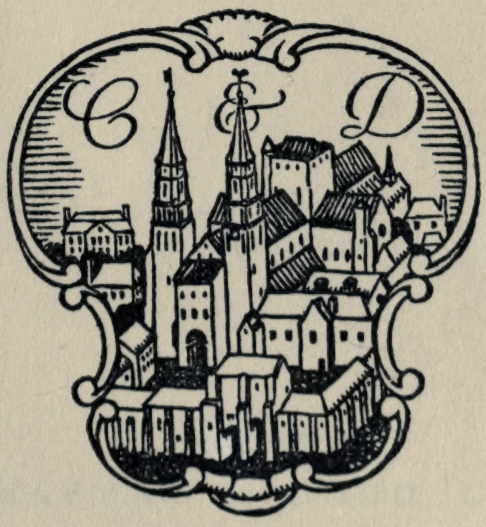
THE FIVE AUTHORS OF 'SHAKE-SPEARES SONNETS'



THE FIVE AUTHORS
OF
'SHAKE-SPEARES SONNETS'

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LONDON
CHAPMAN & DODD, LTD.
MCMXXIII

Cahill & Co., Ltd., London and Dublin.

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PREFACE

In the following pages an entirely new solution of the 'Problem of the *Sonnets*' is propounded and demonstrated. Compared with most of its predecessors, it will, I fear, be found dull and unromantic—it has nothing to do with Mary Fitton or William Hughes, The Ideal Man or the Doctrine of a Celibate Church. 'Competitive Sonnetteering' is the *mot d'énigme*, and stripped to its essentials my new theory may be stated shortly thus:

Of the one hundred and fifty-four sonnets published in 1609 under the title of "*Shakespeares Sonnets*," Shakespeare was responsible for rather less than a quarter, while nine-tenths of the remainder were contributed in varying proportions by four other poets (who may be identified with more or less certainty as Barnes, Warner, Donne, and Daniel) writing in competition with him and each other in a series of private sonnet-tournaments, which were fought out some time between 1594 and 1599, under the auspices of the Earl of Southampton.

A statement of this theory in its complete form is given in *Chapter I.*

Chapters II., III. and IV. present the eighty-eight sonnets of the eight 'Personal' or 'Patron and Poet' series, each chapter dealing with one of the three 'batches' in which they were successively presented to Southampton for judgment. These eight series are by far the most interesting section of the *Sonnets*. They are all historically connected, and form a more or less homogeneous whole; the four contributors, Shakespeare, Barnes, Warner, and Donne, remain the same throughout; they speak in their own persons; and their contributions are full of personal allusions to the Patron and to each other. *Chapter V.* presents the fifty-two sonnets of the five 'Dramatic' or 'Lover and Mistress' series. Each of these series is merely a self-contained example of the art of competitive sonnetteering; the contributors are (except in one unimportant case) three in number instead of four; they are not the same throughout; they speak not in their own persons, but in that of their employer (Southampton or another); and there is a complete absence of repartee and personal allusion. In these four chapters each series (whether four-poet or three-poet) has been printed *across the double-page*, with each sonnet standing under its proper author, and in its proper order. And to each series has been attached its quota of notes discussing the various treatments of the common theme, collating 'verbal parallelisms,' calling attention to examples of the 'characteristics' of the various authors, explaining personal allusions, and, in short, giving a detailed interpretation of each sonnet on the lines demanded by The Theory.

Chapter VI. presents the fourteen remaining non-serial or 'Occasional' sonnets. Though only three of them have any relation to The Theory, I have thought it desirable, for the sake of completeness, to annotate all of them in the same way as the serial sonnets, mainly with reference to the question of authorship—Shakespearean or non-Shakespearean. *Chapter VII.* uses The Theory to illuminate the obscure question of the 'Order' of the Sonnets, *i.e.*, the way in which they were arranged in the original Quarto. *Chapter VIII.* gives an abstract of the evidence on which my

identifications of Shakespeare's four fellow-competitors are based. *Chapter IX.* reviews from the new angle of vision provided by The Theory the two well-worn problems, 'The People of the *Sonnets*,' and 'Mr. W. H.' And *Chapter X.* anticipates and attempts to meet certain more or less obvious objections to my general thesis.

In the Appendix will be found the text of the *Sonnets* with the original spelling and punctuation. The text used in the body of the work is (by kind permission of Messrs. J. M. Dent & Sons) that of the Everyman Shakespeare, while the text of Appendix V., Shake-speares Sonnets, is by the courtesy of the Clarendon Press, taken from that published in the Tudor and Stuart Library. The quotations from the notes of previous commentators are taken almost exclusively from Mr. Knox Pooler's excellent edition in the Arden Series (1918).

I desire to express my gratitude to my two friends Mr. R. Sheepshanks and Mr. H. Wardle—to the former for much valuable advice, to the latter for substantial assistance in the task of preparing this book for publication.

That all Shakespearean scholars will, sooner or later, agree in accepting the general thesis of 'Competitive Sonnetteering' as the one and only clue to the complicated series of puzzles presented by the *Sonnets* seems to me to be quite certain. My own detailed analyses of these puzzles are bound, of course, to contain many errors, but these errors will be found to be errors of detail only; I am entirely confident that the more critically my main position is examined, and the more severely it is tested, the more clearly will its essential soundness be made to appear.

H. T. S. FORREST.

Budleigh Salterton, September,
1923.

CHAPTER I.—THE NEW THEORY.

In 1609 there was published in London, under the title of "*Shake-speares Sonnets,*"[1] a small quarto containing a collection of 154 'English-form' sonnets, to which was appended a narrative poem in Rime Royal, entitled *A Lover's Complaint.* The publisher was a stationer's assistant named Thomas Thorpe, and the literary historians agree in holding that the publication was a 'piratical' one, *i.e.*, a publisher's venture made without the author's knowledge or consent. The venture appears to have been a failure; no second edition was printed, and no allusion either to the collection itself or to individual lines or passages is traceable in contemporary literature. In fact, when some thirty years later the *Sonnets* were reprinted (in a mangled and defective form) as part of a collection of Shakespearean and pseudo-Shakespearean poetry, they were referred to in the preface in terms which clearly show that the editor, John Benson, regarded them as an entirely new 'discovery.' They remained more or less neglected till the latter part of the eighteenth century, when Steevens 're-discovered' Thorpe's text, and published it as a supplement to his edition of Shakespearean quartos. Since this republication the *Sonnets* have attracted an increasingly large share of critical attention, and the many biographical puzzles which they present have given rise to an enormous mass of speculative writing—some of it of a very wild character. But many of our soundest Shakespeareans, from Steevens himself onwards, have found their chief stumbling-block not in these *biographical* puzzles but in the *literary* difficulty that the *Sonnets* exhibit a good deal of very indifferent verse, and convict the author of having shewn himself on a good many occasions to be a very indifferent artist.

Both classes of difficulties, the biographical as well as the literary, are removed by my new theory of 'Competitive Sonnetteering' which is set forth in detail below. This theory owes nothing to 'outside' sources, being based solely on an analysis of the text of the original quarto. And I am convinced that any unprejudiced investigator who will take the trouble to subject this text to a really strict and systematic analysis of the kind attempted in the following pages will find himself confronted by such a mass of unexpected, and indeed unprecedented, phenomena that he will be forced to the conclusion—quite apart from any consideration of the correctness or otherwise of the *synthetic* part of my theory—that Shakespeare could not have been the sole, or even the main, author of the *Sonnets.*

I have considered several ways of introducing this new theory, and after much hesitation have decided to employ 'The Historical Method'—that is to say, I am going to ask the kind reader to be good enough to listen to a circumstantial account of how the idea of composite authorship first came into my mind, and how it was gradually elaborated into the complete Theory which he will find set forth at the end of this chapter. The disadvantage of this personal way of presenting a thesis is that it makes one appear insufferably egotistical; and I can only hope that he will accept my assurance that I

[1] The unusual *form* of the title deserves notice; there appears to be no contemporary parallel.

am adopting it for no other reason than that I think that it is, in the long run, the method most likely to economize his time and attention.

. . . . . .

Well, then, it happened in the early summer of 1918 that being then resident "somewhere east of Suez" and much afflicted by one of the vilest of the many vile climates to be met with in those regions of our planet I had sought relief in a well-thumbed volume of Shakespeare, and after reading for the twentieth or thirtieth time that lovely poem *Venus and Adonis* was idly turning over the pages of the *Sonnets*, and wondering why they always aroused in me so strong a feeling of repulsion, when a happy thought flashed across my mind—Why not do what I had never done before, read the *Sonnets* right through from beginning to end, and see if I cannot appreciate them as one ought to appreciate the lyrical *magnum opus* of the greatest of all our poets? I set to work then and there; but, as I plodded on conscientiously from sonnet to sonnet with the music of the *Venus* still ringing in my ears, I became aware of an ever-deepening sense of disillusionment and disappointment until, at last, about half-way through the collection, I found myself exclaiming—"Shakespeare simply *couldn't* have written some of this rubbish"—and, although I did not know it, my new Theory was born!

Shutting up the *Sonnets* with a sigh of relief, I hastened to consult the only books about Shakespeare to be found in the house—the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and Sir W. Raleigh's monograph in the Men of Letters series—in order to discover the amount of critical authority available for the support of my newly-born idea of 'composite authorship.' To my great astonishment, I found that though there had been any amount of theorizing about the *Sonnets*—about their date, the people they were addressed and dedicated to, their autobiographical value, and so forth—the possibility of their being the work of more than one author seemed never to have been considered. Shaken but still clinging obstinately to my faith in my own judgment I refused to be put off by this unaccountable oversight on the part of the authorities, and made up my mind to follow up the clue I had hit upon to the end, no matter into what heresies or absurdities it might lead me.

For the next three weeks or so, therefore, I devoted the whole of my not over-abundant leisure to the task of examining minutely every single one of the hundred and fifty-four sonnets in the collection. And at the end of that period, I found that I had succeeded in producing two lists, the *first* consisting of sonnets so bad that they couldn't have been written by Shakespeare, and the *second* consisting of sonnets so good that they couldn't have been written by anybody else. Here are the two lists (I copy them from my rough notes made at the time):

† *List No.* 1. (Non Shakespearean.) 5, 7, 8, 9, 12, 16, 17, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, 28, 31, 35, 38, 42, 46, 47, 48, 51, 53, 54, 56, 59, 60, 63, 65, 67, 69, 72, 81, 82, 84, 93, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 103, 105, 107, 111, 112, 113, 118, 119, 122, 124, 125, 128, 135, 145, 151, 153.

* *List No.* 2. (Shakespearean.) 1, 2, 3, 18, 26, 29, 33, 64, 66, 73, 78, 79, 102, 106, 132, 143, 144, 146.

The remaining eighty sonnets I had marked as 'doubtful.'

In compiling these lists I was guided solely by *æsthetic* considerations. In every sonnet in the first list I had found a serious flaw or flaws—confusion of thought or language, banality or clumsiness of expression, preciosity or absurdity of phrase, deficiency in rhythm or rhyme, etc.—which I could not conceive of as existing in the work of the author of *Venus and Adonis*. And in the second list I included no sonnet which had not completely satisfied my mind and my ear as being the work of Shakespeare at his lyrical best.

Now in the course of my repeated perusals of the text, I had noticed (as, of course,

the most casual reader must notice) that in a good many cases one sonnet is clearly a continuation of its predecessor and forms with it a single poem. So my next very obvious step was to try to pick out all these ' sequences ' in the hope that they might supply some additional items for my two lists. After a careful search, I discovered no less than twenty-two cases in which the connection appeared to be quite certain. Here is the list :

List of 'Sequences.' Nos. 5-6, 9-10, 15-16, 27-28, 33-34, 44-45, 50-51, 67-68, 73-74, 78-79, 50-51, 67-68, 73-74, 78-79, 82-83, 85-86, 88-89-90, 91-92-93, 98-99, 100-101, 109-110, 113-114.

