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of flattery, he like the witch, is taken aback by an unexpected answer. Lear wants his daughter Cordelia to say something more opulent than her sisters. Very unexpected is the reply of Cordelia: "Nothing, my lord". The confession of sincere love provokes his wrath:

"Here I disclaim all my paternal care,

Propinquity and property of blood

And as a stranger to my heart and me

Hold thee from this for ever."

The blind arrogant also banishes Kent.

The same disposition prevails in his dealings with Goneril. What Goneril has done is no more than to require him 'a little to despatch' and reform his train of knighthood. This is painful indeed; as abdication of kingship is always. But Lear's curses on Goneril are possible not for a father but for one who is completely crippled by power and disastrous craving for authority — "Hear, Nature hear! dear goddess, hear / Suspend thy purpose, if thou didst intend / To make this creature fruitful / Into her womb convey sterility."

All such things can possibly happen in a pagan primitive world where Christianity has not penetrated. This perhaps is the reason that Roland Frye points out that "King Lear" is "a secular drama set in a prechristian and explicitly pagan world." But a careful study shows that the emphasis is put on the regeneration