

AN EDITION WITH

ANNOTATIONS

OF

JACOB AND ESAU

Submitted to the Department of English
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
Degree of Master of Arts

by

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AUGUST, 1970

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ABSTRACT

The Renaissance period has produced the best drama in the English language. The Arden series of Shakespeare's plays and the Revels Plays and others all provide scholarly annotated texts of Elizabethan drama and substantial criticism but the vast majority of interludes, from which this drama evolved, has not been edited. Jacob and Esau is an interlude of the sixteenth century which illustrates the development of the Elizabethan drama. An analysis of this play shows the growing awareness of characterization and plot development in drama.

Naturally, the plot of Jacob and Esau focusses on dramatic action rather than any other aspect and an attempt is undertaken to suggest motivation for the actions of the characters. Another feature of the play is the interrelationships between the humorous, minor characters and the major characters. These interrelationships aid in the characterization and promote plot development. Plot development also is aided by the fact that minor characters are intimately connected with the dramatic action. The author maintains unity of place, of time, and of action, and although the play is divided into acts and scenes, it does not have a classical structure.

The only extant Elizabethan edition of this play is the quarto printed by Henry Bynneman in 1568. The editions of William C. Hazlitt and John S. Farmer are based upon the British Museum exemplar of this quarto.

This edition with annotations provides full notes and compares the notes of Hazlitt and Farmer. In many places the errors in their notes, or their misinterpretations, are pointed out. The commentary is both textual and glossarial. A number of instances in the play have been used to illustrate how closely the author follows the Biblical account and to show how the author was aware of the techniques of the stage. The topical allusions, in some cases, are not readily apparent because a complete study of this period of drama has not been carried out.

A number of the problems, such as authorship, dating, sources, and stage history, and some interesting sidelights connected with the play of Jacob and Esau are dealt with in the appendices.

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I

INTRODUCTION

1. Introductory Remarks

The lack of reliable, annotated texts of Tudor plays makes the study of early English drama difficult. A great deal of the richness of the Elizabethan stage can be attributed to the writers of interludes, who experimented both in the writing and the staging of plays in order to develop workable dramatic techniques.¹ One such interlude which shows the richness of the drama of this period is Jacob and Esau

The purpose of this thesis is to provide an annotation to the edition of Jacob and Esau and it is hoped that this thesis will give a solid basis for others who may want to delve more deeply into the play and attempt to answer the puzzling questions connected with this interlude: Who is the author? When was the play written? When and where was the play performed?

2. The Text of the Play

Only one Renaissance edition of Jacob and Esau is extant, printed

¹Richard Southern, The Seven Ages of the Theatre (New York, 1963), pp. 133-144, points out a number of the technical developments which took place during the evolution of the interlude from 1495 to 1576. David Bevington, From "Mankind" to Marlowe (Cambridge, Mass.: 1962), pp. 68-85, discusses how the interludes became longer. He elaborates on 'doubling' in the interludes and shows how certain roles increased or decreased in prominence. He points out that the Vice became an important figure but as the interlude evolved there was a transition away from the dominant Vice figure to a greater emphasis upon other roles. Throughout this period then, writers were searching for methods to present their

by Henry Bynneman in 1568 with the title page reading as follows:

[within a border of type ornaments] A newe mery
and wittie / Comedie or Enterlude, newly / imprinted,
treating vpon the Historie of / Iacob and Esau,
taken out of the xxvij. / Chap. of the first booke
of Moses / entituled Genesis. / The partes and
names of the Players / who are to be considered to
be Hebrews / and sh^d should be apparaild with
attire. / [in a space of 53 mm., a list of the
eleven characters, divided into two enumerated
columns, appears. The first line reading, "The
Prologe, a Poete.) (7 Hanan, a neighbour", appears
5 mm. from the line above it. The entire list of
characters occupies 40 mm. The last line of the cast,
"6 Zethar a neighbour.) (seruat to Rebecca.", is 8
mm. above the imprint.] / Imprinted at London by
Henrie / Bynneman, dwelling in Knightrider streete,
/ at the signe of the Mermayde. / Anno Domini. 1568.

Bynneman's edition seems to be the only one printed during the
Renaissance, although an entry in the Stationers' Register reads:

To henry Sutton to prynte an enterlude vpon the
history of Iacobe and Esawe out of the xxvij
chapeter of the fyrste boke of Moyses Called
genyses and for his lycense he geueth to the
howse. iiiij^{d2}

There has been speculation as to whether Henry Sutton printed the play
as no such edition from his press has been found.

Of Bynneman's edition six exemplars are known to be extant: they
are found in the Bodleian Library, the British Museum, the Folger
Shakespeare Library, the Huntington Library, the Pforzheimer Library,

material in the most dramatic way.

²Edward Arber, A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of
Stationers of London; 1554-1640 A.D., Vol. I (London, 1875), 77. The
entry is in the records from 19 July 1557 to 9 July 1558. W. W. Greg,
A Bibliography of the English Printed Drama to the Restoration, Vol. I
(London, 1939), 1, suggests the date somewhere in October--November 1557.

and the Yale University Library. Also one leaf, F₄, is kept in the Bagford fragments in the British Museum. In these six exemplars, variant readings occur but these variants appear to be the result of worn type and type which has slipped because of loose setting.³

The play has been printed in four subsequent editions. The first modern-spelling edition appeared in Volume II of Dodsley's A Select Collection of Old Plays edited by W. C. Hazlitt and published in 1874-76. Hazlitt's notes are sketchy and a number of questions arise because he does not give complete explanations for the changes he makes in the text of Bynneman's edition. He prints "Ragan" for "Ragau", although no note is given to explain the reason for this change. Perhaps Hazlitt noted the inversion of u and n (II.iii.63 prints honud for hound and II.iii.86 prints uo for no) and he felt Ragau should be Ragan. In II.iv.48, Hazlitt states that the original copy has as for and; however, no copy of Bynneman's edition can be found with this reading.⁴

The second modern-spelling edition of Jacob and Esau appeared in the Early English Dramatists: Six Anonymous Plays (Second Series) edited by John S. Farmer and published in 1906. In 1966, this edition of 1906 was re-issued.⁵ Farmer's edition of Jacob and Esau resembles Hazlitt's and it appears that Farmer relied heavily upon the earlier work. Farmer states that his edition was based on the British Museum

³See John Crow, "List of Variant, Irregular, and Doubtful Reading", Jacob and Esau, Malone Society Reprints (London, 1956) pp. viii-ix, for a complete comparison of early extant exemplars.

⁴Ibid., p. viii.

⁵It was printed by Charles W. Traylen, Guildford, England.

copy of Jacob and Esau C.34.2.3., but the British Museum copy is listed as C.34.b.25. There does not appear to be any reason for Farmer's incorrect shelf number of the British Museum copy.

The third edition of Jacob and Esau was printed in Tudor Facsimile Texts issued by J. S. Farmer in 1908 and this edition was part of a series of facsimile editions upon which Farmer worked.⁶

The fourth edition of Jacob and Esau was printed in The Malone Society Reprints in 1956 and was edited by John Crow under the general editorship of F. P. Wilson. Unlike Hazlitt's edition or Farmer's work of 1906 (both of which are modern spelling editions), the Malone Society reprint is a type-facsimile edition of the Bodleian copy and has been set from the photostats of this exemplar of Bynneman's edition. Furthermore, the editors compared the Bodleian copy with the copies in the British Museum, the Folger Library, the Huntington Library, and the Bagford leaf.⁷ This edition has a short introduction which briefly outlines the problems connected with the play.

It is evident that there is no edition with complete annotations and that the works of W. C. Hazlitt and J. S. Farmer have inadequate notes. Of these editions, Hazlitt's notes are far more sketchy than those of Farmer but even Farmer leaves a great deal unexplained. Throughout my annotations I have noted both Hazlitt's and Farmer's remarks and attempted to provide complete notes in all areas. No comment is made upon punctuation or upon grammar unless the interpretation of the

⁶See "Note Book and Word List", Six Anonymous Plays Second Series (London, 1906), p. 388.

⁷See Crow, p. viii.

passage is vital.

Since there is only the one edition printed by Henry Bynneman in 1568, no question of a choice of copy-text arises. I have decided to use the exemplar of the British Museum, even though the Yale and the Bodleian exemplars are much easier to read, because both Hazlitt and Farmer used the British Museum copy for a control text. In this way any errors that might arise from variant readings can be avoided.

The Bynneman edition is in quarto and it contains twenty-eight unnumbered leaves, A--G₄. The title-page is on signature A₁ which is unsigned while the speech of the Prologue is on A₁^V, and the text of the play begins on A₂. The head-title, printed in italic type reads:

The Historie of Iacob / and Esau.

The running-title, also printed in italic type, reads The Historie of on the verso leaves and Iacob and Esau. on the recto leaves.

Three different kinds of type, roman, italic and black letter are used in Bynneman's quarto of the play, all three being found on the title-page. The text of the play, the names of the characters, which are in the outer margins, and the text of the Prologue are in black letter type. To indicate the division into acts and scenes, to show the stage directions, to list the names of characters below the act and scene division, and to indicate the headings and directions preceding the three songs, roman type is used. Italic type is used for the title of the Prologue, the head-title, and the running titles. Also printed in italic type are the three songs (II.iv [v].38-54; IV.iv.7-25; V.x.75-90) and the concluding Amen.

The stage directions give particular instructions indicating the characters' action: "Ragau entreth / with his horn / at his back, and / his huntyng / staffe in hys / hande, and lea- / deth. iij. grey- / hounds or one / as may be got / ten.", (I.i, stage directions in the outer margin). However, the stage directions are not always complete: when Esau beats Ragau for the servant's presumptuous assertions about Jacob (I.i.109-111), no stage directions are given to indicate Esau's actions, but rather the actions of the characters must be presumed from the dialogue of the play. The exits are inserted sporadically throughout the text. At the end of I.i. 121, the directions "Exeant ambo." appear, but at the end of I.ii 64 no stage directions are given. The final speech of Zethar, however, "And we haue ben long, farewell neighbour heartily," indicates that the actors are leaving the stage. Usually indicated in roman after the act and scene divisions is the order in which the characters appear on stage or, if the characters are on stage, the order in which they speak: in II.iii below the act-scene division, "Mido the boy" appears before "Ragau" and Mido's speech begins the scene. In IV.iv, "Abra the mayde" appears before "Deborra, the nourse," and the first speech belongs to Abra.⁸

⁸There are a number of exceptions to the rule: IV.ii does not have any speakers' names after the act and scene division. The reason for this omission might be that the insertion of these names would have resulted in extra lines and, ultimately, in another gathering at the end of the play. The first four gatherings have more space between act and scene divisions than those in the last three gatherings. This reduction of space becomes evident when the act-scene divisions of I.ii (A₃^V) and II.i (D₄^V) are compared to the act-scene division of IV.iv (E₂) and IV.x (F₁^V). Occasionally an actor's name is not inserted after the act and scene division: II.ii does not include Jacob, who enters late in the scene (line 90); IV.xi does not have Mido listed; and V.vi has Abra listed before Mido although Mido speaks before Abra and Deborra's name does not

There are a number of printing errors throughout the play.⁹ Often errors in attribution of lines can be detected in this play because the first line of each character's words is indented.

3. Jacob and Esau: The Play

Jacob and Esau is an interlude exhibiting a number of peculiarities which make it different from contemporary plays such as Ralph Roister Doister and Gammer Gurton's Needle. Jacob and Esau is one of the few early plays which appears to have a classical five-act structure. There is a unity of plot and place as well as an apparent unity of time which the author obtains by compressing into one day the Biblical events found in Genesis and by selecting only those events which have a cause and effect relationship. Through the use of minor characters and the interrelationships of minor and major characters, the dramatist is able to create realistic personages in a realistic story which allows the play to overcome the restrictions hampering the mystery plays (i.e., the problem of providing suspense in a Biblical story of which the outcome was well-known). The entire writing of this interlude, however, seems

appear at all. In other places oddities occur: I.iv Mido's name is listed below Isaac and Rebecca's name because the words "Mido, the ladde that leadeth blinde Isaac" would have extended beyond the normal margin had the printer aligned it with "Isaac the husbande", where it should have been placed. IV.x does not include Mido's name, but from the context of the scene it would appear that the speech given to Mido should actually belong to Abra. V.x does not give the first lines to Esau, although the context of the speech, particularly "mine vnclle Laban" (line 1) and "is Iacob gone to the house of Bethuel?" (line 3), indicates that the speaker is Esau.

⁹A list of variants and irregularities is found in Appendix E.

to have been undertaken with care so that plausibility is maintained and yet the author is always consistent with the Biblical narrative. It becomes evident from a look at the structure of the play, at the adaptation and selection of material, and the characterization of the play that the author was a skilled dramatist who could create a successful interlude.

A great deal of controversy exists about the meaning of the term interlude.¹⁰ It seems to me that the most reasonable and functional definition is that given by E.K. Chambers:

I am inclined myself to think that the force of inter in the combination has been misunderstood, and that an interludium is not a ludus in the intervals of something else, but a ludus carried on between (inter) two or more performers; in fact, a ludus in dialogue. The term would then apply primarily to any kind of dramatic performance whatever.

In any case it is clear that while 'interlude' was only a subordinate name for plays of the miracle-type, it was the normal name, varied chiefly by 'play' and 'disguising', for plays given in the banqueting-halls of the great. These begin to claim attention during the fifteenth century.¹¹

Jacob and Esau shows that the definition of Chambers is applicable, for the title-page also calls the play a "Comedie". Therefore, the term interlude is relatively broad and under these circumstances Jacob and Esau can be termed an interlude.

The author of Jacob and Esau in dividing the play into five acts

¹⁰The controversy around the term interlude has been long and arduous. For an examination of the arguments see Thomas Marc Parrot and Robert Hamilton Ball, A Short View of Elizabethan Drama (New York, 1943), p. 22; T. W. Craik, The Tudor Interlude (Leicester, 1958), p. 1; and E. K. Chambers, The Medieval Stage (London, 1925), II, 181-184.

¹¹The Medieval Stage, II, 183-184.

with thirty-four scenes has experimented with the classical five-act structure. Although this division would seem to indicate that the play follows the classical dictum, Thomas W. Baldwin, who described the five-act classical structure, however, maintains that Jacob and Esau does not in fact follow his formula. The difference is exhibited in the first act:

Thus the first act presents Rebecca's problem of procuring the birthright for Jacob, but on the one hand it presents no plan, and on the other it actually begins the action by having Rebecca make her first attempt. It does not conform therefore to the first act formula.¹²

Furthermore, Baldwin states that the story of Jacob and Esau

. . . falls of its own accord into five acts. Thus the original author certainly constructed his play as a narrative divisible into five units: but whether he did so in deference to the five-act theory and called the units acts or whether someone else later noticed the units and distinguished them as acts is not apparent to me. The third unit is suspiciously short and unemphasized for what a third act should be, though it is in a way the epitasis of the play.¹³

Two points made by Baldwin indicate that the author may have been experimenting: the short, unemphasized third act and the lack of a plan for

¹²Shakespeare's Five-Act Structure (Urbana, 1947), pp. 418-419. In the "Preface" to his book, Baldwin states that, in the classical play, the author selects the five most important parts of the story and makes each a climax of an act. Act I introduces the characters and begins the action which will create the conflict of the play. Act II provides a link between Act I and Act III by introducing complications and provides rising action. Act III, the action takes its final turn and enters the final phase. Act IV deals with this final phase of action and Act V deals with the final stages of the denouement begun in Act III and provides the resolution (p. vii). However, it is a well-known fact that printers and publishers were sometimes responsible for imposing this division on plays not originally so divided.

¹³Ibid., p. 419

procuring the birthright for Jacob. It seems unlikely that the author was totally unaware of the classical structure since he conforms to the unities of place, time, and action but the classical structure is not a dominating factor.

Rather, it is in the selection and adaptation of the source material that we find a mature dramatist at work. The playwright selects as the focal points of the play the sale of the birthright and the beguilement of Isaac, while he rejects the famine, God's appearance to Isaac, the Isaac-Abimelech covenant, and Esau's marriages (Genesis 26). The two focal points are related in that the beguilement of Isaac results directly from Jacob's ability to purchase the birthright from Esau. He portrays Isaac as a blind old man from the outset of the play and Esau as a pleasure-loving young man, thus compressing into a short span of one full day the two Biblical events which occurred many years apart. The scenes are restricted to the area in front of the family tent or to the nearby fields. In this way the setting conforms to the classical unities.

A look at the play demonstrates how tightly the plot is structured. From Act I which introduces all of the major characters and most of the minor characters (the only exceptions are Abra and Deborra) and which defines these characters we move directly to a clarification of the conflicting forces (namely Rebecca and Jacob's group and Isaac and Esau's group). The action progresses from the sale of the birthright, which is a step which leads to the climactic denouement of the disguising of Jacob and the beguilement of Isaac, to the blessing of Jacob and the realization by Esau that he has lost his inheritance. A number of secondary events involving minor characters are woven into the main plot in which the

author has included divine approbation as an integral part. These minor characters contribute to the vitality of a well-known Biblical tale.

The final scene presents the resolution and reconciliation when Rebecca and Esau confront each other in person for the first time in the play. Rebecca is able to overcome Esau's hatred and he agrees to put aside his anger (V.x.43-49). The return of the recalcitrant Esau to the family is symbolized in the words of the final song. In this way the story is complete and presents a completely developed dramatic unit.

Closely connected with the development of the plot is the characterization. The author attempts to present characters in action to give an interesting and credible life-like portrayal. The dramatist uses dialogue for character development rather than for the creation of witty debates such as those found in plays like Witty and Witless or The Four P.P. Major characters are also developed through the relationships with minor characters. The minor characters are also used to provide humour but the high moral tone of the work is never violated by making characters appear ludicrous. The farcical elements are reserved for the minor characters whereas the main characters are involved only peripherally in the humorous antics of Ragau, Mido, and Abra. In maintaining this separation of station the action of the play focusses upon Rebecca and Esau, and the minor characters through their humour take on a human quality and a realism which were unusual in the interludes contemporary with Jacob and Esau. And yet the major roles do maintain their integrity as major forces.

Of the minor characters, Ragau is depicted most realistically and

his character shows a stroke of creative genius. Right from the first scene the audience is aware of the conflict between what Ragau is and what he wants to be. Throughout the story he is constantly ready to leave Esau; yet once Esau appears on stage Ragau immediately falls back into his servant role and cowers under Esau's hand. Ragau also functions as a source of information. In rather long, loquacious and humorous passages, he elaborates on the character of Esau and comments on the master's unwise actions. Throughout his speeches Ragau is complaining of the harsh treatment he receives and the unhealthy relationship that exists between himself and Esau, but he remains typically human in his inability to overcome his weaknesses and change the unhealthy relationship.

Mido is another minor character connected with the action of the story from leading the blind Isaac around to helping Jacob fetch the kids for the beguilement. Mido constantly comments on the actions of the people around him and he is the one who emphasizes certain characteristics in the story. His imitation of Isaac groping around in blindness (I.iv.48-65) not only points out Isaac's lack of sight but illustrates Rebecca's respect for God. His observation that Rebecca has been able to argue Isaac to a standstill (I.iv.172-176) stresses Rebecca's lively, quick wit. His comments on Esau's eating habits (II.iii), besides providing plenty of laughter, give prominence to Esau's desperate condition.

Abra functions in much the same way as Mido since she is Mido's female counterpart. Besides her witty remarks to Mido, she adds a youthful feminine touch to the story. Her enthusiasm for her work shown in ". . . I will not let my matters slepe" (IV.iii.28) and her happy

lyrical song while she sweeps (IV.vi.7-25) point out the serenity and contentment in Rebecca's household, both of which contribute to the overall impression that Rebecca's course of action is justified. Besides this effect, Abra contributes to the air of domesticity which helps create the realism of the play as does the introduction of Deborra, the nurse.

Throughout the play then the minor characters aid in both the development of the plot and in the characterization of the main characters. Furthermore, the minor characters help to develop realism and provide humour in the interlude.

From this brief look at Jacob and Esau it can be seen that the dramatist was competent and that he consciously strove to create realistic characters in an interesting story. The unity of plot and setting, the adaptation and selection of source material, and the refined characterization especially of the minor roles indicate that this interlude requires a deeper study that is beyond the limits of this thesis. Murray Roston's statement, besides indicating a number of potential studies, sums up a number of points concerning Jacob and Esau:

The liveliness of the play [Jacob and Esau] derives primarily from the servants in whom the tradition of the Middle Ages meets and mingles with that of the humanist. Ragau, Esau's servant, comes straight out of the Wakefield cycle and plays Garcio to Esau's Cain, preceding his master onto the stage, and cursing him liberally before he arrives with frequent invocations to the 'dyvell'. Isaac's servant, on the other hand, the pert, mischievous Mido, is a typically Terentian slave using his intelligence to outwit his master and winning the audience's sympathy by his saucy humour. But for all the comedy, the didactic purpose is not forgotten. Rebecca's substitution of Jacob for Esau at the blessing (conveniently white-

washed in the play as 'a pretty knacke') demonstrates that the righteous are rewarded; Esau, again in the prodigal-son tradition, repents at the last moment, and a hymn is sung eulogizing God's mercy in selecting his Chosen.¹⁴

It is the purpose of this annotated edition to provide a sound basis to proceed into this deeper study.

¹⁴Biblical Drama in England (Evanston, 1968), pp. 77-78.

4. To the Reader

In this edition several systems of line numbering have been used to facilitate the annotation of the play.

The actual lines of the text of the play are numbered consecutively and every fifth line is marked by a typewritten numeral. Each scene is considered as a unit; therefore the first line of each scene is considered as number one. The songs and prayers are considered as part of the text of the play and as such are counted in the line numbering system. The same system is followed for the annotations made on the title page but each line has been marked with a number to avoid errors because the size and kind of type varies.

When comment is made upon the act and scene divisions, these sections are simply listed as I.i, I.ii, I.iii, etc., and the comments follow; for example, a note on the different kinds of letters used for the act and scene divisions is found after I.i. After the act and scene divisions of the play, a list of characters appearing in the scene is found. When a comment is made upon peculiarities in this list of characters, the act and scene division is again used with a note following it.

The stage directions of one full line or more which are found between the lines of the text of the play are numbered with the prefix s.d.; for example, the stage directions, "Here they knele doune to sing all foure, sauing that / Abra is slackest, and Mido is quickest," found before the first song in II.iv[v], are numbered s.d.1 and s.d.2.

For the notes that are found in the margin of the copy, the prefix m.n. has been used and every fifth line is given a typewritten numeral. Therefore, in I.i, the fifth line of the margin notes, "staffe in hys"

is numbered m.n.5. and the tenth line "ten." is numbered m.n.10.

The Biblical references in the annotations came from:

The Bible in Englische / that is to saye. The
content of al the holy scripture / both of the olde /
and newe Testament / accordinge to the translacion
that is appointed to be rede in the Churches.
(S.T.C. 2081)

This version of the Bible was printed by Edward Whytchurche in 1550 and it is a version of the Great Bible. This particular version seems to be very close to the wording of Jacob and Esau and, consequently, Biblical references are quoted from it. To facilitate comparison with the King James Version of the Bible, chapter and verse numbers are given.

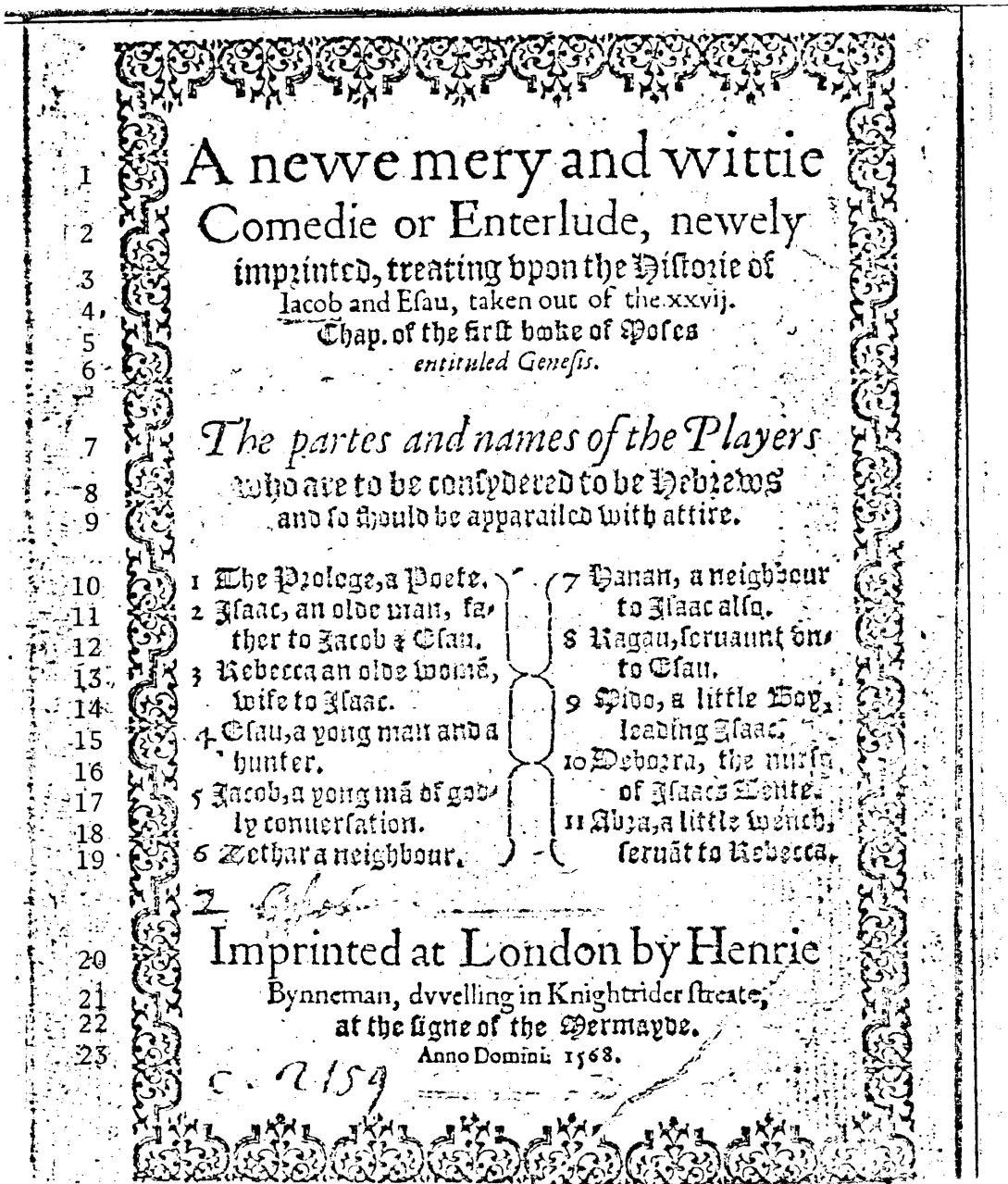
The following is a short list of the abbreviations that are used in the annotations.