This list gave me nine new items for my first list, *viz.*, Nos. 6, 10, 15, 50, 68, 83, 91, 92, 114 ; and two for my second list, viz., Nos. 34, 74.

My lists, therefore, in their final form read as follows :—

† *List No.* 1. (Non-Shakespearean.) 65 Sonnets, *viz.*: Nos. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 15, 16, 17, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, 28, 31, 35, 38, 42, 46, 47, 48, 50, 51, 53, 54, 56, 59, 60, 63, 65, 67, 68, 69, 72, 81, 82, 83, 84, 91, 92, 93, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 103, 105, 107, 111, 112, 113, 114, 118, 119, 122, 124, 125, 128, 135, 145, 151, 153.

* *List No* 2. (*Shakespearean.*) 20 Sonnets, *viz.*: Nos. 1, 2, 3, 18, 26, 29, 33, 34, 64, 66, 73, 74, 78, 79, 102, 106, 132, 143, 144, 146.

At this point I must digress a little in order to explain that a few days after the birth of The Theory in the circumstances mentioned above, I had written to the nearest bookseller (three hundred miles away), ordering Lee's *Life of Shakespeare* and any reasonably modern annotated edition of the *Sonnets* he might have in stock or be able to procure elsewhere. And now, just as I had completed these two lists, the *Life* arrived, together with an intimation that the annotated edition was not available but had been ordered from Home. This meant, in the then prevailing conditions, a delay of anything from two to three months ; so there was nothing for it but to await its arrival with what patience I might, and meanwhile get all I could out of the *Life*.

Sir Sidney Lee's book was my first introduction to *Sonnets* criticism. I found to my great satisfaction, that he had treated the *Sonnets* with exceptional fulness, especially in the matter of their affinity with the work of Shakespeare's contemporaries and the common debt which he and they owed to the sonnetteering schools of France and Italy. I read most carefully everything he had to say on the subject of the *Sonnets* and sonnetting, checking the references by the text ; and I eventually came to the provisional conclusion (which I have seen no reason to alter since), that he had established his three main points, *viz.* :

(1.) The *Sonnets* are conventional in tone and sentiment, and cannot be considered as reflecting to any material degree the author's real emotions.

(2.) The ' hero ' of the *Sonnets* is the third Earl of Southampton.

(3.) The *Sonnets* were not printed in their proper order.

This third point of Sir Sidney's cheered me considerably, as it went to confirm a strong suspicion I had formed as the result of my repeated investigations of the text, namely, that the *Sonnets* had been written on not more than ten or a dozen themes, and that the individual sonnets belonging to these themes had been scattered more or less at random about the collection. Furthermore, an *obiter dictum* of Sir Sidney's on *The Phœnix and the Turtle* had given a definite bent to my speculations as to how or why the work of other men had been mixed up with Shakespeare's and published under his name. Speaking of that strange poem, Sir Sidney says : " It is chiefly memorable for the evidence it affords of Shakespeare's amiable acquiescence in a fantastic scheme of professional homage on the part of contemporary poets to a patron of promising repute."

This sentence linking itself up in my mind with my two ideas of ' composite authorship ' and ' dislocated themes ' at once suggested the hypothesis that my ' non-Shakespearean ' sonnets were the work of some other poet or poets writing in rivalry with Shakespeare on certain specified topics or themes in pursuance of some " scheme of professional homage " to Southampton. I determined to test this hypothesis thoroughly, and as a first step in this direction set myself to make a list of these themes or topics, and to sort out the sonnets belonging to each theme from the jumble-heap. This proved to be a lengthy and at times a very exasperating business, but eventually after much intending of the mind and many reshufflings I managed to produce the following list. (I transcribe, as always, from my rough notes.) :

List of Themes.

Theme No. (1).—The Poet urges The Patron to marry. Seventeen Sonnets, viz. : Nos. *1, *2, *3, 4, †5, †6, †7, †8, †9, †10, 11, †12, 13, 14, †15, †16, †17.

Theme No. (2).—The Poet promises to immortalise his Patron in his verse. Twelve Sonnets, viz. : Nos. *18, 19, †21, †53, †54, 55, †60, 62, †63, *64, †65, †81.

Theme No. (3).—The Poet forgets his troubles in thinking of his Patron. Four Sonnets, viz. : Nos. *29, 30, †31, 37.

Theme No. (4).—The Poet dedicates his sonnets to his Patron. Four sonnets, viz. : Nos. †23, *26, †38, †105.

Theme No. (5).—The Poet makes excuses for not writing. Sixteen sonnets, viz. : Nos. †59, *78, *79, 80, †82, †83, †84, 85, 86, †100, †101, *102, †103, 104, *106, 108.

Theme No. (6).—The Poet absent from the object of his affections (man or woman uncertain) describes his painful feelings. Twenty-one sonnets, viz. : Nos. †24, †27, †28, 43, 44, 45, †46, †47, †48, †50, †51, 52, 57, 58, 61, 75, †97, †98, †99, †113, †114.

Theme No. (7).—The eternal Triangle. Charges and Counter-chargès of infidelity, neglect, and breach of friendship (persons indistinct). Thirty-one sonnets, viz. : Nos. 25, *33, *34, †35, 36, 40, 41, †42, †56, †69, 70, 94, 95, 96, 109, 110, †111, †112, 115, 116, 117, †118, †119, 120, 121, 123, †124, †125, 133, 134, *144.

Theme No. (8).—The Poet anticipates imminent death. Eight sonnets, viz. : Nos. †22, 32, 39, 71, †72, *73, *74, 76.

Theme No. (9).—The Poet anticipates estrangement from the object of his affections (man or woman uncertain). Eight sonnets, viz. : Nos. 49, 87, 88, 89, 90, †91, †92, †93.

Theme No. (10).—The Poet reproaches his dark and fickle mistress. Nine sonnets, viz. : Nos. 127, 131, *132, 137, 141, 147, 148, 150, 152.

Theme No. (11).—The Will sonnets. Four sonnets, viz. : Nos. †135, 136, 142, *143.

Miscellaneous Sonnets, i.e., unconnected with any special theme. Twenty sonnets, viz. : Nos. 20, *66, †67, †68, 77, †107, †122, 126, †128, 129, 130, 138, 139, 140, †145, *146, 149, †151, †153, 154.

N.B.—Sonnets marked with an asterisk * belong to *List No.* 2 above (Shakespearean). Sonnets marked with an obelus † belong to *List No.* 1 above (Non-Shakespearean). Sonnets unmarked belong to the ' doubtful ' list.

By this time I had become very familiar with the text of the *Sonnets*, and I found that my first vaguely-formed idea of composite authorship, *i.e.*, of a poet or poets writing in rivalry with Shakespeare on certain definite themes had gradually crystallized into a belief that there were at least three such poets, and that the work of each of these three could be more or less easily distinguished from that of Shakespeare and the other two by certain peculiar characteristics of thought and style—poet A's chief characteristic being graceful writing marred by a certain ' sloppiness ' of thought and expression, poet B's a clear but pedestrian style strongly flavoured with technical legal phraseology, and poet C's super-subtle thought expressed in obscure and extravagant language. I accordingly christened them The Minor Poet, The Lawyer, and The Concettist respectively, and set to work to distribute among them as many of the sixty-five Sonnets in List No. 1 as I could. I was more successful than I expected, and without much difficulty produced the following list :

1. **The Minor Poet.** Ten sonnets, viz.: Nos. 7, 8, 38, 54, 60, 72, 98, 99, 118, 119.
2. **The Lawyer.** Thirteen sonnets, viz.: Nos. 6, 9, 21, 31, 35, 46, 65, 69, 82, 83, 84, 111, 125.
3. **The Concettist.** Nine sonnets, viz.: Nos. 16, 24, 53, 59, 81, 100, 103, 113, 114.
4. **Unassigned.** Thirty-three sonnets, viz.: Nos. 5, 10, 12, 15, 17, 22, 23, 27, 28, 42, 47, 48, 50, 51, 56, 63, 67, 68, 91, 92, 93, 97, 101, 105, 107, 112, 122, 124, 128, 135, 145, 151, 153.

Another point, too, I had come to see more and more clearly. The striking samenesses in the ' thoughts ' of sonnets belonging to the same theme, and the really extraordinary number of repetitions in the language (' verbal parallelisms ' was the name I eventually decided to give them), which they exhibited could mean only one thing, and that was that the competing poets were not merely dealing with the same themes, but were in each case writing with their eyes on an actual ' copy '—a sonnet or set of sonnets of which they had to make ' a free translation ' so to speak. It was not hard to guess which of them was most likely to have furnished the ' copy,' and so I arrived at the general idea of " *Shakespeare's Sonnets* " being in essence a collection of competitive exercises composed by Shakespeare and some other poets on certain set themes with Shakespeare's contribution as the model for imitation in each case.

This sent me back again to my List of Themes. And here I found at once a very striking confirmation of the accuracy of this general idea. If the reader will kindly refer to the list on the previous page, he will find that in no less than six out of the ten Themes the number of sonnets is either four or a multiple of four, viz.: Nos. 3, 4 and 11, four; Nos. 8 and 9, eight; No. 2, twelve; and No. 5, sixteen. This fact considered along with my identification of *three* rival poets made me almost certain in my own mind that Shakespeare's rivals were these three, and these three only. And this belief was still further strengthened when I discovered that it did not clash in any way with the provisional distribution I had made among these three poets of half the obelized sonnets comprised in List No. 1—negative evidence, it is true, but still when the laws of chance were considered, evidence of a highly significant character. Another significant circumstance also not easily reconcilable with the laws of chance forced itself on my attention. This was the circumstance that among the twenty-one sonnets which made up the Absence (No. 6) series, there was *not a single one* starred as Shakespearean. This fact considered along with the number of sonnets in the series (21), naturally suggested the idea that in this series Shakespeare's contribution was—for some reason or other—missing, and the number of poets, therefore, three instead of four. For the same reason I came to the same conclusion about Series No. 10, except that in the case of this series the poet who had dropped out could not be Shakespeare, inasmuch as one of the sonnets (No. 132) belonged to the Shakespearean list (No. 2), but one of the three others. This train of reasoning left, it is true, two Themes, viz., No. 1 (seventeen sonnets), and No. 7 (thirty-one sonnets) unaccounted for, but I was more than satisfied with the measure of success I had attained, and very well content to leave these two exceptions to be investigated later on.

So with the idea of four rival poets firmly fixed in my mind I started with great confidence to take what was plainly indicated as the next step in my investigations, namely, to distribute the ' competitive ' sonnets among these four competitors, Theme by Theme. This I found a long and difficult task; but it was made extraordinarily interesting by the discovery, as each new Theme was taken up, of many fresh instances of identity of thought, of ' verbal parallelism,' and of idiosyncrasy of style and language—all working out perfectly into ' a concatenation accordingly.' I had worked through Themes Nos. one to five, and hammered them out into practically the identical shape in which they will be presented in this book, when the long-expected annotated

edition of the *Sonnets* arrived in the shape of Mr. Knox Pooler's just-published volume in the Arden Series.

The arrival of this book marked a very definite stage in the development of my ideas about The Theory, and the way in which I should treat it. I suspended forthwith my labours on my themes and lists, and devoted the whole of my attention for the next month or two to Mr. Knox Pooler's notes and explanations. I read the book through from beginning to end, with the greatest care, twice. It yielded me a very substantial addition to my stock of information about the *Sonnets* and their problems, much enlightenment with regard to the various passages which had puzzled me, and a quite satisfactory number of points which went to confirm the conclusions of The Theory. But the evidence it afforded of the care and thoroughness with which practically every line in the collection had been weighed and tested by successive generations of commentators forced upon me the depressing conviction, that if The Theory was to be given a fair chance it would not be enough for me merely to give an outline sketch of it in a magazine article (as had been my intention), for others to fill up if they chose ; but I must write a regular book in which each series should be considered in detail from the point of view of The Theory, sonnet by sonnet.

