

Nine daies vvonder.

William Kemp.

Note on the e-text: this [Renascence Editions](#) text was transcribed by R.S. Bear, July 2000, from the Bodley Head reprint of 1923. The source text is that in the Bodleian Library, Art. 4^o. L. 62; misprint corrections by G. B. Harrison in 1923 have been retained. Any errors that have crept in are the fault of the present publisher. The text is in the public domain. Content unique to this presentation is copyright © 2000 The University of Oregon. For nonprofit and educational uses only. Send comments and corrections to the Publisher.

Kemps nine daies vvonder.

Performed in a daunce from
London to Norwich.

*Containing the pleasure, paines and kinde entertainment
of William Kemp betweene London and that Citty
in his late Morrice.*

Wherein is somewhat set downe worth note; to reprocue
the slaunders spred of him: many things merry,
nothing hurtfull.

Written by himselfe to satisfie his friends.



LONDON

Printed by *E.A.* for *Nicholas Ling*, and are to be
solde as his shop at the west doore of Saint
Paules Church. 1600.

*To the true ennobled Lady, and his most bountifull Mistris, Mistris Anne
Fitton, Mayde of Honour to the most sacred Royall Queene Elizabeth.*

HONORABLE Mistris in the waine of my litle wit, I am forst to desire your protection, else euey Ballad-singer will proclaime me bankrupt of honesty. A sort of mad fellows seeing me merrily dispos'd in a Morrice, haue so bepainted mee in print since my gambols began from London to Norwich, that (hauing but an ill face before) I shall appeare to the world without a face, if your fayre hand wipe not away their foule coulors. One hath written *Kemps farewell* to the tune of Kery, mery, Buffe: another his desperate daungers in his late trauaile: the third his entertainment to New-Market; which towne I came neuer neere by the length of halfe the heath. Some sweare in a Trenchmore I haue trode a good way to winne the world: many say many thinges that were neuer thought. But in a word your poore seruant offers the truth of his progresse and profit to your honorable view, receiue it I beseech you, such as it is, rude and plaine, for I know your pure iudgement, lookes as soone to see beauty in a Blackamoore, or heare smooth speech from a Stammerer, as to finde any thing, but blunt mirth in a Morrice dauncer, especially such a one as *Will Kemp*, that hath spent his life in mad Iigges and merry iestes. Three reasons moooue mee to make publik this iourney, one to reprove lying fooles I neuer knew: the other to co[m]mend louing friends, which by the way I daily found: the third to shew my duety to your honorable selfe, whose fauours (among other bountifull friends) makes me

(dispight of this sad world) iudge my hart Corke, & my heeles feathers, so that me thinkes I could flye to Rome (at least hop to Rome, as the olde Prouerb is) with a mortar on my head. In which light conceite I lowly begge pardon and leaue, for my Tabrer strikes his huntsup, I must to Norvvich: Imagine Noble Mistris, I am now setting from my Lord Mayors, the houre about seauen, the morning gloomy, the company many, my hart merry.

Your worthy Ladships most
vnworthy seruant,

William Kemp.

Kemps Nine Daies Wonder:

Performed in a Morrice from London to Norwich. Wherein euery dayes iourney is pleasantly set downe, to satisfie his friends the truth, against all lying Ballad-makers; what he did, how hee was welcome, and by whome entertained.

The first daies iourney, being the first Munday in cleane Lent, from the right honorable the Lord Mayors of London.

THE first mundaye in Lent, the close morning promising a cleere day, attended on by *Thomas Slye* my Taberer, *William Bee* my seruant, and *George Sprat*, appointed for my ouerseer, that I should take no other ease but my prescribed order) my selfe, thats I, otherwise called *Caualliero Kemp*, head-Master of Morrice-dauncers, high Head-borough of heighs, and onely tricker of your Trill lilles, and best bel-shangles betweene Sion and mount Surrey, began frolickely to foote it, from the right Honorable the Lord Mayors of London, towards the right worshipfull (and truely bountifull) Master Mayors of Norwich.

My setting forward was somewhat before seauen in the morning, my Taberer stroke up merrily, and as fast as kinde peoples thronging together would giue me leaue, throrow London I leapt: By the way many good olde people, and diuers others of yonger yeeres, of meere kindnes, gaue me bowd sixepences and grotes, blessing me with their harty prayers and God-speedes.

