

TENNYSON'S BECKET: A CRITICAL COMPARISON OF THE ARRANGEMENT  
FOR THE STAGE BY HENRY IRVING WITH THE ORIGINAL VERSION

by

Benjamin Matthew Nyberg

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SIGNED: Benjamin K. Nyberg

APPROVAL BY THESIS DIRECTOR

This thesis has been approved on the date shown below.

Desmond S. Powell

DESMOND S. POWELL  
English Department

14 August 56  
Date

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction. . . . .	1
Prologue. . . . .	2
Act I . . . . .	9
Act II. . . . .	27
Act III . . . . .	33
Act IV. . . . .	39
Act V . . . . .	40
Appendix. . . . .	53

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
A	Original Lines Utilized by Irving. . . .	54
B	Passages Deleted from Original . . . . .	56
C	Total Length Compared . . . . .	57

The historical tragedy of Becket by Alfred Tennyson was written during the years 1876 to 1879. Publication was deferred until December 1884. In 1891, the eminent producer-actor Henry Irving asked Tennyson's permission to present the play, in an abridged version, at the Lyceum. The permission granted, Mr. Irving himself set about the task of adjusting the length of the play to the exigencies of the modern stage. The alterations which he made in the basic manuscript of the play, and their effect for good or ill upon Becket is the subject of our inquiry. Unfortunately, neither the Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature nor any of the specialized Victorian bibliographies available<sup>1</sup> provided any references to critical commentary on Becket; this discussion has, therefore, been conducted without the customary quantity of documentary support.

All citations of acts, scenes, and lines follow those of the Cambridge Edition of The Poetic and Dramatic Works of Alfred Lord Tennyson; the text of the arrangement for the stage by Henry Irving used in this analysis is included in the appendix of the Eversley Edition of The Works of Alfred Lord Tennyson (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1908).

Perhaps the first change effected by Irving which should be

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<sup>1</sup>In The Victorian Poets: A Guide to Research, Paull Franklin Baum mentions only two items that are concerned with Tennyson's plays. One is an article by J. O. Eidson: "The Reception of Tennyson's Plays in America." The other is a book, The Dramas of Alfred Lord Tennyson by Cornelia G. H. Japikse, which Professor Baum calls "the work of an amateur, without technical or critical merit."

mentioned is the overall rearrangement of act and scene divisions. In the original, there are: Prologue, Act I (four scenes), Act II (two scenes), Act III (three scenes), Act IV (two scenes), and Act V (three scenes); in Irving's version: Prologue (two scenes), Act I (four scenes), Act II (one scene), Act III (two scenes), Act IV (three scenes). Thus the fifteen scenes of Tennyson's original manuscript were pared to twelve, and the original five acts reduced to four. In order to accomplish this abridgement, Irving amalgamated several scenes of the original, and deleted one scene entirely.

### Prologue

Irving divided the Prologue of the original into two separate scenes so that an inversion of the two incidents included therein might be accomplished. This curious inversion, coming as it does at the very beginning of the play, can well provide us with a starting point to our detailed investigation. In the original Becket, the opening scene discovers Becket and King Henry II at chess. The first words of Henry disclose that the Archbishop Theobald is dying, and the reader is left to make the necessary assumptions about the future of Becket in regard to the archbishopric. The game of chess then becomes a subtle metaphorical foreshadowing of the strife ahead, for Becket and Henry as they play are made to behave in the very manner which is to prove fatal to Henry's peace of mind and Becket's very existence: the King is voluble, proud, slightly boastful, and little interested in the game until it appears that he is beaten, whereupon, in a fit of temper he overturns the board; the Chancellor is serious-minded and close-lipped during the game,

obviously involved in it thoroughly, even to the point of not heeding the King's remarks, and takes every opportunity to press the unwilling Henry to move. Thus, if we are attentive to this opening scene, we may see in vague outline the coming difficulties: the bishop, a self-contained and tenacious zealot, is to checkmate his friend, the sanguine and unsuspecting King; but this King is to overturn the bishop's winning game, destroying the evidence, if not the fact, of the victory. Henry pleads distraction as his reason for the loss; Becket suggests Rosamund as a likely distraction, and our attention is thereby quickly shifted to the sub-plot, the love element in the play. We learn that Eleanor of Aquitaine, the Queen of England, is not the true love of Henry; he loves rather Rosamund de Clifford, whom he has married morganatically.

Rosamund is to be secluded in a bower in England, and Becket, as Henry's best friend, shall be her protector, chiefly from the jealous wrath of Eleanor. After a brief return to the main problem--the appointment of Becket to the Archbishopric--the powerful but flippant figure of Eleanor herself enters to reinforce the statement of the sub-plot's entanglements. In 220 lines, then, Tennyson has accomplished a complete statement of the difficulties which are to form the substance of his play; he has done it dramatically, while not straining to artificiality. The scene stands first so logically, that we are at great pains to discover Mr. Irving's reasons for placing it second. Possibly he felt that a game of chess allowed for but little movement on the stage, and would thereby fail to get the attention of the audience; but what the opening lacks in action it more than compensates for in tension; it is alive, and no more can be demanded than this. No, certainly, a lack of dramatic

effectiveness cannot be the flaw of this scene. The clue to Irving's strange inversion may in fact lie in its very power, for by placing it after the decidedly less telling episode between Eleanor and Fitzurse, which in the original follows the chess game, a steadily mounting excitement is achieved, and this, we may be certain, would seem desirable to any producer. But a well built drama such as Becket will inevitably suffer from such alterations, if not dramatically, at least structurally; and this inversion is a good illustration of the point: the conversation between Eleanor and Fitzurse concerns Becket--his relationship to the King, and his forthcoming rise to the position of Archbishop of Canterbury--and Rosamund--the King's love of her, and Eleanor's hate of her--just as the conversation of the King and Becket over the game of chess does. However, standing first, the Eleanor-Fitzurse scene seems but a weak exposition and further serves to spoil the subtleties of the Henry-Becket scene; placed as in the original version, there is much more logical provocation for Eleanor's passionate outburst against Becket and Rosamund, for she has just observed Henry's chart showing the location of Rosamund's bower, and has just witnessed a display of the King's confidence in Becket--his entrusting the chart to the care of the Chancellor. So we can but conclude that Irving has swapped logical progression for a doubtful dramatic accelerando--no bargain at best.

Of less moment are the numerous small deletions of speech, phrase, and line. The first of these consists of seven lines, 111-117 of the original, and falls in the middle of an extended speech of Henry. The speech could, perhaps, bear to be shorn somewhat, but to omit:

I, true son  
 Of Holy Church--no croucher to the Gregories  
 That tread the kings their children under heel---  
 Must curb her; and the Holy Father, while  
 This Barbarossa butts him from his chair,  
 Will need my help--

to omit this self-evaluation of Henry is to leave something out of the composite picture of the King which is essential to the appreciation of his position relative to the Church. Nowhere else does he make the point clear that, though he holds the Church in great respect and is himself devout in his faith, he will not suffer the Pope to extend his power in matters over which he, Henry, should hold sway. Furthermore, Becket's reluctance to accept the Archbishopric which is offered shortly afterwards by the King is more understandable when these lines are included; for without them Becket's protests sound coy and needlessly self-effacing--most unlike the Becket of the rest of the play; but interpreting his remarks in the light of Henry's statement above, they become a plea to the King to forbear in his unwitting efforts to destroy their life-long friendship.

The next omission in the Irving text is that of Becket's suggestion that Henry of Winchester be appointed Archbishop upon the death of Theobald, and the King's response thereto (lines 144-146). Henry's ". . . I'll have no more Anselms" is good reinforcement of his former declaration against those who would usurp his authority, but inasmuch as the statement depends upon the hearer's knowledge of what an "Anselm" is for its force, it was probably as well omitted from the stage version of the play.

Lines 150-152 of the original text comprise the following verbal fencing match which arises upon the insistence of Henry that Becket

answer him positively whether or no he will accept the Archbishopric:

Becket. Then for thy barren jest  
Take thou mine answer in bare commonplace--  
Nolo episcopari.

Henry. Ay, but Nolo  
Archiepiscopari, my good friend,  
Is quite another matter.

Students of either Church History or Latin would be in a position to appreciate such an exchange, but it is doubtful that the average theatre patron would understand much of the proceedings. It is a momentary diversion to those equipped for it, but it does not press the action forward, and does not contain anything vital to later action; the deletion was doubtless to the advantage of the performance.

Shortly after the entrance of Eleanor there is a cut of 33 lines (175-207) in the Irving version. The greater part of these lines is taken up with a little song and soliloquy by Eleanor. The song is prettily innocuous the first time she sings it, ending thus.

Over! the sweet summer closes,  
And never a flower at the close;  
Over and gone with the roses,  
And winter again and the snows.

But after a veiled reference to her rival, Rosamund, the sweetness fades as she recasts the lyrics:

And never a flower at the close;  
Over and gone with the roses,  
Not over and gone with the rose.

And to be sure the point is not missed, she adds: "True, one rose will outblossom the rest, one rose in a bower." There are several fine touches in this passage, but again, it is not essential except as it shades the character of Eleanor, for it neither moves the action onward, nor adds information which will prove indispensable at some time in the

future. The producer must remember that Henry and Becket are also on the stage, and should not stand idle during the progress of these lines.

After a brief interruption by Becket, Eleanor continues with a condemnation of marriage. Of four similitudes which strike her on the subject, Irving has chosen to omit one, namely: ". . . the bright link rusts with the breath of the first after-marriage kiss, . . ." (line 214). And later in the same speech, her extraneous comment, "I could pity this poor world myself that it is not better ordered." (line 218) has been cut in the interests of linking more closely ". . . the honey-moon is the gall of Love; he dies of his honey-moon." with Henry's "Dead is he, my Queen?"