The history of the development of The Theory from this point onwards to its completion about a year later, becomes so complicated that I have found it impossible to continue it on chronological lines. Mr. Pooler's book pointed out to me many promising-looking paths, and I determined to explore them all. Some of them led me to rich tracts of undiscovered country ; others proved to be mere connections between these main paths ; and not a few of them ended in a cul-de-sac. A detailed account of my wanderings could be of no possible interest to the reader, even if I were able to set them down with any approach to accuracy, which I very much doubt. But the actual fruits of these explorations—the ' discoveries ' I made from time to time of facts which went to swell the steadily-increasing mass of evidence in favour of The Theory—stand on record in my notes, and I will note here three of the more important.

Discovery No. I. The Link Sonnet. (No. 121.)

The kind reader will remember that my Series No. 7—the largest of all, consisting of no less than thirty-one sonnets—did not fit in with either the ' Four-poet ' or the ' Three-poet ' theory, and was left for future investigation. I struggled with the problem of this series for a long time before it dawned on me that sonnet No. 121, which was worrying me a good deal by its truculent tone (so out of harmony with the others in which the poets admit the error of their ways), was a reply to some sonnets in the series, and was in turn alluded to in some others. Working out this clue I found the series fall into line as if by magic. The thirty-one sonnets resolved themselves swiftly and easily into a series of eight in which the four poets gently chide The Patron for his neglect of them, a single sonnet (No. 121) in which The Patron makes a truculent reply, a series of sixteen in which the four poets hasten to make him an *amende honorable*, and six sonnets on an ' Intrigue ' *motif*, which were seen to form a separate ' three-poet ' series (with Shakespeare as one of the three).

Discovery No. II. The distinction between the ' Personal ' and the ' Dramatic ' series.

When examining the different series for ' verbal parallelisms ' I noticed several instances in which a competitor was obviously holding up to ridicule a line or phrase used by one of his rivals ; but it was some time before I realized the great lengths to

which this parody business had been carried, and longer still before it struck me that some of the lines which were puzzling me owed their difficulty to the fact that the authors were making a concealed personal allusion (usually of an uncomplimentary nature) to one of the others' appearance, or profession, or private character. But what puzzled me considerably was the fact that while some series exhibited a remarkable profusion of parody and personal allusion, others (including some of the longest) had none at all. However, after the discovery first of the Link-Sonnet (No. 121), and secondly, of a ninth 'Estrangement' Sonnet (No. 149), which converted that series from a 'four-poet' into a 'three-poet' one, and at the same time established pretty conclusively that the addressee was a woman, I began to put two and two together and eventually made a very important discovery, which explained away the two above-mentioned difficulties as well as several others. This was the discovery that the thirteen series fell into two very distinctly differentiated divisions or sections, the first section consisting of eight connected series addressed to a masculine patron by the four poets speaking in their own persons and incidentally 'ragging' each other with great freedom, and the second section consisting of five disconnected series addressed to a woman (or women) by three of the four poets (the composition of the trio varying from series to series) speaking in the person of a patron or employer and eschewing personal and satirical allusions of every kind. Adopting a nomenclature suggested in Mr. Massey's book on the *Sonnets* I called them the 'Personal' and the 'Dramatic' sections respectively, and this distinction between the eight 'Personal' series and the five 'Dramatic' series at once took its place as one of the fundamental propositions of The Theory.

A corollary to the discovery of the systematic 'ragging' of the 'Personal' series was the re-christening of The Concettist. I found that right through the eight Personal series The Concettist stood out as the champion parodist and allusion-monger, his contributions containing more of this sort of thing than those of all the other three put together. So after due consideration I changed his name to The 'Humorist' in recognition of the fact that his chief characteristic now turned out to be a subtle and ironic humour of a peculiarly distinctive quality.

Discovery No. III. The Newcomer.

As has been explained under the heading "Link-Sonnet" above, three 'three-poet' series—Absence, Estrangement and Intrigue—had been established at an early stage of my investigations. These added to the original nine-sonnet Dark Lady series (subsequently enlarged to twelve sonnets) and the original four-sonnet 'Will' series made up a total of fifty-two sonnets for the Dramatic section. Now Shakespeare had been eliminated from the Absence series, tentatively at first for reasons noted above, and quite definitely later on when on being analysed the series was found to divide up very easily and satisfactorily into three connected sequences which exhibited even more clearly than usual the 'Characteristics' of The Minor Poet, The Lawyer and The Humorist respectively. From the remaining three three-poet series The Humorist had been excluded at an early stage owing to the absence of any sonnet exhibiting his peculiar humour and super-subtlety of thought; and I assumed as a matter of course that in these three series the competitors were the other three, viz., Shakespeare, The Minor Poet, and The Lawyer. But though Shakespeare's and The Lawyer's contributions gave no trouble, I was much puzzled by the change which seemed to have come over the spirit of The Minor Poet's effusions. Though the versification of the ten sonnets—all patently the work of the same hand—continued to be smooth and melodious, they appeared to me to lack both the merits and the defects of The Minor Poet's Muse, their

most obvious characteristic being a rather colourless correctness. Now correctness is the last quality that can be predicated of The Minor Poet's contributions to the eight Personal series and the Absence series, and I was forced to the conclusion that in these series he, too, had dropped out and his place had been taken by another poet. This poet I christened, provisionally, ' The Newcomer.'

Many other interesting items of more or less importance to The Theory were discovered as the analysis proceeded, such as the identification one after the other of the four poets—the ' unknown quantities,' The Minor Poet, The Lawyer, The Humorist, and The Newcomer—with real flesh-and-blood literary contemporaries of Shakespeare, the ' Palinodes ' of the Moribund Poet Series, and the ' Shakespearizing ' of the Absence series. But these are subsidiary points which, I think, I should not attempt to explain at this stage. I shall, therefore, bring this history—a rather ' scrappy ' one, I fear—of the genesis of my Theory to an end, and proceed to state The Theory itself in its final and complete form as follows :

THE ' COMPETITIVE SONNETTEERING ' THEORY.

Proposition I.

The 154 Sonnets consist of 140 *serial* sonnets divided into thirteen series, plus a group of 14 *non-serial* or ' occasional ' sonnets.

Proposition II.

Each of the thirteen series of serial sonnets has for its subject one dominant theme with which all the sonnets in the series deal directly or indirectly. This invests each series with an ' atmosphere ' so distinctive that practically every one of the one hundred-and-forty serial sonnets can be assigned to its proper series at sight.

List of Series and Themes.

Series No. 1 (19 Sonnets). *Theme :* The Poet urges The Patron to marry in his own and posterity's interest. *Short Title :* Matrimony Advocated. Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20, 126.

Series No. 2. (12 Sonnets) *Theme :* The Poet promises to enshrine The Patron's gifts and graces in immortal verse. *Short Title :* Beauty Immortalized. Nos. 18, 19, 21, 53, 54, 55, 60, 62, 63, 64, 65, 81.

Series No. 3 (4 Sonnets). *Theme :* The Poet sunk in dejection comforts himself by thinking of The Patron. *Short Title :* Despondency Dispelled. Nos. 29, 30, 31, 37.

Series No. 4 (4 Sonnets). *Theme :* The Poet modestly commends to The Patron his first batch of adulatory sonnets. *Short Title :* Epistle Dedicatory. Nos. 23, 26, 38, 105.

Series No. 5 (16 Sonnets). *Theme :* The Poet proffers his excuses for delaying to send a second batch of adulatory sonnets. *Short Title :* Poet's Excuses. Nos. 59, 78, 79, 80, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 106, 108.

Series No. 6 (8 Sonnets). *Theme :* The Poet mildly reproves The Patron for deserting him and getting into bad company. *Short Title :* Patron's Peccadilloes. Nos. 33, 34, 35, 69, 70, 94, 95, 96.

Sonnet 121. The Patron makes a " *tu quoque* " reply to No. 6. *Short Title :* Link Sonnet.

Series No. 7 (16 Sonnets). *Theme :* The Poet contritely recognises the truth of The Patron's countercharges, and asks to be forgiven. *Short Title :* Poet's Repentance. Nos. 25, 36, 56, 109, 110, 111, 112, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 123, 124, 125.

Series No. 8 (8 Sonnets). *Theme :* The Poet in anticipation of immediate death commends to the Patron his completed tale of adulatory sonnets. *Short Title :* Moribund Poet. Nos. 22, 32, 39, 71, 72, 73, 74, 76.

Series No. 9 (21 Sonnets). *Theme :* The Lover absent from his Mistress describes his feelings. *Short Title :* Absence. Nos. 24, 27, 28, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 50, 51, 52, 57, 58, 61, 75, 97, 98, 99, 113, 114.

Series No. 10 (9 Sonnets). *Theme :* The Lover sadly anticipates the loss of his Mistress's affection. *Short Title :* Estrangement Anticipated. Nos. 49, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 149.

Series No. 11 (6 Sonnets). *Theme :* The Lover is annoyed at discovering an intrigue between his Mistress and his best friend. *Short Title :* Intrigue. Nos. 40, 41, 42, 133, 134, 144.

Series No. 12 (12 Sonnets). *Theme :* The Lover deplores his infatuation for a frail and fickle brunette. *Short Title :* Dark Lady. Nos. 127, 130, 131, 132, 137, 139, 140, 141, 147, 148, 150, 152.

Series No. 13 (4 Sonnets). *Theme :* The Lover solicits a second place in the favours of a light woman in love with another man. *Short Title :* Will. Nos. 135, 136, 142, 143.

Proposition III.

The first eight series form the *Personal* Section of the *Sonnets.* They are addressed to a *man,* and are the work of Shakespeare and three other poets writing in their own persons as competitors in a more or less serious literary contest, in which the Earl of Southampton combined the functions of addressee, umpire, and prize-giver. The eight series form a connected whole, and were all written between 1594 and 1596. The three poets may be provisionally styled (1) **The Minor Poet,** (2) **The Lawyer,** (3) **The Humorist.**

Proposition IV.

This literary contest was conducted on the following lines : Shakespeare first writes a ' batch ' of sonnets on one or more of the Themes noted in Proposition II. above ; this batch is then sent to The Minor Poet for imitation ; The Minor Poet then forwards it with his ' imitation ' to The Lawyer, who forwards both contributions along with *his* imitation to The Humorist, who then writes *his* imitation, and forwards the lot to The Patron for judgment. These imitations are written in strict conformity with certain well-understood conventions, which may be styled the ' Rules of the Contest.'

Rules of the Contest.

(1). Each theme shall be imitated separately.
(2). Each such imitation shall contain the same number of sonnets as the ' copy.'
(3). The competitor shall follow generally the main ' thoughts ' of the copy. He may also follow any new thought introduced by a predecessor.
(4). The competitor is expected to display his skill in composing variations on words and phrases used in the copy and in any of the imitations thereof that may be available to him.
(5). Extra marks will be awarded for discreetly-veiled personal allusions to other competitors and parodies of their style and language.

Proposition V.

The remaining five series form the *Dramatic* Section of the Sonnets, and were written later than the Personal Sonnets—probably before 1599. The addressee is in each case a *woman,* and they are the work of Shakespeare and four other poets, *viz.,* the three poets of the Personal Section, plus one other who may be provisionally styled **The Newcomer,** writing in competition as in that section but under altered conditions.

Differences between the Personal Series and the Dramatic Series.