- Farmer: Jacob and Esau, in Six Anonymous Plays (Second Series), ed. John S. Farmer
London, Published for the Early English Drama Society by Charles W. Traylen, 1906.
- Halliwell: James O. Halliwell, A Dictionary of Archaic and Provincial Words, 2 vols., 11th ed., London: Reeves and Turner, 1889.
- Hazlitt: Jacob and Esau in Robert Dodsley's A Select Collection of Old Plays, ed. W.C. Hazlitt, Vol. VII, London, 1874-1876.
- Heywood: John Heywood, The Proverbs, Epigrams and Miscellanies of John Heywood, ed. John S. Farmer, London, Published for the Early English Drama Society by Charles W. Traylen, 1906.
- O.E.D.: The Oxford English Dictionary, ed. Henry Bradley et al., 12 vols., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933.

S.T.C.: A. W. Pollard and G. R. Redgrave, comp.,
A Short-title Catalogue of the Books
Printed in England, Scotland, and Ireland
and of English Books Printed Abroad
1475-1640, London: Printed for the
Bibliographical Society by Oxford University
Press, 1926.

II

THE TEXT OF JACOB AND ESAU



2-3. newly / imprinted] Although the play was entered to Henry Sutton in the Stationers' Register around October or November, 1557, there is no extant copy.

8-9. who are to . . . apparaild with attire.] The text of Jacob and Esau does specify "Hebrew attire", indicating that this play required representative costumes or an attempt at such costuming.

12. Ragau] Both Farmer and Hazlitt use Ragan instead of Ragau but

their reasons for changing the name are not given. Of all the characters' names used in this play only the names of Mido and Ragau do not appear in the Bible.

22. at the signe of the Mermayde.] "Bynneman traded at the sign of the Mermaid from 1567 to 1580" (R. B. McKerrow, Printers' and Publishers' Devices in England and Scotland 1485-1640 (London, 1913), p.54.)

23. Anno Domini. 1568.] See Appendix B.

The Prologue of the play.

In the Booke of Genesis it is exprest,
 That whē God to Abrahā made sure promises
 That in his sēde al nations shold be b'essed:
 To send him a son by Sara he did not misse,
 Then to Isaac (as there recorded it is) 5
 By Rebecca his wife, who had lōg time tē va
 Whē pleased him, at one birth he sent sons twaine. (rain

But before Jacob and Esau yet bozne were,
 Or had eyther done good, or yll perpetrate:
 As the prophete Malachie and Paule witnesse beare, 10
 Jacob was chesen, and Esau reprobate:
 Jacob I loue (sayde God) and Esau I hate.
 For it is not (sayth Paule) in mans renning or will,
 But in Gods mercy who choseth whom he will.

But now for our coming we shal exhibite here 15
 Of Jacob and Esau howe the stoy was,
 Wherby Gods adoytion may plainly appeare:
 And also, that what euer Gods ordinance was,
 Nothing might defeate, but that it muste come to passe.
 That if this stoye may your eyes or eares delite, 20
 We pray you of patience, while we it recite.



7. twaine] two. Although the word twin was in use, the word twaine also had another meaning: 'separate, parted asunder, disunited' (O.E.D.). This secondary meaning is quite in keeping with the struggle of the twins in the womb recorded in Genesis 25:22-26. The full account of the birth reads:

Therefore she sayde: yf it shoulde go so to passe what helpeth it that I am with child? wherfore she wente to aske the Lorde. And the Lorde sayde vnto her: there are two maner of people in thy wombe,

and two nations shalbe deuided out of thy bowels:
and the one natyon shalbe myghtier than the other,
and the ð elder shalbe seruaunt vnto the younger.
Therefore when her time was come to be delyuered:
beholde, there were two twynnes in her wombe. And
he that came out fyrst was red, and he was all ouer
as it were a rough garment: and they called his name
Esau. And after him, came his brother out, and his
hande holdynge Esau by the * hele. And his name
was called Iacob

(The Bible in Englishe / that is to saye. The content of al the holy
scripture / both of the olde / and nevve Testament / accordinge to the
translacion that is appointed to be rede in the Churches. S. T. C. 2081.
This version of the Bible was printed by Edward Whytchurche in 1550 and
it is a version of the Great Bible).

10. As the prophete . . . Paule witnessse beare] Both Malachi
(Malachi 1:2-5) and Saint Paul (Romans 9:10-13) deal with the fact that
Jacob was chosen by God over Esau.

13-14. For it is . . . whome he will.] Saint Paul points out that
God does not have to answer for His actions to any human being (Romans
9:14-16). Essentially the Prologue is pointing out that man's actions
are irrelevant and that only God's will really matters in salvation.
This part of the prologue is indicative of the didacticism found through-
out the play.

13. renuing] This word may be a printer's error. In a few cases
in the play the printer prints u instead of n (see II.iii.86). If this
is a printer's error the word would be renning, an earlier form of the
word running. John Crow, editor of the Malone Society Reprint edition
of Jacob and Esau feels that the word in Bynnerman's text is a misprint.
He bases his argument on the fact that the lines closely follow the Bible
and the Bible has running rather than renewing (Romans 9:16). In the
edition of Hazlitt and the edition of Farmer, both editors accept the
word as renewing which means 'to make spiritually new' (O.E.D.). Since
the author has maintained a close fidelity to the Biblical account, I
agree with Crow's argument that an error has occurred and that the word
should be renning. (See John Crow, "List of Variant, Irregular, and
Doubtful Reading," Jacob and Esau, Malone Society Reprints (London, 1956)
pp. viii-ix.)

The Historie of Iacob

and Esau.

Actus primi, Scæna prima.

Ragau the seruant. Esau a yong man his maister.

Now lette me see what tyme it is by the starre light:
 Gods for his grace man, why it is not yet midnight,
 We might haue slept these four houres yet I dare well
 But this is our god Esau his common play: (say.
 5 What the dyuell ayleth him: now truly I thinke plaine,
 He hath either some woxnes or bottes in his braine.
 He scarcely slepeth .vij. god houres in two waktes.
 I wote wel his watching maketh me haue leane chækes.
 For there is none other life with hym day by day,
 10 But by Ragau. by drousy hogges head I say:
 Why when: Up, will it not be: Up. I come anon.
 Up, or I shall reyle you in sayth ye drousy horse son.
 Why, when: shall I sette you: I come sʒ by and by.
 Up with a wilde wenpon, how long wilt thou lie:
 15 Up I say, by at once, Up by, let vs goe hence,
 It is tyme we were in the forrest an houre sence.
 Nowe the deuill stoppe that same pallyng throate (thinke I)
 Somwhiles. For from he call, farewell all winke of eye.
 Begin he once to call, I sleepe no more that sounce,
 20 Though half an houres slepe wer worth .x. thousand pouid.
 Anon when I come in, and bydde him god mo:ow:
 Ah sʒ, by at last, the deuill gyue the sʒow.
 Nowe the diuell breake thy necke (thinke I by and by)
 That hast no witte to sleape, no: in thy bedde to lye.
 25 Then come on at once, take my quiner and my bolwe,
 Fette Louell my hounde, and my ho:ne to blowe.
 Then forth goe we sallyng an houre or two ere day,
 Before we may well see either our handes or way,

A.ij.

And

Ragau entretch
 with his horn
 at his back, and
 his hunting
 staffe in hys
 hande, and lea-
 deth .iij. grey-
 hounds or one
 as may be got-
 ten.
 Here he coun-
 tertaiteth howe
 his maister cal-
 leth hym vp in
 the morning,
 and of his an-
 sweres.

m. n. 5

m. n. 10

m. n. 15

Actus primi, Scaena prima] The type setting of the act and scene divisions varies. In a number of scenes the word scaena is printed as "S" whereas in other places scaena is printed with a swash "s". The scenes printed with the "S" are I.i; I.ii; I.iii; II.iii; and III.iii. All other scenes have scaena printed using the swash "s". There does not appear to be any reason for this variance except that the compositor may have used both types arbitrarily.

m.n.2 horn] probably a reference to the 'hunting horn, a wind

instrument,' rather than to 'a vessel to carry water, etc.', (O.E.D.).

m.n.4-5. huntyng staffe] The reference to staffe may mean a quarter-staff, 'a short pole tipped with an iron point' popular around 1550 (O.E.D.).

m.n.7-8. grey-hounds] This play has one of the first printed references in the text of the play referring to the use of animals on the English stage. There is a reference to the use of dogs "in the play of narcisses" (performed in the winter of 1571-1572), recorded in the documents of the Revels Office. See Documents Relating to the Office of the Revels in Time of Queen Elizabeth, ed. Albert Feuillerat (Louvain, 1908) p. 141. Later in the play (I.i.74-79), Esau speaks to at least three of his dogs, implying that three or more dogs are needed.

2. Gods for his grace man] The phrase is a mild oath, with a meaning similar to the modern saying, "for God's sake . . .". Hazlitt puts a comma between grace and man and writes God's for Gods.

3. slept these four houres yet] Ragau refers to the fact that the average Elizabethan country folk rose about three in the morning and according to these standards Ragau feels that he might have slept four more hours. See M. St. Clare Byrne, Elizabethan Life in Town and Country, revised edition (London, 1961), p. 292.

4. Esau his common play] Esau's generally known behaviour (O.E.D.). This speech indicates Esau commonly roused Ragau at this hour.

After the line Hazlitt inserts the stage directions (m.n.11-17), "Here he counterfeiteth how his master calleth him up in the morning, and of his [i.e., Ragau's] answers." [Hazlitt's spelling]

6. either some wormes . . . in his braine] The word worm was used in a figurative sense. It meant a 'grief or passion that preys on an man's heart or torments his conscience'. It could also mean a 'whim' or a 'streak of insanity' (O.E.D.).

bottes] a parasitical worm or maggot (O.E.D., [16th century]).

10. drousy hogges head] 'applied allusively to a person', 1515 (O.E.D.). The connotation may have arisen from the fact that liquor and wine were stored in a hogshead, or barrel. Hence hogshead would connote a drunken person. J. S. Farmer defines it as 'sleepy head'.

13. fette] fetch.

14. wilde wenyon] wild wanion: 'with a plague', 'with vengeance' (O.E.D.). The phrase was used as a curse. Cf. Misogonus, ed. J. S. Farmer, Second Series (London, 1906), IV.i, p. 229: ". . . with a wanion to my master--here thou com'st, as th'adst no lust." Cf. Pericles, II.i.17: "Look how thou stirr'st now! Come away, or I'll fetch thee

with a wanion."

16. It is tyme . . . an houre sence] Ragau's words should not be taken literally here. If they were to leave an hour before, the hunt would have begun before 11:00 p.m. Actually Ragau's speech is exaggerated to provide humour. Ragau becomes more accurate in line 27.

17. yallyng] howling, yelling (Farmer).

18. Somwhiles.] This word completes the preceding line. The meaning of the word is sometimes. Hazlitt changes the original period to a colon and drops the comma after call.

I feel that the original punctuation is satisfactory and does not require any change.

For from he call] The Elizabethans frequently used elliptical sentences for the sake of brevity. For a discussion of this point see E. A. Abbott, A Shakespearian Grammar (London, 1869), pp. 279-294.

19. stounde] 'a time', 'while'; 'a short time', 'mount' (O.E.D.).

20. .x. thousand poud] To get an idea of the way Ragau exaggerates, a relative comparison is required. The average shepherd received six-pence a week and board for working while a ploughman earned about one shilling a week and board. See M. St. Clare Byrne, Elizabethan Life in Town and Country, pp. 140-141, 167-169.

Jonas The Historie of

And there raunge we the wilde fozeff, no crumme of bread
 From morning to darck night coming within our head, 30
 Sometime Esau selfe will faynt for drinke and meate:
 So that he would be glad of a dead horse to eate.
 Yet of freshe the next morow sooth he will againe,
 And somtime not come home in a whole night or twaine:
 For no delite he hath, no appetite nor minde. 35
 But to the wilde Fozeff, to hunt the Harte or Hinde,
 The Roebucke, the wilde boze, the fallow Deere, or Hare:
 But howe poore Kagau shall dine, he hath no care,
 Poore I, must eate Acornes or Bearies from the Tree.
 But if I be sounde sticke in the sute following, 40
 Or if I do sayle in blowing or hallowing,
 Or if I lacke my Staffe, or my Horne by my syde:
 He will be quicke inough to summe chafe, and chide.
 Am I not well at ease suche a mayster to serue,
 As must haue such seruice, and yet will let me serue? 45
 But in faith his fashions displease mee than me,
 And will haue but a madde ende one day we shall see.
 He passeth nothing on Rebecca his mother,
 And much lesse passeth he on Jacob hys brother.
 But peace, mynime, no more: I see maister Esau. 50
 Esau. Howe nowe, are we all ready seruant Kagau?
 Art thou by for all day man? art thou ready now?
 Kagau. I haue ben here this halfe houre sye waiting for you.
 Esau. And is all thing ready as I bad, to my mynde?
 Kagau. We haue no cause, that I know, any fault to fynde: 55
 Except that we disease our tent and neighbours all
 With rising euer early eche day when ye call.
 Esau. Ah thou dronke drassefacke, wouldst thou ryse at none?
 Say I trow the firth honre with thee were ouersone.
 Kagau. Say I speake of your neighbours being men honest, 60
 That labour all the day, and would faine be at rest:
 Whom with blowing your Horne ye disease al aboutes.
 Esau. What care I for waking a fozte of clubbishe loutes?
 And

36. Harte] 'the male of the deer, esp. of the red deer; a stag; especially a male deer after its fifth year' (O.E.D.).

37. Roebucke] 'a male of the roe deer species' (O.E.D.). The roe deer is a small species of deer.

fallow Deere] fallow means 'pale brownish or reddish yellow' (O.E.D.). A fallow deer was a species of deer smaller than the stag or red deer.

47. a madde ende] a violent death.

58. drousy draffesacke] draffsack: 'sack of draff or refuse'; also 'figuratively a big paunch'; 'lazy glutton' (O.E.D.).

Farmer states: "a generic term of contempt; draff=dregs, dirt, refuse, and (specifically) brewer's grains: hence draffy (or draffish)=vile, worthless".

63. a] the same.

clubbishe] 'clownish, boorish, rough, rude' (O.E.D.).

Jacob and Esau.

	And I speake of Rebecca your mother, our dame.	Ragan.
65	Tutte I passe not whether she doe me prayse or blame.	Esau.
	And I speake of your god father, olde Isaac.	Ragan.
	Peace folithe knaue : As for my father Isaac,	Esau.
70	In case he be a sterpe, I doe him not disease, And if he be waking, I knowe I do him please, For he loueth me well from myne natiuitie, And neuer so as now, for myne adiuitie.	} Here Esau bloweth his horn agayne.
	Therefore haue at it, once more will I blow my Horne To giue my neighbour loutes an haile peale in a mozne.	
	How my maister Lightfoote, how say you to this geare,	Here he speaketh to hys
75	Will you do your ductie to redde or fallow Deare ?	Dogges.
	And Swan mine owne god curre, I do think in my minde, The game shal runne apace, if thou come farre behinde :	
	And ha Takepart, come Takepart, here, how say you child Wilt not thou do thy part : yes, else I am beguilde.	
80	But I shewoe your chokes, they haue had too much meat. I blame not dogges to take it, if they may it geat :	Ragan.
	But as for my parte, they coulde haue pardie, A small releuanit of that that ye giue me.	
	They may runne light inough for ought of me they got,	
85	I had not a god meales meate this weeke that I wot. If we haue lucke thys day to kill Hare, Leg, or Doe,	Esau.
	Thou shalt eat thy belly full, tyll thou cryest hoe. I thanke you when I haue it, mayster Esau.	Ragan.
	Well, come on, let vs goe nowe seruant Ragan.	Esau.
90	Is there any thing more, that I shoulde say or do ? For perhaps we come not againe this day or two.	
	I know nothing maister, to God I make a howl, Except you woulde take your byother Jacob with you :	Ragan.
	I neuer yet sawe hym with you an hunting goe, Shall we prone hym once whether he will goe or no ?	
95	No, no, that were in vaine : Alas god simple mome. Nay, he must tarrie and sucke mothers dugge at home :	Esau.
	Jacob must keepe home I trow, vnder mothers wing,	
	A.iii. To	

65. Tutte] 'an ejaculation (often reduplicated) expressing impatience, dissatisfaction or contempt' (O.E.D.).
passe] 'to care', 'to reck' (O.E.D.). Usually the word passe is used with the negative as it is in this sentence.

70-72. For he loueth . . . blow my Horne] Hazlitt inserts the stage directions (m.n. 23-25) after line 70. I feel the directions should follow line 72. Presumably Esau would finish his speech and then blow his horn.

72. haue at it] In Jacob and Esau, Hazlitt's use of a colon after the word it makes the meaning of Esau's lines clearer.

76. curre] a dog. Although the modern term has a derogatory connotation, the Elizabethan meaning did not have this connotation.

77. apace] 'literally, at a pace, i.e., at a good pace; hence with speed; swiftly' (O.E.D.).

if thou come farre behinde] a curious elliptical phrase meaning "if thou come not far behind" (O.E.D.).

80. shrewe] a form of beshrew: 'to curse, or blame greatly, as the cause of misfortune' (O.E.D.). Esau is worried because his dog appears fat and is not in good condition.

82. they coulde haue pardie] In Hazlitt's edition a comma separates haue and pardie, making the sentence meaningful.

pardie] a form of oath; By God! In Hazlitt's edition he spells the word parde, a variant.

The term comes from the Old French, 'par de or par Dieu' (O.E.D.).

83. releuauit] 'ad. L. relevavit "he has relieved", 3rd. [sic.] person indicative' (O.E.D.).

Hazlitt changes the word to remanant.

86. Teg] a doe or female deer in its second year (O.E.D.).

90-91. Is there any . . . day or two] Esau's words indicate that he has not always fully planned his hunting. Instead he will see what develops and then decide how long he will be away from the tent. Ultimately, his poor planning results in his near death from starvation.

96. mome] a 'blockhead', 'dolt', 'fool' (O.E.D.).

The Historie of

- To be from the Tentcs he loneth not of all thing.
 Jacob loneth no huntynge in the wylde foress: 100
 And would feare if he shoulde there see any wylde beaust.
 Pea to see the game runne, Jacob would be in feare.
 Ragau. In god soth I wene he would think eche Hare a Beare.
 Esau. What brother myne, what a worde call ye that?
 Ragau. Sye I am scarce waked: I spake ere I wyl what. 105
 Esau. Come on your ways my childe, take the lawe of the game.
 I will wake you I trowe, and set your tongue in frame,
 Oh what haue you done maister Esau, Gods apes.
 Ragau. Why can ye not yet refraine from lettynge such scapes?
 Esau. Come on, ye must haue thre tentcs for the nonce. 110
 One.
 Ragau. Oh, for Gods loue sye haue done, dispatche at once.
 Esau. Nay there is no remedy but hyde it, there is twaine.
 Ragau. O ye rent my cheuerell, let me be past my paine.
 Esau. Take hede of huting termes fro henceforth, there is thre. 115
 Ragau. Whowp. Nowe a mischiefe on all mopyng foles for me.
 Jacob shall keepe the Tentcs tenne yere for Ragau,
 Ere I moue agayne that he hunt wyth Esau.
 Esau. Come on, now let vs goe. God sende vs game and lucke,
 And if my hande serue me well, 120
 Ragau. He wyl kill a Ducke. Excant ambo.

Actus primi, Scæna secunda

Hanan. Zethar. two of Isaacs neighbors.

- Hanan. **A**s sye, I see I am an early man thys moone,
 I am once more begyde with Esau his hojne.
 But there is no suche stirrer as Esau is:
 He is by day by day before the Crowe yis:
 Then maketh he with his Hojne such rotyng and blowing 5
 And with his wyde throate such shenting and hallowing,
 That no neighbour shall in his Tent take any rest,
 From

104. What brother myne,] The word what has two possible meanings: it can be used as an exclamation of surprise or be used as an interrogative introducing a rhetorical question.

Hazlitt puts a period between what and brother. In Hazlitt's sentence brother myne refers to Ragau and would be addressed to Ragau as part of Esau's household. In Hazlitt's case what is an exclamation of surprise.

The other meaning is more easily derived without the period being inserted, i. e., "What brother myne". What here can be regarded as part

of a rhetorical question. Hence what is used as 'an exclamation implying an emphatic contrary assertion' (O.E.D.). I think this latter meaning is more suitable to the context of the sentence. Esau's next statement "What a worde call ye that?" indicates that he does not like Ragau speaking about his brother in a derogatory manner. Ragau's statement gives Esau cause to beat his servant.

what a worde call ye that] "what" is used here to express 'the surprising or striking nature of the thing said' (O.E.D.). Essentially Esau asks threateningly, "What are you calling my brother?"

106. take the law of the game] to accept the consequences.

108. Gods apes] 'a fool, a natural born fool' (O.E.D.).

109. lettyng such scapes] scapes: 'a transgression due to thoughtlessness' (O.E.D.).

110. three iertes for the nonce] iertes: jerks, 'a stripe, a lash' (O.E.D.). Farmer defines iertes as: 'stroke, stripe, lash: a dialectical form of jerk'.

nonce] 'for the particular purpose; expressly'; 'for the occasion; hence, for the time being; temporarily' (O.E.D.).

111. One] i.e., one stroke. Hazlitt inserts the stage direction 'beats him'.

112. dispatche] 'to settle business; get through, have done' (O.E.D.). A modern equivalent would be 'quit'.

114. cheuerell] 'garment made of the skin (or the skin itself) of young goats' (Farmer).

115. Take hede of Hūting termes frō hencforth] "Mind your proper business."

118. moue] suggest, propose, mention.

121. Ye wyll kill a Ducke] Hazlitt has Ragau make this statement through an aside. The meaning of the phrase seems straight forward. There does not appear to be any unpleasant connotation.

I.ii.1. AH syr] This may be an address to the audience.

6. his wyde throate] A modern equivalent would be his big mouth.

Jacob and Esau.

- From Esau addresseth hym to the Forrest.
 So that he maketh vs whether we will or no,
 10 Better husbandes than we woulde be, abroade to go,
 Cche of vs about our businelle and our warke.
 But whome doe I see yonder commyng in the darke?
 It is my neyghboz Zethar, I percepue hym nowe.
 What neighbour Hanan, well met, god moxow to you. Zethar.
 15 I see well nowe I am not beguiled alone:
 But what boote to lye still? for rest we can take none.
 That I meruaile much of olde father Isaac,
 Beyng so godly a man, why he is so slacke
 To byng hys sonne Esau to a better stay.
 20 What shoulde he do in the matter I you pray? Hanan.
 Oh it is no small charge to fathers afore God, Zethar.
 So to traine their childezen in youth vnder the rod,
 That when they come to age they may vertue ensue,
 Wicked pranks abhorre, and all leudnesse eschue.
 25 And me thinketh Isaac, being a man (as he is)
 A chosen man of God, shoulde not be slacke in this.
 Alack god man, what shoulde he do more than he hath done? Hanan.
 I dare say no father hath better taught his sonne,
 For no two haue giuen better example of life,
 30 Unto their childezen, than bothe he and his wife:
 As by their yonger sonne Jacob it doth appeare.
 He lyueth no loose life, he doth God loue and feare.
 He kepeth here in the Tentcs lyke a quiete man:
 He geneth not hymselfe to wildnesse any whan.
 35 But Esau euer more from his yong childehode
 Hath ben lyke to proue yll, and neuer to be good.
 Yng it pricketh (folkes do say) that wpll be a thorne,
 Esau hath ben nought euer since he was borne.
 And wherof commeth this, of Coucation?
 40 Nay it is of his olane yll inclination.
 They were brought by bothe vnder one tuition,
 But they be not bothe of one disposition.

8. From Esau addresseth . . . to the Forrest] from the moment Esau blows his horn.

16. boote] 'advantage; profit; avail; use' (O.E.D.).

19. stay] 'a thing or person that affords support; an object of reliance' (O.E.D.). In the context here, a socially acceptable behaviour and hence more prestigious.

25. being a man (as he is)] Hazlitt removes the brackets and puts a dash after is.

33. quiete] 'free from excess; moderate, gentle (O.E.D.).

34. any whan] 'anytime; now dialectical' (Farmer).

37. Yong it pricketh . . . be a thorne] the proverb points out that undesirable characteristics can be detected early in life. Esau's behaviour in adulthood was noticeable even when he was young. See IV.i, Abra's Song. This proverb seems to have been common.

The Historie of

Clau is gyuen to loce and leude liuyng.
Zethar. In fayth I warrant him haue but shreude thriuing.
Hanan. Neither see I any hope that he will amende. 45
Zethar. Then let hym euen looke to come to an yll ende.
 For youth that will folow none but theyr owne bydle,
 That leadeth a dissolute lyfe and an ydle,
 Youth that refuseth holosome documentes,
 Do to take crample of theyr godly parentes, 50
 Youth that is retcheleise, and taketh no regarde,
 What become of them selfe, nor which ende goe forwarde,
 It is great meruaille and a speciall grace,
 If euer they come to godnesse all theyr life space.
 But why doe we consume this whols moorning in talke, 55
 Of one that hath no recke no care what way he walke,
 We had bene as god to haue kept our bedde still.
Hanan. Oh it is our parte to lamente them that doe yll.
 Lyke as very Nature, a godly heart dothe moue
 Others god proceedings to tender and to loue : 60
 So suche as in no wise to godnesse will be brought :
 What god mā but wil mourn, since god bs al hath wrought
 But ye haue some busynesse, and so haue I.
Zethar. And we haue ben long, farewell neighbour heartily.