Being past White chappell, and hauing left faire London, with all that North-east Suburb before named, multitudes of Londoners left not me: but eyther to keepe a custome which many holde, that Mile-end is no walke without a recreatio[n] at Stratford Bow with Creame and Cakes, or else for loue they beare toward me, or perhappes to make themselues merry, if I should chance (as many thought) to giue over my Morrice within a mile of Mile-end. How euer, many a thousand brought me to Bow, where I rested a while

from dancing, but had small rest with those that would haue vrg'd me to drinking. But I warrant you *Will Kemp* was wise enough: to their ful cups, kinde thanks was my returne, with Gentlemanlike protestations: as, truly sir, I dare not: it stands not with the congruity of my health. Congruitie said I? how came that strange language in my mouth? I thinke scarcely that it is any Christen worde, and yet it may be a good worde for ought I know, though I neuer made it, nor doe verye well understand it, yet I am sure I have bought it at the word-mongers, at as deare a rate, as I could haue had a whole 100. of bauines at the wood-mongers. Farwell Congruitie for I meane now to be more concise, and stand upon eeuener bases: but I must neither stand nor sit, the Tabrer strikes alarum. Tickle it good Tom, Ile follow thee. Farwell Bowe, haue ouer the Bridge, where I heard say, honest Conscience was once drownd. Its pittye if it were so: but thats no matter belonging to our Morrice, lets now along to Stratford Langton.

Many good fellows being there met, and knowing how well I loued the sporte, had prepared a Beare-bayting: but so unreasonable were the multitudes of people, that I could only heare the Beare roare, and the dogges howle: therefore forward I went with my hey de gaies to Ilford, where I againe rested, and was by the people of the towne and countrey there-about, very very wel welcomd: being offred carowses in the great spoon, one whole draught being able at that time to haue drawne my little wit drye: but being afrayde of the olde P[ro]uerbe (He had need of a long spoone that eates with the deuill) I soberly gaue my boone Companions the slip.

From Ilford by Moone-shine, I set forward, dauncing within a quarter of a myle of Romford: where in the high way, two strong Iades (hauing belike some great quarrell to me vnknowne) were beating & byting either of other. And such through Gods help was my good hap, that I escaped their hoofes both being raysed with their fore feete ouer my head, like two Smithes ouer an Anuyle.

There being the end of my first dayes Morrice, a kinde Gentleman of London lighting from his horse, would haue no nay but I should leap into his saddle. To be plaine with ye, I was not proud, but kindly tooke his kindlyer offer, chiefly thereto vrg'd by my wearines: so I rid to my Inne at Romford.

In that towne, to giue rest to my well labour'd limbes, I continued two dayes, being much beholding to the towns-men for their loue, but more to the Londoners, that came hourelly thither in greate numbers to visite me: offring much more kindnes then I was willing to accept.

The second dayes iourney, beeing Thursday of the first weeke.

THURSDAY being Market day at Burnt-wood, *Tom Slye* was earlyer up then the Lark, and sounded merrily the Morrice: I rowsed my selfe, and returned from Romford to the place wher I tooke horse the first night, dauncing that quarter of a myle backe againe thorow Romford, and so merily to Burntwood: yet now I remember it well, I had no great cause of mirth, for at Romford townes end I strained my hip, and for a time indured

exceeding paine: but being loath to trouble a Surgeon I held on, finding remedy by labour that had hurt mee, for it came in a turne, and so in my daunce I turned it out of my seruice againe.

The multitudes were so great at my comming to Burntwood, that I had much a doe (though I made many intreaties and staies) to get passage to my Inne.

In this towne two Cut-purses were taken, that with other two of their companions followed mee from Lo[n]don (as many better disposed persons did:) but these two dy-doppers gaue out when they were apprehended, that they had laid wagers and betted about my iourney. Wherupon the Officers bringing them to my Inne, I iustly denyed their acquaintance, sauing that I remembred one of them to be a noted Cut-purse, such a one as we tye to a poast on our stage, for all people to wonder at, when at a play they are taken pilfring.

This fellow & his half-brother being found with the deed, were sent to Iayle: their other two consorts had the charity of the towne, & after a dance of Trenchmore at the whipping crosse, they were sent backe to London: where I am afraide there are too many of their occupation. To bee short I thought myselfe well rid of foure such followers, and I wish hartily that the whole world were cleer of such companions.

