

*Lear.* To thee and thine, hereditary ever,  
 Remain this ample third of our fair kingdom,  
 No less in space, validity, and pleasure, 80  
 Than that conferr'd on Goneril.—Now, our joy,  
 Although our last and least, to whose young love

81. *conferr'd*] *confirm'd* Qq, Steev.  
 Var.

*Now*] *but now* Qq.

82. *our last and*] Ff, Rowe, Knt,  
 Coll. i, Del. i, Sing. Wh. Sch. *our last*,  
 not Pope +, Jen. Dyce ii, Sta. Del. ii,

Ktly, Huds. Coll. iii. *the last*, not Qq  
 et cet.

82. *least, ... love*] *least; ... love*, Ff. *least*  
*in our deere love*, Qq, Cap. *least; in*  
*whose young love* Han.

*to*] in Quincy (MS.).

80. *validity*] For instances of 'validity,' meaning *value*, see SCHMIDT'S *Lex.*  
 s. v; see also *Ham.* III, ii. 179.

82. *last and least*] In his *Life of Shakespeare* (Var. '21, vol. ii, pp. 276-278), MALONE gives many instances to prove that *last not least* was a formula common in Shakespeare's time, and is always applied to a person highly valued by the speaker. STEEVENS refers to King Leir's reply to Mumford in the old ante-Shakespearean play. [See Appendix, p. 401.] MALONE adds from *The Spanish Tragedy*, written before 1593: 'The third and last, not least, in our account.' DYCE pronounces the reading of Ff, 'last and least,' a flagrant error; and STAUNTON says it can scarcely be doubted that it is a misprint, and to the examples already given and referred to, adds the following: 'The last, not least, of these brave brethren'—Peele's *Poly-hymnia*. 'Though I speak last, my lord, I am not least'—Middleton's *Mayor of Queenborough* I, iii. And 'my last is, and not least,'—Beau. & Fl., *Monsieur Thomas* III, i. WHITE [see Text-notes]: Plainly this passage was rewritten before the Folio was printed. The last part of line 82, as it appears in the Qq, shows that the figurative allusion to the king of France and the duke of Burgundy could have formed no part of the passage when that text was printed. And in the rewriting there was a happy change made from the commonplace of 'last not least,' to an allusion to the personal traits and family position of Cordelia. The impression produced by all the passages in which she appears or is referred to is, that she was her father's little pet, while her sisters were big, bold, brazen beauties. Afterwards, in this very scene, Lear says of her to Burgundy: 'If aught within that little seeming substance, or all of it, *with our displeasure pieced*,' &c. When she is dead, too, her father, although an infirm old man, 'fourscore and upward,' carries her body in his arms. Cordelia was evidently the least, as well as the youngest and best beloved, of the old king's daughters; and therefore he says to her, 'Now our joy, what can you say to justify my intention of giving you the richest third of the kingdom, although you are the youngest born and the least royal in your presence?' The poet's every touch upon the figure of Cordelia paints her as, with all her firmness of character, a creature to nestle in a man's bosom,—her father's or her husband's,—and to be cherished almost like a little child; and this happy afterthought brings the picture into perfect keeping, and at the very commencement of the drama impresses upon the mind a characteristic trait of a personage who plays an important part in it, although she is little seen. HUDSON: I find it not easy to stand out against White's argument in favour of the Ff; still, the phrase 'though last, *not least*,' appears to have been so much a favorite with the poet, and withal so good in itself,

The vines of France and milk of Burgundy

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Strive to be interest'd, what can you say to draw

83, 84. *The.....interest'd*] Om. Qq,  
Cap.84, 85. *What...opulent*] One line, Qq,  
Cap.84. *interest'd*] Jen. *interest* Ff, Sch.  
*inf' rest* Pope. *Inf' rest'd* Theob. +.84. *can you say*] *say you* Pope +.  
*draw*] *win* Qq, Cap. Jen.

that I feel constrained to read with the majority of the editors. SCHMIDT (*Zur Textkritik des King Lear*, p. 13), in following out his theory that in the Qq we have merely a corrupt text taken down from the stage representation, repudiates the 'last, not least,' here, and shrewdly suggests that since the same phrase occurs in *Jul. Cæs.* III, i, 189, the actor who took the part of Antony in that play also acted *Lear*, and the phrase once learned by heart was repeated by him in *Lear*, where it does not belong. 'But let one put himself in the place of Lear, and there will be felt in this "last and least" a tender touch of Nature. Our unser Letztes und Kleinstes gives the meaning certainly, but not quite wholly; "least" means the youngest child, because there had been less of formal ado made over her, because in many a fête and state occasion, in which the elder sisters took part, she had not had any share, and yet was the joy and "object" of her father, as the youngest child is always the favorite of the father, the eldest of the mother.' [If Hudson finds it not easy to stand out against White's argument, I find it impossible. White is at his happiest in detecting subtle, delicate touches, and when, as in this instance, he is in accord with the Folio, I yield at once, and will merely add that if Malone and Staunton can prove that 'last, not least,' was a hackneyed phrase in Shakespeare's time, it is all the more reason why it should not be used here. Its very opposition to the common use and wont makes it emphatic.—Ed.]

83. *milk*] ECCLES: The pastures of Burgundy, the effect for the cause. MOBERLY: In ascribing vines to France, and not to Burgundy, Sh. may have thought of the pastoral countries of Southern Belgium as forming part of Burgundy (as they did till the death of Charles the Bold, 1477), otherwise we should not understand the distinction; as in the French Burgundy wine-growing was of very old standing; the arms of Dijon and Beaune have a vine upon them, and a great insurrection of vine-dressers took place there in 1630.—Michelot, *Hist. de France*, ii, 303.

84. *interest'd*] STEEVENS: So in the Preface of Drayton's *Polyolbion*: '—there is scarce any of the nobilitie or gentry of this land, but he is in some way or other by his blood interested therein.' Again in Jonson's *Sejanus* III, i: 'The dear republic, our sacred laws, and just authority are interest'd therein.' WRIGHT: For the form of the word, see Cotgrave (*Fr. Dict.*): 'Intéressé . . . Interested, or touched in; dishonoured, hurt, or hindered by,' &c. See also Massinger, *The Duke of Milan*, I, i: 'The wars so long continued between The emperor Charles, and Francis the French king, Have interest'd in either's cause the most Of the Italian princes.' And Florio (*Ital. Dict.*): 'Interessare, to interesse, to touch or concerne a mans maine state or see-simple, to concerne a mans reputation;' and 'Interessato, interested, touched in state, in honour or reputation.' Again in Minsheu (*Span. Dict.*): 'Interessado, m. interested, hauing right in.' For other instances of verbs of which the participial form has become a new verb, compare 'graft,' 'hoise,' which appear in modern speech as 'graft,' 'hoist.' SCHMIDT maintains that 'interest' of the Ff is the contracted past participle *interested*, formed on the analogy of 'felicitate,' line 73, &c., and that there is no such verb as *interesse* or *interest* in Sh.