Actus primi, scæna tertia.

Rebecca the Mother. Jacob the Sonne.

Rebecca. Come forth sonne Jacob, why tarriest thou behinde ?
Jacob. Forsoth mother, I thought ye had sayd al your minde.
Rebecca. Nay, come I haue yet a worde or two moze to say.
Jacob. What soeuer pleaseth you, speake to me ye may.
Rebecca. Seyng thy brother Clau is suche an one, 5
 Why rebukest thou hym not when ye are alone ?
 Why doest thou not gyue him some god sad wyse counsaile ?
Jacob. He lacketh not that mother, if it woulde auale.

44. In fayth I . . . but shreude thriuing] Zethar means that Esau will only be successful in malicious dealings and pranks.

47. bridle] Here the term is used figuratively. By following his oune bridle, Esau is following the whims of his own disposition. He refuses to be guided by any other person's examples.

48. an ydle] an elliptical phrase, i.e., an idle life.

59-61. Lyke as very . . . will be brought] A problem of interpretation is present in these lines. In Hazlitt's edition, he makes others possessive and punctuates the sentence in the following way:

Like as very nature a godly heart doth moue.

Others' good proceedings to tender and to loue.

However, I have retained the original punctuation and I suggest that Others good proceedings to tender and to loue be read as Others to tender and to loue good proceedings.

So suche as] an elliptical sentence, meaning "so such as these" where these actually refer back to the kind of people mentioned in line 58, i.e., "them that doe yll."

I.iii.5. Seyng thy brother . . . suche an one] Rebecca's words indicate she and Jacob have been discussing Esau's behaviour.

7. sad] 'mature, serious' (O.E.D.).

Jacob and Esau

But when I doe him any thing of his fault tell,
 10 He calleth me foolishhe p[ro]uide boy with him to mell.
 He will sometime demaunde by what authoritee,
 I p[re]sume to teache them which mine elders be
 He will sometime aske if I learne of my mother,
 To take on me teaching of mine elder brother.
 15 Sometime when I tell him of his leude behauiour,
 He will sende me a mocke or twaine for my labour.
 And sometime for anger he will out with his purse
 And call me as please him, and sweare he will doe worse.
 Oh Lozde, that to beare such a sonne it was my chaunce.
 20 Mother, we must be content wyth Gods ordinaunce.
 Or, if I shoulde needes haue Esau to my sonne,
 Would God thou Jacob haddest the Elderthip wonne.
 Mother, it is to late to wishe for that is past:
 It will not be done now With ye neuer so fast.
 25 And I woulde not haue you to wish agaynst Gods wyll
 For both it is in vaine, and also it is yll.
 Why did it not please God, that thou shouldest as wele
 Treade vpon his crowne, as holde him fast by the helme?
 Whatsoener mysterie the Lozde therein ment,
 30 Must be referred to his vnsearched iudgement.
 And what soeuer he hath pointed me vnto,
 I am his stone vntill his will with me to do.
 Well, some strange thing therin of Gods intended was,
 And what he hath decreed, must sure come to passe.
 35 I remember when I had you both conceiued,
 A voyce thus sayng from the Lozde I receiued:
 Rebecca, in thy wombe are now the nations,
 Of vnlike natures and contrary fashions,
 The one shall be a mightier people elect:
 40 And the elder to the yonger shall be subiect.
 I knowe this voyce came not to me of nothing:
 Therefore thou shalt folow my counsell in a thing.
 So it be not displeasing to the Lozde I must.
 B.J. I feare

Rebecca.
 Jacob.
 Rebecca.
 Jacob.
 Rebecca.
 Jacob.
 Rebecca.
 Jacob.
 Rebecca.
 Jacob.
 Rebecca.

9-12. But when I . . . mine elders bee] As the eldest brother, Esau was not responsible for his actions to Jacob.

10. mell] 'to concern or busy oneself' (O.E.D.).

17-18. he will out with his purse . . . will doe worse] A statement for which it is difficult to find an interpretation. The term purse referred to a 'money-bag or--receptacle and its contents' (O.E.D.). Jacob probably means that Esau has a "a bag full of insults" from which he draws to insult Jacob, and often Esau threatens to do more than just

insult Jacob, i.e., cause Jacob bodily harm.

Farmer states: "offer, as an insult or jibe, to pay Jacob for his interference."

22. Eldership] Esau, being the older twin, has the rights of primogeniture. As the first-born child, he was to succeed his father as head of the family and he was to get a double portion of the family estate. Also, as head of the family, Esau would enjoy a great deal of respect from the other members of the household. See Deuteronomy 21:16-17 for the Biblical reference.

The birthright could be lost as in the case of Jacob and Esau, or Reuben (I Chronicles 5:1).

23. Mother, it is . . . that is past] Jacob's speech shows how aware the younger son is of God's law. He appears willing to accept his fate and God's will. Jacob is aware that God did have Esau born first and that this occurrence gives Esau certain rights under the Hebrew law.

28. Treade vpon his crowne] in other words, come first in birth. The rest of the line is in reference to the fact that Jacob was born holding Esau's heel.

30. vnserched] that can not be discovered, impenetrable, or mysterious (O.E.D.).

The Historie of

Rebecca. I feare the lorde eke, who is mercifull and iust:
 And loth would I be, his maiestie to offende,
 But by me (I doubt not to worke he doth intende,
 Alay if thou canst, at some one tyme or other,
 To buye the right of eldership from thy brother:
 Do thou buye the birthright that to hym both belong,
 So mayst thou haue the blessing, and doe hym no wrong. 50
 What thou hast once bought, is thyne owne of due right.

Jacob. Mother Rebecca, if withouten fraude I might,
 I would your aduise put in vze wyth all my hart,
 But I may not attempt any such guilefull part:
 To buye my brothers eldership and hys birthright,
 I feare woulde be a great offence in Gods sight. 55
 Which thyng if I wilst, to redeme I ne wolde,
 Though I might get therby ten millions of golde.

Rebecca. God, who by his worde and almightifull decre,
 Hath appoynted the Chaw his lorde to be,
 Hath appointed some way to haue it brought about,
 And that is thys way, my spite both not doute,
 Vpon your worde mother, I will assay ere long,
 Yet it grudgeth my heart to doe my brother wrong.

Jacob. Thou shalt do no wrong somee Jacob, on my perill. 65
 When by Gods leaue once I wil.

Rebecca. Then farewell dere son, Gods blessing e mine with the.
 I will againe to the Tent. Well you ha. Exeat Jacob.

Jacob. Ah my swete sonne Jacob, god fortune God the sende.
 Rebecca. The most gentle yong man alyne, as God me mende. 70
 And the moste naturall to father and mother:
 That such a meke spirite were in thy brother,
 Or thy spze loued thee as thou hast merited,
 And then should Chaw some be disherited.

Actus

46. But by me . . . not to worke] Hazlitt inserts the closing parenthesis after not leaving the sentence to read "But by me (I doubt not) to worke he doth intende".

49-51. Do thou buye . . . of due right] Rebecca explains that if Jacob has purchased the birthright, he will have a legal right to the blessing.

50. blessing] Isaac must officially bless his son as the final function of primogeniture.

54-58. But I may . . . millions of golde] It is interesting to note that Jacob is very hesitant at this point to do anything which might be immoral, illegal, or injurious to Esau. Jacob needs to be convinced that God wants him to have the birthright. The proof appears to come when Esau does sell his birthright, II.ii.

71. naturall] 'kind' (O.E.D.). Rebecca means the son who acts towards his parents most like an offspring should act.

*Jacob and Esau.***Actus primi, Scæna quarta.**

Isaac the husbände, Rebecca, the wife.
Mido, the ladde that leadeth blinde Isaac.

- W**hers art thou my boy Mido, when I see thee lacke? Isaac.
 Who calleth Mido? here good maister Isaac. Mido.
 Come leade me forth of doores a little I thee pray. Isaac.
 Lay your hande on my shoulder, and come on this way. Mido.
 5 **N**ow O Lorde of heauen, the fountaine of all grace,
 If it be thy godd will that my will shall take place:
 Sende successe to Jacob, according to thy worde,
 That his elder brother may serue hym as his lorde.
 10 **S**pe, whyther would ye goe, now that aduoad ye be? Mido.
 To myse Rebecca. Isaac.
 Ponder I doe hir see. Mido.
 Lorde, thou knowest Jacob to be thy seruant true, Rebecca.
 And Esau all frowarde thy wayes to ensue.
 Ponder she is speaking, what euer she doth say: Mido.
 15 **B**y holdyng by hir handes, it seemeth she doth pray.
 Where be ye wyfe Rebecca? where be ye woman?
 Who is that calleth? Isaac my godd man?
 Where be ye wyfe Rebecca, lette me vnderstande?
 She commeth to you apace. Mido.
 20 **H**ere my lorde, at hande. Rebecca.
 Saying that what so euer Godd doth is all right,
 So small grieve it were so; a man to lacke his sight.
 But what the Lorde doth sende or worke by his high will,
 Can not but be the best, no such thing can be yll. Isaac.
 25 **A**ll bodily punishment or infirmitie,
 With all mainnes of nature, what euer they be,
 Pea and all other afflictions temporall:
 As losse, persecution, or troubles mortall,
 Are nothing but a triall or probation.
 30 **A**nd what is he that firmly trusteth in the Lorde,

I. iv.] This scene has Mido and Isaac coming onto the stage while Rebecca remains on stage after the preceding scene. In lines 9-15, the conversation of Mido and Isaac indicates that the two males are approaching Rebecca, yet they can not really hear what she has been saying.

3. forth of doores] outside.

5-8. Now O Lord . . . as his lorde] prayer of Rebecca.

13. frowarde] 'disposed to go counter to what is demanded or is reasonable' (O.E.D.).

The Historie of

O steadfastly beleueth his promise and worde,
 And knoweth him to be the God omnipotent,
 That feedeth and governeth all that he hath sent:
 Protecting his faithfull in euery degree,
 And them to relieue in all their necessitie: 35

What creature (I say) that doth this vnderstande,
 Will not take all thing in god parte at Gods hande:
 Shall we at Gods hand receyue prosperitie,
 And not be content likewise with aduersitie?
 We ought to be thankfull what euer God doth sende,
 And our selues wholly to his will to commende. 40

Rebecca. So should it be, and I thanke my lord Isaac,
 Suche dayly lessons at your hande I doe not lack.

Isaac. Why then should not I thanke the Lords, if it please him
 That I shall nowe be blinde, and my sight waie all diu. 45
 For who so to olde age will here liue and endure,
 Must of soyle abide all such defaults of nature.

Mido. Why must I be blinde too, if I be an olde man?
 How shall I grope the way, for who shall leade me thur?

Isaac. If the Lords haue pointed the such olde dayes to see, 50
 He will also provide that shall be made for thee.

Mido. I trowe if I were blinde, I coulde goe well inow,
 I coulde grope the long thur, and goe as I do nowe,
 I haue bene so ere nowe both by day and by night,
 As I see you grope the way, and haue hitte it right. 55

Rebecca. Wea say boy, will ye play any suche childlike knack?
 As to counterfeit your blinde maister Isaac:
 What is bat to mocke him for his impediment.

Mido. Nay I haue oyd it in any suche intent.

Rebecca. Nay it is to tempt God before thou haue made: 60
 Wherby thou mayst prouoke him in very deede,
 With some great misfortune or plague to punish thee.

Mido. Then will I neuer more do so while I may see:
 But against I be blinde, I will be so perfight,
 That though no man leade me, I will go at midnight. 65

Polwe

55. hitte it right] been able to find it.

64. perfight] The word is a form of "perfite", meaning 'perfect, skilful' (Halliwell).

65. I will go at midnight] Mido's words imply that his inner perfection and goodness will provide him with the right actions.

Jacob and Esau.

Nowe wife, touching the purpose that I sought for you. Isaac.
 What sayth my lorde Isaac to his handemayde now? Rebecca.
 We haue ofte in conuerte wordes be a right earnest Isaac.
 To haue me graunt vnto you a boune and request:
 70 But ye neuer tolde me yet plainly what it was,
 Wherefore I haue ener yet lette the matter passe.
 And now of late by ofte being from me absent,
 I haue halfe suspected you to be scarce content.
 But wife Rebecca, I woulde not haue you to mourne,
 75 As though I did your honest petition wourne.
 For I neuer ment to denie in all my life
 Any latefull or honest request to my wyfe.
 But in case it be a thing vnrasonable,
 Then must I needs be to you vntractable.
 80 Now therfore say on, and tell me what is your case.
 I woulde, if I were sure in your heart to fynde grace:
 Else say I woulde be lothe. Rebecca.
 To speake do not refraine, Isaac.
 And if it be reasonable ye shall obtaine:
 85 Otherwise, ye must pardon me gentle swete wife.
 Sir, ye knowe your sonne Esau, and for his life,
 Howe loose it is, and howe stiffe he is and stubberne,
 Howe retchelesly he both him selfe misgouerne:
 He geueth himselfe to hunting out of reason,
 90 And serueth the Lorde and vs at no time or season.
 These conditions can not be acceptable
 In the syght of God, nor to men allowable.
 Nowe his brother Jacob your yonger sonne and mine,
 Dothe more applie his heart to seke the wayes diuine.
 95 He liueth here quietly at home in the Tent,
 There is no man nor childe but is with him content.
 Oh wife, I perceiue ye speake of affection,
 To Jacob ye beare loue, and to his brother none.
 I deede say, I can not leue Esau so well Isaac.
 100 As I doe Jacob, the plaine truth to you to tell. Rebecca.
 B.iii. For

75. wourne] a form of "werne". 'To forbid, to refuse, to hinder, to deny' (Halliwell).

Hazlitt changes wourne to scorn in his edition while Farmer's edition retains wourne.

81-82. I woulde, if . . . woulde he lothe] Rebecca is not sure how Isaac will receive her request, and therefore she is hesitant to tell him. Her words also give reason for the use of "coverte wordes" that Isaac mentions in line 68.

lothe] one of the few cases where rime does not occur.

84. ye shall obtaine] ye shall prosper.

87. stiffe] 'obstinate', 'stubborn', 'not amenable to reason'
(O.E.D.).

90. And serueth the . . . time or season] Actually there is no Biblical basis for this statement. Esau did all that God required of him according to the Bible but still God chose Jacob over Esau. This is one of the very few occasions that the author does not maintain close Biblical fidelity.

99. I deede] indeed. Both Farmer and Hazlitt adopt indeed for their editions.

The Historie of

For I haue no comfozte of Esau God wot :
 I scarce know where I haue a sonne of hym or not.
 He goeth abroade so early before day light,
 And returneth home againe so late in the night,
 And vneth I sette eye on hym in the whole weeke : 105
 Do sometime not in twaine, though I doe for hym seeke.
 And all the neighbours see him as seloome as I.
 But when they would take rest, they heare hym blow & cry.
 Some see him so seloome, they aske if he be sicke :
 Somtimes some demaunde whether he be dead or quicke. 110
 But to make short tale, such his conditions be,
 That I wishe of God he had nere bene borne of me.
 Isaac. Well saye, I loue Esau, and must for causes trowe.
 Rebecca. Sure'y your loue is bestowed on him in bayne.
 Isaac. First againe he is, as any yong man can be : 115
 And many a good morfell he bringeth home to me.
 Then he is myne eldest and first begotten sonne.
 Rebecca. If God were so pleased, I woulde that were fordonne.
 Isaac. And the eldest sonne is called the fathers might.
 Rebecca. If yours rest in Esau, God giue vs good night. 120
 Isaac. A prerogative he hath in euery thing.
 Rebecca. Waxe pitie he shoulde haue it without deseruing.
 Isaac. Of all the godes his portion is greater.
 Rebecca. That the worthy shoulde haue it, I thinke much better.
 Isaac. Among his bretherne, he hath the preeminence. 125
 Rebecca. Where Esau is chiefe, there is a gay presence.
 Isaac.ouer his bretherne he is soueraigne and lord.
 Rebecca. Such dignitie in Esau doth yll accorde.
 Isaac. He is the head of the fathers succession.
 Rebecca. I woulde Esau had losse that possession. 130
 Isaac. And he hath the chiefe title of inheritaunce.
 Rebecca. Wisdome woulde in Esau chaunge that ordinaunce.
 Isaac. To the eldest sonne is due the fathers blessing.
 Rebecca. That shoulde be Jacobs, if I might haue my wishyng.
 Isaac. And the chiefe endowment of the fathers substance. 135
 Which

102. where] probably whether. Rebecca means that Esau is away so much that she very rarely sees him.

Hazlitt changes where to whe'r. Farmer follows Hazlitt's example

105. vneth] unless.

111. conditions] 'mental disposition, character'; 'personal qualities' (O.E.D.).

118. fordonne] 'undone' (O.E.D.). Hazlitt puts this entire speech in an aside and Farmer follows his example. Actually the speech does not need to be in an aside. It is a wish on the part of Rebecca and she has already told Isaac how she feels about Esau. All she is stating is that she wishes Esau were not the first born.

See E. A. Abbott, A Shakespearian Grammar, pp. 212-214: "When . . . a wish is implied, and were, perhaps indicates the desire that the wish should be fulfilled, not hereafter, but at once, as a thing of the past."

120. God giue vs good night] a mild oath. The modern equivalent might be "God help us".

126. gay presence] This statement of Rebecca's has an ambiguous meaning: the word gay can mean (1) 'disposed to joy or mirth', or (2) 'brilliant or attractive' (O.E.D.). Rebecca's meaning can be gathered from her speech in the next few lines: obviously she feels that Esau is not serious enough about his duties to God or to his family.

128. yll accorde] does not agree with his actions.

134. That should be . . . haue my wishing] Again Hazlitt and Farmer have chosen to put this speech in an aside. I feel that it is more dramatic to have Rebecca say it to Isaac. He already knows she wishes to have Jacob succeed him; however, the audience realizes the irony because they realize Rebecca has begun to plan to get Jacob the birthright.

Jacob and Esau.

	Which will thine well in Esau his governance.	Rebecca.
	By title of Eldership he hath his birthright.	Isaac.
	And that would I remove to Jacob if I might.	Rebecca.
	He must have double portion to an other.	Isaac.
140	What were more fitte for Jacob his yonger brother,	Rebecca.
	In all maner of things diuided by a rate.	Isaac.
	Well gyuen goodes to him that the Lorde both hate.	Rebecca.
	Why say ye so of Esau mine eldest sonne?	Isaac.
	I say true, if he procede as he hath begonne.	Rebecca.
145	Is he not your sonne too, as well as he is myne?	Isaac.
	Wherefore do ye then against him thus sore repine?	
	Because that in my spirite verily I know,	Rebecca.
	God will sit by Jacob, and Esau delene the owe.	
	I haue shewed you many a tyme ere this day,	
150	What the Lorde of them bring in my wombe byd say.	
	I vs not so; to ye: And I beleeue certaine,	
	What the Lorde spake not these wordes to me in vaine.	
	And Jacob it is (I know) in whome the Lorde will	
	His promises to you made, and to your sate fulfill.	
155	I doubt not his promise made to me and my sate,	Isaac.
	Meaning to his coneynance howe it shall procede.	
	The Lorde after his way change this heritage,	
	But I may not wrongly breake our ordinance.	
	Howe would God, I coulde persuade my lorde Isaac,	Rebecca.
160	Jacob to preferre, and Esau to put backe.	
	I may not do it wife, I pray you be content.	Isaac.
	The title of birthright that cometh by descent,	
	Or the place of eldership cometh by due course	
	I may not change nor shift, for better nor for worse.	
165	Nature as lawe it is, the eldest sonne to herelowe,	
	And in no wise to barre hym of his heritage.	
	And ye shall of Esau one day haue comforte.	
	Set a god long day then, or else we shal come short.	Rebecca.
	I warrant you, he will doe well inough at length.	Isaac.
170	You must needs comfort him being your mighte strength.	Rebecca.
	Well,	

138. And that would . . . if I might] This is another line which Hazlitt and Farmer put as an aside but which I would leave spoken directly to Isaac for the purposes of dramatic irony.

141. diuided by a rate] as determined by Biblical law; namely, one-half of the estate.

142. Well gyuen goodes] goods given in good faith.

151. vse] to be accustomed to, 'to engage or to practise' (O.E.D.).

I.iv.

Rebecca means that she does not make it a habit to tell lies.

156. conueyaunce] way.

158. wetingly] wittingly

165. to knowlage] to acknowledge.

168. come short] i.e., never see the day when Esau will be a comfort to them.

170. You must nedes . . . might e strēgh] this can be taken in two ways: (1) Rebecca can say it mockingly, meaning Isaac should praise Esau because of the virtues Isaac sees in Esau; or (2) Rebecca can say it sincerely as a statement, meaning that Isaac has to praise Esau because Isaac feels that, through Esau, God's promises will be **fulfilled**.

I favour the second because it shows that Rebecca understands why Isaac has reacted in the way he has, and it provides for the congenial feeling between husband and wife exemplified by the lines following. Even though the two of them have been arguing, Rebecca realizes Isaac must follow the laws of primogeniture.

The Historie of

Isaac. Well, now we go we hence, little Mido where art thou?
 Mido. I have stood here all this while, listening how you
 And my Dame Rebecca haue bene laying the lawe,
 But she hath as quicke answeres as euer I sawe.
 He coulde not speake any thing vnto hir so thicke,
 But she had hir answeres as ready and as quicke.
 Isaac. Pea, womens answeres are but fewe times to seeke.
 Mido. But I did not see Esau neither all this same while:
 For I do loue your sonne Esau so well,
 As I do loue your sonne Jacob by a great deale.
 Isaac. No dost thou Mido, and tell me the cause why?
 Mido. Why: for I doe not: And none other cause knowe I.
 But euery body as well one as other, doe
 Doe wisly that Jacob had bene the elder brother.
 Isaac. Well, come on, let vs goe.
 Mido. And who shall leade you?
 Rebecca. No, it is my office as long as I am by.
 And I woulde all things, as the world this day is,
 Woulde vnto their husbandes likewise do their office.
 Mido. Why dame Rebecca, then al wedded men shold be blind.
 Rebecca. What thou foolish lorde, no such thing was in my minde.

Actus secundi, scena prima.

Ragau. the Seruant of Esau.

 Ragau. Haue hearde it offe, but nowe I feele a wonder,
 In what grievous paine they die, that die for hunger.
 Oh my greddie stomacke hoine it doth bite and gnawe.
 If I were at a racke, I could eate hay or strawe.
 Mine empty guts doe frette, my maw doth euen teare,
 Woulde God I had a peece of some horsebyead here.
 Yet is matter Esau in worse case than I.
 If he haue not some meate the sower he will die.
 He hath souke for faintnesse twice or thrice by the way.

And

175. thicke] 'in close or rapid succession' (O.E.D.).

177. fewe times to seeke] Isaac states that men should not ask women's opinions too often.

187-191. No, it is . . . in my minde] Rebecca's words show dramatic irony. She is going to lead Isaac, so that he will give the blessing to Jacob. Mido refers to this when he points out that Rebecca is physically leading Isaac, but more important, she is also leading Isaac into a situa-

tion where she can trick the old man into giving Jacob the blessing. Mido knows how Rebecca feels but she quickly stops him from revealing anything to Isaac.

II.i.3. greedie] 'hungry' (O.E.D.).

4. racke] a frame made with upright bars of wood or metal to hold fodder for horses or cattle, either fixed in a stable or moveable' (O.E.D.).

6. horsebread] 'bread made of beans, bran etc; for food for horses' (O.E.D.).

Jacob and Esau.

- 10 **And not one siely bitte we got since yester day.**
All that ever he hath, he woulde haue giuen to day
To haue had but thre morsels his hunger to allay.
Or in the fielde to haue mette with some hoggs,
I coude scarcely kepe him from eating of these doggs.
- 15 **He hath sent me afoze some meate for to prouide,**
And commeth creeping after, scarce able to stride.
But if I knowe where to get of any man,
For to ease myne owne selfe, as hungry as I am,
I pray God I thinke: but if any come to me,
- 20 **Die who die will, for sure I will first serued be.**
I will see if any be ready here at home:
Or whether Jacob haue any that peakishe mome.
But first I must put all my dogges by,
And lay by thys geare, and then God sende vs the cup.

Actus secundi, scæna secunda.

Esau the maister.

Ragau the seruant.

- O** What a grieuous pain is hunger to a man?
Take all that I haue for meate, helpe who that can.
Or lozde, some god body for Gods sake gync me meate.
I forze not what it were, so that I had to eate.
- 5 **Meate or drinke, saue my life, or breade, I recke not what.**
If there be nothing else, some man giue me a rat.
If any god body on me will doe so much cost,
I will teare and eate hir ratte, she shall nere be rost,
I promise of honestie I will eate hir ratte.
- 10 **And what a nody was I, and a howson datte,**
To let Ragau goe with all my doggs at ones:
A shoulder of a dogge were nowe meate for the nones.
Oh what shall I doe? my teeth I can scarcely charme,
From gnawing away the bzaune of my berry arme.
- 15 **I can no longer stande for saynt, I must nedes lie.**
And except meate come sone, remedie I see.

Esau.

Commeth in m. n.
so faint that he
can scarce go.

C. 1.

And

10. siely] seely: 'insignificant; mean, poor' (O.E.D.).

13-14. Or in the . . . of these doggs] Although the law against eating swine's flesh was not given until Leviticus 11:1-11, and Deuteronomy 14:8, Ragau refers to the fact that Esau is ready to commit a vile sin (i.e., eat pork) because he is so hungry.

22. peakishe] 'spiritless; stupid; ignorant' (O.E.D.).