Hauing rested well at Burtwood, the Moone shining clearely, and the weather being calme, in the euening I tript it to Ingerstone, stealing away from those numbers of people that followed mee: yet doe what I could, I had aboue fiftie in the company, some of London, the other of the Country there about, that would needs when they heard my Taber, trudge after me through thicke and thin.

The third dayes iourney, being Friday of the first weeke.

ON Friday morning I set forward towards Chelmsford, not hauing past two hundred, being the least company that I had in the day time: betweene London and that place. Onward I went thus easily followed, till I came to Witford-bridge, wher a number of country people, and many Gentlemen and Gentlewomen, were gathered together to see me. Sir Thomas Mildmay standing at his Parke pale, received gently a payre of garters of me: gloues, points, and garters, being my ordinary marchandize, that I put out to venter for performance of my merry voyage.

So much a doe I had to passe by the people at Chelmsford, that it was more than an houre ere I could recouer my Inne gate, where I was faine to locke my selfe in my Chamber, and pacifie them with wordes out of a window instead of deeds: to deale plainly I was so weary, that I could dance no more.

The next morning I footed it three myle of my way toward Braintree: but returned back againe to Chelmsford, wher I lay that Satterday and the next Sunday. The good chere and kinde welcome I had at Chelmsford, was much more than I was willing to entertaine: for my onely desire was to refraine drinke, and be temperate in my dyet.

At Chelmsford a Mayde not passing fourteene yeares of age, dwelling with one Sudley

my kinde friend, made request to her Master and Dame, that she might daunce the Morrice with me in a great large roome. They being intreated, I was soone wonne; to fit her with bells, besides she would haue the olde fashion with napking on her armes; and to our iumps we fell. A whole houre she held out: but then being ready to lye downe I left her off: but thus much in her praise, I would haue challenged the strongest man in Chelmsford, and amongst many I thinke few would haue done so much.

The fourth dayes iourney, beeing Munday of the second vveeke.

ON Munday morning very early, I rid the 3. myles that I daunst the satterday before: wher alighting, my Taberer strucke up, and lightly I tript forward, but I had the heauiest way that euer mad Morrice-dancer trod: yet

*With hey and ho, through thicke and thin,
the hobby horse quite forgotten,
I follow'd, as I did begin,
although the way were rotten.*

This foule way I could finde no ease in, thicke woods being on eyther side the lane: the lane likewise being full of deep holes, sometimes I skipt vp to the waste: but it is an old Prouerb. That it is a little comfort to the miserable to haue companions, and amidst this miry way, I had some mirth by an vlookt for accident.

It was the custome of honest Country fellows my vnknowne friends, upon hearing of my Pype (which might well be heard in a still morning or euening a myle) to get vp and beare mee company a little way. In this foule way two pretty plaine youthes watcht me, and with their kindnes somewhat hindred me. One a fine light fellow would be still before me, the other euer at my heeles. At length comming to a broad plash of water and mud, which could not be auoyded, I fetcht a rise, yet fell in ouer the anckles at the further end. My youth that follow'd me, tooke his iump, and stuck fast in the midst, crying out to his companion, come George, call yee this dauncing, Ile goe no further: for indeede hee could goe no further, till his fellow was faine to wade and help him out. I could not chuse but lough to see howe like two frogges they laboured: a hartye farwell I gaue them, and they faintly bad God speed me, saying if I daunst that durty way this seauen yeares againe, they would neuer daunce after me.

Well, with much a doo I got unto Braintree by noone, tarried there Munday night and the next day: onely I daunst three miles on Tewuesday, to ease my Wednesdaies iourney.

If I should deny that I was welcome at Braintree, I should slander an honest crew of kind men, among whome I far'd well, slept well, and was euery way well usde.

The fift dayes iourney being Wednesday of the second weeke.

TAKING aduantage of my 3. miles that I had daunst y^e day before, this wednesday morning I tript it to Sudbury, whether came to see a very kinde Gentleman Master Foskew, that had before trauailed a foote from London to Barwick: who, giuing me good counsaile to obserue temperate dyet for my health, and other aduise to bee carefull of my company, besides his liberall entertainment, departed leauing me much indebted to his loue.