The omission of two lines (256-257) of Henry's exit speech subjects it to possible mis-interpretation. "Well, well, old men must die, or the world would grow mouldy, . . ." may sound gaily insouciant unless deepened by ". . . would only breed the past again." A jocular stoicism is transformed thereby into a philosophic resolution of the question of death wherein death is recognized as an essential element in the progress of mankind. The seeds of the thought are found in "the world would grow mouldy" to be sure, but they are given definition only by the phrase which Irving has chosen to omit. Also deleted is Henry's off-hand comment: "Meanwhile the revenues are mine." (line 258) which not only helps us to see more clearly the character of the King, but may be interpreted as an indirect appeal to Becket's sense of duty to the Church to accept the Archbishopric.

Twelve lines have been omitted by Irving which in the original version follow directly upon the exit of the King. (lines 260-272)

Becket and Herbert exchange thoughts on the death of the Archbishop Theobald:

Becket. He did prefer me to the chancellorship,  
Believing I should ever aid the Church--  
But have I done it? He commends me now  
From out his grave to this archbishopric.  
Herbert. A dead man's dying wish should be of weight.  
Becket. His should. Come with me. Let me learn at full  
The manner of his death, and all he said.

The question of the acceptance of the Archbishopric is thus knit up. The dying wish of an old friend does have weight; but yet more deciding is Becket's feeling of guilt, a feeling which is to play so significant a part later, both in the scene at Northampton Castle in which a guilty conscience will not allow him to seal "the customs" he has signed, and also after his return to England from France when his guilt over having once fled England will not permit him to escape his murderers. "But have I done it?" seems vital to the logical motivation of Becket; without it the transition from grief-stricken Chancellor to Archbishop (opening of Act I) seems rough, for it is this conversation that confirms Becket's intentions to the audience. Whether he knows for certain what his decision will be, the onlooker is convinced that he does, and is ready for his emergence as Archbishop in the next act.

Eleanor's cautious nature is revealed in her opening gambit to Fitzurse concerning Becket (lines 274-276): "Hate him? as brave as Henry and a goodlier man: but thou--dost thou love this Chancellor, that thou hast sworn a voluntary allegiance to him?" She is careful to sound out the attitude of Fitzurse before revealing her own feelings. This remark, together with her praise of Becket's policy as Chancellor a few lines later (lines 288-290): "A great and sound policy that; I could

embrace him for it," inform the audience in short order that she is a dissembler of the first rank, for in but a moment she is villifying Becket's name with an intensity surpassing that of Fitzurse. To omit Eleanor's feigned commendation of Becket as Irving does is to fail at the onset to impress the audience with her great subtlety; she is much more to be feared as an enemy of Becket and Rosamund if she can "look like the innocent flower, but be the serpent under't." And the drama is heightened, naturally, when protagonist and antagonist are closely matched.

In his desire to keep the action well motivated, Tennyson seems to have wished to bind Fitzurse to Eleanor indissolubly by some means other than his hatred of Becket. This he effects through a variation of a rather unsatisfactory stage device, the "stage whisper." Eleanor reveals to Fitzurse that she knows of "that secret matter which would heat the King against thee." (line 324) He starts, apparently taken quite aback by whatever it is she knows. She then tells him (once more speaking for the benefit of the audience as well) that the secret is ". . . safe with me as with thysself" (line 325); but Fitzurse is clearly in her power. The "stage whisper" is probably well left out by Irving; for when shortly we learn that Fitzurse has courted Rosamund in the past and was rejected, and that he hopes by working with the Queen to gain her for himself, we certainly need not feel that he is weakly motivated.

### Act I

The first scene of Act I progresses according to the original text for fifteen lines. Herbert of Bosham has asked Becket if his

Archbishop's robe is heavier than the armor he wore at Toulouse. Quite naturally this reminds Becket of the days past when his responsibilities were only secular and of the times he braved the Church as a function of his office (lines 15-16):

O Herbert, Herbert, in my chancellorship  
I more than once have gone against the Church.

But these lines are omitted by Irving, and the question "Not heavier than thine armor at Toulouse?" is answered instead by the rather unrelated statement "But hast thou heard this cry of Gilbert Foliot/ That I am not the man to be your primate, . . ." Now admittedly it is not necessary, or even desirable, in a drama which is supposedly substantially true and which therefore should present its characters realistically, that each question be balanced neatly by a logical reply, but it was not the intention of the author in this case for the reply to appear distracted. It is the author's conception of character to which we must remain true, and not even history itself can contradict his poetic license. It seems therefore objectionable that the omission should distort Tennyson's meaning.

The deletion of a conversation of thirteen lines (26-38) between Becket and Herbert wherein Becket expresses his doubts about certain prophecies which his rise to the Archbishopric seems to fulfil, is questionable on purely esthetic grounds. Although it is essential to neither the action nor the characterization of those whose motives form the action, yet the passage contains some of the finest dramatic poetry in the play:

Becket. Am I the man? My mother, ere she bore me,  
 Dream'd that twelve stars fell glittering  
                   out of heaven  
 Into her bosom.

Herbert. Ay, the fire, the light,  
 The spirit of the twelve Apostles enter'd  
 Into thy making.

Becket. And when I was a child,  
 The Virgin, in a vision of my sleep,  
 Gave me the golden keys of Paradise. Dream,  
 Or prophecy, that?

Herbert. Well, dream and prophesy  
                   both.

Becket. And when I was of Theobald's household, once--  
 The good old man would sometimes have his  
                   jest--  
 He took his mitre off, and set it on me,  
 And said, 'My young archbishop--thou wouldst  
                   make  
 A stately archbishop!' Jest or prophesy  
                   there?

Herbert. Both Thomas, both.

Whether or no we believe in apocalyptic knowledge, the gradual crescendo implicit in this exchange prepares us for the climactic return of Becket's soul-probing "Am I the man?" The orchestration of the passage as a prelude to Becket's soliloquy (lines 39-60) makes its omission an unfortunate one; for while the first "Am I the man?" is serenely meditative, its repetition seems agitated and demanding, and the excitement is decidedly more convincing when developed naturally from the dialogue which Irving omitted.

A few lines of the soliloquy referred to above recount Becket's younger, less pious days (lines 43-46):

I have been a lover of wines, and delicate meats,  
 And secular splendours, and a favorer  
 Of players, and a courtier, and a feeder  
 Of dogs and hawks, and apes, and lions, and lynxes.

Irving probably omitted this listing of Becket's youthful pursuits inasmuch as the fact of his full-blooded past had already been established

in the Prologue (lines 50-60). But the role of the fact is decidedly different in this scene: the redolent memories of the Prologue are become crimes against God and the Church which plague Becket's mind with feelings of guilt. For this reason, the lines should not have been deleted.

Becket concludes the narrative of his dreamed interview with God (lines 58-59):

He drew toward me,  
And smote me down upon the Minster floor. I fell.

Herbert notices Becket's concern, and attempts to distract him (line 60): "God make not thee, but thy foes, fall." And he may succeed in distracting the audience as well from the dramatic irony of Becket's dream, if the subject is dropped thereupon. The Irving version omits the line which in the original serves to bring us back to the point and reinforce it (line 61): "I fell. Why fall? Why did He smite me?" To all who are familiar with the martyrdom of Thomas Becket, it will now be perfectly clear how the dream is to be interpreted, whereas before Becket invites a moment's thought upon the subject, even those capable of appreciating this bit of foreshadowing may well not bother to do so.

Much of the nineteen lines (80-98) cut from Becket's "dedication" speech, in which he casts his doubts aside and pledges himself to the Church, are but elaboration of the idea stated cogently in its first three lines (77-79):

. . . on such a sudden  
At such an eagle-height I stand and see  
The rift that runs between me and the King.

But certain statements therein are necessary to prepare us for several scenes later in the play wherein Becket's pride of office is an

instrumental force. Such a recognition as "This Canterbury is only less than Rome" (line 83) and such a resolution as ". . . all the puissance of the warrior,/ And all the wisdom of the Chancellor,/ And all the heap'd experiences of life,/ I cast upon the side of Canterbury--" (lines 86-89) accustom us to the strong and stiff-necked attitude which is to characterize Becket throughout the remainder of the play.

Irving should either have included the entrance and hasty exit of De Tracy (lines 131-132), or altered Becket's statement (line 133), "These be those baron-brutes/ That havock'd all the land in Stephen's day." As it stands, the reference of "these" is somewhat confusing, for it obviously refers to a group of at least two "baron-brutes"; but Fitzurse has come alone in the Irving version.

Becket's apostrophe to the Great Seal, upon the occasion of his returning it to the King, is greatly abbreviated by Irving. As in the dedication speech, there is some superfluous, albeit effective poetry; but it seems most unfair to the character of Becket to omit both the reasoning which has ultimately led him to this action--"Can I be under him/ As Chancellor? as Archbishop over him?" (lines 190-191)--and his genuine sorrow at having to resign a position of service to the King--"Go therefore like a friend . . . all but moaned for." (lines 192-194)

In the original text, Herbert insists (line 210) that Becket reconsider his decision to return the Seal. Becket responds (lines 210-216):

Against the moral excess  
No physical ache, but failure it may be  
Of all we aim'd at. John of Salisbury  
Hath often laid a cold hand on my heats,  
And Herbert hath rebuked me even now.  
I will be wise and wary, not the soldier  
As Foliot swears it.

The inverted order of the first three lines, and the use of "against" in the sense of "in the event of," somewhat obscure the meaning of this speech, which seems to be: In the event of moral excess (occasioned by the possession of the Seal), it may be no mere physical ache (a reference to Fitzurse's headache--"Nature's moral against excess"--which has just been mentioned) that besets us, but rather the failure of all our plans. It would seem that while the lines are fathomable upon examination, they could easily escape us in the theatre, and would probably as well be omitted from a stage version of the play.

