. The heroic admiration for physical prowess is there; the chivalric ideal of polite manners is there, but,

considering that it is a play be acted on the stage some might feel that Shakespeare is being lavish as an artist in expending a hundred lines and odd on these farewells. We may find a dramatic reason if we look a little before and after. The development of Hector's character before the challenge is rather cursory. The challenge brings him out in a new colour; in the scenes to follow he is to occupy the centre of the stage and demand our attention. He is to lead the play to its end. The audience then should know something more about him. The various greetings enable the dramatist to deepen and colour the so far thin character sketch. Hector's character gains in strength and grace with each response he makes to the greetings. The compliments that the Greek heroes offer him add variety and colour to his character. This out impression of him remains when in the new scene we find him obstinately refusing his aged father and mother, his entreating wife and prophesying sister. And then on the battlefield we discover him working wonders and finally falling. Our point is that Shakespeare uses greetings to execute his intention and produce the desired effect.

In this scene the Greeks and the Trojans contend in courtesy. Elsewhere in the play (I,3) Shakespeare has used the same form of courtesy viz. greeting, as a vehicle to cover scorn. Aeneas the Trojan, brings Hector's challenge to the Greek camp. He knows that he is in front of the great Greek general's tent, but, to belittle him, pretends ignorance, and at every stage flings insults, dressed up in a language of courtesy. A trumpet sounds and Aeneas appears, before Agamemnon's tent, seeking the general's presence.

Agam : What trumpet I look, Menelaus.

Mene : From Troy. (Enter Aeneas)

Agam : What would you fore-our tent ?

Aeneas : Is this great Agamemnon's tent, I pray you ?

Agam : Even this.

Aeneas : May one that is a herald and a prince,
Do a fair messege to his kingly ears ?

Agam : With surity stronger than Achilles's arm
'Fore all the Greekish heads, which with
one voice
Call Agamemnon head and general.

Aeneas : Fair leave and large security. How may
A stronger to those imperial looks
Know them from eyes of other mortals ?

Agam : How ?

Aeneas : Ay;
I ask, that I might waken reverence,
And bid the cheek be ready with a blush
Modest as morning when she coldly eyes
The youthful Phoebus :
Which is that god in office, guiding men ?
Which is the high and mighty Agamemnon ?

in contrasting colours. It is such a use of courtesy in the plays that makes it dramatically something very much more than mere formality. The two sides in this instance are unequal in degree; and the nobler of the two must tender its loftiness to the less noble, the erring in courtesy. Aeneas in the play knows the art of being gentle so as to belittle others. But we have another occasion in the play (IV,i), where two nobles of the same degree, both generals belonging to the same order, Lord Aeneas and Diomedes meet. Here also Aeneas is consistent in his character as a man who can spite with gentle words. But in Diomedes he meets his equal in the art. Aeneas comes seeking Paris who is accompanied by Diomedes. The latter has come to Troy to deliver 'the enfréed Antenor' and take back to the Greecian camp in exchange 'the fair Cressid'.

Diomedes greets : "Good morrow, Lord Aeneas".
(V,i,7)

Paris, who, perhaps, knows Aeneas' ways, intervenes, to make the meeting smooth :

Paris : "A valiant Greek, Aeneas, - take his hand, -
Witness the process of your speech, wherein
You told how Diomed, a whole week by days,
Did Raunt you in the field". (8-11)

Aeneas can use polite speech in peace only; yet, the prince has told him to be courteous : the boastful Aeneas can do no better than say :

Aeneas : Health to you, valiant Sir,
During all question of the gentle truce;
But when I meet you arm'd, as black
 defiance
As heart can think or courage execute.

Diomedes : The one and other Diomed embraces.
Our bloods are now in calm, and, so long,
 health;
But when contention and occasion meet,
By Jove, I'll play the hunter for thy
 life
With all my force, pursuit, and policy.

Aeneas : And thou shalt hunt a lion, that will fly
With his face backward. - In humane
gentleness,
Welcome to Troy ! now, by Anchises' life,
Welcome; indeed! By Venus' hand I swear
No man alive can love in such a sort
The thing he means to kill more excellently.