In this towne of Sudbury, there came a lusty tall fellow, a butcher by his profession, that would in a Morrice keepe mee company to Bury: I being glad of his friendly offer, gaue him thanks, and forward wwe did set: but ere wee had measur'd halfe a mile of our way, he gaue me ouer in the plain field, protesting, that if he might get a 100. pound, he would not hold out with me; for indeed my pace in dauncing is not ordinary.

As he and I were parting, a lusty Country lasse being among the people, cal'd him faint hearted lout: saying, if I had begun to daunce, I would haue held out one myle though it had cost my life. At which wordes many laughed. Nay saith she, if the Dauncer will lend me a leash of his belles, Ile venter to treade one mile with him my selfe. I lookt vpon her, saw mirth in her eyes, heard boldnes in her words, and beheld her ready to tucke vp her russet petticoate, I fitted her with bells: which she merrily taking, garnisht her thicke short legs, and with a smooth brow bad the Tabrer begin. The Drum strucke, forward marcht I with my merry Maydemarian: who shooke her fat sides: and footed it merrily to Melfoord, being a long myle. There parting with her, I gaue her (besides her skinfull of drinke) an English crowne to buy more drinke, for good wench she was in a pittious heate: my kindnes she requited with dropping some dozen of short courtesies, and bidding God blesse the Dauncer, I bad her adieu: and to giue her her due, she had a good eare, daunst truely, and wee parted friendly. But ere I part with her, a good fellow my frriend, hauin writ an odde Rime of her, I will make bolde to set it downe.

*A Country Lasse browne as a berry,
Blith of blee in heart as merry,
Cheekes well fed and sides well larded,
Euery bone with fat flesh guarded,
Meeting merry Kemp by chaunce,
Was Marrian in his Morrice daunce.
Her stump legs with bells were garnisht,
Her browne browes with sweating varnish[t];
Her browne hips when she was lag,
To win her ground, wnet swig a swag,
Which to see all that came after,
Vvere repleate with mirthfull laughter.
Yet she thumped it on her way,
VWith a sportly hey de gay,*

*At a mile her daunce she ended,
Kindly paid and well commended.*

At Melford, diuers Gentlemen met mee, who brought me to one master Colts, a very kinde and worshipfull Gentleman, where I had vnexpected entertainment till the Satterday. From whose house hauing hope somewhat to amend my way to Bury, I determined to goe by Clare, but I found it to be both farther and fouler.

The sixt dayes iourney, being Satterday of the second weeke.

FROM Wednesday night till Satterday hauing bin very troublesome, but much more welcome to master Colts: in the morning I tooke my leaue, and was accompanied with many Gentlemen a myle of my way. Which myle master Colts his foole would needs daunce with me, and had his desire, where leauing me, two fooles parted faire in a foule way: I keeping on my course to Clare, where I a while rested, and then cheerefully set forward to Bury.

Passing from Clare towards Bury, I was inuited to the house of a very bountifull widdow, whose husband during his life was a Yeoman of that Countrie, dying rich no doubt, as might well appeare, by the riches and plentie, that abounded in euerie corner of the house. She is called the widdow Eueret.

At her house were met aboue thirty Gentlemen. Such, and so plentifull variety of good fare, I haue very sildome seene in any Commoners house. Her behaiur being very modest and freendly, argued her bringing vp not to be rude. She was a woman of good presence: and if a foole may iudge, of no smal discretion.

From this widdowes I daunst to Bury, comming in on the Satterday in the afternoone, at what time the right Honorable, the Lord Chiefe Justice entred at an other gate of the towne, the wondring and regardles multitude making his honor cleere way, left the streetes where he past to gape at me: the throng of them being so great, that poore Will Kemp was seauen times stayed ere hee could recouer his Inne. By reason of the great snow that then fell I stayed at Bury from Satterday in the second week of my setting foorth, til Thursday night the weeke following.

The seauenth dayes iourney being Friday of the third weeke.

V PON Fryday morning I set on towards Thetford, dauncing that tenne mile in three houres: for I left Bury somewhat after seauen in the morning, and was at Thetford somewhat after ten that same forenoone. But indeed considering how I had been booted the other iourneys before, and that all this way or the most of it was ouer a heath, it was no great wonder: for I far'd like one that had escaped the stockes, and tride the vse of his legs to out-run the Constable: so light was my heeles, that I counted the ten mile no better than

a leape.