In scene two of the first act, a delightful sample of the subtle cunning that is Eleanor has been deleted by Irving. She is attempting to bargain for a look at the chart she knows to be in Becket's possession which shows the bower where Rosamund is secluded (lines 30-35):

That Church must scorn herself whose fearful priest  
Sits winking at the license of a king,  
Altho' we grant when kings are dangerous  
The Church must play into the hands of kings;  
Look! I would move this wanton from his sight  
And take the Church's danger on myself.

She plays in a grim manner upon the various meanings of the word "danger." When kings are difficult to deal with, the Church must fawn and hope for favor, and overlook vice; but Eleanor would ameliorate the Church's perilous condition by taking upon herself the responsibility of disposing of Rosamund. This much she says; but does she? Becket sounds her thoughts, yet they cannot be definitely tied to her words, so subtly has she phrased her offer. Remembering, doubtless, his pledge to be "wise and wary, not the soldier" the Archbishop remains cool, and seems even to take a certain pleasure in this verbal fencing--all the more remarkable when Eleanor's taunting remarks are included in full.

The long third scene of Act I has been trimmed from 432 lines to 228 lines. Many of the omissions are small and inconsequential, and we shall not take note of them; others are more questionable and merit discussion.

It was possibly unwise for Irving to cut the most vituperative section from Roger of York's attack upon Becket's overzealous desires to uphold the dignity and efficacy of the Church; for we need to be confronted with and reminded of the fact that, while this is a tragedy of circumstance, it is no less a tragedy of character, and Roger of York's "O bolster'd up with stubbornness and pride,/ Wilt thou destroy the Church in fighting for it,/ And bring us all to shame?" makes us aware of Becket's tragic flaw. Great tragedy usually involves the destruction of noble persons through a set of circumstances unique in their capacity to tax the single great weakness of character exhibited by each of the protagonists; and Becket presents no exception to the rule: Becket's "stubbornness and pride," because of a peculiar set of conditions, are destined to bring about his death. These characteristics, therefore, must be emphasized rather than underplayed. Tennyson was, at least in this respect, a better student of drama than Irving.

The argument over the question of supremacy among Becket, Roger of York, and Foliot, Bishop of London, supplies us with some interesting history (lines 25-37):

Roger of York. And is not York the peer of Canterbury?  
Did not Great Gregory bid Saint Austin here  
Found two archbishoprics, London and York?  
Becket. What came of that? The first archbishop  
fled,  
And York lay barren for a hundred years.  
Why, by this rule, Foliot may claim the pall  
For London too.

Foliot.

And with good reason too,  
For London had a temple and a priest  
When Canterbury hardly bore a name.

Becket.

The pagan temple of a pagan Rome!  
The heathen priesthood of a heathen  
creed!

Thou goest beyond thyself in petulancy!  
Who made thee London? Who, but  
Canterbury?

The details of Church history here referred to may be in question except to students thereof, but the general tenor or the dispute is clear enough for its purpose, that is, a demonstration of the rivalry which still existed among the Sees in Becket's day. It is necessary to understand this in order to appreciate the plausibility of the King's appeal to York, London, and Salisbury, in the absence of Canterbury, to crown young Henry III. The passage is lively enough dramatically to carry its weight of information, and prepares us for the open break in the Church later in the scene.

John of Oxford reads the "customs" which have been written down at the command of the King. Becket finds objection to each as it is read; but as Tennyson is careful to point up in the original version, he has his reasons for each objection. He is uncompromising in his fealty to the Church; he is not merely possessed for the moment by truculent whim, as it would appear in the Irving version. Indeed, Irving leads us to believe that possibly the Archbishop is but reacting in a rather childish manner to the taunts of his fellow Churchmen by allowing him only a quick "And that I cannot sign" after each law is read.

In lines 86-89 and 92-99 Tennyson has put into the mouth of Becket the reason for the knights' hostility to him. Unlike the question of Fitzurse's motivation, discussed earlier, which was adequate



keep peace between himself and his King inasmuch as the Papacy, weak itself at present, desires no more enemies. In the original, Becket shows a willingness to obey the wishes of the Pope, if such they are; he asks, "Have I the orders of the Holy Father?" (line 139) Thereupon, Philip becomes as hesitant as he has been to that time prolix: "Orders, my lord---why, no; for what am I?/ The secret whisper of the Holy Father." (lines 140-141) By the deletion of these few lines, Becket appears to ignore the advice of the Pope; whereas in the original, he determines that Philip's report of the Pope's opinion may be more figment than fact, and refuses only to act credulously.

The plea of the aged Templar, Richard de Hastings, is included in part; but, following the precedents of his earlier cuts of similar nature, Irving allows Becket no rebuttal. Taking this series of deletions en masse, we find that a certain dramatic purpose is served: plea is stacked upon plea, and since each is not disposed of as it arises, each adds its weight to the total sum of emotion directed toward the Archbishop until finally he capitulates to the sea of sentiment by signing the customs. Irving played the part of Becket himself, and was supposedly a fine actor; as such, he must have made Becket's very silence speak the anguish he felt; the scene would have been a telling one, no doubt, with suppliants in appropriate postures surrounding the Archbishop to form an appealingly sentimental tableau. But could not much of the emotional power of the incident be retained without doing such injustice to the character of Becket? He can be plied by emotionally charged language, and is; yet his natural inclination is to reason, and the scene is, in a different way, even more moving, when it depicts

the gradual deterioration of Becket's ability to think clearly as emotional values began to inundate logic. Tennyson seems to have thought so, for this is how his scene derives its strength.

Gilbert Foliot is a foil to the character of Becket: his spineless conformity to majority opinion in an effort to please as near everyone as possible brings into stronger relief Becket's bold courage in standing against all odds for what he believes to be true. In order for this heightening to be effective, we must see Foliot at his sycophantic worst, namely, upon the moment of the Archbishop's agreeing to sign the customs. When it had seemed safe to join with Roger of York in questioning the authority of Canterbury earlier in the scene, he was quick to seize the opportunity of ingratiating himself with York; but no sooner has Becket regained his unquestioned pre-eminence among the Sees than Foliot sets a different course, disgustingly obsequious, in an effort to crawl back into favor with him. Becket readily sees into Foliot's hypocrisy, and seems not to hate him so much as pity him for it:

Foliot. Is it thy will,  
My lord archbishop, that we too should sign?  
Becket. O, ay, by that canonical obedience  
Thou still hast owed thy father, Gilbert  
Foliot.  
Foliot. Loyally and with good faith, my lord arch-  
bishop?  
Becket. O, ay, with all that loyalty and good faith  
Thou still hast shown thy primate, Gilbert  
Foliot.

The elimination of these lines (160-166) by Irving virtually eliminates the function of Foliot in the play.

After he has signed, Becket has an immediate change of heart; he would blot out his name. He is informed that it is too late for that, and falls once again to self-deprecation. In the original version he

declares (lines 177-178): "Herbert, till I hear from the Pope/ I will suspend myself from all my function." It can be argued that this statement should be included on the grounds that it demonstrates the severity with which Becket judges himself; but equally sound arguments can be posed in favor of omitting the lines: first, we are already aware of Becket's harsh criticism of himself; and further, "Foliot's "My lord archbishop, thou hast yet to seal." (line 180) comes less as a deus ex machina, saving Becket from his high-sounding vow, if it follows upon Becket's "I am no soldier, as he said---at least/ No leader."

(lines 176-177) as in the Irving version.

The deletions which reduce the King's address to the barons and bishops of his realm (lines 198-235, 237-243) from 44 lines to but thirteen lines are among the most to be regretted of all that Irving made. There is no finer poetry, and none more rhetorically satisfying, to be found in the entire play. The following will serve to illustrate the magnificent eloquence of this speech. Henry is speaking of his efforts to bring order out of the chaos of Stephen's reign (lines 210-219):

Nor dwelt alone, like a soft lord of the East,  
 In mine own hall, and sucking thro' fools' ears  
 The flatteries of corruption--went abroad  
 Thro' all my counties, spied my people's ways;  
 Yea, heard the churl against the baron--yea,  
 And did him justice; sat in mine own courts  
 Judging my judges, that had found a King  
 Who ranged confusions, made the twilight day,  
 And struck a shape from out the vague, and law  
 From madness.

Proud and haughty are his words, but no fustian, no empty braggadocio this. Henry is "every inch a king" and speaks the lofty and forceful language of scepter and crown. Unfortunate enough is the loss of such poetry alone, if it were the only loss; but the structure of the drama

suffers as well. Henry's speech in full is necessary to the just presentation of his case. Becket has shown himself strong and not unreasonable in his attitude toward the customs; the King must state his position as convincingly if he is to appear more than a tyrannous villain. The question of the customs must remain open if it is to be the source of tension which animates the scene, for once the two sides seem black and white, our mixed emotions resolve into commitment, and with our own internal struggle over, we ease back to observe the outcome of the stage action, less involved than before. We do not close our minds to Henry if we can hear him tell of the cleric who "violated/ The daughter of his host, and murder'd him." He addresses the bishops powerfully (lines 226-235):

Ye haled this tonsured devil into your courts;  
 But since your canon will not let you take  
 Life for a life, ye but degraded him  
 Where I had hang'd him. What doth hard murder  
     care  
 For degradation? and that made me muse,  
 Being bounden by my coronation oath  
 To do men justice. Look to it, your own selves!  
 Say that a cleric murder'd an archbishop,  
 What could ye do? Degrade, imprison him--  
 Not death for death.

The speech shows us Henry as he was: jealous of his authority, but dedicated to the improvement of his realm through enlightened reform. The few moments of stage time saved by Irving lost for him much of the richness that Tennyson lavished upon the character of Henry.

Herbert's remark (lines 286-287) is reminiscent of Pope Gregory's famous "Non Angli sed angeli":

As once he Becket bore the standard of the  
     Angles,  
 So now he bears the standard of the angels.

Because of its similarity to the better known quotation, it becomes somewhat trite at first utterance; also, it seems ill-timed, for it impedes the progress of the action and adds nothing relevant. As such, the omission can hardly be objected to.