II.ii.m.n.1-3] This marginal note at the side of the page refers to Esau's actions and quite rightly could be put before Esau's words, as both Hazlitt and Farmer have done.

3. O Lorde, some . . . gyue me meate] Hazlitt inserts a comma after body, making the sentence clearer.

4. force] 'to care for' (O.E.D.). In other words "I care not what it were".

7. If any good . . . so much cost] Esau asks if any body would give him something from the charity of that person's heart.

10. nody] 'a fool, simpleton, noodle' (O.E.D.).
dawe] 'a bird of the crow kind (corvus monedula)' (O.E.D.). Here the term is used figuratively, meaning 'A simpleton', 'a sluggard', 'a slut' (O.E.D.).

12. nones] 'the third quarter of the day'; i.e., from three to six in the afternoon (O.E.D.).

The Historie of

And where art thou Kagan tohome I sent before?
 Unless thou come at once, I neuer see thee more.
 Where art thou Kagan, I heare not of thee yet?

Kagan. Here as fast as I can, but no meate can I get. 20
 Not one draught of drink, not one peece morsel of bread
 Not one bit of crum though I shold freight way be dead.
 Therefore ye may now see how much ye are to blame,
 What wil thus serue your self for solotving your game.

Clau. Ah thou villain, tellest thou me this now? 25
 If had thee, I woulde eate thee, to God I bolue,
 Ah, meate thou hasten, why hast thou not brought me meate?
 Would you haue me being you that I can nowhere geat.
 Come hitther, let me tell thee a woode in thine care.

Kagan. Nay, speake out aloud: I will not come a fate nere, 30
 Fall ye to smatching at folkes: adieu I am gone.
 Nay for gods loue Kagan, leane me not alone:
 I will not eate thee Kagan, to God me helpe.

Clau. No, I shall desire you to chese some other tohelpe. 35
 Being in your best lust I woulde topple with ye,
 And plucke a good crowe ere ye brake your fast with me.
 What are you manhens now? Precken it best I,
 To bind your handes behind you euen as ye lye.

Kagan. Nay haue mercy on me, and let me not perishe.
 In faith nought coulde I get toher with you to cherishe. 40
 Clau. Was there nothing to be had among so many?
 Kagan. I coulde not finde one but Iacob that had any,
 And no grannt woulde he make for ought that I coulde say,
 Yet no man aliuie with fairer woordes coulde him pray.
 But the best redde pottage he hath that euer was. 45

Clau. So pray him I may speake with him once ere I passe.
 Kagan. What message by Gods grace shall not long be vndone.
 Clau. He shal go apate, and retorne againe sone.
 If Iacob haue due brotherly compassion,
 He will not see me fainte after this fashion, 50
 But I dare say, the wyetche had rather see me thost,
 Then

35. topple] 'to fall headlong, tumble, or pitch over'. In this context meaning 'to wrestle' or to 'try a fall' (O.E.D.).

36. plucke a good crowe] An incomplete definition is offered by Farmer who suggests 'demand explanation, or satisfaction, or remedy for disagreeables'.

'To have something disagreeable or awkward to settle with him; to have a matter of dispute, or something requiring explanation, to clear up' (O.E.D.). A modern equivalent would be "to put up a good fight".

37. mankene] man-keen: 'of animals (rarely of persons): inclined to attack men; fierce, savage' (O.E.D.).

Hazlitt notes: i.e., Mankind, masculine, furious'. His edition prints the words as mankin.

Farmer states: 'furious, fierce, mad'.

51. throst] a form of throwst; 'to do violence to', 'to torture' (O.E.D.).

Jacob and Esau.

- Than he would finde in his harte to do so muche cost:
 For where is betwene one fremman and an other,
 Lesse loue found than now betwene brother and brother?
 55 Will Jacob come forth to shewe comforte vnto me?
 The honeston hypocrite will as sone hanged be.
 Yet peace, me thinketh Jacob is comming in dede:
 And my minde geueth me at his hande I shall spede.
 For he is as gentle and louing as can be,
 60 As full of compassion and pitie.
 But let me see, doth he come? no I warrant you.
 He come quod I? tush, he come? then hang Esau.
 For there is not this daye in all the worlde rounde,
 Suche an other hoodpeake wretche to be founde.
 65 And Esau my man, is not that a fine knaue?
 Haue any mo matters suche a man as I haue?
 So idle, so loytring, so trifling, so toying?
 So prattling, so fratling, so chiding, so loying?
 So telling, so wessing, so mocking, so mowling?
 70 So nipping, so tripping, so cooking, so croloing?
 75 So knapping, so snapping, so chipping, so froloarde?
 So crabbed, so wyabbed, so lissie, so vntowarde?
 In play or in pastime, so iouing, so mery?
 In woike or in labour so vnd or so weary?
 75 Oh that I had his rare betwene my teeth now,
 I should shake him euen as a dog that lulleth a sow.
 But in faith if euer I reconer my selfe,
 There was neuer none trounced as I shal trounce that elfe.
 He and Jacob are agreed I dare say, I,
 80 Not to come at all, but to suffre me here to die.
 Whiche if they do, they shall finde this same word true,
 That after I am dead, my soule shall them pursue.
 I wyll be auenged on all foes till I dye.
 Dea and take vengeance when I am deade for I.
 85 For I mistrust against me agreed they haue:
 For there is but a sole, and thother a sharke knaue.

C.ii. Assurance

52. cost] 'to his loss or detriment', 'resulting to his expense' (O.E.D.).

53. fremman] fremed: 'foreign', 'not related' (O.E.D.).

Hazlitt notes: "Stranger. A more usual form is fremed".

Farmer notes: "stranger, not one related: usually "fremed folk," "fremed persons".

57-64. Yet peace, me . . . to be founde] Esau's speech indicates

that he is day-dreaming and imagining things.

58. my minde geueth me at his hande] i.e., "I can see myself when he arrives." Probably a colon between hande and I would make the sentence clearer.

64. hodypeake] 'a fool, noodle, blockhead' (O.E.D.).

68. boying] 'to play the boy' (O.E.D.).

Farmer remarks: "boylike: Esau's jingle is not always of the best". It is difficult to disagree with Farmer.

69. mowing] 'to make mouths or grimaces' (O.E.D.).

70. cocking] 'to fight' (O.E.D.). It can also mean 'to strut, brag, or crow' (O.E.D.), but it seems that this latter meaning is covered by the next word crowyng.

72. crabbed] 'cross-tempered, churlish' (O.E.D.).

wrabbed] not listed in the O.E.D. Farmer states: "? rabid. Nares thought it so spelt as to appear like a rhyme to 'crabbed', having found it in Heywood's Four P.P. (Works, 1.[line] 57b), and here it is again, spelt in the same way, and rhyming also with 'crabbed' once more." Farmer's meaning does fit the context.

76. lulleth] Farmer states: 'pulls by the ears'.

I could find no source of the word. Farmer's definition fits the context.

82-84. That after I . . . deade too I] Esau illustrates the popular belief of the Elizabethans that a person who died under strange circumstances would not be allowed to enter Heaven but would have to roam the earth as a ghost. See Hamlet, I.v.9-23.

84. I am deade too I] This grammatical construction is unusual. The final I is used for emphasis.

85. For I mistrust . . . agreed they haue] Hazlitt puts commas after for and mistrust. His punctuation makes the sentence clearer.

The Historie of

Ragau.	I assure you Jacob, the man is very weake.	
Esau.	But hearke once again, me thinke I heare them speake.	
Ragau.	I promise you I feare his lyfe be alreadie past.	
Jacob.	Mary God forbidde.	90
Esau.	Loe nowe they come at last.	
Ragau.	If ye beleue not me, see your selfe where he is.	
Jacob.	I ye brother Esau, what a foly is this? About vaine pastime to wander abroade, and penke, Til with hunger you make your selfe thus faint & weake,	95
Esau.	Brother Jacob, I pray you chide now no longer, But giue me somewhat wherwith to slake mine hunger.	
Jacob.	Alack brother, I haue in my little cotage, Nothing but a mease of grosse and homely pottage.	
Esau.	Refresh me therewithall, and boldly aske of me, The best thing that I haue, what sooner it be.	100
	I were a very beast, when thou my life doest saue, If I should sicke with this for the best thing I haue.	
Jacob.	Can ye be content to sell your birthright to me?	
Esau.	Helpe, here is my hande, I doe sell it here to thee. With all the profit thereof henceforth to be thine, As free, as full, as large, as euer it was mine.	105
Jacob.	Then sweare thou hand in hand before the liuing Lord, This bargaine to fulfill, and to stande by thy worde.	
Esau.	Before the Lord I sweare, to whom eche heart is known That my birthright that soas, from henceforth is thine owne.	110
Jacob.	When shalt also with me by this promise indent, With this bargaine and sale to holde thy selfe content.	
Esau.	If eche penny thereof might be worth twentie pounds, I willingly to this surrender it this sounde. And if eche cicle might be worth a whole talent, I promise with this sale to holde me content.	115
Jacob.	Come, let vs set him on foote that he may goe sup.	
Ragau.	Pay, first I will knowe a thing, ere I helpe him vp. Sirra, will ye eate folke when ye are long fasting?	120
Esau.	No, I pray thee helpe me by, and leaue thy iestyng.	120

87. Hazlitt inserts the stage directions "enter Ragau [sic] and Jacob behind, conversing." Probably, for staging purposes Ragau's voice could come from off-stage.

90. Mary God forbidde] a slight oath. Hazlitt changes Mary to May but Farmer retains the original word but spells it Marry.

94. About vaine pastime] The word about means "in".

About is used as a preposition.

103. sticke] 'to remain firm, continue steadfast, stand fast; to be determined to do something; to persist in (an opinion, etc.)' (O.E.D.). Esau means that if he were obdurate, it would appear as if he were more ungrateful than any animal.

116. cicle] sicle: 'a shekel': a coin of the Hebrews, Phoenicians, etc., usually of silver' (O.E.D.).
talent] a denomination of weight, used by the Assyrians, Babylonians, Greeks, Roman, and other nations (O.E.D.).

Jacob and Esau:

<p>No trow, eate your brother Jacob nowe if you lust. For you shall not eate me, I tell you, that is iust. Come, that with my pottage thou mayst refreshed be. 125 There is no meate on earth that so wel liketh me. Yet I may tell you, it is potage dearely bought. No not a whitte, for my bargaine take thou no thought. I desye that birthright that shoulde be of more price, Than helping of ones selfe, I am not so vnwise. 130 And how then sir, shall poore Ragau haue no meate? Yes, and if thou canst my brother Jacob intreate. God graunt I haue inough for Esau alone. Why then I perceyue poore Ragau shall haue none. Well, much god do it you with your potage of Rice: 135 I woulde fast and fare yll, ere I eate of that price. Woulde I sell my birthright beyng an eldest sonne? Forsoth then were it a faire threede that I had spoone. And then to lette it goe for a meale of pottage, What is that, but bothe vnthriftinesse and dotage? 140 Alack, alack, god blessed father Isaac, That euer sonne of thine, shoulde play such a leude knacke. And yet I doe not thinke but God this thyng hath wrought, For Jacob is as good as Esau is nought. But forthy cometh Mido, as fast as he can trot: 145 For a ricle, whether to call me in or not?</p>	<p>Ragau. Jacob. Esau. Ragau. Esau. Ragau. Esau. Ragau. Ragau. Esau. Jacob. Ragau. Esau entring into Jacobs tent. n. 5 shaketh Ra- gau off.</p>
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Actus secundi, scena tertia

Mido the boy. Ragau.

<p>HA, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, Howe who saue ere suche an other as Esau? By my truthe I will not lie to thee Ragau, Since I was boyme, I neuer ses any man 5 So greedily eate rice out of a potte or pan. He woulde not haue a dishe, but take the pot and sup.</p>	<p>Mido cometh m. n. in clapping his hands, and laughing.</p>
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C.iiij.

133. Why then I . . . shall haue none] Hazlitt inserts the stage direction, "Esau, entering into Jacob's tent, shaketh Ragan off." Farmer also inserts the directions at this point.

134. potage of Rice] Although the word rice does not appear in the modern version of the Bible, both the Great Bible of 1539 and Thomas Matthews' translation of 1537 does have red "pottage of rice"

137. a faire threede that I had spoone] a reference to the old idea

of thinking connected with spinning. 'Something figured as being spun or drawn out like a thread; esp. [ecially] the continued course of life' (O.E.D.).

Farmer states: 'a proverbial saying borrowed from spinning'. A modern equivalent would be "a fine mess I have gotten myself into."

145. For a cicle] Ragau wonders if Esau has changed his mind and if the master wants the servant to come and join him in a meal.

II.iii.] Ragau remains on stage and Mido enters. The margin directions (m.n.1-4) are inserted by Hazlitt and Farmer before Mido's speech.

The Historie of

He neuer sawe hungry dogge so stabbe potage by.

Ragau. Why howe did he suppe it? I pray t'ee tel me howe?
 Mido. Mary even thus, as thou shalt see me do now.

m. n. 5 Here he counterfaith supping out of the pottle.
 Oh I thanke you Jacob: with all my hart Jacob. 10
 Gently done Jacob: A frendely parte Jacob.
 I can suppe so Jacob.
 Pea than I will I suppe for Jacob.
 Here is good meate Jacob.

Ragau. As ere I was cate Jacob. 15
 Mido. As ere I sawe Jacob.
 Ragau. Claus a daine Jacob.
 Mido. Swete rice potage Jacob.
 Ragau. By Claus dotage Jacob.
 Mido. Jolly good chaire Jacob. 20
 Ragau. But bought full deere Jacob.
 Mido. I was hungry Jacob.
 Ragau. I was an unthrift Jacob.
 Mido. He will none nowe Jacob.
 Ragau. I can not see you Jacob. 25
 Mido. I will eate all Jacob.
 Ragau. The boyll go withall Jacob.
 Mido. Thou art a good sonne Jacob.
 Ragau. And woold he never have done Jacob?
 Mido. No, but still cogge to in like Jacke daw that cries ka kob. 30
 That to be kylde I coulde not laughyng forbear:
 And therfore I came out, I durst not abide there.
 Is there any potage left for me that thou wotte?
 Mido. No, I left Claus about to lick the pottle.
 Ragau. Lick quod thou now a shame take him that can all lick 35
 Mido. The pottle shall neede no washing, he will it so lick.
 And by this he is sitting downe to bread and drinke.
 Ragau. And shal I have no part with hym, doste thou thinke?
 Mido. No, for he praide Jacob ere he did begin,
 To shutte the tent fast that no mo gettes come in. 40
 Ragau. And made he no mention of me his servant?

He

7. stabbe] Farmer states "? a variant of stub=to root up--to wallow in food as doth a hog in swill."

Hazlitt states "the meaning seems to be obvious enough; but the word is not to be found in our glossaries."

9. Mary] both Hazlitt and Farmer spell Marry.

After this line both Hazlitt and Farmer insert the directions (m.n. 5-8).

11. A frendely parte] a 'favourable portion' or 'share' (O.E.D.).

16. ere] Hazlitt prints e're. Farmer notes that the line should be printed ere (see "Note-Book and Word List", p. 388). I feel that the original ere should be retained.

30. cogeld] coggled. '? To foist in, esp.[ecially] in a wheedling way; to interpolate in a glazing manner' (O.E.D., 1568.). As the first example of the use of this word the O.E.D. gives the History of Jacob and Esau.

Farmer states: "apparently='tucked in' at his meal: the sense is unglossed".

Hazlitt remarks: "Halliwell mentions this word; but none of his interpretations suits the present context."

Jacob and Esau.

He sayd thou were a knane, and bad thee hence, quant. Eido.
 So shift where thou couldest, thou gottest nothing there. Kagau.
 God yelde you Esau, with all my stomachere. Eido.
 45 I must in againe, lest perhaps I be spent, Kagau.
 For I asked no body licence when I went. Eido.
 Say it is his nature, do what ye can for him, Kagau.
 Do thanke at his hand but chuse you sinke or swim.
 Then reason it with him in a meite time and place,
 50 And he shall be ready to see straight in your face.
 This proverbe in Esau may be vnderstande
 Clawe a churle by the tayle, and he will file your hand.
 Well ywisse Esau, ye did knowe well ynough
 That I had as muche nede to be meated as you.
 55 Haue I trotted and trudged all night and all day,
 And now leaue me without doze, and so go your way.
 Haue I spent so muche labour for you to provide,
 And you nothing regarde to what of me may betide?
 Haue I runne with you while I was able to go,
 60 And now you purchase fode for your selve and no more.
 Haue I taken so long paine you truly to serue,
 And can ye be content that I shoulde and serue?
 I must lackey and come lugging greyhound and hound,
 And carry the weight I dare say of twentie pound.
 65 And to helpe his hunger purchase grace and fauour,
 And now to be shutte out lacking for my labour.
 By my faith I may say, I serue a good maister,
 Nay nay, I serue an ill husband and a waster,
 That neither profite regardeth nor honestie,
 70 What meruaile I then if he passe so light on me?
 But Esau nowe that ye haue solde your birthright,
 I commende me to you, and god gene you god night.
 And let a friend tell him his faute at any time,
 Ye shall heare him chafe beyonde all reason or rime.
 75 Except it were a siende or a berie-helhounde,
 Ye neuer saloe the matche of him in any grounde.

44. yelde] yield: 'to repay, restore' or 'to give in return for something received, to render, return (a benefit, injury, etc.)' (O.E.D.).
stomachere] Farmer prints it, as does Hazlitt, stomach cheer.
 Farmer notes: "in original stomachere, usually=food, 'belly-cheer'; probably in this case a pun is enshrined". The reference to the pun is found in the meaning of stomacher: 'a kind of waiscoat worn by men'.
 I can find no other suitable definition for stomachere and therefore I suggest using Farmer's definition.

45. shent] past participle of shend: 'to blame, reproach, reprove' (O.E.D.).

50. to flee straight in your face] i.e., to fight or to quarrel, to beat.

52. Clawe a churle . . . file your hand] a proverb probably having a number of meanings. One suitable meaning is "Flatter a knave and he will corrupt you". Clawe here means 'to flatter, cajole, or faun upon' (O.E.D.). In Heywood, another version of the proverb is given: "Clawe a churl by th'arse and he shitteth in my hand".

Hazlitt defines file as defile.

53. ywisse] 'certainly, indeed' (O.E.D.).

65. And to helpe . . . grace and fauour] i.e., go begging for food and hand-outs for Esau.

75. helhounde] 'a hound or dog of hell; esp.[ecially] Cerberus' (O.E.D.).

The Historie of

When I shewe him of god will what others do say,
 He wil fall out with me, and offer me a fray.
 And what can there be a wosser condition,
 Than to doe yll, and refuse admonition? 80
 Can suche a one prosper, or come to a god ende?
 Then I care not holwe many children God me sende.
 Once Esau shall not beguile me, I can tell:
 Crecept he shall fortune to amende, or doe well.
 Therefore why doe I about hym wast thus much talkie, 85
 Whome no man can induce ordynately to walke?
 But some man perchance both not a little wonder,
 Holwe I who but right nowe did roze out for hunger,
 Haue nowe so muche vacant and boyde time of leasure,
 To walke and to talke, and discourse all of pleasure. 90
 I tolde you at the fyre, I woulde prouide for one:
 My nother taught me that lesson a god whyle agone.
 When I came to Iacob his friendship to require,
 I dyete here and here tyl I came to the fyre.
 There harde besyde me stode the potage pot, 95
 Euen as God would haue it, neither colde nor hot,
 God simple Iacob coulde not turne his backe so thicke,
 But that the labell got a gualye or a licke.
 So that ere I went I made a very good meale.
 And dynde better cheape than Esau a god deale. 100
 But here commeth nowe maister Esau forth.

Actus secundus, Scena quarta,

Esau, and Ragau.

Esau.
 m. n. He commeth
 forth wiping
 his mouth.
 When one is hungry, god meat is much worth.
 And well fare a god brother yet in time of neede,
 The worlde is now metely well amended in neede.
 By my truth if I had bidden from meate any longer,
 I thinke my very nauwe would haue frette asunder. 5
 When

82. Then I care . . . God me sende] Ragau realizes that Esau is very headstrong and that the older son refuses to take advice. Ragau feels that if he were to have a child like Esau, it would be better not to have God send too many children.

83. Once Esau shall . . . I can tell] Ragau sees Esau's true character and he knows what type of person Esau is. Ragau thinks he will be surprised only if Esau's actions change.

86. uo] It should read no.

87. But some man . . . a little wonder] the rest of Ragau's speech is directed at the audience. It is humorous because of the irony contained in the speech.

II.iv.4. bidden] past participle bide: 'to remain in expectation, to wait' also connected to abide, meaning 'to stay, remain' (O.E.D.).

5. frette] to wear away, to tear (O.E.D.).
asonder] 'in two pieces' (O.E.D.).

Jacob and Esau.

	Then had I beine dead and gone I make God a bolue.	
	Surely then the world had had a great losse of you.	Ragau.
	For where should we haue had your fellow in your place?	
	What should I haue done with my birthright in this case.	Esau.
10	Kept it still, and ye had not bene a very asse.	Ragau.
	But the best pottage it was yet that euer was.	Esau.
	It were sinne not to sell ones soule for such geare.	
	Ye haue done no lesse in my conscience I feare.	Ragau.
	Who is this that standeth clattering at my backe?	Esau.
15	A pore man of yours sir, that doth his dinner lacke.	Ragau.
	Dinner whoreson knaue? dinner at this time a day?	Esau.
	Nothing with thee, but dinner and mouching allway.	
	Why thou whoreson billain slaue, who is hungry now?	
	In dede sy? (as seemeth by your wordes) not you.	Ragau.
20	A man were better sell the bellies of some twelue,	Esau.
	Than to fill the gutte of one such whoreson else,	
	That doth none other good but eate and drinke and slepe.	
	We shall do some thing els whom ye shall haue to keepe.	Ragau.
	And that maketh thee so slouthfull and so lyther,	Esau.
25	I dare saie he was sixe houres comming hither,	
	When I sent him to make prouision afoze,	
	Not passing a myle hence or very little more.	
	And yet being so farre past the house of dining,	
	See and the knaue be not for his dinner whining.	
30	Fast a while, fast with a mischiefe greedy slaue,	
	Must I prouide meate for enery glutton knaue?	
	I may fast for any meate that of you I haue.	Ragau.
	Do deserue thy dinner before thou do it craue.	Esau.
	If I haue not deserued it at this season,	Ragau.
35	I shall neuer deserue it in mine owne reason.	
	We promised I should eate till I cried hoe.	
	Dea that was if we toke either hare, fegge, or Doe.	Esau.
	But when your selfe were hungry, ye said I wot what.	Ragau.
	What thou billaine slaue, tellest thou me now of that?	Esau.
40	When helpe, runne apace, Ragau my god seruant.	Ragau.
	Dea	

7-8. Surely then the . . . in your place] The sarcastic and ironic tones of these lines and Esau's words up to line 14 indicate that Ragau's speech is heard by the audience but not by Esau. In line 14 Esau states: "Who is this that standeth clattering at my backe?", indicating that he has not discovered Ragau's presence until then.

Hazlitt and Farmer have Ragau speaking in an aside. I prefer to think of Ragau as being off to the back of the stage. In this way the audience could hear him and Esau would not see him but would become conscious of someone speaking behind him.

15. A poore man . . . his dinner lacke] Ragau's tone changes significantly with this speech. Until this point he has been rather belligerent because he is unheard but now he assumes his role as a servant.

23. He shall do . . . haue to kepe] Hazlitt and Farmer put this speech in an aside.

24. lyther] 'lazy, sluggish' (O.E.D.).

25. I dare saie he was] It appears that Esau's comments are directed to the audience because he changes from speaking to Ragau who he addresses as thee and begins to speak about him using the pronoun he.

29. See] Esau probably makes some gesture which is indicative of time.

the knaue be not his dinner whining] i.e., is not the knaue whining for dinner?

32. I may fast . . . you I haue] This speech is also treated by Hazlitt and Farmer as an aside. I feel, however, that Ragau is becoming bolder and says these words to Esau's face. In the next few lines, Ragau argues openly with Esau until Esau becomes angry by line 39, and goes on to explain why he has sold his birthright.

The Historie of

Clau. **Yea then was then, now is it other wise: anaunt.**
Haue I nothing to do bat prouide meate for you?
Ragau. **Ye might haue geue me som part when ye had ynough.**
Clau. **What, of the red rice pottage with Jacob I had?**
Why, the crow would not geue it hir bird, thou art mad 45
Is that meate for you? nay it would make you to ranke.
Nay soft brother mine, I must kepe you moze lanke.
It hath made me euen since so lusty and freshe,
As though I had eaten all delicates of fleshe.
I fele no maner faintnesse wherof to complaine. 50
Ragau. **Yet to mozoly ye must be as hungry againe,**
When must ye and will ye wishe againe for god chere:
And repent you that euer ye bought this so dere.
Clau. **Repent me? wherof, then the Lorde geue me sozoly,**
If it were to do, I would do it to mozoly. 55
For thou foolish knave, what hath Jacob of me bought?
But a matter of a strawe, and a thing of nought.
Clau. **By birthright and whole title of mine eldership.**
Mary sir I pray God much good do it his maship,
If I die to mozoly, what god would it do me? 60
If he ple to mozoly, what benefite hath he?
And for a thing hanging on such a casualtie:
Wetter a mease of pottage than nothing pardy.
If my father live long, when should I it enioye?
If my father die sone, then is it but a toy. 65
For if the time were come, thinkest thou that Jacob,
Should finde Clau such a loute or such a lob,
To suffer him to enioy my birthright in rest?
Nay, I wil spise tosse him and trounce him of the beste,
I thinke to finde it a matter of conscience, 70
And Jacob first to haue a fart by reuerence.
When my father Isaac shall the matter know:
He will not let Jacob haue my birthright I trow.
Or if he should hope it as his owne, I pray you,
Sight not I live without it and do wel ynough? 75

Do

45. Why, the crow . . . thou art mad] because there was not enough of the pottage to sustain both lives.

There is no punctuation after the line in the original. Hazlitt and Farmer use a comma at the end of the line and insert a dash between "bird" and "thou".