At my entrance into Thetford, the people came in great numbers to see mee: for there were many there, being Size time. The noble Gentleman Sir Edwin Rich, gaue me entertainment in such bountifull and liberal sort, during my continuance there Satterday and Sunday, that I want fitte words to expresse the least part of his worthy vsage of my vnworthines: and to conclude liberally as hee had begun and continued, at my departure on Munday, his worship gaue me fiue pound.

The eyght dayes iourney being Munday of the fourth weeke.

ON Munday morning I daunst to Rockland ere I rested, and comming to my Inne, where the Hoast was a very boone companion, I desir'd to see him: but in no case he would be spoken with, till he had shifted himselfe from his working dayes sute. Being armed at all poyntes, from the cap to the codpeece, his blacke shooes shining, and made straght with copper buckles of the best, his garters in the fashion, and euery garment fitting Corremsquandam (to use his owne word): hee enters the Hall with his bonnet in his hand, began to crye out: O Kemp deere Master Kemp: you are euen as as as, and so stammering, he began to study for a fit comparison, and I thanke him at last he fitted me, for saith he, thou art euen as welcome as the Queenes best grey-hound. After this dogged yet well-meaning salutation, the Carrowses were called in: and my friendly Hoast of Rockland began with all this: blessing the houre vppon his knees, that any of the Queenes Maiesties well-willers or friends would vouchsafe to come within his house: as if neuer any such had been within his doores before.

I tooke his good meaning, and gaue him great thanks for his kindnesse: and having rested mee well, began to take my course for Hingham, whether my honest Hoast of Rockland would needs be my guide: but good true fat-belly he had not folowed mee two fieldes, but he lyes all along, and cryes after me to come backe and speake with him. I fulfilled his request: and comming to him, dauncer quoth hee if thou daunce a Gods name God speede thee: I cannot follow thee a foote farther, but adieu good dauncer, God speed thee if thou daunce a Gods name.

I hauing haste of my way, and he being able to keep no way, there wee parted. Farewell he, he was a kinde good fellow, a true Troyan: and it euer be my lucke to meete him at more leasure, Ile make him full amendes with a Cup full of Canarie. But nowe I am a little better aduis'd, wee must not thus let my madde Hoast passe: for my friend late mentioned before, that made the odde rime on my Maide-marian, would needes remember my Hoast. Such as it is Ile bluntly set downe.

*He was a man not ouer spare,
In his eybals dwelt no care ;
Anon anon and welcome friend,
Were the most words he vsde to spend.
Saue sometime he vvould sit and tell,*

*What wonders once in Bullayne fell ;
Closing each Period of his tale,
With a full cup of Nut-brovvne Ale.
Turvvin and Turneys siede were hot,
Yet all my Hoast remembers not.
Ketfield and Muscledborough fray,
Were battles fought but yesterday.
O tvas a goodly matter then,
To see your svvord and buckler men ;
They vvould lye heere, and here and there,
But I would meete them euery vvhere :
And novv a man is but a pricke,
A boy arm'd with a poating sticke,
VWill dare to challenge Cutting Dicke,
O t'is a vvorld the vvorld to see,
But tvvill not mend for thee nor mee.
By this some guest cryes ho the house,
A fresh friend hath a fresh carouse,
Still he vvill drinke, and still be dry,
And quaffe vvith euery company.
Saint Martin send him merry mates
To enter at his hostree gates :
For a blither lad than he
Cannot an Inkeeper be.*

Well once againe farewell mine Hoast at Rockland: after all these farewels I am sure to Hingham I found a foule way, as before I had done from Thetford to Rockland.

Yet besides the deep way I was much hindred, by the desire people had to see me. For euen as our Shop-keepers will hayle, and pull a man with Lack ye? what do you lack Gentlemen? My ware is best cryes one: mine best in England sayes an other: heere shall you haue choyse saith the third: so was the dyuers voyces of the young men and Maydens, which I should meete at euerie myles ende, thronging by twentie, and sometimes fortie, yea hundreths in a companie: One crying the fayrest way was throwow their Village: another, this is the nearest and fayrest way, when you haue past but a myle and a halfe: an other sort crie, turne on the left hand, some on the right hand: that I was so amazed, I knewe not sometime which way I might best take: but haphazard, the people still accompanying me, wherewith I was much comforted, though the wayes were badde: but as I said before at last I ouertooke it.

The ninth dayes iourney, being VVednesday of the fourth weeke.