Gilbert Foliot's major function in the play as a foil to Becket has already been treated. In our earlier discussion it was pointed out that in order for the character of Foliot to fulfil its purpose, it must present a striking enough contrast to that of Becket that comparison is inevitable; yet again, by omitting lines 300-303, Irving has de-emphasized the pettiness of Foliot. He utters a lie which he knows Becket is too large to quibble over, and which it would be to the advantage of the other bishops to endorse by their silence:

My lord,  
 Hadst thou not sign'd, I had gone along with thee;  
 But thou the shepherd hast betray'd the sheep,  
 And thou art perjured, and thou wilt not seal.

And the significant line from Becket's answer to this charge, which finally names Foliot what he is, has likewise been cut: "A worldly follower of the worldly strong." (Line 312)

Although Irving has preserved the semblance of continuity during the interval from Roger of York's exit (line 325) to Fitzurse's entrance (line 356), much of the excitement of the Council, and to a large extent, even the Council itself, has been omitted. In the shortened version, we understand that when Fitzurse, De Tracy, and De Brito enter to state the demands of the King, they must have enjoyed some sort of audience with him; similarly, when Lord Leicester enters to pronounce the King's sentence upon Becket, we infer with no difficulty that he has lately been in the royal presence; but all the grandeur of the off-stage

proceedings to be found in the original has been stripped away. The impression created in the Irving version is one of confused informality, whereas the Council of the original presents a thrilling spectacle to our imagination. The following report by Hilary of the Council activities will illustrate the point (lines 337-340):

Some have pleaded for him,  
But the King rages--most are with the King;  
And some are reeds, that one time sway to the  
    current,  
And to the wind another.

The rest of Hilary's speech (lines 340-345) clarifies the attitude of the bishops toward Becket; the split in the Church remains only conjectural without it.

But we hold  
Thou art forsworn; and no forsworn archbishop  
Shall helm the Church. We therefore place our-  
    selves  
Under the shield and safeguard of the Pope,  
And cite thee to appear before the Pope,  
And answer thine accusers.

Having trimmed Henry's address considerably, Irving must have recognized that the utterance of Becket which parallels it, both in tone and subject matter, must also be shortened. This must have been a disappointment to those familiar with the original version of the play, for Becket's speech (lines 389-414) rings of the same noble metal as was found in Henry's:

I had been so true  
To Henry and mine office that the King  
Would throne me in the great archbishopric;  
And I, that knew mine own infirmity,  
For the King's pleasure rather than God's cause  
Took it upon me--err'd thro' love of him.

The "err'd thro' love of him" phrase echoes the King's identical comment (line 255) made, of course, in reference to Becket; and it is all the

more effective when used by the Archbishop in that he is unaware of Henry's having employed it.

A realistic touch is added by Tennyson in Becket's exit after his fiery apology to the assemblage. Leicester, who has been unsuccessfully attempting to deliver the King's ultimatum to Becket, "looks at him doubtingly" as he starts to go; Becket turns and inquires simply, "Am I a prisoner?" (line 415). Leicester has been so struck by the Archbishop's oratory that he can blurt out only "By Saint Lazarus, no! / I am confounded by thee. Go in peace." (line 415-416) That an actor-producer could overlook the stageworthiness of this exchange is surprising.

As Becket is leaving, the Herald enters to inform all present that they shall not "wrong or injure" the Archbishop, whereupon Foliot mutters a deliciously appropriate line from the Old Testament: "Deal gently with the young man Absalom." (line 431) Little excuse can be offered for the omission of this brilliant stroke, for it consumes but a second or two, and though it be lost upon half the audience (this being doubtful, for the Victorians, on the whole, knew their Bible well), yet the appreciation of those in a position to savor the remark would be sufficient to recommend its inclusion.

Hallam Lord Tennyson has stated in his notes to Becket that his father "regretted the excision" of scene four of the first act, and the Walter Map scenes from the Acting Edition. It is the first of these excisions which concerns us here. One cannot help sharing Tennyson's regrets upon reading this, the most warmly human episode in the entire play; the comic and tragic herein blend so perfectly that the reader is

at a loss to determine certainly the composition of his reaction; he is aware that he has witnessed a vital human experience, this much his emotions can tell him; but so completely has the poet captured, condensed, and intensified life itself that he can no more define his response to the scene than can he categorize human existence as either comedy or tragedy. After the Archbishop's break with the Church, his retainers have grown fearful of their position as associates of Becket; at the opening of this scene they request permission to leave his services, and the permission is granted, not without a reminder to them that they have fed at his table for many years and that desertion at such a time as this betrays their loathsome cowardice. A banquet has been prepared for the Archbishop, his retainers, and a few honored guests; the retainers have departed, and it appears that the earls and barons invited are not coming, whereupon Becket orders (lines 68-69): "Call in the poor from the streets, and let them feast." The beggars enter and behold the food with naive astonishment (lines 130-134, 148-150):

Third Beggar. What's that, my lord?

Becket. Venison.

Third Beggar. Venison?

Becket. Buck--deer, as you call it.

Third Beggar. King's meat! By the Lord, Won't we pray for your lordship! . . . Here--all of you--my lord's health! (they drink).  
Well--if that isn't goodly wine--

Becket departs, having been warned that there are those who are seeking his life because of his brazenness toward the King and his fellow bishops, and soon thereafter the four Knights enter. Their defeat at the hands of the beggars (lines 170-246) is humorous in the fullest sense of the word--laughter and tears at once:

Fitzurse. Sheep, said he? And sheep without the shepherd, too. Where is my lord archbishop? Thou the lustiest and lousiest of this Cain's brotherhood, answer.

Third Beggar. With Cain's answer, my lord. Am I his keeper? Thou shouldst call him Cain, not me.

Fitzurse. So I do, for he would murder his brother the State.

Third Beggar. (rising and advancing) No, my lord; but be-  
et al cause the Lord hath set his mark upon him that no man should murder him.

Fitzurse. Where is he? where is he?

Third Beggar. With Cain belike, in the land of Nod, or in the land of France for aught I know.

De Brito. They mock us; he is here.

(All the Beggars rise and advance upon them.)

Fitzurse. Come, you filthy knaves, let us pass.

Third Beggar. Nay, my lord, let us pass. We be a-going home after our supper in all humbleness, my lord; for the archbishop loves humbleness, my lord, and though we be fifty to four, we daren't fight you with our crutches, my lord. There now, if thou hast not laid hands upon me! and my fellows know that I am all one scale like a fish. I pray God I haven't given thee my leprosy, my lord.

(Fitzurse shrinks from him, and another presses upon De Brito.)

De Brito. Away, dog!

Fourth Beggar. And I was bit by a mad dog o' Friday, an' I be half dog already by this token, that tho' I can drink wine I cannot bide water, my lord; and I want to bite, I want to bite, and they do say the very breath catches.

De Brito. Insolent clown! Shall I smite him with the edge of the sword?

De Morville. No, nor with the flat of it either. Smite the shepherd, and the sheep are scattered. Smite the sheep, and the shepherd will excommunicate thee.

De Brito. Yet my fingers itch to beat him into nothing.

Fifth Beggar. So do mine, my lord. I was born with it, and sulphur won't bring it out o' me. But for all that the archbishop washed my feet o' Tuesday. He likes it, my lord.

De Morville. Faugh! we shall all be poisoned. Let us go.

(They draw back, Beggars following)

Seventh Beggar. My lord, I ha' three sisters a-dying at home o' the sweating sickness. They be dead while I be a-supping.

Eighth Beggar. And I ha' nine darters i' the spital that be dead ten times o'er i' one day wi' the putrid fever; and I bring the taint on it along wi' me, for the archbishop likes it, my lord.

(Pressing upon the Knights till they disappear thro' the door.)

Third Beggar. Crutches, and itches, and leprosies, and  
 ulcers, and gangrenes, and running sores, praise ye  
 the Lord, for tonight ye have saved our archbishop!  
First Beggar. I'll go back again. I hain't half done yet.

As well as the scene stands by itself, it nonetheless serves several important purposes in the play also: just as the porter scene in Macbeth and Hamlet's dialogue with the traveling players in Hamlet allow a moment of relief from the solemn death-march of tragedy while at the same time accentuating its shadows with a thin streak of warm and healthful sunlight, so do the beggars both relieve and intensify the tragedy of Becket. In addition to this important, if not essential, dramatic function, we also lose by the omission of the beggar scene some information which will prove necessary in later acts: that Becket has been warned of an attempt to be made on his life, that the four Knights have actually made such an attempt, and that because of this Becket flees to France where he may enjoy the protection of Louis. Without this knowledge, we may accept as true Henry's statement that Becket "thief-like fled from his own church by night, / No man pursuing." (III, ii, 87) Indeed, we well may not understand why the Archbishop is in France at all; we know Becket to be a man of little fear, who would hardly have left his beloved Canterbury without just cause, and consequently it is difficult for us to believe Henry; but without the beggar scene there is no testimony to the contrary. Thus the omission of this scene may be attacked from at least three different points of view, any one of which might suffice as an argument for its inclusion.

## Act II

Act II turns our attention back to the sub-plot--Henry's love of

Rosamund, and the jealousy it excites in Eleanor. Irving has telescoped the two scenes between Henry and Rosamund of the original into a single scene. Continuity is maintained when shifting from scene to scene, albeit somewhat haltingly in one or two instances which we will take note of, but the distribution of the sub-plot is affected adversely; the careful weaving of the author has become a knot, and the fabric is thereby roughened.

On the whole, there are fewer lines omitted in this scene proportionate to the total number of lines in the original than in any other. The reason for the favoritism shown this particular scene over all others which most readily suggests itself is that the love element, being the part of the play most certain of popular success, should be given full sway. While it is not unfortunate that the Henry-Rosamund scenes are but little cut, inasmuch as they are convincingly simple and thereby show us a tender and affectionate side of Henry we find nowhere else, yet it is to be regretted that, by so doing, the proper balance between main-plot and sub-plot has been disturbed.