Diomed : We sympathise; - Jove, let Aeneas live,
If to my sword his fate be not the glory,
A thousand complete courses of the sun !
But, in nine emulous honour, let him die,
With every joint a wound, and that tomorrow!

(11-30)

This variation of courtesy, this welcome in love today with a promise to kill on the morrow, is not proper in the true ideal of courtesy and must be corrected. Paris standing higher in degree to the two lords, must reprove :

Paris : This is the most despiteful gentle greeting,
The noblest hateful love, that e'er
I heard of. -
(33-34)

Troilus : And suddenly; where injury of chance
Puts back leave-taking, justles roughly by
All time of pause, rudely beguiles our
lips
Of all rejoindure, forcibly prevents
Our lockt embrasures, strangles our
dear vows
Even in the birth of our own labouring
breath :
We too, that with so many thousand sighs
Did buy each other, must poorly sell
ourselves
With the rude brevity and discharge of one.
Injurious time now, with a robber's haste,
Cramps his rich thievery up, he knows not
how :
As many farewells as he stars in heaven
With distinct breath and consign'd
kisses to them,
He fumbles up into a loose adieu;
And scants us with a single famisht kiss,
Distasted with the salt of broken tears.

(IV, iv, 34-49)

Farewells are countless like, 'the stars in heaven' in Shakespeare, and this one has its 'distinct breath' too. What we have lost by its brevity, we have gained in its poetry. It reads almost like a sonnet.

We have seen the Greek heroes welcoming a foe when they greeted Hector. Let us see them greet a lady, a beauty in her own right, Cressida, when she is brought to the Grecian camp. It is again a series of greetings, each with a quality of its own. It is entertaining as a variation even as a contrast to the earlier soldiers' greeting. Here is a welcome with kisses for variety; it is a feast for the eyes :

Enter Diomedes with Cressida.

Agam : Is this the Lady Cressida ?

Dio : Even she.

Agam : Most dearly welcome to the Greeks, sweet lady.

The lady must be welcomed with a kiss.

Nestor : Our general doth salute you with a kiss.

Cressida's beauty appears to be spreading its magic around. If the general greets with a kiss, why not the others ? It is a courtly business :

Ulysses : "Yet is the kindness but particular;
'Twere better she were kisst in general".

Old Nestor, the good old chronicle, even he, agrees and straight way starts the round :

Nestor : "And very courtly counsel : I'll begin -
(kisses her)
So much for Nestor."

And the brawny Achilles :

Achilles : "I'll take that winter from your lips,
fair lady :
(kisses her)
Achilles bids you welcome".

A previous kiss is haunting Menelaus; he must be argued and fillipped into another :

Mene : I had good argument for kissing once.

Patro: But that's no argument for kissing now;
For thus popt Paris in his hardiment,
And parted thus you and your argument.
(Kisses her)

Ulysses : O deadly gall, and theme of all our
 scorns !
For which we lose our heads to gild his
 horns.

Patroclus takes the opportunity to kiss again.

Patro : The first was Menelaus 'kiss; - this, mine:
Patroclus kisses you. (Kisses her again)

Wene : O, this is trim !

Patro : Paris and I kiss ever more for him.

By now Menelaus is sufficiently incited to kiss.

Mene : I'll have my kiss, Sir : - Lady, by
your leave.

He must have done awkwardly, unlike a gallant; so Cressida too, who knows his horns, asks, (and her first utterances among the Greeks) :

"In kissing, do you render or receive ?"

Mene : Both take and give.

Cressida : I'll make my match to live,
The kiss you take is better than you give;
Therefore no kiss.

Mene : I'll give you boot, I'll give you three
for one.

Cressida : You are an odd man; give even or give
none.

Mene : An odd man, lady ! every man is odd.

Cressida must have relished this dig at Menelaus :

Cressida : No Paris is not; for you know 'tis true
That you are odd, and he is even with
you.

Mene : You fillip me o' the head.

Cressida : No, I'll be sworn."

Ulysses, though it was he who had tendered this
'courtly counsel', and who by now has studied Cressida's
wantenness to the letter, now intervenes to Menelaus'
advantage :

Ulysses : It were no match, your nail against
his horn. -
May I, sweet lady, beg a kiss of you ?