THE next morning I left Hingham, not staying til I came to Barford-bridge, fiue young

men running all the way with me, for otherwise my pace was not for footemen.

From Barford bridge I daunst to Norwich: but comming within sight of the Citty, perceiuing so great a multitude and throng of people still crowding more and more about me, mistrusting it would be a let to my determined expedition, and pleasurable humour: which I long before conceiued to delight this Citty with (so far, as my best skill, and industry of my long trauelled sinewes could afford them) I was aduised, and so tooke ease by that aduise, to stay my Morrice a little about Saint Giles his gate, where I tooke my gelding, and so rid into the Citty, procrastinating my merry Morrice daunce through the Citty till better opportunitie.

Being come into the Citty: Master Roger Wiler the Maior, and sundry other of his worshipfull Brethren sent for me: Who perceiuing howe I intended not to daunce into the Citty that nyght: and being well satisfied with the reasons, they allotted me time enough not to daunce in till Satterday after: to the end that diuers knights and Gentlemen together with their wiues and Children (who had beene many dayes before deceyued with expectation of my comming) might nowe haue sufficient warning, accordingly by satterday following.

In the mean space, and during my still continuance in the Citty afterwards, they not onely very courteously offered to beare mine owne charges and my followers, but very bountifully performed it at the common charges: the Mayor and many of the Aldermen often times besides inuited vs priuately to theyr seuerall houses.

To make a short end of this tedious description of my entertainment: Satterday no sooner came, but I returned without the Citty through Saint Giles his gate: and beganne my Morrice where I left at that gate, but I entred in at Saint Stephens gate, where one Thomas Gilbert in name of all the rest of the Cittizens gaue me a friendly and exceeding kind welcome: which I haue no reason to omit, vnlesse I would condemne my selfe of ingratitude, partlye for the priuate affection of the writer towards me: as also for the generall loue and fauour I found in them, from the highest to the lowest, the richest as the porest. It followes in these few lynes.

Master Kemp his welcome to Norvvich.

*W With hart, and hand, among the rest,
E Especially you welcome are :
L Long looked for, as welcome guest,
C Come now at last you be from farre.
O Of many within the Citty sure,
M Many good wishes you haue had.
E Each one did pray you might indure,
W VVith courage good the match you made.
I Intend they did with gladsome hearts,
L Like your well vvillers, you to meete :
K Know you also they'l doe their parts,
E Eyther in field or house to greete
M More you then any with you came,
P Procur'd thereto with trump and fame.*

Your well-willer.

T.G.

Passing the gate, Wifflers (such Officers as were appointed by the Mayor) to make me way through the throng of the people, which prest so mightily vpon me: with great labour I got thorow that narrow peaze into the open market place. Where on the crosse, ready prepared, stood the Citty Waytes, which not a little refreshed my wearines with toyling thorow so narrow a lane, as the people left me: such Waytes (under Benedite be it spoken) fewe Citties in our Realme haue the like, none better. Who, besides their excellency in wind instruments, their rare cunning on the Vyoll, and Violin: theyr voices be admirable, euerie one of the[m] able to serue in any Cathedrall Church in Christendoome for Quiristers.