A "duet" written in dactylic hexameters which sounds like a page from Swinburne precludes Act II in the original version. (lines 1-10) It is a flight of pure poetry, and while set to appropriate music it might serve to put one in a favorable mood to receive the tender affection of the love scene, yet it is extraneous to the action. The lyricism, moreover, is not of the sort which lends itself well to drama; it has little of the natural simplicity usually to be found in Tennyson's songs, those from The Princess, for example. Rather than coping with its difficulties, Irving has chosen to leave it out.

A skillful bit of dramaturgy on the part of the author has been eliminated by Irving in cutting lines 25-34. Henry has chided Rosamund for broaching the subject of his quarrel with Becket, and Rosamund has dutifully changed the subject to their first meeting. The dialogue progresses easily upon this topic:

Henry. Nay, I remember it well.  
There on the moors.

Rosamund. And in a narrow path.  
A plover flew before thee. Then I saw  
Thy high black steed among the flaming  
furze,  
Like sudden night in the main glare of day.  
And from that height something was said  
to me,  
I know not what.

Henry. I ask'd the way.

Rosamund. I think so.

But the King would speak of Becket; in spite of his protestations to the contrary, he is obviously preoccupied with the problem of his relations with the Archbishop, for he breaks in upon himself in the midst of his frivolities:

Well, well, no more of him--I have sent his folk,  
His kin, all his belongings, over-seas;

In the Irving version, these lines come as no departure from the subject at hand, and as a consequence, continuity is maintained where it is not desired.

Additional evidence is offered by Henry (lines 44-47) which helps explain Becket's appearance in the next scene under the protection of Louis of France. Coupled with the circumstances of the beggar scene, this statement is vital to the logical motivation of the Archbishop:

But since he cursed  
My friends at Veselay, I have let them know  
That if they keep him longer as their guest,  
I scatter all their cowls to all the hells.

The Knights have tried in the previous scene to murder Becket; we discover now that he had no refuge in England. But Irving has deleted all this information. Certainly, it may be charged that great concern over the "facts" in a drama more often leads to dullness than clarity; but when the character of the protagonist is at stake, it would seem that the risk should be taken.

Henry's two "muttering" soliloquies (lines 77-85, 88-91) have been deleted almost in their entirety. The first is a piece of self-deprecation, more in the manner of Becket than the King:

I am not worthy of her--this beast-body  
That God has plunged my soul in--I, that taking  
The Fiend's advantage of a throne, so long  
Have wander'd among women,--a foul stream  
Thro' fever-breeding levels,--at her side,  
Among these happy dales, run clearer, drop  
The mud I carried, like yon brook, and glass  
The faithful face of heaven--

Granting that this is said only to himself, still we cannot think that the Henry whom we heard recently in Northampton Castle and will hear shortly at Montmirail would estimate himself so meanly. He is subject to occasional outbursts of temper and frequent outpourings of kingly self-adulation, but is not given to melancholy introspection. The above speech seems to blur our picture of the King as a sanguine, extroverted man of action; but this impression is one which should be preserved, for it is these very qualities of boldness and practicality, virtues in nearly any man and in nearly every situation, which to a large extent determine his difficulties with Becket and their mutual tragedy in the end. That Henry, being an intelligent and sensitive person, does on occasion stop to consider himself, evaluate his merits and shortcomings, is not a sufficient reason to argue the inclusion of this soliloquy; a drama, in

its "two hour's traffic," must be selective, including only that material which serves to create vividly life-like persons, and consequently, that Henry does not typically indulge in such meditation as that above is sufficient recommendation to omit it.

Lines 88-91 are more in the spirit of the King. He mutters still, and is yet discontented with himself, but the lugubrious tone of the former soliloquy is gone; in four succinct lines he capsules first Eleanor's, and then his hatred of Becket:

A sane and natural loathing for a soul  
Purer, and truer and nobler than herself,  
And mine a bitterer illigitimate hate,  
A bastard hate born of a former love.

It is difficult to decide definitely either in favor of, or against the deletion of these lines; since they seem to contribute only about as much as they take away, we may feel, as Irving did, that they are as well omitted.

Irving has inserted the stage direction "breaking off suddenly" before Henry's affirmation, "Let it content you now/ There is no woman that I love so well." (III, 1, 4-5). This was necessary because of the shift from Act II, scene one of the original to Act III, scene one. Irving attempts to disguise in roughness of dialogue a roughness of transition, which may well be the best solution to a problem inherent in his desire to amalgamate the two scenes. This difficulty is significant in that it typifies the many "artificial" problems of the Irving text; the inconsistencies in the acting version are more often than not created by Irving's deletions. When changes made by an editor or arranger are so exhaustive as to alter the basic structure of any work of art so much that a reorganization of the work is necessary, we must

begin to doubt seriously the wisdom of the changes.

By retaining Henry's "Nay--I must go;" (II, i, 166) Irving has committed himself to terminating the scene shortly; this means that the forty-nine lines of Act III, scene i, which pass before the King's exit must be considerably reduced inasmuch as they have, in Irving's text, been attached to scene i of Act II. Of the forty-nine lines, thirty-three have been cut; most to be deplored is the excision of lines 16-21. Henry is concerned over Rosamund's security in the bower; he inquires: "Is our secret ours?/ Have you had any alarm? no strangers?" and is reassured by Rosamund,

No.  
The warder of the bower hath given himself  
Of late to wine. I sometimes think he sleeps  
When he should watch; and yet what fear?

The question is appropriately timed dramatically; for it reminds us that there is indeed much to fear in the persons of Eleanor and her tool, Fitzurse. Surely, Eleanor has not been idling all this time, we may speculate; and our speculations are satisfied shortly by Eleanor's re-appearance just outside the bower.

Also omitted from this scene is Rosamund's description of her new bower-maiden's reticence (lines 38-41):

I but ask'd her  
One question, and she prim'd her mouth and put  
Her hands together---thus--and said, God help her,  
That she was sworn to silence.

This description prepares us for quite a different Margery than the garrulous and uncouth woman who enters a few lines later; and we are pleasantly jarred by the inconsistency. Once again a delicate touch by Tennyson has been overlooked or ignored by Irving.

Margery is not overbright, and like most simpletons, she proclaims banal thought with great fluency; her vacuity is the more amazing and amusing for its duration--forty-seven lines in Tennyson's original--and much of its effectiveness, especially as "comic relief," has been lost through Irving's cuts, which reduce the speech by about half.

Like Midas' servant, Margery cannot hold a secret. She knows the King is married to Eleanor, and informs her lady of it, although she salves her conscience by insisting that Rosamund's visitor must be the King's brother. The mischief done, Margery is ordered to leave, and Rosamund ponders the rumor she has heard. In the original, fragments of Margery's "Bee mustn't buzz" song intrude intermittently upon Rosamund's reflections and by their very inanity heighten the desperate tone of the soliloquy. Irving has omitted these interruptions, and has thereby deprived the soliloquy of the greater power which would result from the juxtaposition of contrasting sentiments.

### Act III

Act III, scene i, of the Irving version combines rather ineptly Act II, scene ii and Act III, scene iii of Tennyson's original text; this is not to say that Irving did not strive diligently enough to effect a satisfactory union of the two scenes, but rather that such a union would necessarily fail regardless of the skill of the arranger because of the individual character of each of the scenes. They are as oil and water, for though they may be mixed they will not admit of homogeneous solution.

In Act II, scene ii, of the original the King attempts to make

amends to Becket, but the effort is fruitless; and before Act III, scene iii, commences, he has appealed to York and several other bishops to crown young Henry. Because Irving has made one scene of these two, it is necessary, of course, that young Henry have been already crowned at the opening of the scene; this means that the conversation between Henry and John of Oxford wherein the King states that "Becket should crown him (young Henry) were he crowned at all" must be omitted, which is quite unfair to Henry. He hopes, in the original, to reach some sort of rapprochement with the Archbishop in order that young Henry may be crowned according to custom by Canterbury; in Irving's version, Henry appears to have taken immediate advantage of Becket's flight to France by crowning his son while he should be unopposed.

But if the deleted section shows Henry to be less unscrupulous than he seems in Irving's cut version, it does not whitewash the King's motives in desiring a resumption of his friendship with Becket; the King feels that he must either make peace with the Archbishop or face ex-communication. His thoughts on Becket's recent spiritual triumphs (lines 24-32) are typically pragmatic:

I must patch up a peace--  
 A peace in this long-tugged-at, threadbare-worn  
 Quarrel of Crown and Church--to rend again.  
 His Holiness cannot steer straight thro' shoals,  
 Nor I. The citizen's heir hath conquer'd me  
 For the moment. So we make our peace with him.

Again it must be said, as in our discussion of the King's address to the barons and bishops, this is Henry as he was. He does not wish to subvert the authority of Canterbury, for not only is Thomas a long-cherished friend, but more important, such action could topple his own power to improve his realm. He is dedicated to his country, and feels

that he understands best how to build it to prosperity, but he will compromise and wait if necessary. He is practical, diligent, and resourceful; but this side of the King we are largely deprived of by Irving's cuts.

The other significant excision in this compound scene of Irving's is that of the character of Walter Map. It may be remembered that Tennyson himself regretted the deletion of the incidents involving this quick-witted quidnunc, and it is difficult not to commiserate with Tennyson for several reasons: Map serves the function of a Greek Chorus by commenting upon and interpreting the events of the play from a position external to the central whirlwind of action. He is convincingly disinterested in his evaluation of the fray between Church and King:

(III, iii, 35-57)

It is this black, bell-silencing, anti-marrying, burial-hindering, interdict that hath squeezed out this side-smile upon Canterbury, whereof may come conflagration. Were I Thomas, I would n't trust it. Sudden change is a house on sand; and tho' I count Henry honest enough, yet when fear creeps in at the front, honesty steals out at the back, and the King at last is fairly scared by this cloud--this interdict. I have been more for the King than the Church in this matter--yea, even for the sake of the Church; for, truly, as the case stood, you had safelier have slain an archbishop than a she-goat. But our recoverer and upholder of customs hath in this crowning of young Henry by York and London so violated the immemorial usage of the Church, that, like the grave-digger's child I have heard of, trying to ring the bell, he hath half-hanged himself in the rope of the Church, . . .