Cressida : You may.

Ulysses : I do desire it.

Cressida : why, beg, then.

Ulysses : Why, then, for Venus' sake, give me
a kiss,
When Helen is a maid again, and his.

Cressida : I am your debtor, claim it when 'tis due.

Ulysses : Never's my day, and then a kiss of you.
(IV, v, 17-52)

Diomedes, who with the intimacy he has already achieved with Cressida, was so far perhaps, a jealous onlooker, has now become impatient and bursts in with :

Dio : Lady, a word :- I'll bring you to your father.
(53)

and he takes her away.

It is after Cressida's exit that we come to understand the dramatic purpose behind this greeting executed with kisses. We have the revelation of the Greek temperament here, but that is ^{not} the main thing. That is to spotlight a side of Cressida's character, namely her wantenness. The audience so far is not sufficiently familiar with this aspect of her character, which indeed is the root of the tragedy. The greeting brings into prominence Cressida's wantenness. It is again this quality which is to be brought into active play in the scenes that follow. Nestor appreciates her wit, but it is Ulysses, a shrewder judge of nature that exposes the true Cressida :

Nestor : A woman of quick sense.

Ulysses: Fie, fie, upon her !

There's language in her eye, her cheek,
her lip,

Nay, her foot speaks; her wanton spirits
look out

At every joint and motive of her body.

O, these encounters, so glib of tongue,
That give a coasting welcome ere it comes,

And wide unclasp the tables of their thoughts
 To every ticklish reader ! set them down
 For sluttish spoils of opportunity
 And daughters of the game.
 (54-63)

It is this Cressida we see in the last scenes. As the dramatic object of the knightly welcome to Hector, of over a hundred lines, was to bring that character into prominence for action in the last scenes, the dramatic object of this welcome, stretching over fifty lines, is to reveal Cressida's character fully to us. Shakespeare is too practical an artist to throw away dramatic economy for the sake of mere formality or for mere entertainment.

Parolles in All's Well That Ends Well recommends that a farewell to be fashionable should be elongated. (II, i, 50-58). We have seen how Shakespeare can condense a farewell into a little sonnet; we have also seen how he can expand it to scores of lines to produce a definite, calculated, dramatic effect. The tragedies and the historical plays offer more scope to farewells than the comedies and the romances. It is significant that on the enchanted island in The Tempest there is only one farewell and a very brief one, that Prospero bids to Aerial. However, we have noticed in this chapter how Shakespeare can lengthen

farewells to several dozen lines with a view to producing the intended dramatic effect. We may yet look at the two farewells in Romeo and Juliet where Shakespeare makes a poetic use of this form of courtesy. One of these is in the orchard scene when the lovers part for a short time reluctantly, the other in what is now famous as the balcony scene, effusive almost extravagant in its poetry, when the hesitant lovers part, vaguely conscious of their final doom. Their hesitancy, which lengthens the parting, sounds as if were, an expression of their resistance to the dim, indefinable awareness of the final catastrophe. Tragedy looms large over the play, casting its shadow right from the beginning and Shakespeare misses no opportunity to deliver a hint of it, wherever possible in the play. He uses these two farewells also for the same purpose.

There is a difference, though, between the two, a difference in degree. The tragic awareness of the lovers is fainter in the orchard scene than in the balcony scene. The occasion for the former is the lover's first meeting after they fell in love, now to vouch their love to each other. Romeo breaks upon

the scene when the unwary Juliet is expressing her feelings for him. In the conversation that follows, sly hints of tragedy are given by such words and phrases as Juliet's 'the place of death', 'murder' and Romeo's 'there lies more peril in thine eyes! Than twenty of their swords'. The vague sense of doom subdues the joy of youthful love : and the fear of it finds a channel for its expression when causes are mentioned, which are tangible and definable - like the enmity between their two houses, and the feeling that the new love is unbelievable, because it is too sudden. The lovers are trying to fight the indistinct premonition. So says Juliet, just before wishing the first good-night, (there are some half a dozen to follow) :

Juliet : "Well, do not swear : although I joy
in thee,
I have no joy of this contract tonight:
It is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden;
Too like the lightning, which doth
cease to be
Ere one can say 'It lightens'. Sweet
goodnight!
This bud of love, by summer's ripening
breath,
May prove a beauteous flower when next
we meet,
Good night, good night ! as sweet repose
and rest
Come to thy heart as that within my
breast! "

(Romeo and Juliet : II,i,259-267)

repeated once, and asks Romeo to leave her alone and 'cease his suit' if he be not sincere. Romeo can only utter - 'so thrive my soul' - when Juliet returns for a second time with 'A thousand times good night'.