Passing by the Market place, the presse still increasing by the number of boyes, girles, men and women, thronging more and more before me to see the end. It was the mischance of a homely maide, that belike, was but newly crept into the fashion of long wasted peticotes tyde with points, & had, as it seemed but one point tyed before, and comming vnluckily in my way, as I was fetching a leape, it fell out that I set my foote on her skirts: the point eyther breaking or stretching, off fell her peticoate from her waste, but as chance was, thogh hir smock were course, it was cleanly: yet the poore wench was so ashamed, the rather for that she could hardly recouer her coate againe from vnruely boies, that looking before like one that had the greene sicknesse, now had she her cheekes all coloured with scarlet. I was sorry for her, but on I went towards the Maiors, and deceiued the people, by leaping ouer the Church-yard wall at S. Iohns, getting so into M. Mayors gates a neerer way: but at last I found it the further way about: being forced on the Tewsdays following to renew my former daunce, because George Sprat my ouer-seer hauing lost me in the throng, would not be deposed that I had daunst it, since he saw me not: and I must confesse I did not wel, for the Cittizens had caused all the turne-pikes to be taken vp on Satterday, that I might not be hindred. But now I returne againe to my Iump, the measure of which is to be seene in the Guild-hall at Norwich, where my buskins, that I then wore, and daunst in from London thither, stand equally deuided, nailde on the wall. The plenty of good cheere at the Mayors, his bounty, and kinde vsage, together with the general welcomes of his worshipful brethren, and many other knights, Ladies, Gentlemen & Gentlewomen, so much exceeded my expectation, as I adiudg'd my selfe most bound to them all. The Maior gaue me fiue pound in *Elizabeth* angels: which Maior (faire Madame, to whom I too presumptuously dedicate my idle paces) as a man worthy of a singuler and impartiall admiration, if our criticke humorous mindes could as prodigally conceiue as he deserues, for his chast life, liberality, & temperance in possessing worldly benefits: he liues vnmarried, and childlesse, neuer purchased house nor land: the house he dwels in this yeere, being but hyred: he liues vpon marchandies, being a Marchant venturer. If our marchants & gentlemen wold take example by this man, Gentlmen would not sell their lands, to become bankrout Marchants, nor Marchants liue in the possessions of youth-beguiled gentlemen: who cast themselues out of their parents heritages for a few out-cast commodities. But wit whither wilt thou? What hath Morrice tripping Will to do with that?

it keeps not time w^t his dance: therefore roome you morral precepts, giue my legs leaue to ende my Morrice, or that being ended, my hands leaue to perfect this worthlesse poore tottered volume.

Pardon me Madame, that I am thus tedious, I cannot chuse but com[m]end sacred liberality, which makes poore wretches partakers of all comfortable benefits, besides the loue & fauour already repeated: M. Weild the mayor gaue me 40.s. yeerely during my life, making me a free man of the marchant venterers, this is the substance of al my iourney: therefore let no man beleue how euer before by lying ballets & rumors they haue bin abused, y^t either waies were laid open for me, or that I deliuered gifts to her Maiesty. Its good being merry my masters, but in a meane, & al my mirths, (meane though they be) haue bin & euer shal be imploi'd to the delight of my royal Mistris: whose sacred name ought not to be reme[m]bred among such ribald rimes as these late thin breecht lying Balletsingers haue proclaimed it.

It resteth now that in a word I shew, what profit I haue made by my Morrice: true it is I put out some money to haue threefold gaine at my returne, some that loue me, regard my paines, & respect their promise, haue sent home the treble worth, some other at the first sight haue paide me, if I came to seeke the[m], others I cannot see, nor wil they willingly be found, and these are the greater number. If they had al usd me wel, or al ill, I would haue boldly set downe the true sum of my smal gain or losse, but I wil haue patience, some few daies lo[n]ger. At y^e end of which time, if any be behinde, I wil draw a cattalogue of al their names I ventur'd with: those y^t haue shewne the[m]selues honest men, I wil set before them this Character H. for honesty; before the other Bench-whistlers shal stand K. for ketlers & keistrels, that wil driue a good companion without need in them to contend for his owne, but I hope I shall haue no such neede. If I haue, your Honorable protection shall thus far defend your poore seruant, that he may being a plain man, call a spade a spade. Thus fearing your Ladyship is wearier with reading this toy, then I was in all my merry travaile, I craue pardon: and conclude this first Pamphlet that euer Will Kemp offred to the Presse, being thereunto prest on the one side by the pittifull papers pasted on euery poast, of that which was neither so nor so, and on the other side vrg'd thereto in duety to expresse with thankfulnes the kind entertainment I found.

Your honors poore seruant,

W. K.

Kemps humble request to the impudent generation of Ballad-makers and their coherents ; that it would please their rascalities to pittie his paines in the great iourney he pretends, and not fill the country with lyes of his neuer done actes as they did in his late Morrice to Norwich.

To the tune of Thomas Delones Epitaph.

MY notable Shakerags, the effect of my sute is discouered in the Title of my supplication.