Further, as may be appreciated somewhat from this speech, he overflows with colorful similes and exempla which make his conversation interesting of itself. He also details to Herbert the circumstances of the coronation of young Henry which in the Irving version are dismissed in a prosaic soliloquy by Louis at the beginning of the act. The

description by Map (lines 65-91) is a masterful "thumb-nail sketch" calling to mind some of Chaucer's characterizations:

Herbert. And how did Roger of York comport himself?

Walter Map. As magnificently and archiepiscopally as our Thomas would have done: only there was a dare-devil in his eye--I should say a dare-Becket. He thought less of two kings than of one Roger, the king of the occasion. Foliot is the holier man, perhaps the better. Once or twice there ran a twitch across his face, as who should say 'what 's to follow?' but Salisbury was a calf cowed by Mother Church, and every now and then glancing about him like a thief at night when he hears a door open in the house and thinks 'the master.'

Herbert. And the father-king?

Walter Map. The father's eye was so tender it would have called a goose off the green, and once he strove to hide his face, like the Greek king when his daughter was sacrificed, but he thought better of it. It was but the sacrifice of a kingdom to his son, a smaller matter; but as to the young crown-ling himself, he looked so malapert in the eyes, that had I fathered him I had given him more of the rod than the sceptre.

But these objections to the deletion of Walter Map pale into insignificance when compared with one's dismay over the omission of lines 205-250 of Act III, scene iii. The King has extended himself to the limit of his powers in an effort to mend his relations with Becket, and some part of the old friendship has been reestablished; yet he senses that there is something makeshift about their agreement, something temporary that was no part of their friendship as it once had been, and wishes to indicate his willingness and eagerness to bring about not only a cessation of hostilities but a resumption of cordiality between himself and his friend (lines 198-203):

Mine old friend, Thomas,  
 I would there were that perfect trust between us,  
 That health of heart, once ours, ere Pope or King  
 Had come between us! Even now--who knows?--I  
 might deliver all things to thy hand--  
 If--

He pauses, awaiting some sort of response from Becket. But Becket remains adamant, or at least too long hesitant, and the King concludes, "but I say no more--farewell, my lord." Thereupon, as soon as the King has departed, Walter Map charges Becket with stubbornness and ingratitude:

Walter Map. There again! when the full fruit of the royal promise might have dropt into thy mouth hadst thou but opened it to thank him.

Becket. He fenced his royal promise with an if.

Walter Map. And is the King's if too high a stile for your lordship to overstep and come at all things in the next field?

Becket. Ay, if this if be like the devil's 'if Thou wilt fall down and worship me. . . .'

Walter Map. You wrong the King: he meant what he said to-day. Who shall vouch for his to-morrows? One word further. Doth not the fewness of anything make the fulness of it in estimation? Is not virtue prized mainly for its rarity and great baseness loathed as an exception: for were all, my lord, as noble as yourself, who would look up to you? and were all as base as--who shall I say?--Fitzurse and his following--who would look down upon them? My lord, you have put so many of the King's household out of communion, that they begin to smile at it.

Becket. At their peril, at their peril--

Walter Map. For tho' the drop may hollow out the dead stone, doth not the living skin thicken against perpetual whippings? This is the second grain of good counsel I ever proffered thee, and so cannot suffer by the rule of frequency. Have I sown it in salt? I trust not, for before God I promise you the King hath many more wolves than he can tame in his woods of England, and if it suit their purpose to howl for the King, and you still move against him, you may have no less than to die for it; but God and his free wind grant your lordship a happy home-return and the King's kiss of peace in Kent. Farewell! I must follow the King.

The refusal of Becket to unbend in the slightest degree on this occasion deserves the emphasis which Walter Map gives it; it is the structural climax of the play--the point of no return. Becket is at the peak of his fortunes; and in order to appreciate the magnitude of this decision to hold his ground, a decision which will eventually impoverish his fortunes to martyrdom, it is necessary that the decision be stamped indelibly upon our minds. It may be objected at this point that the martyrdom of Becket is not an impoverishing of his fortunes; that, in fact, it is a glorious victory even as Christ's upon the cross; and to this objection it can only be answered that unless we are concerned primarily with the earthly career of Becket, his aspirations and struggles in and with the world of men, those events which the dramatist has selected as the basis of his story, there is indeed no "tragedy" to be found in the play and Tennyson's attempts to make it appear tragic are not only hopeless but malicious. But to return to our major point--it is essential that the tragedy of the decision which will inevitably prove fatal to the protagonist be writ large. An example or two from Shakespeare will help clarify and justify this contention: the tragic irony of Hamlet's decision not to strike down the King as he prays is emphasized and deepened by the King's admission, "My words fly up, my thoughts remain below:/ Words without thoughts never to heaven go." Brutus liberally grants Antony a chance to deliver a eulogy upon Caesar, and no sooner does Antony begin to speak than Brutus' descent from power begins; the tragedy of the decision is thereby immediately emphasized and deepened. So it is with Becket's refusal to speak of compromise with the King; the tragedy of Becket's decision is emphasized and deepened by the

remarks of Walter Map. This excision is probably the most damaging to the structure of the play that Irving felt called upon to make.

#### Act IV

The next scene which Irving has cut extensively is scene ii of Act IV (III, iii, in the Irving text). Rosamund's young son Geoffrey has wandered out of the bower, has been discovered by Eleanor, and has led her, his mother's worst enemy, directly into the sanctuary. The two women meet, and Rosamund, anticipating an unpleasant exchange at least, tells Geoffrey to leave. His question to his mother just before he obeys (lines 42-43) is innocent and terrifying, reminiscent of the manner of Webster: "Shall I find you asleep when I come back?" This device, so effective in The White Devil, is no less effective in Becket; it produces an instantaneous shudder in the listener, and further, makes him anticipate greater evil in Eleanor than he may previously have suspected. The anticipation is very shortly fulfilled by Eleanor's threat upon Rosamund's life. The omission of small touches such as this, deprive Irving's version of much of the dramatic finesse of the original.

Passing over several minor deletions we arrive at the final one hundred lines of this scene. Three lengthy speeches and a soliloquy by Eleanor are here to be found; collectively, they trace the development of her thought about her recent attempt to murder Rosamund which only the sudden appearance of Becket had thwarted. The same fine psychological shadings which the author had delineated in Maud are to be found in miniature in this series of speeches; Irving must have felt their length prohibitive, for he has eliminated them all. A few selected



drama is focused and directed upon the final catastrophe of Becket's murder. It is important to realize that while this play should not be categorized pejoratively as a "well-made play," yet the detail included in its composition has been selected in such a way that dramatic unity is achieved. We have not two unrelated stories here; each modifies the action of the other to the extent that each is dependent upon the characters, their motives, and their actions; as Act V begins to direct more certainly these characters, motives, and actions, into a common path, we become more acutely aware of the two-fold nature of the distortion brought about by deletion: it not only alters the shape of the immediate environment in which it occurs, but also, insofar as each incident is an integral part of a line of action this other line of action suffers as well. Thus, if the characterization of Eleanor is neglected in the bower scene by eliminating her speeches and soliloquy as Irving has done, her function in the sub-plot is lessened to be sure; but more to be lamented is her loss in effectiveness as an instrument of the evil forces which must be loosed in the final act, wherein both plots merge in a culmination of the major issue of the play.

It may be readily admitted that, considering how completely the purpose of Gilbert Foliot in the first four acts of the play is eliminated by Irving's deletions, there is no reason for Irving to attempt to salvage this character at so late a time as Act V; but this is no reason to recommend the procedure; indeed, it is but another charge against the previous deletions that they prohibit, or at least make ineffectual, the inclusion of Foliot's final speech (V, i, 20-34). Foliot here sums himself up extremely well; in his own words we have the description of a

weak-willed and sanctimonious sycophant:

My royal liege, in aiming at your love,  
 It may be sometimes I have overshot  
 My duties to our Holy Mother Church  
 Tho' all the world allows I fall no inch  
 Behind this Becket, rather go beyond  
 In scourgings, macerations, mortifyings,  
 Fasts, disciplines that clear the spiritual eye,  
 And break the soul from earth. Let all that be.  
 I boast not; but you know thro' all this quarrel  
 I still have cleaved to the crown, in hope the crown  
 Would cleave to me that but obey'd the crown, . . .

Since in the next two scenes we are to observe the final hours of Becket himself, it is important that the qualities of false piety, hypocrisy, and obsequiousness be strongly accented in his foil, Foliot, at this time. This speech contributes greatly to the total accumulation of meanness which Becket struggles with, and is eventually defeated by--an accumulation of meanness which we consciously or unconsciously balance against the greatness of Becket. The tragedy of Becket is that of a great man who, like Coriolanus, had too much pride and dignity about him to permit his understanding and dealing successfully with meanness; and, again like Coriolanus; he is killed by the brute force which meanness typically employs as its instrument of "justice." In order to appreciate this tragedy, we must appreciate the kind of meanness which precipitates it. It is not the poverty and coarseness of the beggars, no, nor the malice of Eleanor, nor even the angry flashes of the King; it is the unthinking spite of little men. We are nowhere given a clearer notion of this littleness than in the person of Gilbert Foliot; and nowhere does he reveal his nature more certainly than in the speech above.

