XVIII.—"THAT RUNAWAY'S EYES MAY WINK".

BY HENSLEIGH WEDGWOOD, ESQ.

Gallop apace you fiery-footed steeds
Towards Phœbus' mansion; such a waggoner
As Phaeton would whip you to the West
And bring in cloudy Night immediately.
Spread thy close curtain, love-performing Night,
That Runaway's eyes may wink, and Romeo
Leap to these arms untalked of and unseen.

Romeo and Juliet, A. III. Sc. 2.

Few passages of Shakespeare or any other author have been so much tortured by the commentators as the foregoing in order to make sense out of the words as they stand. One explains Runaway to mean the Day, another the Night, a third Cupid, and another Juliet herself, making her modestly pray that the darkness may conceal her reception of Romeo from her own eyes; whether it is her own tattling also that she would fain escape, it does not occur to the commentator to inquire, although the effect of darkening Runaway's eyes is expected to be that the reception of Romeo will be untalked of as well as unseen.

Steevens' explanation may be worth giving: "Juliet first wishes for the absence of the sun and then invokes the night to spread its curtain close around the world. Next recollecting that the night would seem short to her, she speaks of it as a runaway whose flight she would wish to retard and whose eyes she would blind lest they should make discoveries."

With such unsatisfactory attempts at explanation it is not surprising that another class of editors should have been convinced that the nonsensical "Runaway's" was a corruption of the text, and accordingly they have variously substituted "unawares", "enemies", "rude day's", or "soon day's", "Renomy's", a word coined for the occasion from Fr. *Renommée*, meaning rumour or talebearing, a sense which the French word will certainly not bear. Finally in the eighth vol. of Notes and Queries Mr. Singer with well-grounded confidence suggested *rumorers*, a word elsewhere used by Shakespeare in the sense required:

Go see this *rumorer* whipt, it cannot be
The Volsces dare break with us.—Coriolanus.

Mr. Singer's emendation is strongly confirmed by a passage in a ballad extant in Shakespeare's time which the poet may very likely have had in his thoughts, if indeed it was not a common place in the ballad poetry of the time.

Makyne the nicht is soft and dry
The wether warm and fair,
And the grene wod richt neir hand by,
To walk attowre all where.

There may nae *Janglers* us espy
That is to Lufe contrair,
Therein Makyne baith you and I
Unseen may make repair.

Henryson. Robin and Makyne.

Now the enemies of Love, from whose notice Juliet is desirous of being shrouded by the curtain of Night, are the Janglers of the ballad, tattlers, as the word is rendered by Jamieson, and as it would be difficult to find a synonym for tale-bearers agreeing so well in outward appearance with *Runaway's* I have little doubt that *Rumorers'* was really the word disguised under the *Runaway's* of our copies.

XIX.—ON THE DERIVATIONS OF *DUNTAXAT*, *TRANQUILLUS*, AND *SI* (*SI DIS PLACET*). BY PROFESSOR KEY.

DUNTAXAT.

The word *duntaxat* at once by its form suggests a derivation from *dum taxat*, so that the logical explanation seems alone to present a difficulty. Our own word *tax* is probably derived from the Latin verb, but gives but a poor clue to the real meaning of the original word. Such a failure indeed is little to be wondered at, considering the nature of the case, for when we derive a word from a Latin origin, we take it with its latest meaning, whereas it is in the earliest use of a Latin word that we must expect to find