But for your better vnderstandings: for that I know you to be a sort of witles beetle-heads, that can understand nothing, but what is knockt into your scalpes; These are by these presentes to certifie vnto your block-headships, that I William Kemp, whom you had neer rent in sunder with your vnreasonable rimes, am shortly God willing to set forward as merily as I may; whether I wish ye, imploy not your little wits in certifying the world that I am gone to Rome, Ierusalem, Venice, or any other place at your idle appoint. I knowe the best of ye by the lies ye writ of me, got not the price of a good hat to couer your brainles heads: If any of ye had come to me, my bounty should haue exceeded the best of your good masters the Ballad-buiers, I wold haue apparrelled your dry pates in party coloured bonnets, & bestowed a leash of my cast belles to haue crown'd ye with cox-combs. I haue made a priuie search, what priuate Iigmonger of your iolly number, hath been the Author of these abhominale ballets written of me: I was told it was the great ballet-maker *T. D.*, *alias Tho. Deloney*, Chronicler of the memorable liues of the 6. yeomen of the west, Iack of Newbery, the Gentle-craft, & such like honest me[n]: omitted by Stow, Hollinshead, Grafto[n], Hal, froysart, & the rest of those wel deseruing writers: but I was giuen since to vnderstand your late generall Tho. dyed poorely, as ye all must do, and was honestly buried: which is much to bee doubted of some of you. The quest of inquiry finding him by death acquitted of the Inditement, I was let to wit, y^t another Lord of litle wit, one whose imployment for the Pageant, was vtterly spent, he being knowne to be Eldertons immediate heyre, was vehemently suspected: but after due inquisition was made, he was at that time knowne to liue like a man in a mist, hauing quite giuen over the mistery. Still the search continuing, I met a proper vpright youth, onely for a little stooping in the shoulders: all hart to the heele, a penny Poet whose first making was the miserable stolne story of Macdoel, or Macdobeth, or Mac-somewhat: for I am sure a Mac it was, though I neuer had the maw to see it: & hee tolde me there was a fat filthy ballet-maker, that should haue once been his Iourneyman to the trade: who liu'd about the towne; and ten to one, but he had thus terribly abused me & my Taberer: for that he was able to do such a thing in print. A shrewd presumption: I found him about the bankside, sitting at a play, I desired to speake with him, had him to a Tauerne, charg'd a pipe with Tobacco, and then laid this terrible accusation to his charge. He swels presently like one of the foure windes, the violence of his breath, blew the Tobacco out of the pipe, & the heate of his wrath drunke dry two bowlefuls of Rhenish wine. At length hauing power to speake, Name my accuser saith he, or I defye thee Kemp at the quart staffe. I told him, & all his anger turned to laughter: swearing it did him good to haue ill words of a hoddy doddy, a habber de hoy, a chicken, a squib, a squall: One that hath not wit enough to make a ballet, that by *Pol* and *Aedipol*, would Pol his father, Derick his dad: doe anie thing how ill soeuer, to please his apish humor. I hardly beleueed, this youth that I tooke to be gracious, had bin so graceles: but I heard afterwards his mother in law was eye and eare witnes of his fathers abuse by this blessed childe on a publique stage, in a merry Hoast of an Innes part. Yet all this while could not I finde out the true ballet-maker. Till by chaunce a friend of mine puld out of his pocket a booke in Latine called *Mundus Furiosus*: printed at *Cullen*, written by one of the vildest and arrantest lying Cullians that euer writ booke, his name Iansonius, who taking vpon him to write an abstract of all the turbulent actions that had beene lately attempted or performed in Christendome, like an vnchristian wretch, writes onely by report, partially

and scoffingly, of such whose pages shooes hee was vnworthy to wipe, for indeed he is now dead: farewell he, euery dog must haue a day. But see the luck on't: this beggerly lying busie-bodies name, brought out the Ballad-maker: and it was generally confirmd, it was his kinsman: he confesses himselfe guilty, let any man looke on his face: if there be not so redde a coulour that all the sope in the towne will not washe white, let me be turned to a Whiting as I passe betweene Douer and Callis. Well, God forgiue thee honest fellow, I see thou hast grace in thee: I prethee do so no more, leaue writing these beastly ballets, make not good wenches Prophetesses, for litle or no profit, nor for a sixe-penny matter, reuiue not a poore fellowes fault thats hanged for his offence: it may be thy owne destiny one day, prethee be good to them. Call vp thy olde Melpomene, whose straubery quill may write the bloody lines of the blew Lady, and the Prince of the burning crowne: a better subiect I can tell ye: than your Knight of the Red Crosse. So farewell, and crosse me no more I prethee with thy rabble of bald rimes, least at my returne I set a crosse on thy forehead, that all men may know thee for a foole.

William Kemp.

FINIS.