The Dramatic Series differ from the Personal Series in four respects :
(1). The Poets are speaking *not* in their own persons, but in that of a patron or employer (possibly, as before, the Earl of Southampton).
(2). With the exception of the last series (Will), in which the number is four, the number of competitors in each series is *three* only, viz., in Series No. 9, The Minor Poet, The Lawyer, and The Humorist; and in Series Nos. 10, 11 and 12, Shakespeare, The Lawyer, and The Newcomer. In Series No. 13, the four *are* the three last-mentioned *plus* The Humorist.
(3). The five series are *not* historically connected ; each series constitutes a self-contained whole.
(4). Rule No. 5 of the Rules of the Contest is abrogated, no personal allusions being allowed, and parody being discountenanced.

Proposition VI.

In each of these thirteen series it is possible to assign each sonnet to its proper author by collating with the results of the working of the ' Rules of the Contest ' given in Proposition IV. above, exemplifications of certain idiosyncrasies or characteristics which mark the work of each of the five poets.

Proposition VII.

These ' characteristics ' may be stated shortly as follows :

Shakespeare. (1) *Clear Thinking,* (2) *Clear Writing,* (3) *Perfect Versification,* (4) *Accurate Simile and Metaphor,* (5) *Balance and Restraint,* (6) *Self-respect.* Keynote : MASTERY.

The Minor Poet. (1) *Confused Thinking,* (2) *Slovenly Phrasing,* (3) *Smooth Versification,* (4) *Sound not Sense,* (5) *Forcing the Note,* (6) *The Flunkey.* Keynote : SLOPPINESS.

The Lawyer. (1) *Pedestrian Style,* (2) *The Attorney,* (3) *The Accountant,* (4) *Clumsy Humour.* (5) *The Candid Friend,* (6) *The Old Dog.* Keynote : MATTER-OF-FACTNESS.

The Humorist. (1) *Compressed Thought,* (2) *Super-Concettism,* (3) *Deliberate Dissonance,* (4) *Subtle Humour,* (5) *Personal Allusion,* (6) *The Polite Shirker.* Keynote : BURLESQUE.

The Newcomer. (1) *Correct Versification,* (2) *Shallowness.* Keynote : CONVENTIONALITY.

Explanation.

These ' characteristics ' require a certain amount of explanation.

Shakespeare. Many of Shakespeare's sonnets are masterpieces—recognizable as such immediately, and, of course, immeasurably superior to the work of his fellow-competitors. Many others, though not so plainly hall-marked, contain lines and passages so fine that only Shakespeare could have written them. The rest attain a high standard, but not too high a one for The Humorist or The Newcomer to touch at the top of their form. But *all* Shakespeare's sonnets without exception are musical, effortless, and entirely clear in thought and expression, and sustain their flight smoothly and uninterruptedly throughout—even in the final couplet which is the weak spot of the ' Shakespearean ' form of sonnet. His attitude towards his noble Patron is eminently correct, and contrasts favourably with the flunkeyism of The Minor Poet on the one hand, and the rather uncouth self-assertion of The Lawyer on the other.

The Minor Poet. Though his work is full of glaring faults The Minor Poet *is* a poet. He has imagination and a feeling for natural beauty, and his versification is smooth and melodious. But he thinks confusedly, he often writes in a very slovenly fashion, and as long as he gets his musical effect (usually by alliteration of which he is inordinately fond), or his rhyme, he does not bother much about the sense. He is lacking in judgment, and his many *gaffes* argue a defective sense of humour. He is given to exaggeration and ' forcing the note,' and his compliments to The Patron are often unnecessarily servile.

The Lawyer. The Lawyer's literary qualities are more those of a prose-writer than a poet. He thinks logically, and as a rule expresses himself clearly. But though the technique of his versification is good, he has little imagination, and displays a constant tendency to drop into prose. His most prominent characteristic is a pronounced fondness for dragging in on every possible occasion words, phrases, and metaphors drawn from the special vocabularies of the Law and Accountancy. He has humour of a rough and primitive sort, and is giving to making bad puns. He cultivates two poses : (1) That of The Patron's candid friend who will not stoop to flattery, and tells him the exact truth about himself ; and (2) the veteran poet of the old school contemptuous of the new-fangled fashions of the younger generation—the old dog who cannot be taught new tricks.

The Humorist. The outstanding feature of the Humorist's contributions is a subtle and sardonic humour, manifesting itself in parody, irony and personal allusion. He writes in a spirit of mockery throughout. His thought is vigorous and logical, but very often appears obscure owing to excessive compression. He is fond of ' conceits '—especially the Neoplatonic kind—and pushes them as far as they will go, and farther. He goes out of his way to write unrhythmically, several of his lines being as harsh and cacophonous as any in the language. He preserves his self-respect as successfully as Shakespeare, and in particular displays very great ingenuity in shirking his duty of praising The Patron in the fulsome fashion demanded by sonnetteering etiquette.

The Newcomer. In the matter of sheer technique The Newcomer is the best of Shakespeare's fellow-competitors. His versification is smooth and his thoughts are clear and clearly expressed. But his verse lacks character and gives one an impression of shallowness. He is responsible for ten sonnets only—all in the Dramatic Section.

Proposition VIII.

The Minor Poet may be identified with Barnabe Barnes (with absolute certainty); **The Lawyer** with William Warner (with practical certainty); **The Humorist** with John Donne (with great probability); and **The Newcomer** with Samuel Daniel (probably).

Proposition IX.

The fourteen non-serial sonnets are in the nature of occasional verse, and except in the case of two sonnets—one written by Southampton and the other probably by The Lawyer—have no relation to the competitive part of the collection. The remaining twelve sonnets are of uncertain authorship—two or three probably by Shakespeare. Approximate dates of composition can be given in the case of four only out of the fourteen.

List. Nos. 66, 67, 68, 77, 107, 122, 128, 129, 138, 145, 146, 151, 153, 154.

Proposition X.

The first editor (Thomas Thorpe or another) had before him a MS. of the *Sonnets* arranged in their original series as they are arranged in this work. For reasons of his own he wished to disguise the *competitive* character of the collection, and to give it the appearance of being the work of a single author—Shakespeare. He rearranged the collection accordingly on an ingenious 'catchword' system, which all the critics who have attacked the problem of the 'Order of the *Sonnets*' have misunderstood, owing to their not being in possession of the key supplied by Propositions I. and II. above.

. . . . . .

Here then is the New Theory set forth in ten formal propositions which I have endeavoured to make as precise and uncompromising as possible. In the next five chapters I shall, with the double object of making my task of exposition easier and of saving the kind reader from being wearied by the constant repetition of qualifying words and phrases, assume *as a convention* that the first nine of these ten propositions have been proved and accepted as correct. When at the end of Chapter VI. this convention comes up before him for final judgment he will, of course, be justified in treating it with the utmost rigour of the law.

CHAPTER II.—THE PERSONAL SONNETS.—FIRST BATCH.

The sonnetteering craze which raged in England in the last decade of the sixteenth century is one of the most curious phenomena in the history of English literature. Indeed, for some of its features—the suddenness with which it began and ended, the shortness of its life, and the universality of its sway while it lasted—it would be difficult to find parallels in the history of any literary fashion of any age or country whatsoever. During the last quarter of a century its origins have been investigated, and its developments traced and analysed, by a number of writers among whom two Elizabethan scholars, the Rt. Hon. J. M. Robertson and Sir Sidney Lee—both, one need hardly say, Shakespeareans of unimpeachable orthodoxy—stand out with special prominence. From each of these two authorities a short extract will now be quoted which summarizes his conclusions more or less satisfactorily. Taken together, these two passages show how greatly modern scholarship has discounted the almost purely autobiographical interpretations of the *Sonnets* which satisfied the earlier generations of Shakespearean critics.

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON says :—

The first sonnets published in this sequence were quite the worst. Watson avowedly copies French and other models, and he does it unmelodiously, infelicitously, and cheaply. But when he published his first set, many others had been penned and privately circulated for years past. Sidney in particular had already done many of his series to Stella ; and in 1591 these were posthumously published, with the effect of eliciting a perfect hubbub of imitation. The Astrophel and Stella title set the fashion of poetic names for such series. Samuel Daniel came out next year with his batch to Delia, and Henry Constable with his consignment to Diana. In 1593 appeared Barnabe Barnes' Parthenophil and Parthenophe, Lodge's Phillis, Giles Fletcher's Licia, and another posthumous bundle from Watson, as dead as their diligent author. Next year came revisions of Delia and Diana, accompanied by William Percy's Cælia, somebody's Zepheria, and Drayton's Idea (first form) ; in 1595, Richard Barnfield's Cynthia, Spenser's Amoretti, and E.C.'s Emaricdulfe—an effort at originality in choice of title at least, but only by way of an anagram on the name of one Marie Cufeld. In 1596 high-water mark as to quantity was reached with Griffin's Fidessa, Linch's Diella, and William Smith's Chloris. A Laura, by Robert Tofte, arrived in 1597. Shakespeare by this time had written a number of his sonnets, but was not minded to join the aviary in print, though an average sample of his has more charm and spontaneity than any save the best in the swarm.

Never had there been such an outburst of lyricism in England ; and, despite the facility of much of the output, never, perhaps, was there in proportion so little of satisfying result to garner for posterity. The poets at first sight seem a very nest of singing birds, singing because they must, on the ancient, the primal impulse. A perusal soon arouses a cold suspicion, fully confirmed by exact modern research, that the nest of singing birds is a cage of parrots. They translate the French and the Italians, and they imitate each other. Spenser and Sidney alone seem to have had a sincere motive ; Sidney's precept,[1] finishing the first sonnet in the posthumous collection, was the one thing to which none of the imitators seems to have paid any attention. Daniel, Drayton, Constable, and Lodge copied their very titles ; and the three last-named include in their series direct but unavowed translations from the French ; as does even Spenser at times. Lodge is perhaps the most hardened—and not the least skilful—plagiarist of all : half his sonnets are translations. If ever the sonnet is personal, in the hands of any of the lesser practitioners, it is impossible to divine the fact with certainty from any superior vitality in the product. (*Elizabethan Literature*—pp.143–145.)

SIR SIDNEY LEE says :—

But it was not until 1591, when Sir Philip Sidney's collection of sonnets entitled ' Astrophel and Stella ' was first published, that the sonnet enjoyed in England any conspicuous or continuous favour. For the half-dozen years following the appearance of Sir Philip Sidney's volume the writing of sonnets, both singly and in

[1] " Fool," said my Muse, " look in thy heart and write."

connected sequences, engaged more literary activity in this country than it engaged at any period here or elsewhere. Men and women of the cultivated Elizabethan nobility encouraged poets to celebrate in single sonnets or in short series their virtues and graces, and under the same patronage there were produced multitude of long sonnet-sequences which more or less fancifully narrated, after the manner of Petrarch and his successors, the pleasures and pains of love. Between 1591 and 1597 no aspirant to poetic fame in the country failed to court a patron's ears by a trial of skill on the popular poetic instrument . . . we find that between 1591 and 1597 there had been printed nearly twelve hundred sonnets of the amorous kind. . . . Thus in the total of sonnets published between 1591 and 1597 must be included at least five hundred sonnets addressed to patrons, and as many on philosophy and religion. The aggregate far exceeds two thousand. . . . Elizabethan sonnets of all degrees of merit were commonly the artificial products of the poet's fancy. A strain of personal emotion is discernible in a detached effort, and is vaguely traceable in a few sequences; but autobiographical confessions were not the stuff of which the Elizabethan sonnet was made. The typical collection of Elizabethan sonnets was a mosaic of plagiarisms, a medley of imitative or assimilative studies. Echoes of the French or of the Italian sonnetteers, with their Platonic idealisms, are usually the dominant notes. . . . As soon as the collection of Shakespeare's sonnets is studied comparatively with the many thousand poems of cognate theme and form that the printing-presses of England, France and Italy poured forth during the last years of the sixteenth century, a vast number of Shakespeare's performances prove to be little more than trials of skill, often of superlative merit, to which he deemed himself challenged by the poetic effort of his own or of past ages at home and abroad. (*Life of William Shakespeare*, Chaps. X., XI., and App. V.)