In the original version there is an apparent digression in the conversation between Eleanor and Henry (lines 59-74) from the main

subject, Becket, to the "family" difficulties of the King and Queen; Irving must have considered the digression real enough, for he has chosen to eliminate it. But Eleanor does not digress so purposelessly. She knows that her jealousy of Rosamund has disposed Henry unfavorably toward herself, and seeks to ameliorate her discredited position before urging him further against Becket. She strikes upon their one common love, the children, and although Henry has some reservations about her plans for their future, his very reservations are turned to Eleanor's ends by her using them as a bridge back to the main subject:

Eleanor. . . . this no-wife has borne you four brave sons,  
And one of them at least is like to prove  
Bigger in our small world than thou art.

Henry. Richard, if he be mine---I hope him mine,  
But thou art like to make him thine. Ay--

Eleanor. Becket is like enough to make all his.

The Queen's reminder has had its effect. Prior to this digression, Eleanor has threatened (line 59), "I will go live and die in Aquitaine." Henry gave threat for threat: "Except I clap thee into prison here." But after Eleanor has mentioned the children, the King is much changed; his transformation is given added emphasis by Eleanor's repeating her former threat word for word (line 78-83):

Eleanor. I will go live and die in Aquitaine.  
I dream'd I was the consort of a king,  
Not one whose back his priest has broken.

Henry. What!  
Is the end come? You, will you crown my foe  
My victor in mid-battle? I will be  
Sole master of my house. The end is mine.

The digression is neither aimless nor unfortunate; Eleanor did not err in her estimation of Henry's response; Tennyson reasons: arresting momentarily the progress of the King's anger seems rather to dissipate

than intensifying the force of his final frenzied appeal, "Will no man free me from this pestilent priest?"

After the storm of the first scene of Act V, we are allowed a moment of physical repose before the violence and blood of the end; scene two opens in a room of Canterbury Monastery where Becket and John of Salisbury are discussing the course that events have taken since Becket's return to England. Of the twenty-seven lines of this discussion, Irving has included only four (6, 8-10):

John of Salisbury. Thomas, I would thou had'st return'd to  
England.

With more of olive-branch and amnesty  
For foes at home. Thou hast raised the  
world against thee.

Becket. Why, John, my kingdom is not of this world.

And these are not the most meaningful ideas brought out in the discussion. In the previous scene, Foliot has given us the credo of meanness to which the Knights pay fealty; in the last scene, Becket's great strength of body, mind, and spirit is demonstrated as he faces the Knights; but Tennyson did not wish to overlook, in his Act V summation of the basic issues of the play, that Becket himself is responsible for much of his own tragedy. Earlier, in the remarks concerning Walter Map, the proud nature and haughty bearing of the Archbishop were noted; John of Salisbury recalls to our minds the prophecy of Walter Map as he lectures Becket upon the virtues of moderation and compromise; Becket's claim that his kingdom is not of this world is answered with candor and wisdom (lines 11-27):

John of Salisbury. If it were more of this world it might be  
More of the next. A policy of wise pardon  
Wins here as well as there. To bless thine  
enemies--

Becket. Ay, mine, not Heaven's

John of Salisbury. And may there not be something  
 Of this world's leaven in thee too, when  
 crying  
 On Holy Church to thunder out her rights  
 And thine own wrong so pitilessly? Ah,  
 Thomas,  
 The lightnings that we think are only  
 Heaven's  
 Flash sometimes out of earth against the  
 heavens,  
 The soldier, when he lets his whole self go  
 Lost in the common good, the common wrong,  
 Strikes truest even for his own self. I  
 crave  
 Thy pardon--I have still thy leave to speak.  
 Thou hast waged God's war against the King;  
 and yet  
 We are self-uncertain creatures, and we may,  
 Yea, even when we know not, mix our spites  
 And private hates with our defence of Heaven.

The weaknesses of great men are large, as is all else about them; Becket's shortcomings are magnified by his gigantic stature. What would be greed and selfishness in a lesser man becomes in him heedless self-confidence. It is this self-confidence, expressed as pride and demi-god-like dignity, which proves catastrophic in the peculiar circumstances of this play. John of Salisbury gives us the understanding of Becket we must have before we can accurately evaluate the outcome of the issues which, taken together, constitute the metaphysical substructure of the play.

After line twenty-seven, a monk, Edward Grim, enters with news from Cambridge; Becket salutes him (line 28): "Thou art but yesterday from Cambridge, Grim." Thereafter his name is not mentioned, and since line twenty-eight is omitted by Irving, his name is not spoken in the Irving version. This is not to be taken as a condemnation of Irving's deletion of this line, for Grim serves his function just as well by remaining nameless; that he is a monk is all that matters. It is

interesting that Tennyson bothered to provide a name for him at all, since no apparent use is made of it. Also curious is the stage direction (line 310) "Grim (re-entering)" to the reader of the Irving text; the name "Grim" is unknown to the reader, and it is "confusion worse confounded" that he is supposedly re-entering. Of course, this arrangement of the play was not intended as literature; and Mr. Irving would doubtless accuse us rightly of pettifoggery for even mentioning such trivial objections to his manuscript.

Rosamund enters, having fled in disguise from Godstow. She is concerned over rumors that Becket has excommunicated the King, and wishes them either confirmed or denied by the Archbishop himself. Her narrative of the journey from Godstow to Canterbury, omitted by Irving, is Tennyson's recapitulation of the point which had been made so forcefully in the beggar's scene: that commonness is meanness. In Act V we have heard John of Salisbury echo the thoughts of Walter Map about Becket's shortcomings; Foliot has clarified the position of meanness in the tragedy; Rosamund now reminds us of the love the simple folk have for Becket (lines 51-63):

I fled, and found thy name a charm to get me  
 Food, roof, and rest. I met a robber once;  
 I told him I was bound to see the archbishop:  
 'Pass on,' he said, and in thy name I pass'd  
 From house to house. In one a son stone-blind  
 Sat by his mother's hearth. He had gone too far  
 Into the King's own woods; and the poor mother,  
 Soon as she learnt I was a friend of thine,  
 Cried out against the cruelty of the King.  
 I said it was the King's courts, not the King,  
 But she would not believe me, and she wish'd  
 The Church were king; she had seen the archbishop  
 once,  
 So mild, so kind. The people love thee, father.

Omitting this, and the other recapitulation speeches, is equivalent to deleting the peroration from an address, or eliminating the recapitulation and coda of a symphony; to do so is to deprive a well-wrought art work of the basis of much of its unity and power.

John of Salisbury's polemical outburst on the character of the average wife (lines 106-118) seems quite unrelated to the progress of the play except insofar as it hinders progress; nor is it a particularly outstanding piece of writing, considered apart from its contribution to the play. As a defense of celibacy it is totally unconvincing. Irving's deletion of this speech seems justifiable.

The four Knights arrive from Normandy to do the King's bidding--rid him of this pestilent priest. But the murder must be provoked in some way if they hope to justify their action to Henry. Fitzurse goads Becket with a series of demands, supposedly from the King "beyond the water," in an effort to force from him some sort of insult or threat which might be grounds for "executing" him on the spot. The result is rather a lengthy debate between Fitzurse and Becket upon the nature of Becket's offenses to the King and the realm. Irving has cut much of this debate, but the effect upon the episode does not seem to be harmful.

Fitzurse finally draws from Becket a remark or two that he can interpret as making "the King a traitor, me a liar" (line 223), and with cries of "To arms!" the Knights rush out. Once again John of Salisbury cautions the headstrong Archbishop (lines 298-301):

Becket. Methought I answer'd moderately enough.  
John of Salisbury. As one that blows the coal to cool the  
 fire.  
 My lord, I marvel why you never lean  
 On any man's advising but your own.

Becket has indeed blown the coal to cool the fire; the simile is most apt and pithy. It is difficult to understand why Irving would wish to eliminate a phrase worthy of Pope at his best, especially as it performs a definite duty in the play as well.

This second scene of the final act ends, in the Irving version, with the exciting dialogue of Becket's preparation to conduct the vespers (lines 330-335):

John of Salisbury. He said, 'Attend the office.'  
Becket. Attend the office?  
 Why then--the Cross!--who bears my Cross  
 before me?  
Grim. I! Would that I could bear thy cross  
 indeed! (Grim takes it)  
Becket. The mitre!  
John of Salisbury. Will you wear it?--there! (Becket puts  
 on the mitre)  
Becket. The pall!  
 I go to meet my King! (Puts on the pall)

Amid the sound of vesper bells and the crashes upon the door made by the Knights, the grandeur that is the Archbishop during service is assembled. The scene must have been a moving one. To add the final nine lines of the original to this sequence of action would be anticlimactic, if not bathetic.

Irving's changes in Tennyson's final scene are slight. The majority of the deletions are of single lines, and we shall not trouble to discuss them. One excision, however, eliminates a very interesting exchange (lines 48-54):

(Fitzurse lays hold of the Archbishop's pall)  
Becket. Touch me not!  
De Brito. How the good priest gods himself!  
 He is not yet ascended to the Father.  
Fitzurse. I will not only touch, but drag you hence.

Becket's noli me tangere may not be an intentional citing from the

Scriptures; the phrase would be a natural one for Becket to seize upon under the circumstances. But De Brito senses the possibility of interpreting "touch me not" as but another example of Becket's god-like pretensions, and fills in, sarcastically, the rest of the quotation: "He is not yet ascended to the Father." It is little strokes such as this that add the seasoning which good drama never lacks, and there seems to be no reason why, when Becket is full of these touches, it should be deprived of the luster they may add.

Although this discussion of Irving's stage adaptation of Tennyson's Becket was not begun with any preconceived notions about how well Irving made use of the material he had to work with, it soon became apparent that by reducing the total number of lines in the original by somewhat over one-half, he did damage to Tennyson's text. The damage may be said to be of the following main varieties:

- 1) Structural distortion. The total elimination of one scene, the numerous inversions of scenes, incidents, and speeches, the over-emphasis of the sub-plot created by excessive cutting of the main plot, the obscuring of the structural climax, may be considered as resulting in structural distortion primarily.
- 2) Character distortion. Many of the speeches we have considered have seemed essential to the understanding either of the character speaking or of a character spoken about. The excision of such as Henry's address to the barons and bishops in Act I, Walter Map's speeches in Act II and Act III,

Margery's Act III soliloquy, Eleanor's speeches and soliloquy at the close of Act IV, and the summarizing speeches of Foliot, John of Salisbury, and Rosamund in Act V, are typical of the deletions which distort character, although, as was mentioned when they were treated individually, most of these deletions have an unfavorable, if indirect, influence upon the structure as well.