48. euen] Hazlitt and Farmer substitute euer for euen.
and] Both Hazlitt and Farmer state that the original copy prints
as.

53. euerye] obviously the compositor forgot to put in a space between euer and ye.

59. maship] mastership.

62. casualtie] 'chance', 'liability to accident' (O.E.D.).

67. lob] 'a country bumpkin' (O.E.D.).

71. And Iacob first to haue a fart] Esau's vulgar expression explains that although Jacob did buy the birthright the younger brother has bought nothing substantial because the birthright is useless without the blessing of the father.

73. He will not . . . birthright I trow] Isaac still had to bless his successor and to bless Jacob would be to contravene natural law. According to natural law, the birthright was hereditary and could not be sold.

Jacob and Esau.

- Do none but mennes eldest sonnes prosper well ?**
How line yonger bꝛethꝛen then, I beseeche you tell ?
Once, if any thing be by the sword to be got :
This falchion and I will have part to our lot.
 80 **But now come on, go we abroade a while and walke,**
Let my birthright go, and of other matters talke.
Who ? I walke: nay I trow not, til I haue better dinde. Ragau.
It is moze time to sꝛke where I may some meate finde.
What saist thou drawlatch ? come forth with a mischeef. Esau.
 85 **Wilt thou not go with me ? on forward whoson thak.**
Shall it be as pleaseth you, or as pleaseth me ?
Say as pleaseth you sye, me thinke it must be. Ragau.
And where be my dogs ? and my hound ? be they all wel ? Esau.
Better than your man, for they be in their kenell. Ragau.
 90 **Then go se all be well in my parte of the tent. Esau.**
With a right god will sye, I go incontinent. Ragau.
And I will to my fielde the which I clenfed last, Esau.
To se what hope there is, that it will yelde fruite fatte.

Actus secundi, scæna quarta

Jacob. Mido. Rebecca. Abra, the handmayde.

- T**hou knowest litle Mido where my mother is. **Jacob.**
I can go to hir as streight as a thꝛede, and not misse. Mido.
Go cal hir, and come againe with her thine owne selfe. Jacob.
Yes, ye shall see me scude like a litle else. Mido.
 5 **Where I haue by the enticement of my mother, Jacob.**
Bargained and boughte the birthrighte of my brother :
Tourne it all to god O Lorde, if it be thy wyll :
Thou knowest my heart Lorde, I did it for no ill. X
And what euer shall please the to worke or to do,
 10 **Thou shalt finde me prest and obedient thereto.**
But here is my mother Rebecca now in place.
How say you master Jacob, ranne not I apace ? Mido.
Yes, and a god soune to go quicke on your errand. Jacob.

D.ij. Sonne

79. This falchion] falchion: 'a broad sword more or less curved with the edge on the convex side' (O.E.D.).

I will haue . . . to our lot] part: 'to separate, divide, to break' (O.E.D.). Lot: share. What Esau means is that he will get his share by using the sword if the opportunity presents itself.

84. drawlatch] literally, 'a thief who enters by drawing up the latch'. Here the term means 'a lazy laggard' (O.E.D.).

come forth with a mischeef] 'mischief' (O.E.D.) probably meaning

here a disease or ailment. The interpretation here would be "Are you going to cause trouble?"

92-93. And I will . . . yelde fruite faste] This is the only reference in the play to the fact that Esau tills the fields.

II.iv[v].4. scudde] 'to run or move or move briskly or hurriedly; to dart nimbly from place to place' (O.E.D.).

After this speech Mido obviously exits. Line 12 indicates his re-entry.

The Historie of

Rebecca.	Sonne how goeth the matter: let me vnderstand.	
Jacob.	Forsooth mother, I did so as ye me bade,	15
	Esau to sell me all his birthright persnade.	
Rebecca.	Hast thou bought it in dede, and he therewith content?	
Jacob.	Yea, and haue his promise, that he will neuer repent.	
Rebecca.	Is the bargaine thorough: hast thou paid him his price?	
Jacob.	Yea that I haue, a measure of red pottage of rice,	20
	And he eate it by euery whit well I wotte.	
Mido.	When he had sypce by all, I sawe him licke the potte.	
	Thus he licked, and thus he licked, and this way.	
	I thought to haue lickt the potte my selfe once to day.	
	But Esau beguilde me, I swete him for that,	25
	And left not so muche as a licke for pisse our catte!	
Rebecca.	Sonne Jacob, forasmuche as thou hast so well sped,	
	With an hymne or psalme let the Lord be praised.	
	Sing we all together, and geue thankes to the Lord,	
	Whose promise and performan ce do so wel accord.	30
Mido.	Shal we sing the same hymne that at our house doth sing?	
	For Abraham and his seede to geue God praising.	
Rebecca.	Yea the very same.	
Mido.	Then must we all knele doune thus,	
	And Abra our maide here muste also sing with vs,	35
	Knele doune Abra, what I say, will ye not knele doune?	
	Knele when I bid you, the slackest touch in this towne.	
	s. d. 1 Here they knele doune to sing all foure, sauing that	
	s. d. 2 Abra is slackest, and Mido is quickest.	
m. in song.	<i>Blessed be thou, O the God of Abraham,</i> <i>For thou art the Lord our God, and none but thou:</i> <i>What thou workest to the glory of thy name,</i> <i>Passeth mannes reason to searche what way or how.</i> <i>Thy promise it was Abraham should haue seede,</i> <i>More than the starres of the skie to be tolde,</i> <i>He beleyed and had Isaac in deede,</i> <i>When</i>	40

38-54. Blessed be thou . . . God of Abraham, & c.] I have concluded that this song, and the other two songs in this play were written by the author. The paraphrasing of the story of God's promise to Abraham in this song resembles the account related in Psalm 105.

Jacob and Esau:

- 45 ~~When~~ both he and Sara seemd very olde.
 Isaac many yeres longed for a sonne,
 Rebecca thy handmaid long time was barraine,
 By prayer in thy sight such fauour he wonne,
 That at one birth she brought him forth sons twaine;
- 50 Wherefore O Lorde, we do confesse and beleue,
 That both thou canst and wilt thy promise fulfill:
 But how it shall come we can no reason geue,
 Save all to be wrought according to thy will.
 Blessed be thou O God of Abrahams. &c.
- 55 Howdout not Jacob, but God hath appointed thee
 As the eldest sonne vnto Isaac to be:
 And now haue no dout, but thou art sure elected,
 And that without Esau of God reiected.
 And to sell thee his birthright since he was so madde,
- 60 I warrant thee the blessing that he should haue had.
 Hea? how may that be wrought?
 Yes, yes, let me alone.
 Ones god olde Isaac is blinde, and can not see,
 So that by policie he maye bequiled be.
- 65 I shall deuise howe, for no yll intent, ne thought;
 But to bring to passe that I know god will haue wrought
 And I charge you twaine, Abja, and little Spido.
 Pay ye should haue set Spido besyde Abja, trow.
 For I am a man toward, and so is not she.
- 70 No but yet I am more woman toward than ye.
 I charge you both that what ener hath bene spoken,
 Ye do not to any liuing body open.
 For my parte it shall to no body uttered be.
 And sit my tongue, if euer it come out for me:
- 75 But if any tell, Abja here, will be prattling.
 For they say, women will euer be clattering.
 There is none here that pratleth so much as you.
 No mo words, but hence we altogether now, except omnes. Rebecca.)
- D.iii. Actus

Rebecca.

Jacob.
Rebecca.

Spido.

Abja.
Rebecca.Abja.
Spido.

Abja.

Rebecca.

63. Ones] used here emphatically, 'once for all, to sum up, in short' (O.E.D.). Once.

Both Hazlitt and Farmer substitute our for once but neither gives any reason. I feel the original word should be retained because it fits the context of the sentence.

64. policie] 'a device, expedient, contrivance; a crafty device, stratagem' (O.E.D.).

68. Nay ye should . . . before Abra, trow] i.e., put Mido's name before Abra.

70. No but yet . . . toward than ye] Taken on the surface, Abra is simply saying that she is older than Mido. These words, however, could refer to the fact that a boy is playing Abra's role. The fact may be that the particular actor playing Abra is younger than the actor playing Mido, and hence has a more feminine voice.

The Historie of
Actus tertij, scæna prima.

Esau. Isaac. Mido.

Esau. **N**ow since I last saw mine olde father Isaac,
Both I do thinke it long, and he will iudge me slack
But he commeth sooth, I will here listen and see,
Whether he shall chauce to speake any worde of me.

Isaac. On leade me sooth Mido, to the benche on this hand,
That I may sitte me downe, for I can not long stand.

Mido. Here sye this same way, and ye be at the benche now,
Where ye may sit downe in gods name if please you.

Isaac. I marvel where Esau my sonne doth become,
That he doth now of daies visite me so seldome.
But it is oft sene whome fathers do best fauour,
Of them they haue lest loue againe for their labour.
I thinke since I saw him it is a whole weeke,
In faith litle Mido I would thou wouldest him seeke.

Mido. Forsooth maister Isaac, and I knew it where,
It should not be very long ere I would be there.
But shall I at aduerture go seeke where he is?

Esau. Seeke no farther Mido, already here he is.

Isaac. We thinkest I haue Esau his voice perceiued.

Esau. He gesse truly father, ye are not deceiued.

Mido. Here he is come now inuisible by my soule:
For I saw him not till he spake harde at my poule,
Now go thou in Mido, let vs two here alone.

Mido. Sir if ye commaund me, full quickely I am gone.

Isaac. Yet and if I call thee, see thou be not slacke.

Mido. I come at the first call, god maister Isaac.

Isaac. Sonne Esau.

Esau. Here father.

Isaac. Is none here but we?

Esau. None to herken our talke father, that I doe see.

Isaac. Sonne Esau, why hast thou bene from me so long?

Esau. I cry you mercy father, if I haue done wrong.

But

III. i. 1-4. Now since I . . . worde of me] If Esau is to get Isaac's blessing, he must be sure not to annoy his father. Therefore, he must not appear to be neglecting his filial duties to his father.

3. But he commeth . . . listen and see] From this and the following lines, it becomes obvious that Esau must hide himself somewhere on stage, so that Mido and Isaac do not see him.

9. become] 'to go' (O.E.D.).

11-12. But it is . . . for their labour] Isaac's words indicate that the father is aware of the conduct of Esau, but as a father, Isaac can bring himself neither to disinherit his son nor to reprimand him.

15. and] if.

17. at aduventure] i.e., to take a chance.

22. poule] poll: 'the human head' (O.E.D.).

30. None to herken . . . I doo see] After this line Hazlitt inserts the stage directions: "Rebecca entereth behind unseen, and listens". These directions do not appear in the original text but it is apparent from Rebecca's words in III.II that she has heard all of the conversation between Esau and Isaac. Hazlitt is quite correct in indicating that Rebecca must be on stage. Also, she must enter after line 30 because, presumably, Esau has been looking around to see if anyone is near when he answers his father saying, "None to herken our talke father, that I doo see."

JACOB AND ESAU.

- But I am loth to trouble you hauing nothing
To present you withall, no; beneson to bring.
- 55 Sonne Esau, thou knowest that I do thee lone,
I thanke you for it father as both me behoue.
And now thou seest my dayes draw to wardes an ende.
That is to me great ruth if I coulde it amende.
I must go the way of all mortall fleshe.
- 40 Therefore while my memozy and witte is yet freshe,
I woulde thee endow mine heritage to succede:
And blisse thee, (as I ought) to multiply my seede.
The God of my father Abraham, and of me,
Hath promised, that our seede as the sande shal be.
- 45 He is a God of truth, and in his wordes inf.
Therefore in my working shall be no faute I trust.
Dow therfore sonne Esau, get thee forth to hunte,
With thy bowe and quiver, as erst thou hast bene wont,
Bring me of thy benison that is good.
- 50 We shall haue of the best that runneth in the wood.
When thou comest home, to dresse it, it shall behoue:
And to make for mine owne tooth such meate as I lone.
Thus do mine owne dere sonne, and then I shall thee kisse
With the kisse of peate, and thee for ever blisse.
- 55 Pour will I accomplishe mooste dere father Isaac,
Wits all godd hast and speede, I shall not be found slack.
Then helpe lead me home, in my tente that I were set.
And then go when thou wilt.
I shall withouten lette.
- Isaac.
Esau.
Isaac.
Esau.
Isaac.
Esau.
Isaac.
Esau.

Actus tertij, scena secunda.

Rebecca.

- This talke of Isaac in secrete haue I heard.
And what end it should come to my hert is afeard.
Here had I so muche ado to forbeare to speake.
But the Lorde (I trust) will Isaacs purpose vreake.
- Rebecca.

D god

48. erst] at first.

49. Bring me of . . . that is good] Hazlitt inserts and before bring, making the sentence more readable.

54. koosse] kiss.

56. Wits] Both Hazlitt and Farmer print With. The meaning of wit that seems to fit the context is 'knows' or 'deserves'. In this sense lines 55-56 would mean that the filial duty of the son requires first

attention by Esau.

59. I shall withouten lette] i.e., I shall leave.
This line plus line 58 are poetically considered one line; hence
line 59 rimes with line 57.

III.ii.3. ado] in this context, 'trouble', 'difficulty'.

4. But the Lorde . . . Isaacs purpose breake] Rebecca's prayer
begins right after this line. The margin directions (m.n.1-3) should be
inserted here. Both Hazlitt and Farmer print these directions after
this line.

The Historie of

m. n. Here she kneeleth downe and prayeth. **O** God of Abraham, make it of none effecte :
 Let Jacob haue the blessing whom thou hast elect.
 I for my parte shall worke what may be wrought,
 That it may to Jacob from Esau be brought,
 And in will I go to see what I can deuise,
 That Isaacs intent may faile in any wise.

Actus tertij, Scæna tertia.

Ragau. Esau.

Ragau. **N**ay, we must on hunting go, yet once more again
 Here he cometh forth with his hunting staffe and
 m. n. 5 other things and a bag of vitales.
 And neuer com home now except we speede certain.
 But I trowe for hunger I haue prouided here :
 That what euer befall, I Ragau shall haue there.
 I haue no time to tell what belicates here be,
 But thinke this to be true) for better men than me.
 And what shall Esau hercof haue any parte ?
 Pay I trust to conueigh it by such pretie arte,
 That till the bag be dere, he shal it neuer see.
 I shall, and if he faint, feede him as he fedde me.
 I shall requite his sporting me out of the doze.
 That if he bidde me runne to get him meat afoze,
 I shall runne as fast as my feet were made of leade,
 And tell him, there is none, though I may wel be speed.
 I will be euen with him for my fare last day
 When he was with Jacob.

Esau. What is it that thou doest say?

Ragau. Sir on your behalfe I earnestly withe and pray,
 That if like nede chaunce, ye may fare as last day
 When ye were with Jacob.

Esau. Well, come on, let vs go.

Ragau. Euen when ye will, is there let in me or no: Excat ambo.

Actus

III.iii] The margin directions (m.n.1-7) are inserted by Hazlitt and Farmer after the first line of Ragau's speech, probably because Ragau's name occupies the margin space opposite line 1 in the original edition. I prefer to put the directions before Ragau's first line because I feel Ragau is seen by the audience before he speaks. The position of the directions given by Hazlitt and Farmer would tend to suggest Ragau began speaking before he entered.

6. Hazlitt inserts an opening parenthesis between but and thinke

in order to provide consistency. Only the closing parenthesis appears in the original between true and for.

Hazlitt also includes, after the closing parenthesis, the words they're fit. Farmer follows his example. This addition clarifies the sentence.

14. spead] 'aided', 'helped', 'provided' (O.E.D.).

16. When he was with Iacob] Esau's next speech indicates that the master has come upon Ragau without Ragau's noticing his presence.

22. let] 'hindrance' or 'obstruction' (O.E.D.).

Jacob and Esau.

Actus quarti, scæna prima.

Rebecca. Jacob.

- S**onne Jacob euen now is come the very houre,
That if thou haue any grace oꝝ hearte oꝝ power,
To play thy parte well, and sticke vnto it throughout,
Esau his blessing will be thine without dout.
- 5 **M**other I know your good will to be vnfained :
But I see not which waye the thing may be attained,
I haue it contrined how all thing shall be done,
Do thou as I shall bid thee, and it will be wonne,
Mother in me shall be no faulte oꝝ negligence.
- 10 **T**hen herken very well vnto this my sentence.
I hearde olde Isaac in a long solempne talke,
Bid thy brother Esau to the feldes to walke,
And there with his bowe to kill him some venison,
Which brought and dressed, he to haue his benison.
- 15 **F**or I am aged (sayd Isaac) truly :
And would blesse thee dere sonne before that I dye.
How is Esau gone to do it euen so.
But while he his away, I would haue thee to go,
Abroade vnto the flocke, and set me kiddes twain.
- 20 **O**f which I shall with a trice make such meate certain,
As shall say come eate me, and make olde Isaac
Licke his lippes therat, so toothson shall it snacke.
I shall make him therof such as he doth loue,
Which in thy brothers searve to blisse thee shall him moue.
- 25 **S**weete and dere mother, this deuise is but vaine,
For Esau is rough, and I am smothe certaine.
And so when I shal to my father bring this meate,
Perchaunce he will seele me, before that he will eate.
Old men be mistrustfull : he shall the matter take,
- 30 **T**hat I went about my father a soole to make.
Mother by such a pranck the matter will be worse :
And I in steede of blissing shal purchase me his curse.
On me be thy curse my sonne, let it light on me.
- Rebecca.
- C.j. Only

IV.i.5. vnfained] unpretentious.

18. while he his away] probably a printer's error. The sentence should read "while he is away".

20. with a trice] in a trice: "in a moment". (O.E.D.).
such meate certain] an inversion for the sake of rime: "such certaine meate".

25. The word, Iacob, appearing in the margin and indicating the speaker of the passage, appears between line 24 and line 25. However, line 25 is indented indicating Jacob's speech begins with this line and the content of line 25 indicates Jacob speaks the line.

26. For Esau is . . . am smothe certaine] See Genesis 25:25 and Genesis 27:11. Both of these Biblical accounts show the close fidelity the author maintains.

In the Great Bible: "Than sayde Iacob to Rebecca his mother: beholde, Esau my brother is a rough man, and I am smooth."

31-32. Mother by such . . . me his curse] See Genesis 27:12 to see how closely this account of the play follows the Biblical account: "My father shal peradventure tele me, and I shal seme vnto hym as though I went about to begyle hym and so shall he bryng a curse vpō me, and not a blessinge."

35. deuoire] 'one's duty' (O.E.D.).

The Historie of

Only set thou the kiddes hither, as I bid thee.
 Do thou thy true deuoir, and let God worke therein. 35
 Jacob. Upon your worde maister, I will the thing begin,
 Send me litle Mido to helpe me beare a kide.
 Rebecca. He shall come by and by, for so I shall him bidde.
 Now lord, & if thou please, that this thing shall take place,
 Further this our enterpryse, helping with thy grace. 40

Actus quarti, scæna secunda.

Mido. A Ke ye here maister Jacob? I came you to looke:
 And here dame Rebecca hath sent you your shep-crooke
 And hath commaunded me to wayte on you this day,
 But wherfore or why, she woulde nothing to me say.
 Jacob. Come on then, folow me Mido a litle wayez. 5
 Mido. Whether ye shall leade me, I am at all assayes.
 Jacob. And art thou able to beare a kide on thy backe?
 Mido, I am able (I trowe) to beare a quarter sacke.
 How say you to this corps? is it not fat and round?
 How say ye to these legges? come they not to the ground? 10
 And be not here armes able your maister to spede?
 Be not here likely shoulers to do such a dede?
 Therfore come maister Jacob, if this your dout be,
 For bringing home of kiddes, lay the biggest on me,
 So that if we make a feast, I may haue some parte. 15
 Jacob. Yes that shalt thou Mido, right worthy thou art.

Actus quarti, scæna tertia.

Rebecca. Abra.

Rebecca. I Come to see if Jacob be gone a fielde yet,
 A litle slacking may all our purpose let.
 But now that he is gone, he will be here at once.
 Therfore I will call my maide Abza for the nonce,
 That all thing within may be in a readinesse. 5
 Abza, where be ye Abza?
 Abza. Here within maistresse.
 Rebecca. Come forth: when? Abza, what Abza I say. 10

None

IV.ii.6. at all assayes] . 'at every trial, or time of need' (O.E.D.).

8. a quarter sacke] Farmer notes: "a sack capable of holding a quarter of grain. 'Quarter sacks were here [Cambridge] first used . . . men commonly carrying . . . eight bushels of Barly.'--Fuller, Worthies (c.1661), 156 (1662)." Farmer's explanation fits the context.

Jacob and Esau.

- Anone.**
- 10 **Must I call so oft? why come ye not by and by?**
I was washing my bestell forsooth maistrisse I.
And in very deede, lo, that all your bestell be done.
There is not one fensle peece in all our tent I wene,
Then make a great fyze, and make redy your pot **Abra.**
Rebecca.
- 15 **And see there be plenty of water colde and hotte.**
And see the spitte be scoured as cleane as any pearle.
If this be not quickly done cal me noughtie gyle. **Abra.**
Day, soft, whither away? I haue not yet all done. **Rebecca.**
I thought ye would haue had me as quicke to be gone, **Abra.**
- 20 **As when ye call Abra, ye would haue me to come.**
Than see ye haue made redy cloues, mace, and sinamon **Rebecca.**
Peper and saffron, then set hearbes for the potte,
We will haue the best that by me can be got. **Abra.**
And let no soule comer be about all the tent. **Rebecca.**
- 25 **If ye find any fault, hardly let me be spent.** **Abra.**
Is there any thing else but that I may go now?
Nought, but that when I come I finde no fault in you. **Rebecca.**
No I warrant you, I will not let my matters slepe. **Abra.**
Any god wench will at hir daimes bidding take hepe. **Rebecca.**
- 30 **Now God of Abraham, as I trust in thy grace,**
Sende Jacob the blessing in Esau his place.
As thou hast ordeyned right so must all thing be.
Performe thine owne wordes lord which thou spakest to me.
- 35 **Now will I go in to see that mine olde husband,**
May of my secrete working nothing vnderstand.
Or in case he smell what we haue thus farre begonne,
He may thinke it all for Esau to be done.

Actus quarti, scæna quarta.

Abra the mayde, Deborra, the nurse,

He that were now within, should find all thing I wene, **Abra.**
As trimme as a trêcher, as tricke, as swete, as cleane.
And seeing that my dame prepareth suche a feast,
I will not I trow be found such a stuttishe beast,

C.ij. That

IV.iii.12. lookethat] The compositor forgot the spacing. From the context, it appears as if the reading should be looke that rather than looketh at. Both Farmer and Hazlitt write look that.

25. hardly] 'with energy, vigorously, violently' (O.E.D.).

28. slepe] 'slip' or 'sleep'. Either meaning can be used here in this context.

29. take kepe] 'take charge', 'take heed' (O.E.D.). In this context 'take heed' is the better meaning.

36. smell] 'suspect'. Probably there is a pun on the word smell. The aroma from the cooking could be detected by Isaac as well as his sensing of his wife's plan for Jacob.

IV.iv.2. trēcher] The word trencher has two meanings: (1) 'A cutting or slicing instrument; a knife'; or (2) 'A flat piece of wood square or circular, on which meat was served and cut up'. The second seems to apply to this context because the trencher is described as trimme, tricke, swete, and cleane. These terms seem more likely to describe a plate than a knife.

4. sluttishe] A term quite commonly used in Elizabethan times to describe women of low, loose character, 'immoral' (O.E.D.). In the context of this sentence, the word suggests someone who is neglectful of her duties.

The Historie of *Honee*

That there shall any lithe about our tent be kepte, 5
But that both within and without it shall bee swepte.

The second song.

It hath bene a proverbe before I was borne,
Yong doth it pricke that wyll be a thorne.

*W*Ho will be euill, or who will be good, 7
Who geuen to truth or who to falshood, 10

Eche bodies youth sheweth a great likelihood.

Then let her sweepe with
a broome, and
while she doth
m. n. 5 it, sing this
song, and when
she hath song,
let her say thus

For yong doth it pricke that will be a thorne.
Who so in youth will no goodnesse embrace.

But folow pleasure, and not vertues trace,

Great meruaile it is if such come to grace. 15

For yong doth it pricke that will be a thorne.

Suche as in youth will refuse to be taught,

Or will be slacke to worke as he ought,

When they come to age, their prooffe will be nought.

For yong doth it pricke that will be a thorne. 20

If a childe haue bene giuen to any vice,

Except he be guided by such as be wyse,

He will therof all his lyfe haue a spice.

For yong doth it pricke that will be thorne.

It hath bene a proverbe. &c. 25

Abza. Now haue I done, and as it should be for the nonce,

By sweeping and my song are ended both at once.

Now but for setting mine herbes I might go play.

Debozra nurse Debozra, a worde I you pray.

Debozra. What is the matter? who calleth me Debozra? 30

Abza. Forsoth gentle nurse euen I little Abza,

I pray you sweete Debozra take in this same broome,

And looke well to all thing till I returne home:

I must to the gardine as fast as I can trotte,

As I was commaunded to set hearbes for the potte. 35

But in the meane time, I pray you nurse looke about

And see well to the fyre that it go not out,

I will aumble so fast, that I will soone be there,

And here again I trot, ere an horse like his eare.

There

6. But that both . . . shall bee swepte] After this line the second song appears. The margin directions (m.n.1-8) are put after line 6 and before the song by Hazlitt who states in a note: "in the old copy this direction [i.e., the stage direction] is printed in the margin, and such is, no doubt, its most suitable position."

The last part of the stage direction, let her say thus, refers to line 26.

7-25. The song is based on an old proverb. It is impossible to

discover if this song had ever been popular.

38. aumble] i.e., amble.

39. ere an horse licke his eare] a common Elizabethan saying of the 16th century: 'As shortly as a horse will lick his ear.' (John Heywood, The Proverbs, Epigrams, and Miscellanies, p. 93.) It is comparable to the modern saying "as quick as a wink".