It was when the craze was at its height—1594 or early in 1595, according to The Theory—that Shakespeare first entered the lists as a sonnetteer by inditing and sending to his "private friend" and patron Henry Wriothesley, Third Earl of Southampton, a sequence of nine 'adulatory' sonnets. What happened to these sonnets The Theory will now proceed to explain.

. . . . .

This chapter deals with the 39 sonnets of Series Nos. I., II., III., and IV., which make up the first batch of the Personal Section. As noted in the last paragraph, the Contest was started by Shakespeare sending to Southampton the nine sonnets which constitute his contribution to the four Series. His motive in writing these sonnets cannot be inferred with certainty. They may have been "commanded" by Southampton, though this supposition is rather out of harmony with their general tone, especially the tone of his Epistle Dedicatory (No. 26); or they may have been the outcome of a hint from Southampton's mother, who was anxious to see him married and settled; or again they may have been a spontaneous offering sent to "witness duty" as Shakespeare himself says, *i.e.*, as a compliment in the fashion of the day to the kind patron of *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece*. But whatever Shakespeare's motive may have been, the tone of his contribution to Series No. 5 (Poet's Excuses) makes it clear that he did not anticipate that his sonnets would be set as a 'copy' for three other poets to imitate. This happy thought probably originated with Southampton himself, gratified by Shakespeare's magnificent compliment, and desirous of seeing what could be done by three other poets of his acquaintance writing in competition on the same noble theme——.

Que son mérite est extrême!
Que de grâces, que de grandeur!
Ah! combien monseigneur
Doit être content de lui-même!

For convenience of reference, the five rules which govern the competitions in the Personal Section, as set forth under Proposition IV. in the previous chapter, are reproduced here:

Rules of the Contest.

(1). Each 'theme' shall be imitated separately.
(2). Each such 'imitation' shall contain the same number of sonnets as the 'copy.'
(3). The competitor shall follow generally the main 'thoughts' of the copy. He may also follow any new thought introduced by a predecessor.

(4). The competitor is expected to display his skill in composing variations on words and phrases used in the copy and in any of the imitations thereof that may be available to him.

(5). Extra marks will be awarded for discreetly-veiled personal allusions to other competitors and parodies of their style and language.

The four series will now be taken up in numerical order, and dealt with by a procedure which will be applied uniformly to all the thirteen series in the collection. It is as follows :

First. The contributions of the competitors will be set out side by side, (in four or three columns, according as the series is a ' four-poet ' or ' three-poet ' one) *across the double-page;* verbal parallelisms (v. Rule 4) *within* the series being indicated by italics, and verbal parallelisms *outside* the series, *i.e.*, between passages in the series and passages in another series, being indicated by underlining.

Secondly. Shakespeare's treatment of the theme will be analysed, and the other competitors' imitations of his ' thoughts ' will be pointed out by reference to sonnet and line.

Thirdly. The main ' inside ' verbal parallelisms will be collected and quoted in full. Minor ' inside ' parallelisms will be pointed out by reference to sonnet and line.

Fourthly. The sonnets will be dealt with individually under the heading ' Notes.' In these ' Notes ' examples of the ' Characteristics ' of the several poets will be pointed out, personal allusions, parodies, etc., explained, and points bearing directly or indirectly on The Theme discussed.

N.B.—' Outside ' verbal parallelisms will be dealt with in the Notes on the series on which the *imitations* occur. The *originals, i.e.*, the ' copy ' lines imitated in subsequent series will (as noted above) be underlined for the convenience of subsequent reference, but no attempt to explain them will be made in the Notes on their own series.

SERIES No. 1.—Matrimony Advocated.

The Theme.—The Poet urges The Patron to marry in his own and posterity's interest.

THE FIVE AUTHORS OF SHAKE-SPEARES SONNETS

SERIES No. 1—

The Theme—The Poet urges The Patron to marry,

SHAKESPEARE

1

From fairest creatures we desire increase,
That thereby beauty's rose might never die,
But as the riper should by time decease,
His tender heir might bear his memory:
But thou, contracted to *thine* own *bright eyes*,
Feed'st thy light's flame with self-substantial fuel,
Making a famine where abundance lies,
Thyself thy foe, to *thy sweet self* too cruel.
Thou that art now the world's fresh ornament
And only herald to the gaudy spring,
Within thine own bud buriest thy content
And, *tender churl*, makest *waste* in *niggarding*.
Pity *the world*, or else this glutton be,
To eat *the world's* due, by the grave and thee.

2

When forty *winters* shall besiege thy brow
And dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field,
Thy *youth's* proud livery, so *gazed on* now,
Will be a tatter'd weed, of small worth held:
Then being ask'd where all thy beauty lies,
Where all the *treasure* of thy lusty days,
To say, within thine own deep-sunken eyes,
Were an ill-eating shame and *thriftless* praise.
How much more praise deserved thy beauty's *use*
If thou couldst *answer* 'This fair child of mine
Shall *sum my count* and make my old excuse,'
Proving his beauty by succession thine!
This were to be new made when thou art old,
And see thy blood warm when thou feel'st it cold.

11

As fast as thou shalt *wane*, so fast thou *grow'st*
In one of thine, from that which thou departest;
And that fresh blood which youngly thou bestow'st
Thou mayst call thine when thou from youth
convertest.
Herein lies wisdom, beauty and increase;
Without this, folly, age and *cold decay:*
If all were minded so, the times should cease
And threescore year would make the world away.
Let those whom *Nature* hath not *made* for *store*,
Harsh, featureless and rude, barrenly perish:
Look, whom *she best endow'd she gave thee* more;
Which *bounteous gift* thou shouldst in *bounty* cherish:
She carved thee for her seal, and meant thereby
Thou shouldst print more, not let that copy die.

3

Look in thy glass, and tell the face thou viewest
Now is the time that face should form another;
Whose fresh *repair* if now thou not renewest,
Thou dost beguile the world, unbless some mother.
For where is she so fair whose unear'd womb
Disdains the tillage of thy *husbandry?*
Or who is he so fond will be the *tomb*
Of his self-love, to stop posterity?
Thou art thy mother's glass, and she in thee
Calls back the lovely April of her prime:
So thou through windows of thine age shalt see,
Despite of wrinkles, this thy golden time.
But if thou live, remember'd not to be,
Die single, and thine image dies with thee.

THE MINOR POET

12

When I do count the clock that tells the time,
And see the brave *day* sunk in *hideous night;*
When I behold the violet past prime,
And sable curls all silver'd o'er with white;
When lofty trees I see barren of leaves,
Which erst from heat did canopy the herd,
And summer's green all girded up in sheaves,
Borne on the bier with white and bristly beard,
Then of thy beauty do I question make,
That thou among the wastes of time must go,
Since sweets and beauties do themselves forsake
And *die as fast as they see others grow;*
And nothing 'gainst Time's scythe can make defence
Save breed, to brave him when he takes thee hence.

9

Is it for fear to wet a widow's eye
That thou consumest thyself in single life?
Ah! if thou issueless shalt hap to die,
The world will wail thee, like a makeless wife;
The world will be thy widow, and still weep
That thou no form of thee hast left behind,
When every private widow well may keep
By children's eyes her husband's shape in mind.
Look, what an *unthrift* in *the world* doth spend
Shifts but his place, for still *the world* enjoys it;
But *beauty's waste* hath in *the world* an end,
And kept *unused*, the *user* so destroys it.
No love towards others in that bosom sits
That on himself such murderous shame commits.

8

Music to hear, why hear'st thou music sadly?
Sweets with *sweets* war not, joy delights in joy.
Why lovest thou that which thou receivest not
gladly,
Or else receivest with pleasure thine annoy?
If the true concord of well tuned sounds,
By unions married, do offend thine ear
They do but *sweetly* chide thee, who confounds
In singleness the parts that thou shouldst bear.
Mark how one string, *sweet* husband to another,
Strikes each in each by mutual ordering;
Resembling sire and child and happy mother,
Who, all in one, one pleasing note do sing:
Whose speechless song, being many, seeming one,
Sings this to thee: 'Thou single wilt prove none.'

7

Lo, in the orient when the gracious light
Lifts up his burning head, each under eye
Doth homage to his new-appearing sight,
Serving with looks his sacred majesty;
And having climb'd the steep-up heavenly hill,
Resembling strong youth in his middle age,
Yet mortal looks adore his beauty still,
Attending on his golden pilgrimage;
But when from highmost pitch, with weary car
Like feeble age, he reeleth from the day,
The eyes, 'fore duteous, now converted are
From his low tract, and look another way:
So thou, thyself out-going in thy noon,
Unlook'd on diest, unless thou get a son.

MATRIMONY ADVOCATED. (M.A.)
in his own and posterity's interest.

THE LAWYER

4

Unthrifty loveliness, why dost thou *spend*
Upon thyself thy beauty's legacy ?
Nature's bequest gives nothing, but doth lend,
And being frank, she lends to those are free.
Then, *beauteous niggard*, why dost thou abuse
The *bounteous largess given thee* to give ?
Profitless usurer, why dost thou use
So great *a sum of sums*, yet canst not live ?
For having traffic with thyself alone,
Thou of *thyself thy sweet self* dost deceive.
Then how, when *nature calls thee* to be gone,
What acceptable *audit* canst thou leave ?
Thy unused beauty must be *tomb'd* with thee,
Which, used, lives th' executor to be.

5

Those hours that with gentle work did frame
The lovely *gaze* where *every eye* doth dwell,
Will play the tyrants to the very same
And that unfair which fairly doth excel :
For never-resting time leads summer on
To hideous *winter* and confounds him there ;
Sap check'd with frost and lusty leaves quite gone,
Beauty o'ersnow'd and bareness every where :
Then, were not summer's distillation left,
A liquid prisoner pent in walls of glass,
Beauty's effect with beauty were bereft,
Nor it, nor no remembrance what it was :
But flowers distill'd, though they with *winter* meet,
Leese but their show; their substance still lives sweet.

6

Then let not winter's ragged hand deface
In thee thy summer, ere thou be distill'd :
Make sweet some vial ; *treasure* thou some place
With beauty's *treasure*, ere it be self-kill'd.
That *use* is not forbidden *usury*,
Which happies those that pay the willing loan ;
That's for thyself to breed another thee,
Or ten times happier, be it ten for one ;
Ten times thyself were happier than thou art,
If ten of thine ten times refigured thee :
Then what could death do, if thou shouldst depart,
Leaving thee living in posterity ?
Be not self-will'd, for thou art much too fair
To be death's conquest and make worms thine heir.

10

For shame ! deny that thou bear'st love to any,
Who for thyself art so unprovident.
Grant, if thou wilt, thou are beloved of many,
But that thou none lovest is most evident ;
For thou art so possess'd with murderous hate
That 'gainst thyself thou stick'st not to conspire,
Seeking that beauteous roof to ruinate
Which to *repair* should be thy chief desire.
O, change thy thought, that I may change my mind !
Shall hate be fairer lodged than gentle love ?
Be, as thy presence is, gracious and kind,
Or to thyself at least kind-hearted prove :
Make thee another self, for love of me,
That beauty still may live in thine or thee.

THE HUMORIST

15

When I consider every thing that grows
Holds in perfection but a little moment,
That this huge stage presenteth nought but shows
Whereon the stars in secret influence comment ;
When I perceive that men as plants increase,
Cheered and check'd even by the self-same sky,
Vaunt in their youthful sap at height decrease,
And wear their brave state out of memory ;
Then the conceit of this inconstant stay
Sets you most rich in *youth before my sight*,
Where wasteful Time debateth with Decay,
To change your *day* of youth to *sullied night* ;
And all in war with Time for love of you,
As he takes from you, I engraft you new.