Romeo, retiring slowly, speaks in a couplet, how lovers may leave with heavy looks as school boys go to school. We feel the scene has come to an end here as Shakespeare often ends a scene with a couplet. But surprisingly, Juliet re-enters above once more and calls back the trudgingly retiring Romeo. Love is, as it were, seized by force to stay lest it be snatched away by a cruel destiny. She has called him back to ask what time next day she may send for his message : but it is to talk love in which discourse she forgets why she had called him. The love talk proceeds, but the scene must end. They would be each other's birds. Yet somehow the premonition of doom cannot altogether be conquered : the idea of their love being 'killed', is put in a new guise : Says Juliet while finally retiring :

"Yet I should kill thee with much cherishing.
Good night, good night ! parting is such sweet
 sorrow,"
That I shall say good-night till it be
 tomorrow".
 (227-229)

The parting is artfully woven, with perfect consistency, into the tragic destiny of the lovers. Rendered in deeper tones, we find another parting in the play, again in tune with the general theme of the tragedy. Events in the meantime have occurred to deepen the tragic shadow. Fate has manifestly crossed the lovers' path. The lovers have married but Mercutio, and then Tybalt are killed and Romeo is banished. The lovers now meet under a darker shadow which accentuates their reluctance to part. Love, distrusting destiny, makes Juliet invent novel excuses to make the lover stay. She converts the lark into the nightingale and the breaking day into a meteoric exhalation of the sun. It is again when the Nurse calls out to Juliet that the final parting comes :

Romeo : Farewell, farewell ! one kiss and
I'll descend.
(III,v,42).

It is as he descends that the sense of tragedy manifests itself again. As Fate would have it, it is their last parting and they will not meet each other : Juliet asks :

O' thinkest thou we shall ever meet again ? (51)

- and as Romeo goes further down from her :

O God, I have an ill-divining soul !
Methinks I see thee, now thou art below,
As one dead in the bottom of a tomb :
Either my eye sight fails, or thou look'st pale".
(54-57)

In fact she is looking into the future, all unconsciously at the moment, into the day when she will see him dead, in 'the bottom of a tomb'. Romeo is equally premonitory.

And trust me, love, in my eye so do you :
 Day sorrow drinks our blood. Adieu, adieu.
 (58-59)

The last words are of a piece with what has gone before. Incidentally, in the former scene, it is Juliet who utters the formal farewell terms, in the latter it is Romeo. But what is relevant to our argument is that Shakespeare perfectly attunes the greetings and farewells to particular situations in the plays. He wields these expressions of courtesy with the case and dexterity that makes them appear effortless. They are made to follow naturally from the characters using them; they are used to reveal character on the stage : They are consistent always with the general cast and complexion of a play, tragedy or comedy, and with the particular context and occasion for which they are employed. Sometimes they bring relief in a prevailing sentiment : occasionally they are used to poeticise a sentiment or situation : Sometimes again, they are consciously

used to deepen the impact of a particular situation. Shakespeare thus seems to have used them in every diversity deliberately to produce a dramatic effect. The instances considered above are taken from a few of the plays and, though typical, may not be the best. They are used in great abundance and each time a greeting or farewell is used, a close examination will discover some dramatic effect or another. It is important that Shakespeare uses them to some dramatic purpose and the variety and frequency with which he does so indicates how deeply the ideal of courtesy must have been rooted in his consciousness. To the plays themselves these formalities of courtesy lend an atmosphere of high breeding and refinement, of a way of living which is above the common and which civilises us by the grace which they impart to the characters and situations. Above all, their use in the plays illustrates how common forms of behaviour can be used deliberately to produce great artistic effects.