Jacob and Esau:

40. **There is not a pretter gyale within this mile,** Debozra.
Than this Abza will be within this litle while.
As true as any fele: ye may trust her with gold.
Though it were a bushell, and not a peny tolde.
As quicke about her worke that must be quickly spread
45 **As any wenche in twenty mile about her head.**
As fine a peece it is as I knowe but a few,
Yet perchauce her husbände of her maye have a shewe.
Cat after kinde (saith the proverbe) swete milke will lap,
If the mother be a shew, the daughter can not scape.
50 **Once our marke she hath, I warrnell if she slippe:**
For hir nose is growing aboute hir ouer lippe.
But it is time that I into the tent be gone.
Let she come and chide me, she will come now anon.

Actus quarti, scæna quinta.

Abra.

- H**ow say ye: have not I dispatched me quickly? Abza.
A straw for that wenche that doth not somwhat likely,
I have brought here good herbes, & of them plenty
To make both broth and farcing, and that full deinty,
5 **I trust to make such broth, that when all things are in,**
God almighty selfe may wet his finger therein.
Here is time and percollie, spinache, and rosemary.
Endive, suckoyte, lactour, violette, dary,
Liver wort, marigolde, foxell, hartes tong, and sage:
10 **Peniryal, purselane, bugleste and boyage,**
With many very good herbes mo than I do name.
But to sary here thus long, I am muche to blame.
For if Jacob should come, I not in readinesse:
I must of coveuant be shent of our maistresse.
15 **And I would not for twenty pounde I tell ye,**
That any pointe of default should be found in me.

Actus quarti, scæna sexta.

Rebecca. Mido. Jacob.

C. iij. I come

45. As any wenche . . . about her head] Farmer states that the semi-colon in his edition should come between about and her rather than between mile and about.

In Hazlitt's edition, the word head is replaced by tread, retaining the original punctuation.

head] used for the word 'person', meaning Abra.

46. a peece] 'a person', or 'personage', 'an individual' (O.E.D.). Whether the word in Elizabethan times carried the same vulgar connotation

it does today is a fact impossible to support.

Deborra's words indicate Abra is one of the fairest girls around.

48. Cat after kinde . . . milke wil lap] The meaning of the proverb seems equivalent to our saying "like father, like son" or "like mother, like daughter". A similar proverb is "Cat after kind, good mouse-hunt".

50. Once our marke she hath] The term means 'a sign, token, indication, or characteristic' (O.E.D.). Later a proverb was made incorporating the concept from this line of the play: "She hath a mark after her mother". (1678, O.E.D.).

Hazlitt changes the word our to sure. He also notes, "Perhaps we ought to read sour." However, Hazlitt gives no reasons for his statements.

51. For hir nose . . . hir ouer lippe] a sign that Abra is getting older.

IV.v.1. How say ye? . . . dispatched me quickely] Addressed to the audience.

2. A straw for . . . not somewhat likely] Abra means that any girl who does not perform her duties as quickly as she does herself is worthless.

4. farcing] forcing: stuffing, 'to stuff with force meat, herbs, spices' (O.E.D.).

Hazlitt notes: "Stuffing or forcing, the same kind of thing as we now know under the name of forced meat."

6. may wet his finger] i.e., may easily partake of the broth. The idea is that even God would be attracted to taste the broth with his finger.

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Rebecca. **I** Come to see if Jacob do not returne yet,
I can not maruell enough what should be his les,
 And greatly wonder he is away thus long.
I feare much of his absence, lest some thing be wrong.
 As well as hearte can wishe all thing is ready here. 5
 And now to me eche moment seemeth a whole yere.
 But hearken, me thinketh I here a yong kidde blee.
 It is so in dede, I see Jacob, well is mee.

Mido. Hearke maister Jacob, hearde ye ever kidde blea so?
I wene she knoweth afoze hande wher to she shall go. 10

Jacob. **I** would not my father Isaac should heare:
 Mido. Nay, she will scarcely be kil, when she is dead, **I** do feare.
 Jacob. But loe I see my mother stande before the tent.
 Rebecca. O Lord, me thinketh long soune Jacob since thou went
 Jacob. And me thinketh mother, we have byed vs well: 15
 Mido. **I** haue made many feete to folow, **I** can tell.
 Rebecca. Gene me thy kidde my sonne, and noice leat me alone,
 Bring thou in thine Mido, and see thou be a stoue.

Mido. A stoue? howe shoulde that be maistrisse? **I** am a lad:
 And a boye alike, as god as ere ye had: 20
 And noice in bringyng home this kyd **I** haue **I** trow,
 Tried my selfe a man, and a peacie fellow,
 Rebecca. **I** ment thou shouldest nothing saye.
 Mido. One warning is enough, ye had vs so last day.
 Rebecca. Well let me go in, and venison hereof make: 25
 Jacob. And hearest thou Mido? see that god hede thou take,
 In any wise to come in my fathers sight.
 Mido. Why he seeth no better at noone than at midnight.
 Is he not blinde long since, and doth his eyes lacke?
 Therefore go in dame, **I** beare an heauy packe. 30

Rebecca. **I** leaue you here Jacob, and hartely you pray,
 That when neede shall require, you be not farre away.
 Jacob. **I** shall be ready mother, when so ere you call.

Actus quarti, scena septima.

Jacob.

Mido.

O how

IV.vi.7. blee] Hazlitt writes blea as does Farmer.
 Although there are no stage directions to indicate the sound, there must have been some sound effects at this point to indicate that the kids were being brought on stage.

10. I wene she . . . she shall go.] i.e., she knows her intended fate.

16. I haue made . . . I can tell] Mido is indicating that he had

difficulty in keeping up with the fast pace set by Jacob.

18. bee a stone] be as quiet as a stone. See line 23 below.

The phrase may have had a sexual connotation and a pun may have been intended. Stones was used meaning "testicles" (O.E.D., 1154) and a term such as 'stone-horse' referred to an uncastrated animal. The term stone was allusively applied to men inferring they were 'lustful'. This allusion results in Mido's reply in line 19: A stone? howe shoulde that be maistresse? I am a lad. In other words, "I am too young to indulge in sexual activities."

Jacob and Esau.

O How happy is that same daughter or that sonne,
 Whome the parentes loue with hartly affection.
 And among all others holwe fortunate am I,
 Whome my mother Rebecca tendreth so greatly?
 5 If it lay in her to do any good ye see,
 She would do her carnest desire to preferre me.
 But as for this matter which she doth now intende,
 Without thy aide O Lorde, holwe should it come to ende.
 Nevertheless forasmuche as my said mother,
 10 Worketh vpon thy worde O Lorde, and none other,
 It shall become me to shewe mine obedience,
 And to thy promise O Lorde, to giue due credence.
 For what is so possible to mans iudgement,
 Which thou canst not with a beck performe incontinent?
 15 Therefore thy will O Lorde, be done for euermore.
 O Jacob, I was neuer so afearde afoze.
 Why what newe thing is chaunced Mido, I pray thee?
 O Isaac your father, hearde your yong kiddes blea.
 He asked what it was, and I said, a kiddo.
 20 Who brought it from the folde, I said you did.
 For what purpose? forsooth she saide I,
 There is some matter that Jacob would remedy:
 And where hast thou ben so long litle Mido, quod he,
 That all this whole houre thou wert not once with me?
 25 Forsooth (quod I) when I went from you last of all,
 Thou hade me be no more but be ready at your call.
 But of the kiddes bleayng he did speake no more.
 No, but and if he had called me afoze,
 I must haue told him al, or els I must haue made a lye,
 30 Which woulde not haue bene a good boyes part truly.
 But I will to him, and no longer here remaine,
 Lest he should happen to call for Mido againe.

Actus quarti, scena octaua.

Jacob. Rebecca. Deborra.

I Were best also to get me into the tent,
Jacob.
That

IV.vii.13. so possible] Both Hazlitt and Farmer print so impossible.
 Farmer does not have any note indicating an error has occurred.

The original meaning seems to be clear enough. No reason can be seen
 for changing possible to impossible.

22. some matter] referring to a malady or disease of the kid.

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		That if my mother neede me, I may be present. But I see hir come forth, and nurse Deborra also, And bring geare with them what so ere it shall do.	
	Rebecca.	Where is my sonne Jacob? I do him now espie. Come apace Deborra, I pray thee let vs hye, That a l' thing were dispatched somewhat to my minde.	5
	Deborra.	It is happy that Jacob ready here ye finde.	
	Jacob.	Mother, what haue ye brought? & what things are those?	
	Rebecca.	Ceare that I haue prepared to serue our purpose. And bicause that Esau is so rough with heare: I haue brought sleues of kid next to thy skin to weare. They be made glouelike, and for eche finger a stall: So that thy fathers feeling some beguile they shall. Then haue I brought a collar of roughe kiddes heare, Fast vnto the skaine round about thy necke to weare.	10
m. n.	Here she doth the sleues vpon Jacobs armes.	Come, let me do it on, and if Isaac fele, He shall therewith be beguiled wondrous wele.	
	Jacob.	And what shall this geare do, that ye haue brought?	
	Rebecca.	It shall serue anon I warrunt you, take no thought. Robb, throughe to rauishe thy father Isaac, Thou shalt here incontinent put vpon thy backe, Esau his best apparell, whose fragraunt flauour, Shall conuince Isaac to heare thee his fauour.	20
	Deborra.	Mary sir now is maister Jacob trimme in dede, That is all triksie and gallant to God me speede, Now I see apparell setteth out a man. Doth it become Esau so? may bespewe me then.	25
	Rebecca.	Ye may now go in nurse, and leaue lokyng on him.	
	Deborra.	I go, mary sir Jacob is now gay and trim.	30
	Jacob.	No forsooth mother, this raiment liketh not me. I could with mine owne geare better contented be. And but for satysfying of your minde and will, I would not weare it, to haue it for mine owne will. I loue not to weare an other birdes feathers.	35
m. n.	Jacob standeth looking on himselfe.	Spine owne poze homely geare will serue for all wethers.	
	Rebecca.	Well content thy selfe, and solow my minde this day.	

Now

IV.viii.12. sleues of kid] Genesis 27:15-16 reads: "And Rebecca fet, goodly rayment of her eldest sonne Esau whiche was in the house with her, and put the vpon Iacob her yongest sonne, and she put the skines of goates vpon his hades & vpon the smooth of his necke."

21. rauishe] in this sense, meaning 'to rob' Isaac of the blessing meant for Esau.

26. triksie] 'trim', 'neat', 'handsome' (O.E.D.).

27. Now I see . . . out a man] probably a proverb, though not listed by Heywood; similar to "Clothes make the man".

Jacob and Esau.

- How the meate by this tyme is ready I dare say.
 Before that with to much enough it be all spilt,
 40 Take thy time, and a talle thy father when thou wilt.
 Yea, but haue ye prouided mother I you pray,
 That no body within may your counsaile bewray?
 I warrant the matter all safe from uttering,
 I haue stopp'd all mouthes for once muttering.
 45 Therefore whyle the tyme serueth, I the swarne,
 To slacke when all thinges are ready may do harme.
 Goe before, I solow: but my chekes will blushe red,
 To be sene among our folke thus appailed.

Actus quarti, scæna nona.

Isaac. Mido. Jacob.

- Come Mido, for without thee I can nothing do.
 What is it sy, that ye would haue my helpe vnto?
 Nothing but to sitte abroad, and take th'open aire.
 That shalbe well done, the weather is very faire,
 5 Praised be the God of my father Abraham.
 Who sendeth all thing needfull for the vse of man,
 And most tenderly provideth be for me Isaac,
 Better than I can seeie or perceiue what I lacke.
 Where is my most dere father? as I would haue it,
 10 Taking the open ayre, here I see him sitte.
 O my most dere father Isaac, well thou be.
 Here I am my swete sonne, and who art thou tell me?
 Dere father, I am Esau thine eldest sonne,
 According as thou baddest me, so haue I done.
 15 Come in dere father, and eate of my venison,
 That thy sou'e may geue vnto me thy venison.
 But how hast thou sped so sone? let me vnderstande.
 The Lorde thy God at the first brought it to my hande.
 And art thou Esau mine elder sonne in dede?
 20 To aske that question father, what doth it neede?
 Come nere that I may see whether thou be he or not,
 For Esau is rough of heare as any goate.

F. J. Let

39. Before that with . . . be all spilt] spilt: 'spoiled or made unwholesome or unfit for food' (O.E.D.). Rebecca means that their plan revolves around the way the meat is cooked. If it is cooked too much or too little, their plan will fail. The meat must be pleasing to Isaac. Everything must be just right in order for the stratagem to work.

enough] Both Hazlitt and Farmer print enough in italic type, and neither gives any explanation for the printing.

42. That no body within] i.e., none of the servants.
bewray] betray, 'to reveal or expose' (O.E.D.).

47. my chekes will blushe red] probably said to make use of the pun. Jacob could mean that he will be ashamed to be seen with Esau's clothes on or that he will blush red to try and counterfeit Esau's looks because Esau has a red complexion.

IV.ix.8.] Following line 8 both Farmer and Hazlitt insert the stage direction, "Enter Jacob disguised", although these directions do not appear in the margin of Bynneman's edition.

12-24. Here I am . . . in mine eare] The text of the play closely follows the account in Genesis 27:18-22:

Whan he came to his father, he sayde: my father?
 And he answered: here am I, who art thou my sonne?
 And Iacob sayd vnto his father: I am Esau thy eldest
 sone, I haue done according as thou baddest me: vp
 and sit, and eat of my veneyso, that thy soule may
 blesse me. And Isahac sayde vnto his sonne: howe
 commeth it that thou hast founde it so quickly my
 sonne? He answered: The Lorde thy God brought it
 to my hande: Thā sayd Isahac vnto Iacob, come nere
 and let me fele the my sonne, whether thou be my sonne
 Esau or not. Than went Iacob to Isahac his father,
 and he felt and sayde: the voyce is Iacobs voyce,
 but the hādes are the handes of Esau.

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Let me feele thy haunde, right Esau by the heare,
 And yet the voice of Jacob souneth in mine care.
 God blesse thee my soune, and so will I do anone, 25
 As sone as I haue tasted of thy venifon.
 Come on, leade me in, I will eate a pittance.
 A little thing God wotte to me is suffisance,
 I may now go play, Jacob leade th Isaac.
 But I neuer saw such a pretty knaske, 30
 How Jacob beguiled his father, how slightly.
 Now I see it true the blinde eate many a flye.
 I quaked once for feare lest Jacob would be caught,
 But as hadde was, he had his lesson well taught.
 But what will Esau say, when he cometh home? 35
 Choose him, but for me to go in it is wisidome.

Actus quarti, scæna decima.

Rebecca. Abra.

Rebecca. **N**ow I beseeche the Lorde prosper Jacob my sonne,
 In our hardy enterpryse which we haue begonne.
 Isaac is eating such meate as he doth lone,
 Which thing to blesse Jacob I doubt not will him moue:
 If he obeyne the blessing as I trust he shall, 5
 When shall my soule geue to God laude perpetuall.
 But I will in to harken how the thing doth frame.

Mido. Come in dame Rebecca,
 Rebecca. Who is it that doth me name?
 Abra. My maister Isaac is coming south freight way. 10
 Rebecca. He shall not finde me here in no wise if I may.

Actus quarti, scæna vndecima.

Isaac. Jacob.

Isaac. **S**et me down on the bench wherethou didst me first finde;
 Now forsooth I haue eate meate euen to my minde.
 It hath refreshed my soule wonderfully well.
 For neuer dranke I better wine that I can tell.
 Jacob. If it were to your liking I am very glad. 5

28. A little thing . . . me is suffisance] Farmer and Hazlitt insert the stage direction, "They go in", after this line, clarifying the stage action.

32. Now I see . . . many a flye] an old proverb meaning that the blind are easily tricked.

36. Choose him, but . . . it is wisidome] Mido leaves the stage.

IV.x.8. Come in dame Rebecca] These words in the original are assigned to Mido. However, the heading of the scene lists Rebecca and Abra only. Hazlitt removes Mido's name, replacing him by Abra. Farmer notes, "in [the] original Mido but obviously the line is to Abra." From the **context**, it appears Hazlitt is justified in his action.

Jacob and Esau.

- It was the best meat and wine that euer I had.
 Come kysse me sonne Esau with the kysse of peace,
 That my loue towarde the may the more increace.
 I blesse thee here for euer my sonne in this place,
 10 The Lorde my God of might endue thee with his grace.
 What swete flauour my sonnes raiment doth yelde,
 Euen the fragrant smell that cometh from a fielde.
 Which the Lord hath blessed, and the same lord blesse thee:
 With the dewe of heauen, the Lorde thy ground increase
 15 That the fatnesse of the earth may neuer cease.
 The Lorde send thee abundaunce of corne and wine,
 And prosper continually all thing that is thine.
 The Lorde make great people seruants vnto thee:
 And nations to do homage and fealty.
 20 And here to succede my place, mine heyre I thee make,
 Of all things that I haue, possession to take.
 Lord and ruler be thou ouer thy bythern all,
 And balue to thee as head, thy mothers children shall.
 Cursed be that man that shall thee curse or mistay:
 25 And who that blesseth thee, blessed be he for aye.
 Thus here haue I made my last will and testament,
 Which the Lord God ratifie neuer to repent.
 Serue the Lord our God, and then wel shalt thou speede,
 And he shall kepe promise to multiply thy seede.
 30 My day draweth on, for olde and feeble I am.
 When I dye, put me to my father Abraham.
 Kysse me once again my sonne, and then depart,
 And enter vpon all, wherof now Lorde thou art.
 The Lord God reward your fatherly tenderneesse.
 35 Which ye haue here shewed me of your mere godnesse.
 Go in peace my dere sonne, leaving me here alone:
 And send little Ysido to leade me in anone. Exeat Jacob.
 Lord God when thou shalt see time as thou thinkest best,
 Dissolue this feeble carkeffe, and take me to thy rest.
 40 How do ye maister Isaac: I am here now.
 For my maister Jacob did bid me come to you.
 F.ij. Day
- Isaac kisseth
 Isaac; and the
 kneleth downe
 to haue his
 blessing. m. n. 5
- Jacob.
 Isaac.
 Ysido.

IV.xi.6. It was the . . . euer I had] The indentation of this line indicates that a different character is speaking. No name appears in the margin but the content of the speech shows that it should belong to Isaac.

11. flauour] 'smell or odour' (O.E.D.).

27. Which the Lord . . . neuer to repent] Isaac keeps his word. For when Esau enters later, Isaac refuses to give Esau the blessing.

41-47. For my maister . . . voyce I perceiued] Even though Mido's words come too late to stop Isaac from blessing Jacob, Mido is the one who reveals the plot to Isaac. See above II.v.68-79, where Mido states he will be able to keep the secret.

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Isaac. Nay boye, it was not Jacob, I dare well say so.
 Esau. Forsooth it was Jacob, if my name be Esau.
 Isaac. If that be a true tale, some body is come thicke,
 But lord that I haue done, I will not now call backe. 45
 But yet I will go see if I be deceiued:
 For in dede me thought Jacobs voyce I perceiued.

Actus quarti, scæna duodecima.

Rebecca.

Rebecca. O
m. n. Then she speaketh kneeling, and holding up her handes.

Lord, the God of Isaac and Abraham,
 I render thanks to thee though a sinfull woman,
 Because of thy worde and promise true arte thou,
 In sending Jacob the blessing of Esau.
 And so; thus regarding a sinner as I am,
 I eftsoones thanke thee O Lord God of Abraham,
 Thy mercy and bountifullnes shall I sing euermore:
 And magnifie thy name, for Gods there is no more.
 But I will to my husbande Isaac, and see,
 That for this matter he take no grudge at me. 10

Actus quinti, scæna prima.

Ragau.

N
m. n. Ragau bringeth venison at his backe.

Ay, now at last we haue well sped I warrant you:
 God lucke is not euermore against Esau.
 He coursed and coursed again with his dogges here:
 But they could at no time take either hare or dere.
 At last he killed this with his bowe as God wold.
 And to say that it is fatte venison be bolde.
 But drest it must be at once in all the haste,
 That olde father Isaac may haue his repast.
 When without delay Esau shall blessed be,
 Then faith rock on hope, al is ours, then who but he? 10
 But I must in that it may be drest in time likely,
 And I trow ye shall see it made ready quickly.

Actus quinti, scæna secunda.

Esau.

IV.xii.m.n.1-4] The margin note refers to the fact that the prayer is spoken while Rebecca is kneeling.

2. a sinfull woman] Probably a reference more to her general condition as a human being than to the fact that she has tricked Isaac. Throughout the play Rebecca has felt she was right in her actions because God gave her His word that Jacob was to succeed Isaac.

6. eftsoones] 'a second time', 'again' (O.E.D.).

10. That for this . . . greefe at me] i.e., He does not remain or become angry with me. Rebecca hopes that Isaac will realize the wisdom of her actions since she is following God's ordinance.

V.i.2. Good lucke is . . . euermore against Esau] The audience knows that Esau's luck has not changed and that Esau's condition is now worse than it was previously because Isaac has blessed Jacob; hence, these words are dramatically ironic.

6. be bolde] i.e., would not be bold.

10. cock on houpe] Farmer notes: "proudly, exultantly: also as an explicative." Ragau's entire speech indicates an exultant mood.

Jacob and Esau.

Mido.

Nay now olde maister Isaac (I warrant you) Mido.
 Hath blessed Jacob in the place of Esau.
 At home here with vs it is iudged no small change
 But a case wonderfull, and also very strange.
 5 The yonger brother is made elder, and againe,
 The elder must now serue the yonger as his swayne,
 And from henceforth we must all make curtesie and bow,
 Unto maister Jacob, and not to Esau now:
 And Esau him selfe must vnder Jacob be,
 10 At his commaundement euen as well as we.
 But Isaac, I warrant you: for our householde
 Loue Jacob better than Esau twenty folde.
 None loueth Esau but for his fathers sake:
 But all godd folkes are glad Jacobs parte to take.
 15 And now by Esau no man will sette a pinne,
 But yonder he commeth now, I will gette me in.

Actus quinti, scena tertia.

Esau.

I trow I haue now wonne my spurres for euer,
 For once better venison killed I neuer.
 And though it wer somewhat longer I coulde it take,
 Yet the goodnesse therof dooth some recompence make.
 5 My father Isaac shall therof haue suche meate,
 As in all his life he hath not the better eate.
 Whether byen I doubt not, after tender kylling,
 To be streight endowed with his godly blyssing.
 As his full and true heire in his place to succede,
 10 And to enioye the promise that God made to his seide,
 And when I am once in my place of succession,
 And haue all maner thinges in full possession:
 I shall wyng all loutes and make them stoupe (I trowe)
 I shall make the slaues couche as lowe as dog to bow.
 15 I shall ruffle among them of an other sort,
 Than Isaac hath done, and with an other port.

Esau. x

F.lij.

But

V.ii.6. swayne] 'a male servant, serving-man: an attendant' (O.E.D.).

15. sette a pinne] The term pin was used to describe something of little worth (O.E.D., 1530), and set meant 'to fix the value at' or 'to care'. No man will value Esau at any substantial price.

V.iii.1. wonne my spurres for euer] originally meaning 'to gain knighthood by some act of valour', now meaning, in this context, 'to achieve one's first honours' (O.E.D.).

14. couche] 'to bow in obeisance' (O.E.D.).

15-16. I shall ruffle . . . an other port] Esau feels that Isaac has been too lenient with the servants. Esau intends to be more strict.

15. ruffle] 'to contend or struggle with' (O.E.D.).

16. port] 'the manner in which one bears himself; external deportment' (O.E.D.).

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But nowe will I go see what hath within they make
That part of my hunting my olde father may take.

Actus quarti, scæna quarta.

Isaac. . . Mido. . . Esau.

Isaac.	Mido, come Mido, where art thou little Mido?	
Mido.	Here ready maister Isaac, what shall I do?	
Isaac.	Come leade me to mine old place, that I may sit downe	
Mido.	What can I as well as any boy in this towne.	
Isaac.	O Lorde my God, how deepe and vnsercheable	5
	Are all thy iudgements, and how immutable?	
	Of thy iustice, whom it pleaseth thee, thou doest reiect,	
	Of thy mercy, whom it pleaseth thee, thou doest electe.	
	In my two sonnes O Lorde, thou hast wrought thy will,	
	And as thy pleasure hath wrought, so shall it stand still.	10
	Hence thou hast set Iacob in Esau his place:	
	I committe him to the gouernance of thy grace.	
Esau.	Now where is Isaac that he may come and eate?	
	Lo where he is sitting abroade vpon his seate.	
	Deare father Isaac, the Lorde thy God thee saue.	15
Isaac.	Who art thou my son? & what thing woldest thou haue?	
Esau.	I am your eldest sonne Esau by my name,	
	Let me come home from hunting, where I had ioyly game,	
	I haue made meate therof for your owne appetite,	
	Meate for your owne tooth, wherein ye will much delite.	20
	Come eate your part, deare father, that when ye haue don,	
	Your soule may blesse me as your heire and eldest son.	
Isaac.	Oh Esau, Esau, thou comest to late,	
	An other to thy blessing was predestinate,	
	And cleane gone it is from thee Esau.	25
Esau.	Alas,	
	When am I the unhappiest that euer was,	
	I would the saluage beastes had my body tozme.	
Isaac.	The blessing that thou holdest haue had, an other hath	
Esau.	Alas, what wretched villaine hath done me such scath?	30
Isaac.	Thy brother Iacob came to me by subtiltie,	
	And	

IV.iv.] The heading Actus quarti should really be Actus quinti.

18. ioyly] a variant of jolly, (O.E.D.).

24. predestinate] Isaac's words here recall Rebecca's argument with Isaac in I.iv.

28. saluage] savage.

30. scath] 'scathe': one who works harm: a malefactor' (O.E.D.).

31. Thy brother Iacob . . . me by subtiltee] Note Genesis 27:35:
"Who answered: thy brother came with subtiltie, and hath taken awaye
thy blessing."