16

But wherefore do not you a mightier way
Make war upon this bloody tyrant, Time ?
And fortify yourself in your decay
With means more blessed than my barren rhyme ?
Now stand you on the top of happy hours,
And many maiden gardens, yet unset,
With virtuous wish would bear your living flowers
Much liker than your painted counterfeit :
So should the lines of life that life *repair*,
Which this, Time's pencil, or my pupil pen,
Neither in inward worth nor outward fair,
Can make you live yourself in eyes of men.
To give away yourself keeps yourself still ;
And you must live, drawn by your own *sweet* skill.

13

O, that you were yourself ! but, love, you are
No longer yours than you yourself here live :
Against this coming end you should prepare,
And your *sweet* semblance to some other give.
So should that beauty which you hold in lease
Find no determination ; then you were
Yourself again, after yourself's decease,
When your *sweet* issue your *sweet* form should bear.
Who lets so fair a house fall to *decay*,
Which *husbandry* in honour might uphold
Against the stormy gusts of *winter's day*,
And barren rage of death's eternal *cold ?*
O, none but *unthrifts :* dear my love, you know
You had a father ; let your son say so.

17

Who will believe my verse in time to come,
If it were fill'd with your most high deserts ?
Though yet, heaven knows, it is but a *tomb*
Which hides your life and shows not half your parts.
If I could write the *beauty of your eyes*
And in fresh numbers number all your graces,
The age to come would say ' This poet lies ;
Such heavenly touches ne'er touch'd earthly faces.'
So should my papers, yellowed with their age,
Be scorn's, like old men of less truth than tongue,
And your true rights be term'd a poet's rage
And stretched metre of an antique song :
But were some child of yours alive that time,
You should live twice, in it and in my rhyme.

NOTE.

In this and all the remaining seven series of the Personal Section—

(1) *Italics* indicate an 'inside' Verbal Parallelism' i.e., a parallelism between a passage in the series and another passage in the same series.

(2) Underlining indicates an 'outside' Verbal Parallelism, i.e., a parallelism between a passage in the series and a passage in another series.

THE MINOR POET—*continued.*

20

A woman's face with Nature's own hand painted
Hast thou, the master-mistress of my passion;
A woman's gentle heart, but not acquainted
With shifting change, as is false women's fashion;
An *eye* more *bright* than theirs, less false in rolling,
Gilding the object whereupon it *gazeth*;
A man in hue, all 'hues' in his controlling,
Which steals *men's eyes* and women's souls amazeth.
And for a woman wert thou first created;
Till *Nature*, as she *wrought thee*, fell a-doting,
And by addition me of thee defeated,
By adding one thing to my purpose nothing.
But since she prick'd thee out for women's *pleasure*,
Mine be thy love, and thy love's use their *treasure*.

TREATMENT OF THE THEME.

In this series the central thought 'Marry and beget a son' swamps all the others. It predominates in all four of Shakespeare's sonnets, and appears more or less prominently in all except three (Nos. 15, 20 and 126) of the rest. A detailed analysis of the passages in which S.'s three rivals imitate his treatment of this central thought would be a very lengthy business; and, as the remarkable faithfulness of their imitations is apparent on the most casual inspection, it will be enough to note that it *is* remarkable, and pass on at once to certain other 'subordinate' thoughts of S.'s which they reproduce with creditable exactness.

They are six in number:

(a). The Patron's beauty a flower doomed to die. (1.2, 1-11.)
(b). The Patron's beauty should be used, not hoarded or wasted. (1.12, 2.8-9, 11.11-12.)
(c). The Patron's beauty an object of special interest to Nature. (11.9-14.)
(d). Time and Death the Patron's enemies. (1.3-4, 3.13-14.)
(e). The Patron his own enemy. (1.8.)
(f). Winter the enemy of Spring. (2.1, 3.10.)

The Minor Poet follows S. in all six, namely: (a) (12.3, 11-12); (b) (9.9-12, 20.14); (c) (20.1, 10); (d) (12.13-14); (e) (9.14); and (substituting Summer for Spring) (f) (12.7-8). He introduces three new thoughts of his own, namely: (g) Meditation on the mutability of things terrestrial (12 *passim*); (h) Night the enemy of Day (12.2, 7 *passim*); and (i) A family compared to a well-tuned harp (8 *passim*).

The Lawyer also follows S. in all six, namely: (a) (5.13-14); (b) (4 *passim*, 6.5-6); (c) (4.11-12); (d) (4.11-12, 6.11-14); (e) (4.10, 6.4, 10.5-6); and (f) (5.5-9, 6.1-2). He introduces two new thoughts of his own, namely: (j) The Patron's hypothetical progeny regarded as the distilled essence of his beauty (5.9-14, 6.1-3); and (k) The Patron's beauty a house to be kept in repair (10.7-8).

The Humorist follows S. in five only of the six, namely: (a) (15.14, 16.6-8); (b) (13.13); (c) (126.5-14); (d) (15.11-13, 16.1-2); and (f) (13.11). He omits (e). He follows M.P. in his (g) (15 *passim*) and (h) (15.12). He follows L. in his (j) (13.9-10). And he introduces one new thought of his own which he treats very fully, namely: (l) The inadequacy of his (The Humorist's) verse as a means of immortalizing The Patron's beauty (15.14, 16.4, 16.10-12, 17 *passim*).

THE LAWYER—*continued.*

14

Not from the stars do I my judgement pluck;
And yet methinks I have astronomy,
But not to tell of good or evil luck,
Of plagues, of dearths, or seasons' quality;
Nor can I fortune to brief minutes tell,
Pointing to each his thunder, rain and wind,
Or say with princes if it shall go well,
By oft predict that I in heaven find:
But from *thine eyes* my knowledge I derive,
And, constant *stars*, in them I read such art,
As truth and beauty shall together thrive,
If from thyself to *store* thou wouldst *convert*;
Or else of thee this I prognosticate:
Thy end is truth's and beauty's doom and date.

THE HUMORIST—*continued.*

126

O thou, my lovely boy, who in thy power
Dost hold Time's fickle glass, his sickle, hour;
Who hast *by waning grown*, and therein show'st
Thy lovers withering as thy sweet self grow'st;
If *Nature*, sovereign mistress over wrack,
As thou goest onwards, still will pluck thee back,
She keeps thee to this purpose, that her skill
May time disgrace and wretched minutes kill.
Yet fear her, O thou minion of her *pleasure!*
She may detain, but not still keep, her *treasure*:
Her audit, though delay'd, *answer'd* must be,
And her quietus is to render thee.

The new thoughts introduced by S.'s three rivals do not reflect much credit on their originality. M.P.'s (g) is borrowed directly from S.'s No. 64 in the next series; his (h) is a fairly obvious variant on S.'s (f), and his (i) is merely an expansion of a metaphor in Sidney's *Arcadia*. L.'s (j) is adapted from a hackneyed conceit of Sidney's, and his (k) was probably suggested by the third line of S.'s No. 3 in this series. H.'s (l) is merely a contradiction in terms of the central thought of the next series (Beauty Immortalized).

The reader is invited to note in this series *the only example* in the whole collection of an infringement of Rule I. of the 'Rules of the Contest', in the shape of the three 'extra' sonnets, Nos. 20, 14 and 126 added to their contributions by M.P., L. and H. respectively. These sonnets are in the nature of 'envoys,' and two of them (Nos. 20 and 126) exhibit metrical peculiarities which are not paralleled elsewhere in the serial sonnets. This attempt to depart from the 'copy' was apparently disapproved of by Shakespeare, or Southampton, or both: at any rate nothing of the sort occurs again.

Verbal Parallelisms.

The most cursory inspection of the sonnets of this series reveals a great many obvious parallelisms based on the dominant thought 'Marry and get a son,' but it is not until one tries to collect them that one realises that to make a full list one would have to quote about a quarter of the lines in the series. So, in accordance with the precedent set in the 'Treatment of The Theme,' they will be omitted altogether, and only 'subordinate' parallelisms collected and quoted. They make up quite a respectable list. To take them in the order in which they occur.

S. But thou contracted to *thine* own *bright eyes*,
M.P. An *eye* more *bright* than theirs, less false in rolling,
L. But from *thine eyes* my knowledge I derive,
And, constant *stars*, in them I read such art,
H. If I could write the *beauty* of *your eyes*

S. *Thyself* thy foe, to *thy sweet self* too cruel.
L. Thou of *thyself*, *thy sweet self* dost deceive.
H. Thy lovers withering as *thy sweet self* grow'st;

S. And, *tender churl*, makest *waste* in *niggarding*.
Pity *the world* . . .

M.P. But *beauty's waste* hath in *the world* an end,
L. Then, *beauteous niggard,* why dost thou abuse

S. *When* forty winters shall besiege thy brow
Then being ask'd where all thy beauty lies,
M.P. *When I* do count the clock that tells the time,
When lofty trees I see barren of leaves,
Then of thy beauty do I question make,
H. *When I* consider every thing that grows
When I perceive that men as plants increase,
Then the conceit of this inconstant stay

Note how in each of the two ' corresponding ' sonnets 12 (M.P.) and 15 (H.) the first and fifth lines begin with ' When ' and the ninth with ' Then.'

S. Thy *youth's* proud livery, so *gazed on* now,
M.P. Gilding the object whereupon it *gazeth* ;
Which steals *men's eyes* . . .
L. That lovely *gaze* where *every eye* doth dwell,
H. Sets you most rich in *youth before my sight,*

S. Where all the *treasure* of thy lusty days,
M.P. Mine be thy love, and thy love's use their *treasure.*
L. . . . *treasure* thou some place
With beauty's *treasure* . . .
H. She may detain, but not still keep, her *treasure.*

S. Were an ill-eating shame and *thriftless* praise.
M.P. Look, what an *unthrift* in the world doth *spend*
L. *Unthrifty* loveliness, why dost thou *spend*
H. O, none but *unthrifts* : dear my love, you know

S. How much more praise deserved thy beauty's *use,*
M.P And kept *unused,* the *user* so destroys it.
L. That *use* is not forbidden *usury,*

S. If thou could'st *answer* ' This fair child of mine
Shall *sum my count* and make my old excuse,'
L. So great a *sum of sums,* yet canst not live ?
Then how, when *nature calls thee* to be gone,
What acceptable *audit* canst thou leave ?
H. Her [*Nature's*] *audit* though delayed, *answer'd* must be,

S. *As fast as* thou shalt *wane,* so fast thou *grow'st*
M.P. And *die as fast as* they see others *grow ;*
H. Who hast by *waning grown,* and therein show'st
Thy lovers *withering* as thy sweet self *grow'st ;*

S. Let those whom *Nature* hath not *made* for store,
M.P. Till *Nature,* as she *wrought* thee, fell a-doting,
L. *Nature's* bequest gives nothing, but doth lend,
H. If *Nature,* sovereign mistress over wrack,

S. Look, whom she [*Nature*] best *endow'd* she *gave thee* more ;
Which bounteous gift thou shouldst in *bounty* cherish :
L. *Nature's bequest gives* nothing, but doth lend,
The *bounteous largess given thee* to give ?

S. Whose fresh *repair* if now thou not renewest,
L. Which to *repair* should be thy chief desire.
H. So should the lines of life that life *repair.*

M.P. And see the brave *day* sunk in *hideous night* :
H. To change your *day* of youth to *sullied night* ;

M.P. But since she prick'd thee out for women's *pleasure,* } Mine be thy love, and thy love's use their *treasure.* }
H. Yet fear her, O thou minion of her *pleasure !* } She may detain, but not still keep, her *treasure.* }

Minor Parallelisms.—(1) *Winter*, 2.1, 5.6, 5.13, 13.11 ; (2) *Convert*, 11.4, 14.12 ; (3) *Cold decay*, 11.6, 13.9, 13.12 ; (4) *Store*, 11.9, 14.12 ; (5) *Husbandry*, (pun) 3.6, 13.10 ; (6) *Tomb*, 3.7, 4.13, 17.3—and many others. Note particularly M.P.'s four ' sweets ' in No. 8 copied by H.'s three ditto in No. 13 and one ditto in the last line of the immediately preceding No; 16.