- 3) Plot distortion. The action itself does not move forward in the Irving version with the logical motivation of the original. Many of the deletions mentioned under structural distortion and character distortion have, of course, a direct effect upon the story; we noted also, especially in the Prologue and Act I, that the omission of certain speeches by Becket and the King confused the motivation of the character.
- 4) Dramatic distortion. While several instances have been noted wherein Irving gains dramatic power by wise deletion, many more instances have been shown where the dramatic potential of a passage or entire scene was impoverished or completely unrealized by an untimely deletion. Omissions such as those of the Act I dialogue between Becket and Herbert, Hilary's report of the proceedings of the council in Act I, and Walter Map's description of the coronation are examples of the type of stage-worthy passages not included in the Irving version.

These categories are admittedly not mutually exclusive; the characters'

actions determine the plot; the distribution of the various elements of the plot in a dramatically satisfying way is the structure. Their totality is the play itself. That these categories are not independent makes the distortion not less, but greater; for the distortion of one element of such a closely knit system results in distortion of the system itself.

It is therefore because of the indivisible unity of those works of genius which deserve the name of art that we cannot conclude our analysis of Irving's stage version of Becket by recommending the method of adaptation through drastic abridgement. We do not so abridge the plays of Shakespeare for presentation on the modern stage; yet Hamlet, Richard III, and Cymbeline are all of greater length than Becket; so length alone cannot be a valid objection to Tennyson's play. And to argue in favor of abridging Becket because it is not of the same order of excellence as the plays of Shakespeare is tantamount to advocating the abridgement of the symphonies of Sibelius or Dvorak whenever they are performed on the grounds that they do not measure up to those of Beethoven. The excellence of a work of art may also vary with the taste and perception of the appreciator; but so long as appreciators tend to agree that a work deserves the name of art, that work will have about it a unity which should not be disturbed by rash and extensive deletions. It may be said then that, after all, the question of abridgement is one involving just a matter of degree. But is the matter of degree so insignificant a question? There is a point beyond which a work of art cannot be violated if we would retain that excellence about it which is the mark of genius; this is a matter of degree, but it is no small

matter. Irving has abridged Becket too drastically, and has, thereby, transformed a well-ordered dramatic unit into a series of dramatic episodes; as such, the arrangement for the stage falls short of the potential greatness inherent in the original.

## APPENDIX

This tabulation has been included to give the reader more exact information about the extent of Irving's deletions of the basic manuscript. In Table A are collected all the lines of the original which Irving utilized in his arrangement; the left-hand column lists the various acts and scenes of the Irving version and the right-hand column the Cambridge edition act, scene, and line numbers of the passages in Tennyson's original which Irving included. In Table B are collected all the passages deleted from the original listed by act, scene, and line. Table C compares the total length of the original text (left-hand column) with that of Irving's abridgement (right-hand column).

TABLE A

Irving Version	Cambridge Edition
Prologue, scene 1	Prologue, lines 277 (altered), 273, 278-284, 295-313, 315-319, 341-367, 329-330, 368-369.
Prologue, scene 2	Prologue, lines 1-110, 118-143, 147-149, 153-174, 208-213, 215-217, 219-255, 258-259.
Act I, scene 1	Act I, scene 1, lines 1-14, 21-25, 39-42, 50-54, 56-60, 77-79, 99-116, 118-122, 124-, 129, 133-152, 154-187, 201-203, 204-209, 217-226.
Act I, scene 2	Act I, scene 2, lines 1-7, 11-29, 34-46.
Act I, scene 3	Act V, scene 1, lines 124-128 (altered).
Act I, scene 4	Act I, scene 3, lines 1-14, 16-17, 20-24, 38-42, 50-55, 60-63, 66-69, 72-85, 90-92, 102-114, 120, 125-129, 144-, 148-151, 155-160, 167-177, 180-188, 189, 192-200, 209-, 219-220, 236-253, 256-261, 269-285, 288-294, 304-311, 323-328, 356-373, 379-381, 388-393, 410-414, 418-422, 424-425, 429-430, 432, plus addenda.
Act II, scene 1	Act II, scene 1, lines 11-17, 22-24, 35-38, 40-41, 49-51, 53-60, 63-77, 85-87, 92-94, 98-99, 100-101, 102-166, 169-173, Act III, scene 1, lines 4-15, 43-44, 48-49, Act II, scene 1, lines 174-177, Act III, scene 1, lines 50-77, 83-86, 102-157, 164, 159-160, 165-173, 175-182, 184-187, 190-204.
Act III, scene 1	Act II, scene 2, lines (first 11 lines unaccounted for) 33-41, 46-48, 53-57, 62-64, 67-77, 86-89, 93-100, 105-106, 107-112, 125-151, 153-154, Act III, scene 3, lines 2-9, 22-24, 157-183, 185, 204, 252-253, 254-257, 262-264, 267-268.

TABLE A (Continued)

<u>Irving Version</u>	<u>Cambridge Edition</u>
Act III, scene 2	Act III, scene 2, lines 1-5, 9-36, Act IV, scene 1, lines 1-40, 46-49, Act IV, scene 2, lines 1-41, 44-53, 55-61, 65-, 64, 66-85, 89-95, 97-113, 115-119, 123-125, 127-136, 146-157, 162-, 166-168, 170-, 210-211.
Act IV, scene 1	Act V, scene 1, lines 1-2, 4-8, 11-13, 31, (3 lines unaccounted for), 40-57, 79-80, 58-, 75-, 84-96, 98-, 105-107, 112-118, 121-, 133-137, 140-147.
Act IV, scene 2	Act V, scene 2, lines 6, 8-10, 36-47, 68-70, 72-, 74-88, 94-97, 97-103, 122, 124-133, 139-152, 155-156, 158-159, 161-171, 203-213, 216-, 220-224, 259-270, 280-291, 303-321, 324-335.
Act IV, scene 3	Act V, scene 3, lines 1-15, 17-, 21-33, 36, 38-39, 41-, 43-44, 46-47, 55-, 59-72, 74-75, 82, 76, 83-85, 88-89, 90-91, 95-, 100, 99, 101.

TABLE BPassages Deleted from Original

- Prologue, lines 111-117, 144-146, 150-152, 175-207, 214, 218, 256-258, 260-272, 274-276, 285-294, 314, 320-328, 331-340.
- Act I, scene 1, lines 15-20, 26-38, 43-49, 55, 61-76, 80-98, 117, 123, 125-128, 130-132, 153, 188-200, 203, 210-216.
- Act I, scene 2, lines 8-10, 30-33.
- Act I, scene 3, lines 15, 18-19, 25-37, 43-49, 56-59, 64-65, 70-71, 86-89, 93-101, 115-119, 121-124, 130-143, 145-147, 152-154, 161-166, 178-179, 189, 190-191, 201-208, 210-218, 221-235, 254-255, 262-268, 286-287, 295-303, 312-322, 329-355, 374-378, 382-387, 394-409, 415-417, 423, 426-428, 431.
- Act I, scene 4, lines 1-260 (total scene).
- Act II, scene 1, lines 1-10, 18-21, 25-34, 39, 42-48, 52, 61-62, 78-84, 88-91, 95-97, 99, 101, 167-168.
- Act II, scene 2, lines 1-32, 42-43, 49-52, 58-61, 65-66, 78-85, 90-93, 101-104, 106, 113-124, 152, 155-297.
- Act III, scene 1, lines 1-3, 16-42, 45-47, 78-82, 87-101, 158, 161-163, 174, 183, 188-189.
- Act III, scene 2, lines 6-8.
- Act III, scene 3, lines 1, 10-21, 25-156, 184, 186-203, 205-251, 253, 258-261, 265-266.
- Act IV, scene 1, lines 41-45, 50-58.
- Act IV, scene 2, lines 42-43, 54, 62-63, 86-88, 96, 114, 120-122, 126, 137-145, 158-161, 163-165, 169, 171-209, 212-264.
- Act V, scene 1, lines 3, 9-10, 14-30, 32-39, 59-74, 76-78, 81-83, 97, 99-104, 108-111, 119-120, 122-123, 129-132, 138-139.
- Act V, scene 2, lines 1-5, 7, 11-35, 48-67, 71, 73, 89-93, 97, 104-121, 123, 134-138, 153-154, 157, 160, 172-202, 214-215, 217-219, 225-258, 271-279, 292-302, 322-323, 336-343.
- Act V, scene 3, lines 16, 18-20, 34-35, 37, 40, 42, 45, 48-54, 56-58, 73, 77-81, 86-87, 89, 92-94, 96-98, 102-104.

TABLE CTotal Length

<u>Original</u>		<u>Irving's Abridgement</u>	
Prologue	369	Prologue, scene 1	64
Act I, scene 1	226	Prologue, scene 2	209
Act I, scene 2	46	Act I, scene 1	134
Act I, scene 3	432	Act I, scene 2	39
Act I, scene 4	260	Act I, scene 3	5
Act II, scene 1	177	Act I, scene 4	228
Act II, scene 2	297	Act II, scene 1	269
Act III, scene 1	204	Act III, scene 1	142
Act III, scene 2	35	Act III, scene 2	218
Act III, scene 3	268	Act IV, scene 1	74
Act IV, scene 1	58	Act IV, scene 2	158
Act IV, scene 2	264	Act IV, scene 3	67
Act V, scene 1	147		
Act V, scene 2	343		1,607
Act V, scene 3	<u>106</u>		
	3,232		