Jacob and Esau.

- And brought me venison, and so preuented thee.
 I ate with him ere thou camst, and with my good will,
 Blessed him I haue, and blessed he shall be still.
35. Ah Jacob, Jacob, well may he be called so: Esau.
 For he hath vndermined me times two.
 For first mine heritage he toke away me fro,
 And se, now hath he awaye my blessing also.
 Ah father, father, though Jacob hath done this thing:
40. Yet let me Esau also haue thy blessing.
 Shall all my good huntings for thee be in vaine?
 What is done and past, can not be called againe. Isaac.
 Mine art must now stand in force of necessitie.
 And hast thou neuer a blessing then left for me? Esau.
45. Behold, I haue made thy brother Jacob thy Lord. Isaac.
 A most pointant sworde vnto my heart is that woord. Esau.
 All his mothers children his seruantes haue I made. Isaac.
 That woorde is to me sharper than a rasers blade. Esau.
 I haue also stablished him with wine and cozne. Isaac.
50. Who be the day and houre that euer I was bozne. Esau.
 What am I able to do for thee my sonne? Isaac.
 Ah Jacob, Jacob, that thou hast me thus vndone. Esau.
 Oh vnhappy happes: oh misfortune, well away,
 That euer I should liue to see this woofull day.
55. But hast thou one blessing and no moe my father?
 Let me also haue some blessing good sweete father.
 Well, nature pricketh me some remorse on thee to haue. Isaac.
 Behold, thy dwelling place the earthes fatnesse shal haue,
 And the dew of heauen whiche downe from aboue shall fall;
60. And with dint of sworde thy liuing get thou shall.
 And to thy brother Jacob thou shalt be seruant.
 Oh, to my yonger brother must I be seruant? Esau.
 Oh, that euer a man should be so oppressed.
 Thine owne fault it is that thou art dispossessed. Isaac.
65. Father, change that piece of thy sentence & iudgement. Esau.
 Things done can not be vnzene, therfore be content, Isaac.
 Let me be in quiet, and trouble me no moe.

Come

32. preuented] Farmer notes, "forestalled, got beforehand with: Fr. prevenir." This meaning is not given in the O.E.D.

35. Ah Iacob, Iacob . . . be called so] Iacob means 'one who takes by the heel, and thus tries to trip up or supplant,' (Dictionary of the Bible, edd. Frederick C. Grant and H. H. Rowley, rev. (New York, 1963).)

The Historie of

Esau. Come Mido, in goddes name leade me in at the doze.
 Oh woulde not this chase a man, and fret his guts out?
 To liue as an vnderling vnder such a loute? 70
 Ah hypocrite, ah hedgecreeper, ah sembling wretche:
 I will be euen with thee for this subtil fetch.
 O God of Abraham, what reason is herein,
 That to sea ones enemy it should be made sinne?
 Were not one as god his part of heauen forgoe, 75
 As not to be reuenged on his deadly foe?
 God was angry with Cain for killing Abell:
 His might I kill Jacob meruellously well.
 I may fortune one day him to dispatche and ride:
 The Lord will not see all things, some thing may be hid. 80
 But as for these misers within my fathers tent,
 Which to the supplanting of me put their consent,
 Not one, but I shal coyle them till they sinke for pain,
 And then for their sinning, coyle them of freshe again.
 I will take no daies, but while the matter is hotte, 85
 Not one of them shall scape but they shall to the potte.

Actus quinti, scæna quinta.

Ragau.

Where are we now become: marie for here is araye,
 With Esau my maister this is a blacke dape,
 I told you, Esau one day woulde shite a rage,
 Haue not we well hunted, of blessing to come lagge? 5
 Nay I thought euer it would come to suche a passe,
 Since he solde his heritage like a very asse.
 But in faith some of them I dare leopord a grofe,
 If he may reache them, will haue on the peiscote.

Actus quinti, scæna sexta.

Esau. Ragau. Abra. Mido.

Esau. Come out whores & thenes, come out, come out I say.
 Ragau. I told you, did I not: that there woulde be a fray.
 Esau. Come out litle whores: esau ape, come out of thy denne.
 Take

74. slea] slay81. misers] Hazlitt notes "wretches". A better meaning might be 'one who covets'.83. coyle] 'cause a noisy disturbance or row' (O.E.D.). Here the meaning seems to connote a more violent treatment, probably meaning a beating or thrashing.

85. I will take no daies] Hazlitt states, "Lose no time".

86. to the potte] a statement from the idea of 'being cut up in pieces like meat or vegetables for the pot; hence to be ruined or destroyed' (O.E.D.).

V.v.1. Where are we now become] i.e., What's going to happen to us now?

araye] 'plight, state of affairs' (O.E.D.).

4. lagge] 'last', 'hindmost', 'tardy' (O.E.D.).

8. will haue on the peticote] Hazlitt notes, "To have on the petticoat is a phrase of very unusual occurrence, of which the sense may, without much difficulty or risk of error, be collected from the context." In other words Esau will have (i.e., to beat them) on the petticoat.

peticote] 'a small coat worn under the doublet' (O.E.D.).

V.vi.2. I told you, . . . be a fray] Ragau's words refer to lines 7-8 of the previous scene. Hazlitt puts this part of the speech in an aside.

For this speech Hazlitt notes: "Ragau and the others must be supposed to be at the back of the stage, out of Esau's sight; but they come forward severally, and plead for themselves." Farmer agrees "it is thought well to retain it [the stage direction of Hazlitt] with this note of its extra-textual value."

Jacob and Esau.

	Take my lyfe for a peny, whether shall I renne?	Widd.
5	Come out thou litle fende, come out thou skittish Gill.	Esau.
	Out alas, alas, Esau will vs all kill.	Abra.
	And come out thou mother Mab, out olde rotten witche,	Esau.
	As white as midnightes arsehole, or birgin pitche.	
	Where be ye? come together in a claffer.	
10	In faith and these three will make a noble muffer.	Ragau.
	Cre ye escape my fingers, ye shall all be tought.	Esau.
	For these be they which haue all this against me wrought.	
	I wrought not a stroke this day but led Isaac.	Widd.
	If I wrought one stroke to day, lay me on the iacke.	
15	Hence then, get thee in, and do against me no moze.	Esau.
	I care as muche for you now, as I did befoze.	Widd.
	What saiest thou litle these? if I may thee catche,	Esau.
	Ye shall runne apace then I wene, so God me snatche.	Widd.
	Now to go Widd, or thou art caught in a trippe,	Ragau.
20	Pay for his sake, Abra, ye shall drinke of the whippe.	Esau.
	Pay for Gods lotte god swete maister Esau,	Abra.
	Hurt not me for Widd: speake for me Ragau.	
	Sir spare litle Abra, she hath done none euill.	Ragau.
	A litle fiende it is, and will be a right deuill,	Esau.
25	And she is one of them that loue not me a deale.	
	If ye let me go, I will loue you very wele.	Abra.
	And neuer any moze ado against me make?	Esau.
	Ragau halbe surety.	Abra.
	Sir I vnder take.	Ragau.
30	Then hence out of my sight at once, and get thee in.	Esau.
	Adew, I set not a strawe by you nor a pinne.	Abra.
	What saiest thou thou Tib? once ye shal haue a rappe.	Esau.
	The best ende of suretiship is to get a clappe,	Ragau.
	Now comie on thou olde heg, what shal I say to thee?	Esau.
35	Say what ye lust, so ye do not touche me.	Deborra.
	Yes, and make powder of thee, for I dare say, thou,	Esau.
	Hast bene the cause of all this feast to Esau.	
	So it was Jacobs feast that I did helpe to dreffe.	Deborra.
	G. J. Ray	

5. Gill] an abbreviation for Gillian: "a lass, wench" (O.E.D.). Farmer notes, "wanton: but also generic for sex."

7. mother Mab] Mab was the queen of the fairies in English folklore.

Hazlitt suggests "Old witch."

8. As white as . . . or virgin pitche] Both of these images are used to describe the blackness of Deborra, whom Esau considers to be a

witch.

14. iacke] This word has a number of meanings but Farmer suggests the phrase lay me on the iacke means "attack, lay blows upon: jack= a kind of loose-fitting outer garment worn by both sexes."

I think that the word iacke is probably a reference to an instrument of torture comparable to the rack as seems to be suggested by the context. The O.E.D. does not give such a meaning for sixteenth century usage.

16. I care as . . . I did before] Hazlitt puts this speech in an aside but it can easily be said by Mido to Esau, since Esau does not really know how Mido feels.

19. trippe] 'to be tripped up', or 'trapped'.

33. clappe] 'a blow' (O.E.D.).

34. heg] hag.

The Historie of

Esau. *May I thought such a witche would do such businesse.*
 Rebecca. *But by my truth if I should dye incontinent,* 40
I knew not of the purpose wherfoze it was ment.
 Esau. *But wilt thou tell me truth if I do forgiue thee?*
 Debora. *Pea if I can maister Esau, beleue me.*
 Esau. *Is it true that when I and my brother were first bozne,*
And I by Gods ordinaunce came forth him befozne, 45
Jacob came forthwith, holding me fast by the hele?
 Debora. *It is true, I was there, and saw it very wele.*
 Esau. *Is it true? well Jacob I pray God I be dead,*
But for my heles sake, I wtll haue thee by the head.
What diuel was in me, that I had not the grace 50
With kicking backe my hele to marre his mopishe face?
But my father Isaac will not long liue nowe,
If he were gone, Jacob I would some mate with you.
For my soule hateth Jacob euen to the death,
And I will nere but hate him while I shall haue breath. 55
I may well dissemble vntill I see a day:
But trust me Jacob, I will pay thee when I may.
 This he speaketh to Debora. *But if euer I heare that thou speake worde of this,*
I shall cut out thy tongue, I will not misse.
 Debora. *But come on Ragau with me, so mote I thinke,* 60
I will get a good sworde, for therby must I liue.
 Ragau, *Liue quod you? we are like to liue God knoweth how.*
 Esau. *What ye saunte merchaunt, are ye a pzater now?*

Actus quinti, scæna septima.

Debora. Rebecca.
 Debora. *I Am glad that Esau is now gone certes,*
For an euill disposed man he is doubtlesse.
Yet am I no gladder of his departure hence,
Than I am that Rebecca is come in pzesence.
 Rebecca. *Debora, what dost thou tarying here so long?* 5
I came full ill afeard least some thing had ben wrong
For Gido and Abya tolde me of Esau.

In Beda

40-41. But by my . . . it was ment] Both Hazlitt and Farmer give this speech to Debora. There is no other speech attributed in this scene to Rebecca and their suggestion should be accepted.

49. wtll] misplaced t.

58. But if euer . . . worde of this] The directions in the margin (m.n.1-3) apply to this line and that which follows.

63. saucie merchaunt] Hazlitt notes, "A word of contempt often used in our old comedies, as we now employ chap."
It appears that Ragau and Esau have left the stage.

Jacob and Esau.

In dede here he was, and departed hence but nowe:
 And one thing I tell you dame, let Jacob beware,
 10 For Esau to mischief Jacob dothe prepare,
 Call Jacob hyther, that I may shew him my minde.
 Sende him hyther quickly, and tary ye behinde.
 That he geue place awhile, it is expedient,
 And howe he may be sure, I wyll the way inuent.

Debozra.

Rebecca.

Actus quinti, scæna octaua.

Jacob. Rebecca.

Mother Rebecca, did ye sende for me hyther?
 Yea and the cause is this, thou must go somwhither,
 To hyde thee from thy brother Esau a space.
 In dede to mens malice we must sometime geue place.
 5 He lieth in awayte, to see thee if he can.
 Thou shalt therfore by my rede see hence to Haran,
 And lye with my brother Laban a man aged,
 Tyll Esaus wrath be somewhat asswaged.
 When all thinges are forgotten, and his fury pass,
 10 I shall sende for thee again in all godly haste.
 Yea, but howe wyll my father herewith be content?
 Thou shalt see me wyne hym thereto incontinent.
 And here he cometh happily, Jacob heare me,
 Make a signe to Mido, that he do not name thee,
 15 Then gette thee in praynely tyl I do thee call.
 As ye commaunde me mother Rebecca, I shall.

Jacob.

Rebecca.

Jacob.

Rebecca.

Jacob.

Rebecca.

Jacob.

Actus quinti, scæna nona.

Isaac. Mido. Rebecca. Jacob.

Where be ye good wyse?
 My dame Rebecca is here.
 I am glad swete husband that I see you appere,
 For I haue a worde or two vnto you to say.
 5 Whatsoeuer it be, tell it me I you pray.
 Sir ye know, that now our life daies are but short
 G.ij. And

Isaac.

Mido.

Rebecca.

Isaac.

Rebecca.

And

V.vii.13. he geue place] i. e., to hide awhile.

V.ix.4. For I haue . . . you to say] Hazlitt points out that this line is improperly given to Isaac instead of Rebecca. It appears that Hazlitt is correct in his assumption because the line is not indented to indicate a new speaker. Rather, the line is part of the speech of line 3. Line 5 is indented indicating a new speaker. Isaac's speech must begin with line 5.

The Historie of

And we had neuer so great néede of comfort,
 Now Esau his wines being Bethites both,
 We knowe to please vs are much unwilling and loth,
 That if Iacob eke would take any Bethite to wife, 10
 Small joy should we both haue of comforte of our life.

Isaac. Wife ye speake this well, and I will provide therfore,
 Call Iacob quickly, that he appeare me before.

Mido. I can runne apace for him if ye bidde me go.

Rebecca. Go bye this at once then like a good senné Mido. 15

Isaac. O Lorde save thou my sonne from miscarrying.

Mido. Come maister Iacob, ye must make no tarrying,
 For I it is that shall be thent if you be slacke,
 Here is your senné Iacob now, maister Isaac.

Isaac. Wonne Iacob, make this ready as fast thou can, 20
 And in all hast possible get this vnto Laban.
 He is thine owne vncle, and a right godly man,
 Marry of his daughters, and not of Canan.
 In Mesopotamia shalt thou leade thy life,
 The lorde prosper this there, without debate or strife. 25
 And the God of Abraham prosper this in peace,
 He multiply thy sède, and make it to encrease,
 Nowe kisse me deare senné Iacob, and so go thy way.

Rebecca. Kisse me also swéte senné, and hence without delay.

Iacob. Now most tender parents, as wel with heart and word, 30
 I bid you well to fare, and leaue you to the Lord.

Mido. Say maister Iacob, let me haue an hande also.

Iacob. Euen with all my heart farewell litle Mido.

Isaac. Now will I departe hence into the tent againe.

Rebecca. As pleaseth God and you, but I will here remaine. 35

Actus quinti, scæna decima.

Esau. Ragau. Rebecca. Isaac. Mido.

And is he gone in dede to mine vncle Laban,
 In Mesopotamia at the toun of Haran?
 And is Iacob gone to the house of Bethuel?

The

V. ix. 32. Nay maister Iacob . . . an hande also] Mido's speech and action here show how much Jacob is loved by the servants.

V. x. 1. And is he . . . mine vncle Laban] Although no speaker's name appears next to this speech, it is evident from the content that this speech is uttered by Esau.

Jacob and Esau.

- The whirlewynd with him, and syngyng fende of hel.
 5 **But I shall mete with him yet one daye well enough.**
And who is this? my mother, whom I see here now?
 She stode here all this while sir, did ye not her see? **Ragan.**
 Didst thou see her stand here, & wouldest not warne me? **Esau.**
 Sonne Esau, afoze God thou art much to blame, **Rebecca.**
- 10 **And to do as I heare of thee, is a foule shame.**
 Mother what is it ye heard of me of late?
 That thou doest thy brother Jacob deadly hate. **Esau.**
 Hate Jacob? I hate him and will do till I dye. **Rebecca.**
 For he hath done me both great wrong and vilanny. **Esau.**
- 15 **And that shal he well know if the Lord geue me lufe.**
 Eye vpon thee to speake so like a lewde captife. **Rebecca.**
 My maister Esau is of nature much hote, **Ragan.**
 But he will be better than he saith, feare not.
 My birthright to sell did he not make me consent? **Esau.**
- 20 **But the same to do were not thy selfe content?** **Rebecca.**
There is no man to blame for it but thine owne selfe.
 Yea mother, see that ye holde with that mopishe else. **Esau.**
 It is your deinty dearlyng, your princkoxe, your golpoll,
 He can neuer be praised enough of your soule,
- 25 **He must euer be extolled aboute the Dorne,**
 It is neuer amisse that he hath said or done.
 I would he were rocked or dandled in your lappe:
 O, I woulde with this sauchon I might geue him pap.
 I meruail why ye should so loue him, and me not?
- 30 **Ye groned as well for the one as thother I wrotte.**
 But Jacob must be aduanced in any wyse:
 But I shall one day handle him of the new guise.
 Both on thy fathers blessing and mine I charge thee, **Rebecca.**
 That thy soule entend neuer such iniquitie,
- 35 **Beware by the example of Caym I thee rede,**
 That thou bring not the Lordes curse vpon thy head.
 And what should I take all this wrong at Jacobs hande? **Esau.**
 For geue, and the Lorde shall prosper thee on the lande. **Rebecca.**

G. iij.

17. My maister Esau . . . nature much hote] Esau was red-headed and he would have been regarded by the Elizabethans as an ill-tempered person. Both Judas and Herod were portrayed as being ill-tempered and red-headed. This tradition began with the miracle and mystery plays.

23. dearlyng] darling.
 princkoxe] 'a pert, forward, saucy boy or youth; a coxcomb' (O.E.D.).
 golpoll] Farmer states, "obviously an endearment, but I do not find it elsewhere". No reference in O.E.D.

28. geue him pap] to have him suckle on the sword; i.e., kill him.

32. new guise] Hazlitt states: "The new guise is a term often met with in old plays, but the application of it here is not very clear, although the meaning of the writer--in a way that he (Jacob) little expected--is sufficiently intelligible."

.

The Historie of

My sonne Esau heare me, I am thy mother :
 For my sake let passe this grudge against thy brother. 40

Ragau. Spee your mothers request is but reasonable,
 Which for you to graunt shal be muche commendable.

Esau. Mother, though it be a great thing that ye require :
 Yet must all malice passe at your desire.
 And for your cause mother, this mine angre shall stake. 45

Rebecca. I thanke thee my sonne, that thou dost it for my sake
 For your sake with Jacob I will be at accorde.
 Esau. And shall I call thy father to be as recorde ?
 Rebecca. As pleaseth you mother, I can be well content.
 Esau. When wyll I go call hym hyther incontinent. 50
 Rebecca. And where he doth already loue thee very well,
 This wyll make hym to loue thee better a greate deale.
 Ragau. Truly spee, this is of you a right gentill part :
 At least yf it come from the bottome of your harte.
 Esau. It must nowe be thus, but when I shall Jacob synde, 55
 I shall then do, as God shall put into my minde.
 Rebecca. He hath at my worde remitted all his quarele.
 Isaac. Forsoyth I loue him the better a great deale.
 Isaac. And if he be here, I woulde commende his doing.
 Isaac. All prest here father to tary on your comming. 60
 Esau. Sonne Esau, thou haste thy selfe well acquitted.
 Esau. What all quarell to Jacob thou haste remitted.
 It was the Lordes pleasure that it should thus be,
 Against whose ordinance to stande is not for thee :
 But nowe to the entent it may please the Lorde, 65
 To knitte your hartes one day in a perfect concoyde,
 We shall first in a song geue laude vnto his name,
 And than with all gladnesse, within confirme the same.
 Rebecca. As ye thinke best dere husbands I agree therto.
 Esau. Hee ye may commaunde to what ye will haue me to do : 70
 And so maye ye do also Ragau my man.
 Isaac. I see none, but praise we the Lorde the best we can.
 Isaac. Cal foryth all our household that with one accorde,

55-56. It must nowe . . . into my minde] Esau's words show that he is still a man of the sword and he is being expedient in the present situation. He is not going to premeditate his actions.

60. All prest here . . . on your comming] As Hazlitt notes, this is Esau's speech but for some reason Isaac's name appears beside the line and Esau's name is found immediately below that of Isaac.

67. his name] i. e., God's name.

72. I see none . . . best we can] These words belong to Isaac but the name of Isaac in the margin has slipped down to the next line.

Jacob and Esau:

We may all with one voyce syng vnto the Lorde.

Ragau called m. n
al to syng.

s. d. This song must be song after the prayer.

75 **O** Lorde the God of our futher Abraham,
Howe deepe and unsearcheable are thy iudgements?
Thy almightifull hande did create and frame,
Both heauen and earth and all the elementes.
Man of the earth thou haste formed and create,
80 Some do thee worship, and some stray awrye,
Whome pleaseth thee, thou doste choose or repr obate,
And no fleshe can aske thee wherfore or why?
Of thine owne Will thou didst Abrahams electe,
Promising him seede as sterres of the skie,
85 And them as thy chosē people to protecte,
That they might thy mercies praise and magnifie.
Performe thou O Lorde, thine eternall decree,
To me and my seede the sonnes of Abraham,
And whom thou haste chosē thine owne people to bee,
90 Guide and defende to the glorie of thy name. **FINIS.**

s. d. 2 Then entreth the Poete, and the rest stand

s. d. 3 still, til he haue done.

Whan Adam for breaking Gods commaundement
Had sentence of death, and all his posteritie:

The Poete m. n
sch.

95 Yet the lorde our God who is omnipotent,
Had in his owne selfe by his eternall decree,
Appointed to restore man, and to make him free,
He purposed to save mankynde by his mercie,
Whome he once had created vnto his glorie.
Yet not all fleshe did he then predestinate,
But onely the adopted children of promise:
100 For he forkeuwe that many would degenerate,
And iustfully giue cause to be put from that blisse:
So on Gods behalfe no matter default there is,

But

74. We may all . . . vnto the Lorde] The stage directions in the margin are best suited to come after this line.

75-90. O Lorde the God . . . of thy name] No direct source could be found for this song. It bears a resemblance to the other two found in this play.

s.d.2-3] Jacob and Esau differs from contemporary plays of this period since the Poete returns to the stage to give the epilogue which is in the form of a short sermon.

The Historie

But where he chooseth, he sheweth his great mercy :
 And where he refuseth, he doth none injury.
 But thus farre surmounteth mans intellection, 105
 To attaine or conceive, and much more to discusse :
 All must be referred to Gods election,
 And to his secret iudgement, it is meete for vs,
 With Paule the Apostle to confesse and say thus :
 Oh the deepnesse of the riches of Gods wisdom, 110
 How vnsearchable are his wayes to mans reason :
 Our parte therfore is first to helue Gods word,
 Not doubting but that he wil his elected saue :
 Then to put full trust in the godnesse of the Lorde,
 That we be of the number which shall mercy haue : 115
 Thirdly so to liue as we may his promise craue.
 Thus if we do, we shall Abrahams chyldren be :
 And come with Iacob to endlesse felicitie.
 s. d. 4 All the rest of the actors answer Amen.
 s. d. 5 Then foloweth the prayer.
 Isaac. Now vnto God let vs pray for all the whole clergy,
 To geue them grace to attaine gods honoꝝ and glorie. 120
 Rebecca. Then for the Quenes maiesty let vs pray,
 Vnto God to kepe her in helth and welth night and day,
 And that of his more mercy and great benignitie,
 He will defend and maintaine hir estate and dignitie,
 That she being greued with any outward hostilitie, 125
 May against her enimies, alwaye haue victorie.
 Jacob. God saue the Quenes counsaillours most noble and true,
 And with all godlinesse their noble heartes endue.
 Esau. Lord saue the nobilitie and preserue them all :
 And prosper the Quenes subiects binnerfall. 130
 Amen.
 s. d. 6 : Thus endeth this Comedie or Enterlude.
 s. d. 7 of Iacob and Esau.

103. But where he . . . his great mercy] A reference to the idea of predestination. St. Paul points out that God chose Jacob over Esau before the children were born. Jacob was elected.

105.-106. But thus farre . . . more to discusse] G. Scheurweghs points out that lines 102-106 bear a very great resemblance to Calvin's Institution Christianae Religionis. See Appendix C.

119-131. This passage is similar to prayers at the end of The Trial

of Treasure and New Custom. Other plays of the mid-sixteenth century also have similar prayers at the end.

121. the Quenes maiesty] Whether this passage has been adjusted to fit the circumstances is a matter of conjecture. No conclusive proof can be found to indicate whether the queen referred to is Mary or Elizabeth.

APPENDIX A

Authorship

It is difficult to arrive at any conclusive statement concerning the authorship of Jacob and Esau, partially because no firm date has been established for the composition of the play and also because so many of its contemporary plays are either lost or anonymous. Although both Nicholas Udall and William Hunnis have been suggested as possible authors of the interlude, no one case made for either is convincing enough to allow a person to venture a definitive statement.

Nicholas Udall as the author of Jacob and Esau is suggested by Frederick S. Boas, Edmund K. Chambers, Charles W. Wallace, and Murray Roston while Mrs. C. C. Stopes is the chief advocate of William Hunnis as author of the play.

Wallace states his view but gives no particular reason for his choice: "Another classically modeled children's play, which I find was written by Udall, on a similar biblical theme was Jacob and Esau, . . ." And in a footnote he goes on to state: "It seems remarkable that students of the drama have not long ago universally recognized Udall in this play. Even the most cursory examination of it and all related matters is convincing."¹ The fact that other critics are not so confident as Wallace

¹The Evolution of English Drama up to Shakespeare (Berlin, 1912), pp. 100-101.

emphasizes the fact that a cursory examination is not "convincing".

Boas gives an account of the play and he feels that the play resembles Ralph Roister Doister.² He draws a number of parallels between Udall's play and Jacob and Esau:

Esau's talkative servant, Ragau, Isaac's boy, Mido, Rebecca's handmaid, Abra, and Deborah the nurse, all inventions of the playwright, remind us of the household of Dame Custance, and the general reconciliation at the end breathes the same spirit as the close of Roister Doister. Both plays are divided into Acts and Scenes on the classical model, and have similar metrical characteristics. Jacob and Esau is thus either by Udall or by some dramatist of kindred type.³

Boas' conclusion is cautious and it is not definite.