NOTES.

Shakespeare in writing his four sonnets obviously had his eye on a well-known passage in Sidney's *Arcadia*, in which Cecropia, in conversation with her niece Philoclea, expatiates on the blessedness of the married state. His three imitators, of course, consider themselves in duty bound to exhibit their own acquaintance with the passage. It would be tedious to point out all the allusions. An extract is quoted, and the reader is invited to trace them himself.

" No, no, my dear niece (said Cecropia), Nature when you were first born, vowed you a woman, and as she made you child of a mother, so to do your best to be the mother of a child. She gave you beauty to move love, she gave you wit to know love ; she gave you an excellent body to reward love ; which kind of liberal rewarding is crowned with an unspeakable felicity. For this, as it bindeth the receiver, so it makes happy the bestower. This doth not impoverish, but enrich the giver. O the comfort of comforts, to see your children grow up, in whom you are, as it were eternised ! If you could conceive what a heart-tickling joy it is to see your own little ones, with awful love come running to your lap, and like little models of yourself still carry you about them, you would think unkindness in your thoughts, that ever they did rebel against the measure to it. . . . Have you ever seen a pure rose-water kept in a crystal glass ? How fine it looks ! how sweet it smells while the beautiful glass imprisons it ! Break the prison, and let the water take his own course, doth it not embrace the dust, and lose all his former sweetness and fairness ? . . . And is a solitary life as good as this ? Then, can one string make as good music as a consort ? "

Shakespeare. (Nos. 1, 2, 11, 3.)

One may say about all four of Shakespeare's sonnets in this series what has been said in the previous chapter about his sonnets generally, namely, that they are " musical, effortless, and entirely clear in thought and expression ; they contain a wealth of just metaphor and imagery ; and they sustain their flight smoothly and uninterruptedly throughout—even in the final couplet." The reader is invited to compare them with the contributions of the other three competitors, and note their manifest superiority in design and execution.

Shakespeare's allusions to The Patron's beauty, eligibility as a *parti*, and reluctance to marry are fully justified by the known facts of Southampton's early life. His good looks were notorious ; in his eighteenth year he accompanied Elizabeth on a progress to Oxford, and in a Latin poem published by the University Press in honour of the occasion he was described as the handsomest youth in the royal train—" Quo non formosior alter, Affuit." Besides being good-looking, Southampton was cultured, accomplished in manly exercises, *persona grata* at Court, and an only child of parents who " came of the new nobility and enjoyed vast wealth " (LEE). Of his reluctance to marry, LEE writes : " Early marriages—child-marriages were in vogue in all ranks of society, and Southampton's mother and guardian regarded matrimony at a tender age as especially incumbent on him in view of his rich heritage. . . Southampton declined to marry to order, and, to the confusion of his friends, was still a bachelor when he came of age in 1594."

The reference to The Patron's mother *only* (No. 3.9-10) would be very odd if his father had been alive at the time. Southampton's father died in 1581.

The Minor Poet. (Nos. 12, 9, 8, 7, 20.)

In Prop. No. VII. in the preceding chapter The Minor Poet's characteristics were noted as follows: (1) *Confused Thinking*, (2) *Slovenly Phrasing*, (3) *Smooth Versification*, (4) *Sound not Sense*, (5) *Forcing the Note*, (6) *The Flunkey*. Keynote: SLOPPINESS. The first four are exemplified in this series, viz.: *Confused Thinking*, 8.3-4, 8.9-13; *Slovenly Phrasing*, 12.1, 12.11, 9.14; *Smooth Versification* throughout, 12.5-12 and 9.9-12, being particularly pleasing passages; *Sound not Sense*, 12.14, 8.2.

12.

1. Note the pleonastic " do," and the worse than pleonastic " that tells the time."

11. The commentators say that " themselves forsake " = ' change for the worse.' No doubt the words *ought* to mean this, but can they be forced to do so?

9.

4-5. Note his characteristic abuse of " alliteration's artful aid."

14. " Murderous shame " = shameful murder, apparently.

8.

This sonnet was suggested by a sentence in the *Arcadia*: " Then can one string make as good music as a consort? " (*v.* extract quoted above). There is also (in lines 7-8 and 12-14) an allusion to Southampton's motto, " *Ung par tout, tout par ung.*"

3-4. According to the commentators the meaning of these two rather feeble lines is, " Is it not inconsistent to be saddened by what you like or to like what saddens you " (POOLER).

7.

5. *et seq.* Note the anacoluthon.

10-12. It is *not* a fact that the sun totters senilely when it sets—it goes down as steadily as it goes up: and it is *not* a fact that people decline to look at a sunset and gaze fixedly at some other quarter of the heavens instead.

14. Why should the existence of a son make people more inclined to " look on " a moribund Patron?

20.

This is rather a daring sonnet to be addressed by a poetical client to his patron, but apparently Southampton appreciated ribaldry of this kind; it was to him that Nash dedicated his outrageous *Choise of Valentines*. POOLER remarks: " This sonnet, if Shakespeare's, sounds as if he had been furnished with a set of rimes and challenged to bombast them out into a poem. It is not pleasing in rhythm, and it differs from all other sonnets in having no single rimes, and from its companions here in containing neither a promise of immortality nor a declaration of his love for his friend." It is an ' Envoy ' sonnet—a parergon—and M.P. therefore allows himself a little latitude.

7. In the Quarto the line is printed:—

A man in hew, all *Hews* in his controwling.

Cf. 104.11. in the P. E. series, and Notes on the Will series.

12. Cf. 136.12., and Notes on the Will series.

The Lawyer. (Nos. 4, 5, 6, 10, 14.)

In Prop. No. VII. in the preceding chapter The Lawyer's characteristics were noted as follows: (1) *Pedestrian Style*, (2) *The Attorney*, (3) *The Accountant*, (4) *Clumsy Humour*, (5) *The Candid Friend*, (6) *The Old Dog*. Keynote: MATTER-OF-FACTNESS. Two of these characteristics are exemplified in this series, viz.: *The Accountant* and *The Attorney*, 4 *passim*, 6.5-10. His contribution is of average quality; he rises to no heights and sinks to no depths.

4.

In this sonnet honours are divided pretty evenly between *The Attorney* and *The Accountant*. There is not room for much else. POOLER explains as follows:—

> Here the subject, beauty, suffers protean changes. It is regarded as transmitted and transmissible. As derived (from parents) it is a legacy, and as it come into being in the course of Nature, it is "Nature's bequest." As transmissible, it is a loan or trust intended for those only who fulfil the condition of transmitting it unimpaired. It is therefore capital to be invested not income to be spent, and its possessor, if he fails to invest it, acts as a money-lender who reduces himself to beggary by spending instead of lending his capital. Rightly used it produces its equivalent in the beauty of a child, i.e., it reproduces itself. This new beauty (the beauty of the child) is the repayment to Nature of the sum lent, viz. the beauty of the father, and so the account is squared. But as the new beauty *ex hypothesi* survives the old it becomes the executor of the will made by the father, for the executor survives the testator.

Shakespeare must have been amused to find his four straightforward lines—

> How much more praise deserved thy beauty's use,
> If thou could'st answer "This fair child of mine,"
> Shall sum my count and make my old excuse,"
> Proving his beauty by succession thine!

transmogrified into this mass of recondite technicalities. Note, too, the legal "frank" and "free."

5.

3-4. A prosy rendering of S.'s—

> And dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field.

8. A fine line remarkable for exhibiting a feeling for natural beauty pure and simple, which is extremely rare in L.'s contributions.

13-14. In this couplet L. imitates the language, though not the imagery, of M.P.'s lines in No. 54 of the next series, which was before him when he wrote—

> But for their virtue only is their *show*.
> . . . . *sweet roses* do not so
> When that [*sc.* your beauty] shall fade, by verse *distills* your truth.

and echoes both the language and the imagery of the line in *Midsummer Night's Dream*

> But earthlier happy is the *rose distilled*,

And, of course, all three derive from a passage in the *Arcadia* (*v.* extract quoted above).

6.

Again *The Attorney* and *The Accountant* divide the honours. POOLER explains 3-8 as follows:—

> Usury was first openly permitted in England by 37 Hen. VIII. cap. 9. It was forbidden by 5 and 6 Edw. VI. cap 20, which states that 'usury is by the word of God utterly prohibited as a vice most odious and de-

testable.' The sonnet was probably written between 13 Eliz. cap 8, which revised the statute of Hen. VIII. while inconsistently condemning usury as sinful, and 39 Eliz. cap 18, which admitted usury to be very necessary and profitable . . . 8. *ten for one* Perhaps because 10 per cent was the highest interest allowed by the statute of Hen. VIII.

10.

3-4. Two typically matter-of-fact lines with a touch of *The Attorney*.

14.

In this ' Envoy ' sonnet L. deliberately sets himself to parody Shakespeare.

In the first two quatrains he satirizes certain thoughts and phrases in S.'s E. D. sonnet (No. 26) which seem to him to lend themselves to ridicule.

1. A satirical reference to the first of S.'s two *gaffes*—" The *star* which guides my moving " (l.9).

3. A reference to the change in S.'s fortunes which the aforesaid star is expected to bring about (l.10).

6. " Pointing," *i.e.*, ' appointing.' A satirical reference to S.'s use of the word in an unusual sense (l.10).

8. " By oft predict " is a decidedly uncouth expression. It is probably a reminiscence of Sidney's lines :

> Though dusty wits dare scorn astrology
> . . . proof makes me sure
> Who *oft-prejudge* my after-following race
> By only those two stars in Stella's face.

The last six lines are an amalgam of ' echoes ' from three separate Shakespearean sources :

(1). *Love's Labour's Lost.* IV. iii. 350–3.
> From women's *eyes* this *doctrine I derive*
> They sparkle still the right Promethean fire.
> They are the books, *the arts*, the Academes.

(2). S.'s sonnet No. 11. in this series
> Thou mayst call thine when thou from youth *convertest*
> Let those whom Nature hath not made for *store*,

(3). *Venus and Adonis.* 1080 (of the dead Adonis).
> But *true*-sweet *beauty lived and died with him.*

Note. (a). The pun on the two meanings of ' constant.'
(b). The satirical reference to S.'s use of the words " store " and " convert " (intransitive) in unusual senses.
(c). The implication that The Patron = Adonis.

The Humorist. (Nos. 15, 16, 13, 17, 126.)

The Humorist's contribution differs entirely from the others in character, and must be considered from an entirely different point of view. However greatly Shakespeare's original ' copy ' and The Minor Poet's and The Lawyer's imitations thereof may differ among themselves in scope and quality, they all agree in one respect—they treat the main theme quite seriously. Now The Humorist does not—as in the rest of the series of this batch (and indeed in nearly all the series of the other batches) he is ' ragging ' the whole time. Although he makes use of much the same thoughts as the other three, and does so ostensibly in the same spirit, a careful examination of his contribution shows the keynote of the whole performance to be a subtle burlesquing of such thoughts, phrases, and words occurring in the compositions of his fellow-competitors as struck

him as being unusual or ridiculous—this burlesquing being varied by a little *very* discreet pulling of the leg of The Patron himself. The reader will kindly remember in this connection that in his choice of material he was not limited to the sonnets of his three colleagues in *this* series only; the whole of their work in the four series of this batch—twenty-nine sonnets altogether—was before him when he wrote.