Chambers' statements on the authorship of the play are sketchy and just as guarded. He states that it is "plausible" that Udall is the author of the play.⁴

Arguments based on characterization and structural similarities are difficult to substantiate convincingly. Since widespread imitation was popular during the sixteenth century, any case built on structural similarities is weakened and, as Thomas W. Baldwin points out, the structural points of similarity are debatable.⁵

A stronger case for Udall is constructed by Leicester Bradner in an article, "A Test for Udall's Authorship".⁶ Pointing out the great

²An Introduction to Tudor Drama (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933), pp. 26-27.

³Ibid., p. 27.

⁴The Elizabethan Stage (London, 1923), IV, 22.

⁵See "Introduction", p.

⁶Modern Language Notes, XLII, (1927), 378-380.

variety in syllabic content in the lines of the interludes of this period, he goes on to show that with the exception of three plays, none of the interludes has more than 29.4% of any one type of line. His findings are interesting enough to quote in full:

Ralph Roister Doister, Respublica, and Jacob and Esau, besides being written in couplets and divided into acts and scenes (a very unusual practice in this period), all have another significant point in common: the unquestioned predominance of the twelve syllable line. In the first it amounts to 68% of the total, in the second 75%, and in the third to 68%. Not only this, but each exhibits the same type of line as a second choice, namely the eleven syllable line. In this case the figures are: Roister Doister 21.6%, Respublica 17%, Jacob and Esau 24%. The third highest in each case, thirteeners, drops to the low figures of 6%, 6%, and 4% respectively. . . . In view of the situation described in the first paragraph [i.e., variance of all other plays], I do not think it is overstating the case to say that these three plays show an extraordinary metrical similarity and that in all probability they were written by the same man.⁷

Bradner's case is quite convincing but there are problems which detract from its positive conclusions. Two of the plays he uses are anonymous: Jacob and Esau and Respublica. Since Bradner does not show that the plays of any single author have "an extraordinary metrical similarity", his argument suffers. Also many of the plays of this period, such as Udall's Biblical play Ezechias, are lost and consequently a larger sample to test is lacking. However, it must be admitted that Bradner's case is quite strong.

Murray Roston in Biblical Drama in England feels that Udall is the author of Jacob and Esau but his statement is not without reservation:

⁷Ibid., pp. 379-380.

"Recent evidence has made the attribution to Udall of a further, and perhaps more significant, biblical play almost certain."⁸ Furthermore, some of Roston's arguments are based on Bradner's statistics. Unlike Roston, David Bevington in his book From "Mankind" to Marlowe suggests that either Udall or Hunnis could have written the play because of "the presence of the poet".⁹

The highly conjectural case developed by Mrs. Stopes for Hunnis is based on a connection between Hunnis' metrical renderings, particularly the metrical version of the Book of Genesis, The Hiue full of Hunnye, and the interlude of Jacob and Esau.¹⁰ She passes over the difference in versification by saying:

It may be objected that the style of Drama is unlike that of his metrical rendering. But his Psalms and Hymns and scriptural versifications, were in the conventional Ballad measures to suit, not only the taste of the people, but the reformed church melodies and popular airs. The chief desire of the writers of such was to educate, therefore sic they kept as closely to the text as their rhythm and rhyme would allow them.¹¹

Obviously, the similarity exists more in the subject matter than in the treatment and hence her argument is tenuous. She tries to strengthen the case by showing that Abra's speech (IV.v) has a connection with

⁸(Evanston, 1968), pp. 75-76.

⁹(Cambridge--Mass., 1962), p. 30.

¹⁰William Hunnis and the Revels of the Chapel Royal in Materialien zur Kunde des alteren Englischen Dramas, ed. W. Bang, XXIX (Louvain, 1910), 258-270. In an article, "The Interlude: or, Comedie of Jacob and Esau," Athenaeum (April 28, 1900), pp. 538-540, she again stresses her argument.

¹¹William Hunnis and the Revels of the Chapel Royal, p. 267.

Hunnis but the point is minor: "Hunnis seems all his life to have been interested, and associated with gardens, and little Abra gives the first list of Kitchen vegetables preserved in poetic literature."¹²

Other arguments that Mrs. Stopes uses are that the play was written for children. In regard to animals, she explains:

The bringing of horns and hounds on the stage suggests the device of Richard Edwards in Palamon and Arcyte and Hunnis in Narcissus. If it had been designed by Hunnis so far in advance as 1553 he could have felt it no plagiarism to reproduce his method in later plays.¹³

However, if the use of hounds and horn had proven dramatically effective, it is certain that any dramatist who could use these devices would have attempted to do so. For example, Shakespeare and his contemporaries used ghosts and supernatural elements because of the dramatic effect. Mrs. Stopes attempts to prove Hunnis' authorship by stating the play was written for children and since Hunnis was master of the Children of the Chapel Royal that he naturally wrote the play. She does not consider that the play may have been written as a school piece, a fact that Boas uses to illustrate that Udall may have written it. Since no records exist as to the place of presentation, an assumption that the Children of the Royal Chapel performed this interlude is open to question.

From external evidence, Mrs. Stopes also tries to link the play to Hunnis. She states that the two dates connected with the piece (1557 and 1568) are important in William Hunnis' life. Hunnis was imprisoned in 1556 and "when he was lying prisoner in the Tower, his property,

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid.

books and papers [were] at the mercy of friend or foe, censor or publisher."¹⁴ Since Hunnis was in prison, Mrs. Stopes explains that the play could have easily been entered in the Stationers' Register in 1557 by Henry Sutton. She explains Hunnis' connection with the 1568 printing date by stating: "It was printed by Henry Bynneman shortly after his [Hunnis'] appointment to the Mastership of the Children, which might be expected to make his work more attractive to possible purchasers."¹⁵ However, if this printing were to take advantage of Hunnis' popularity, it would appear logical to have had his name on the title-page while the title-page of Jacob and Esau has no mention of an author.¹⁶

The fact remains that Mrs. Stopes' case is weak. Stylistic similarities, the use of story material, and the use of certain stage devices only indicate a tenuous case for Hunnis' authorship of Jacob and Esau. Since none of Hunnis' dramatic works survive it is difficult to estimate his dramatic prowess. Mrs. Stopes' use of the dates 1557 and 1568 is also unsound as these dates record the entry of the play in the Stationers' Register and not the actual date of composition.

In summation to state accurately any definite conclusion about the authorship is difficult. From the critical opinion studied, it seems that the best case points to Udall who did write a play, Ezechias, based on a Biblical subject. However, this play is not extant.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 266.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶I am indebted to Dr. John Ripley of the Department of English, McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, for pointing out this fact to me during a conversation.

Other writers of this period have still not been fully studied because of the lack of complete primary source material. Edwards, in the Prologue to Damon and Pithias, states that he wrote comedies before turning his hand to "this new tragical comedy" Damon and Pithias. However, none of these comedies remains, even though Edwards' position as Master of the Chapel and his musical ability plus his knowledge of classical structure through the Latin comedies indicate that he could have a claim to some of the anonymous plays of the period. At this time, besides Edwards, Richard Farrant wrote interludes but again many of these plays are lost.

To determine the authorship of Jacob and Esau would require a careful study of the structure and meaning of this and other plays of the sixteenth century. Such a study would provide a basis for comparison of these plays. Until such a detailed study is undertaken, the question of authorship of Jacob and Esau must remain unanswered.

APPENDIX B

Dating

The difficulty of affixing a date to Jacob and Esau is closely connected with the problem of authorship because a great deal of the needed information is lacking. The anonymity of the author plus the lack of reference to a performance of the play by any company leaves the date of the play open to question.

We do know that a play called Jacob and Esau was entered in the Stationers' Register to Henry Sutton in 1557-58.¹ From the title page of the six extant copies of Bynneman's quarto, the latest date for the play is fixed at 1568 unless the date was forged and there is no evidence pointing to this. We can only speculate that Bynneman's quarto was a reprint of the play entered to Sutton. Furthermore, there is no evidence to indicate that Sutton actually printed the interlude. Mrs. C. C. Stopes in her attempt to attribute the play to William Hunnis deals with the problems of dating:

Whether Sutton really printed it [Jacob and Esau] then or not, there seems little reason to doubt that he dealt with the same production as did Bynneman who published it in 1568. . . . The terminal prayer shows that it had been acted before the Queen; but here is the question, before which Queen? The prayer for the Clergy would hardly have preceded that for the Queen in Elizabeth's reign, while it would be natural in Mary's.

¹See "Introduction", p. iv.

But the absence of all reference to the King, would seem to throw back the date of its performance to 1553-4. It would not have been acted before either Queen had it been previously printed.²

The date of 1553 is also suggested by Charles Wallace.³

However, Charles Mills Gayley feels that the distinct Protestant nature of Jacob and Esau suggests a date earlier than the 1557-8 entry given to Sutton. He states, ". . . its decidedly protestant character may indicate composition before Mary's accession to the throne."⁴ Gayley's argument is weakened, however, when we recall that Udall, who had Protestant leanings, was an active dramatist during Mary's Catholic reign.

G. Scheurweghs attempts to fix the earliest possible date of Jacob and Esau at 1539, the date of John Calvin's Institutio Christianae Religionis.⁵ He compares six passages from the Prologue and the Poet's discourse at the end of the play with six Latin passages from Calvin's works and shows that these passages bear a great resemblance to each other. He concludes that the Prologue and the Poet's speech could not have been written before 1539. However, Calvin's passages are translations of St. Paul's epistles to the Romans and since the writer seems

²William Hunnis and the Revels of the Chapel Royal in Materialien zur Kunde des alteren Englischen Dramas, ed. W. Bang, XXIX (Louvain, 1910), 265-266.

³The Evolution of the English Drama (Berlin, 1912), p. 93.

⁴"An Historical View of the Beginnings of English Comedy," Representative English Comedies (New York, 1903), I, lxxix.

⁵"Notes and News: The Date of 'The History of Jacob and Esau'." English Studies, XIII (1931-33), 218-219.

to have had a good knowledge of Biblical fact and Biblical teachings, it can be assumed he would have been familiar with St. Paul's teachings. Furthermore, both Calvin's translation and the dramatist's version of St. Paul's accounts are not direct line borrowings but rather bear a similarity in content. A fact which Scheurweghs does not make full use of but which strengthens his argument is the Calvinistic nature of the play. The heavy emphasis on predestination and election in the play makes the earliest date of 1539 probable since Calvin's work of 1539 was the first complete document dealing with these subjects. The play would then fall between 1539 and 1568.

Modern critics tend to place the play in the 1550's, David Bevington gives the date as circa 1553-1558 while Richard Southern give the date as 1550.⁶ From the clear development of the plot, the awareness of the stage, the refined wit, the lively dialogue, and the full portrayal of character, it would appear that this play would fit into the 1550's. However, no definite conclusion can be reached because complete information is lacking.

⁶From "Mankind" to Marlowe (Evanston, 1968), p. 65, and The Seven Ages of the Theatre (New York, 1963), p. 138.

APPENDIX C

Sources of Jacob and Esau

The sources for this interlude include early dramatic versions of the Biblical story: Isaac and the Ordo de Ysaac et Rebecca et Filiis eorum Recitandus, as well as the poem Thystory of Iacoby and his twelue sones. All of these sources are closely related to the account in Genesis:25 and 27.

Whether John Calvin's Institutio Christianae Religionis nunc vere deum suo titulo respondens is a source is difficult to prove, but the Calvinistic nature of the play seems to indicate a knowledge of Calvin's work by the author.

To discover which edition of the Bible was used for the story is impossible. Even though some scenes follow the Biblical narrative closely, it is not possible to show direct line borrowings from any particular edition of the Old Testament story because the author had to alter the lines and words to obtain rime. Mrs. C. C. Stopes felt that a clue to the edition and to the translation might be found in the use of the word rice in rice pottage but she discovered a number of editions made use of this word in translations.¹ Thomas Matthew's version of the Bible

¹In William Hunnis and the Revels of the Chapel Royal in Materialien zur Kunde des alteren Englischen Dramas, ed. W. Bang, XXIX (Louvain, 1910), 268, Mrs. Stopes makes the statement that she discovered the King James Version of the Bible prints lentiles rather than rice. She felt

printed in 1537, (S.T.C. 2066), the reprinted version revised by E. Beck in 1549, (S.T.C. 2077) and the Great Bible, first published in 1539 (S.T.C. 2068) use the word rice rather than the word lentiles which is used in the King James Version of the Bible.

One of the earliest dramatic accounts of Jacob and Esau is the Ordo de Ysaac et Rebecca et Filiis eorum Recitandus. This drama is actually a fragment of a play from the latter part of the twelfth century and the possibility of its being known in England in its original form is highly unlikely.² An English version of the story existed as part of the Towneley Cycle of plays. The play called Isaac is actually the fifth in the cycle, but the length is impossible to discover since the first part of the play is missing and only the last thirty-five couplets remain.³ Both of these dramas concentrate upon the Biblical narrative and present a simple account of the story found in Genesis and, hence, bear little more than a passing similarity to the interlude of Jacob and Esau. It is true that the costuming and staging technique of the Latin

that because William Hunnis wrote rice pottage in his metrical rendition of the Book of Genesis, entitled Hiue full of Hunnye, and the interlude referred to the pottage as rice pottage, she could construct a case for Hunnis' authorship of the play; however, her assumptions were incorrect, as she points out: "One word seemed peculiar to me, and common to the Hiue full of Hunnye and the Interlude, the rendering of Jacob's pottage as 'rice, instead of 'lentiles'. I find that nothing can be based on that, as Matthew's Bible uses the same word."

²Karl Young, The Drama of the Medieval Church (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1933), II, 258-269. Young points out that this Latin form of Drama was found in Austria among the sermons of Johannes Geuss de Teining who lived in the fifteenth century (p. 258, n.4).

³The Towneley Plays, ed. George England, Early English Text Society (London, 1897), pp. 49-51.

play resembles the interlude but this point may be coincidental.⁴

Another possible source of the story is Thystory of Iacoby and his twelue sones, (S.T.C. 14323) printed about 1510. This long narrative poem was reprinted a number of times: in 1525 (S.T.C. 14324), 1562 (S.T.C. 14325), and in 1570 by John Allde. The events in the life of Jacob are written in verse and the early events of his life are recorded in the first thirty stanzas. Between the poem and the interlude there are some interesting parallels which are not based upon Biblical narrative but which seem to be inventions of the author of the poem. A number of points, mentioned cursorily in the poetic narrative, are expanded in the interlude.

The poem points out the ardent passion Esau has for hunting and explains, "And for pleasure, ofte wolde be a hunter / To walke erly and late with a bowe in his honde" (Thystory of Iacob and his twelue sones, stanza I, lines 2-4).⁵ The dramatist takes Esau's passion for hunting and makes it an obsession which has become a nuisance to the entire community. Hanan's words explain the effect of Esau's actions:

AH syr, I see I am an early man thys morne,
I am once more begylde with Esau his horne.
But there is no suche stirrer as Esau is:
He is vp day by day before the Crowe pis:
Then maketh he with his Horne such tootyng and
blowing

⁴The Drama of the Medieval Church, II, 264-265. Young states that costumes of Hebrews and stage props such as the goat kids and goat's hair were used in the Ordo de Ysaac et Rebecca et Filiis eorum Recitandus. Jacob and Esau also requires these props, but it would seem that the material of the story would probably suggest the costumes and staging rather than a direct connection between the early Latin drama and the interlude.

⁵S.T.C. 14323.

And with his wyde throate such shouting and
 hallowing,
 That no neighbour shall in his Tent take any
 rest,
 From Esau addresseth hym to the Forrest.
 (Jacob and Esau, I.ii.1-8)

Another event expressed in the poem (stanza 9), Esau's fainting with hunger, is expanded by the dramatist who has Esau entering, "so faint that he can scarce go" (II.ii) and so starved that he is ready to eat a cat (II.ii.1-16). The sale of the birthright in the poem (stanza 10) is concluded by a handshake, "here lay thy hand in mine," and a similar end to the sale is made in Jacob and Esau (II.ii.105), "Holde, here is my hande, I doe sell it [i.e., the birthright] here to thee." In stanza 18 of the poem, Jacob kneels to receive the blessing of Isaac, while the stage directions of the play indicate Jacob kneels to be blessed: "Iacob kisseth Isaac: and thē kneleth down to haue his blessing" (IV.xi).

One of the closest links between the poem and the play is in the use of proverbs. After Isaac is led in by Jacob, Mido states:

I may now go play, Iacob leadeth Isaac.
 But I neuer saw such a prety knacke,
 How Iacob beguiled his father, how slightly.
 Now I see it true the blinde eate many a flye.
 (Jacob and Esau, IV.ix.29-32)

Compare Mido's words to the description of this event in stanza 15 of the poem:

Than of the Kyddes fleshe Rebecca sodde grete
 plente
 And made Ysaac ete in stede of venyson
 Loo the blind often drynketh many a flye.⁶

⁶The 1570 edition of Thystory of Iacob and his Twelue Sonnes (S.T.C. 14326) actually has the final line of the stanza printed as, "Lo the

The fact that the words expressed by Mido and the proverb expressed in the poem describe the same circumstances (i.e., the beguiling of Isaac), and the other similarities between the poem and the interlude suggest that the author of Jacob and Esau was familiar with this long narrative poem.

As mentioned, a number of passages in the interlude bear a resemblance to John Calvin's Institutio Christianae Religionis nunc vere deum suo titulo respondens. The ideas of predestination and eternal election presented in the play, particularly by the Prologue and the Poet, appear to be paraphrases of John Calvin's ideas on the same subject. G. Scheurwegh attempts to show that the author of Jacob and Esau actually drew on Calvin's work.⁷ However, his argument suffers as the parallel passages found in Calvin's work are based upon direct translations of the Biblical text and the author may have been aware of these scriptures without reading Calvin's book. The references made throughout the play do seem to indicate some knowledge on the author's part of the ideas concerning predestination and eternal election. Many of these references are related to Calvin's concepts. In I.iii.34-42, Rebecca points out that God has chosen Jacob over Esau and again she stresses this point later in the same scene, lines 59 to 62. Again in II.v. [incorrectly labelled as

blinde eateth many a flye."

⁷"Notes and News: The Date of 'The History of Jacob and Esau'." English Studies, XIII (1931-33), 219. Scheurwegh states that the Prologue material comes from Institutio, 248, and the Epilogue material (spoken by the Poet) comes from Institutio, 247. Both references are to John Calvin's Institutio Christianae Religionis nunc vere deum suo titulo respondens, Argentarati, 1539.

Scene iv] 55-60, Rebecca reminds Jacob of his divine election by God. When Isaac realizes he has blessed Jacob instead of Esau, the old man states that Jacob was predestined to be ruler over Esau:

Ah Esau, Esau, thou comest to late,
 An other to thy blessing was predestinate,
 And cleane gone it is from thee Esau.
 (V[incorrectly labelled IV].iv.23-25)

Finally Isaac sums up the way God acts, a way that shows similarity to Calvin's doctrines:

It was the Lordes pleasure that it should thus be,
 Against whose ordinance to stande is not for thee.
 (V.x.63-64)

The final song of the play (V.x.75-90) and the Epilogue are closely linked with Calvin's idea of predestination and eternal election.

The interlude of Jacob and Esau relies heavily upon the Biblical narrative. It uses some of the points presented in the poem Thystory of Iacoby and his twelue sones and appears to use some of Calvin's concepts. No definite connection can be shown to the Isaac play of the Towneley Cycle or the early Latin play Ordo de Ysaac et Rebecca et Filiis eorum Recitandus. It appears that except for the Biblical narrative the author borrowed very little from these sources and relied heavily upon his own ingenuity in creating the minor characters and in portraying the major roles. His organization and the structure of the play show his dramatic ability.

APPENDIX D

Stage History

No records have been found to indicate that a production of Jacob and Esau was given during the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries. There are numerous references to 'plaies' and 'enterludes' acted in the presence of Edward VI, and Queen Elizabeth, but many of these references do not give the specific names of the plays.¹ In the records of expenses for court performances, there are no accounts listed for the properties that a performance of Jacob and Esau would require. Such sundry items as goat skins, Hebrew costumes, hunting staffs, hunting horns, bows, quivers, a bag of food, Abra's broom, and tents would have incurred expenses unless these items were already in the Revels' store of properties. The fact that hunting dogs were required should have been noted in the records, as the use of dogs on stage was unusual in the sixteenth century.² However, no such notation has been found.

¹See Documents Relating to the Revels at Court in the Time of King Edward VI and Queen Mary, ed. Albert Feuillerat, in Materialien zur Kunde des alteren Englischen Dramas, ed. W. Bang, ser. I, XLIV (Louvain, 1914), xii-xv, and Documents Relating to the Office of the Revels in the Time of Queen Elizabeth in Materialien zur Kunde des alteren Englischen Dramas, ed. W. Bang, ser. I, XXI (Louvain, 1908), xiii-xvii.

²There are two references to dogs used in plays. One reference is found connected with the play Narcisses produced between 1571-72 (Documents Relating to the Office of the Revels in the Time of Queen Elizabeth, p. 141), and another reference to dogs used in a play is given for an unnamed play in 1574 and entered for the accounts of 1 February, 1574 (p. 244). Also listed in the same account is an expense for "Cariage of

Another indication of a Court performance may be the prayer at the end of the play which asks, "Then for the Quenes maiesty let vs pray, / Unto God to kepe her in helth and welth night and day." The prayer also asks for grace for the clergy and salvation for the "Quenes counsailours" as well as the preservation of the "nobilitie" and for prosperity of "the Quenes subiects vniuersall". Prayers of this nature, however, were common and cannot be used to state definitely that the play was presented at court.

As for modern productions of Jacob and Esau, two performances of the play were given along with scenes from Edward III at the Little Theatre in London on March 6 and March 12, 1911, and were directed by William Poel. Also Jacob and Esau was produced under the auspices of the Elizabethan Stage Society with Cathleen Nesbitt playing the role of Rebecca and Reginald Owen starring as Esau.³ Except for the attempted revival by Poel, this interlude has apparently remained untouched by stage performers.

Tymber woork for the same Mr. hvnnyes his playe downe to the watersyde." These facts do not throw any light on an actual performance of Jacob and Esau.

³Robert Speaight, William Poel and the Elizabethan Revival (Cambridge--Mass: 1954), p. 190. William Poel also mentions his production of Jacob and Esau in Shakespeare in the Theatre (London, 1913), p. 190. However, no date is available.

APPENDIX E

A List of the Variant and Doubtful Readings
Found in Jacob and Esau

The following list deals with the doubtful readings found in the play of Jacob and Esau and the variant readings in the six copies of the edition of 1568.

The Prologue of the play.

line 6	<u>ba]</u> read <u>ba-</u>
line 13	<u>renuing]</u> since the play closely follows the Bible and the Great Bible of 1539, and the subsequent edition of 1550, has the word <u>running</u> , the word should be <u>renning</u> , an early form of <u>running</u> . The Biblical reference is found in Romans 9:16.
I.i.m.n.7	<u>deth. iij.]</u> read <u>deth iij.</u>
I.i.m.n.9	<u>got]</u> read <u>got-</u>
I.i.m.n.13	<u>cal]</u> read <u>cal-</u> .
I.i.m.n.23	<u>blo]</u> read <u>blo-</u> .
I.i.110	<u>musthaue]</u> read <u>must haue.</u>
I.iii.46	(<u>I doubt not to]</u> read (<u>I doubt not</u>) <u>to.</u>
I.iii.74	<u>thenshould]</u> read <u>then should.</u>
I.iv.10	<u>myfe]</u> read <u>my wife.</u>
I.iv.17	<u>Rebecc]</u> read <u>Rebecca.</u> The <u>a</u> has apparently dropped to the line below.
I.iv.18	<u>Isaac.a.]</u> read <u>Isaac.</u>

- I.iv.24 Rebecca.] this word should face line 23 and line 23 should be indented while line 24 should be at the margin
- I.iv.99 I deede] read In deede.
- II.ii.2 Esau.] actually, Esau. Should be opposite line 1 rather than line 2.
- II.ii.26 If had] read If I had.
- II.ii.52 much] The British Museum, Bodley, Pforzheimer, Huntington and Folger copies read this way but the Yale copy read much e.
- II.iii.63 honud] read hound.
- II.iii.86 uo] read no.
- II.iii.98 ora] read or a.
- II.iv.2 Esau.] actually Esau. should be opposite line 1.
- II.iv.53 euerye] read euer ye.
- II.iv[v] Actus secunda, scaena quarta] read Actus secunda, scaena quinta.
- II.iv[v].7 allto] read all to.
- II.iv[v].30 performau nce] read performaunce.
- II.iv[v].31 thesame] read the same.
- III.i.3 commcth] read commeth.
- III.iii.6 true)] read true.
- IV.iii.12 lookethat] read looke that.
- IV.iv.24 be thorne] read be a thorne.
- IV.vi.23 say..] read saye.
- IV.viii.7 mymind e] read my minde. The British Museum and the Huntington copy have mymind e while the Bodley, Folger, Pforzheimer, and Yale copies print my minde.

- IV.viii.m.n.5 looking.] read looking.
- IV.x.8 Mido.] read Abra.
- IV.xi.6 the speaker's name, Isaac., has been omitted
- IV.xii.m.n.1 Then she spea] read Then she spea-.
- IV[V].iv. Actus quarti, scaena quarta.] read Actus quinti, scaena quarta.
- V.vi.20 drinkeof] read drinke of.
- V.vi.27 Esau.] read Esau.
- V.vi.40 Rebecca.] read Deborra.
- V.vi.49 wtll] read will.
- V.vi.63 Esau.] read Esau.
- V.xi.4 Isaac.] actually Isaac. should be placed opposite the indented line, line 5.
- V.ix.20 Isaa] read Isaac.
- V.x.62 Esau.] actually Esau. should be placed opposite the indented part, line 60.
- V.x.81 repr obate] read reprobate. The British Museum and Huntington copy show this printing while the Yale, Bodley, Pforzheimer, and Folger print reprobate.

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