In Prop. VII. in the preceding chapter The Humorist's characteristics were noted as follows: (1) *Compressed Thought*, (2) *Super-concettist*, (3) *Deliberate Dissonance*, (4) *Subtle Humour*, (5) *Personal Allusion*, and (6) *The Polite Shirker*. Keynote: BURLESQUE. Four of these are exemplified in this series, viz.: *Compressed Thought*, 15 *passim*; *Super-concettist*, 16.13; *Subtle Humour* throughout; *Personal Allusion*, 16.8, 17.9-10.

15.

This sonnet imitates M.P.'s No. 12 very closely. It is constructed on precisely similar lines throughout, and conforms faithfully to its sentiment and general tone M.P.'s references to the natural changes undergone by violets, trees, and cornfields are reproduced in

> . . . everything that grows
> Holds in perfection but a little moment,
> . . . men as plants increase,
> Vaunt in their youthful sap, at height decrease,

His " brave day sunk in hideous night," is echoed by

> To change your day of youth to sullied night;

and his " waste of time " by " wasteful " Time; while the thought embodied in M.P.'s final couplet of a defensive war against Time appears in an expanded form in the final couplet and the first three lines of the succeeding sonnet. But, of course, imitation is not necessarily parody: that it is so in this case now remains to be shown.

The first hint of burlesque is given in the third line, where one finds H., after starting off (in the first two lines) with a rural metaphor which promises to work out naturally on the lines of M.P.'s metaphors in No. 12, suddenly switching off into the wholly incongruous metaphor of a stage performance, and then proceeding to mix up the two metaphors so thoroughly as to produce an effect of hopeless confusion of thought and language. In the case of so vigorous and logical a thinker as H. later on proves himself to be, such confusion must have been produced deliberately and of set purpose; and it is difficult to see what this purpose could have been except that of satirizing the slovenly thinking and muddling of metaphors which characterises M.P.'s four sonnets in this series—especially No. 12, the sonnet particularly imitated.

POOLER'S note on the first eight lines of this sonnet runs as follows:—

> The relation of the stars to life is compared to the relation of an audience to a play. The words ' influence ' and ' comment ' seem to be used to obscure the difference between these relations, and to enable the metaphor to pass muster. Stars *ex hypothesi* influence human life, but they do not comment: spectators may comment but do not influence; at any rate their influence does not affect the course of the action. Its effect on the success of the play is another matter. Otherwise we might say that as the reception of a play is indicative of its success or failure, the comments might stand for the omens and portents gathered by astrologers from the stars. The words ' cheer'd and check'd ' seem due to the previous image of spectators of a play. ' Sky ' is ambiguous; it includes the stars which affect men's lives and characters, and weather which affects the growth of vegetation.[1]

[1] After giving this admirable exposition of the complicated absurdities of this passage, Pooler goes on to observe: " What is marvellous is that Shakespeare by means of these inexplicable lines and glimpses succeeds in turning the solid earth into a scene of illusion and change." Truly the most prudent course for an orthodox editor to take, when confronted with this and many other sonnets which exhibit the Humorist in his favourite rôle of clown to the troupe, is to follow Sir Thomas Browne's example and "pursue his Reason to an O altitudo!"

But even stronger indications of H.'s intention to burlesque are given by his choice of the stage for his second metaphor, and the theatrical terms he employs. There is nothing about the stage in the sonnets of any of his competitors in *this* series, but an examination of the *other* series of the first batch shows where he got his materials from, namely: *firstly*, the following lines of S.'s sonnet No. 26 in the E. D. series:

> Till whatsoever star that guides my moving,
> Points on me graciously with a fair aspect,
> And puts apparel on my tatter'd loving,

secondly, two lines in L.'s sonnet No. 21 in the B. I. series:

> That heaven's air in this huge rondure hems.
> As those gold candles fixed in heaven's air.

This explanation is not so far-fetched as it looks at first sight. The connecting link is supplied by four lines from one of Ronsard's most famous sonnets:

> La Mode est le théâtre et les hommes acteurs,
> La Fortune qui est maîtresse de la scène
> Apprête les habits, et de la vie humaine
> Les cieux et les Destins en sont les spectateurs.

Now H., searching his fellow-competitors' contributions for burlesquable material, could not fail to be struck by the resemblance between Ronsard's well-known lines and those of the *actor*-poet, or to see how easily L.'s two lines fitted into the idea of an evening performance at the theatre. To the Elizabethans 'the house' was commonly known as 'the round,' and 'the flies' as 'the heavens' (from which candles would have to be suspended if the performance took place after dark). 'Present' and 'show' appear to have borne their modern theatrical meanings, and it is a not impossible supposition that 'the stars' and 'the sky' were slang names for the occupants of the galleries or 'roomes'—the aristocratic part of the house.

14. This line exhibits a grotesque combination of two images used by his confrères, viz.: (1) S.'s "As fast as thou shalt wane so fast thou grow'st," and (2) M.P.'s line in the D. D. series, "I make my love ingrafted to this store," with (3) the central thought of the next series, 'You shall remain ever young and beautiful in my verse.'

16.

5. POOLER notes—"cf. VII. 13 'in thy noon' perhaps with a reference to the position of the number XII. on a vertical dial." But the vertical dial belongs to M.P.'s remarkable clock "that tells the time," and there is also, possibly, a hint of S.'s "This thy golden time" (3.12).

6-7. An amusing but immoral perversion of S.'s perfectly respectable 3.5-6. "Virtuous" is good.

8-10. A satirical hit at The Patron. The "painted counterfeit" (which has a side allusion to M.P.'s line in this series, "a woman's face by Nature's own hand painted") refers, like L.'s "painted beauty" (No. 21) in the next series, to a portrait of Southampton—probably the one at Welbeck Abbey, described in detail in Lee's *Life* (p. 225). "This time's pencil" (as it surely ought to be punctuated) = the fashionable painter of the day. Apparently the portrait was a flattering one; and it may be confidently assumed that H., in anticipating that Southampton's progeny would be more like their father than the portrait was, did not *really* intend to suggest that they would be *better*-looking than that work of art.

10-12. On the same lines. Neither the flattering portrait nor my poetical eulogies will give posterity a *true* idea of your personal appearance and character—hit number two. POOLER says that " pupil " means ' immature and unskilful,' but it may well be that H. is here referring to the obligation laid on him to follow the lead of S. and the other two competitors in their praise of The Patron, and is thereby adding another effective touch to his satire.

14. Here we have the first of the four " sweets " which, with the three others in lines 4 and 8 of the next sonnet (13), patently burlesque the excessive sugariness of M.P.'s No. 8 in this series and No. 54 in the next. " Sweet skill " is good. It is an ingenious perversion of a line in Sidney's *Arcadia*

> With his sweet skill my skilless youth he drew.

13.

The general intention of the first 8 lines of this sonnet is to burlesque L.'s rather tiresome insistence on his conceit of the identity between a father and his son :

> Thou of thyself thy sweet self dost deceive. (4.10)
> Then what could Death do, if thou should'st depart,
> Leaving thee living in posterity ? (6.11–12)
> Make thee another self for love of me, (10.13)

In H.'s line " To give yourself away keeps yourself still ; " the contradiction may pass for epigram ; and in " then you were yourself again after yourself's decease," the conceit though frigid is intelligible. But when the idea is carried into such nonsensical phrases as " O, that you were yourself," and " you are no longer yours than you yourself here live," the satiric intention is clearly revealed.

13-14. Parodied from the line in *Venus and Adonis :*

> Thou wast begot : to get it is thy duty

17.

The whole of this sonnet is devoted to a deliberate contradiction of the thoughts and sentiments of the next series, in which all the four poets expatiate on The Patron's beauty, and express in the most confident terms their belief that his gifts and graces will be immortalized in their verse. H., as usual, is not so enthusiastic as the three others, and this sonnet may be regarded as a sort of satirical protest against the adulatory strains which his " pupil pen " will have to indite in that series.

9-10. This may be an unkind allusion to L.—the veteran of the party. L. had in the next (B. I.) series laid great emphasis on his ' truth ' (21), and had alluded to himself as a broken-down and wrinkled old man (63).

12. As the commentators point out, Keats took this line as the motto of his *Endymion*. One does not know what meaning he attached to the words " stretched metre," but it scarcely seems likely that it was the correct one, *viz.*, " poetical exaggeration." As POOLER observes : " The expression seems similar to ' swift extremity ' (51.6), where the noun and the adjective have changed places ; it is not the metre that is stretched, but the stretching which is metrical."

13-14. An intentionally absurd and flat-sounding couplet. A man may be said to live twice, once in his natural life and once in that of his child, or once in his natural life and once in the verse of a poet ; but it is straining poetic license to breaking-point to make him live *three times* in all, as here.

126.

This sonnet parodies impartially the work of all the three other competitors in this series; for details *v.* under heading "Verbal Parallelisms" *supra.* It is remarkable chiefly for not being a sonnet at all—the only one of the whole 140 serial sonnets which is irregular in form. H., like M.P., allows himself a little latitude in his 'Envoy' sonnet.

2. This line has puzzled the commentators a good deal, and various emendations have been proposed. No one, however, appears to have suggested—

> Dost hold Time's fickle glass, *his sickle mower.*

This would parody M.P.'s line in his first sonnet (No. 60) in the next series—

> And nothing stands but for *his scythe* to *mow.*

where "mow" is rhymed with "brow." "Sickle" would be used as an adjective = 'curved' (cf. the sickle moon), and mower would = "scythe." The "hour" of the text is spelt "hower" in Q., so one letter only would have to be changed.

SERIES No. 2.—Beauty Immortalized.

The Theme. The Poet promises to enshrine The Patron's gifts and graces in immortal verse.

This theme is one of the most hackneyed of all the many hackneyed conceits of the sonnet-mongers. LEE notes:

> In the numerous sonnets in which he [Shakespeare] boasted that his verse was so certain of immortality that it was capable of immortalizing the person to whom it was addressed, the poet therefore gave voice to no conviction that was peculiar to his mental constitution. He was merely proving his supreme mastery of a theme which Ronsard, Du Bellay, and Desportes, emulating Pindar, Horace, Ovid, and other classical poets, had lately made a commonplace of the poetry of Europe. . . . Drayton and Daniel developed the conceit with unblushing iteration. Drayton, who spoke of his efforts as 'my immortal song' (*Idea,* vi. 14) and 'my world-out-wearing rhymes' (xliv. 7), embodied the vaunt in such lines as:
>
> While thus my pen strives to eternize thee (*Idea,* xliv. 1).
> Ensuing ages yet my rhymes shall cherish (*ib.* xliv. 11).
> My name shall mount unto eternity (*ib.* xliv. 14).
> All that I see is to eternize thee (*ib.* xlvii. 14)
>
> Daniel was no less explicit:
>
> This (*sc.* verse) may remain thy lasting monument (*Delia,* xxxvii. 9).
> Thou mayest in after ages live esteemed,
> Unburied in these lines (*ib.* xxix. 9–10).
> These (*sc.* my verses) are the arks, the trophies I erect
> That fortify thy name against old age;
> And these (*sc.* verses) thy sacred virtues must protect
> Against the dark and time's consuming rage (*ib.* 1.9–12). (*Life*—pp. 186-8.)

Daniel published his *Delia* in 1592 (re-issued 1594), and Drayton his *Ideas Mirrour* in June, 1594. Both these collections, especially Daniel's, were evidently well-known to our four poets; and the reader is invited to observe for himself how many of the phrases quoted in this extract are echoed in the sonnets of this series

SERIES No. 2—BEAUTY

The Theme—The Poet promises to enshrine The

SHAKESPEARE

64

When I have seen by *Time's fell hand* defaced
The rich-proud cost of outworn buried age ;
When sometime lofty *towers* I see *down-razed,*
And *brass* eternal slave to *mortal rage ;*
When I have seen the hungry ocean gain
Advantage on the kingdom of the shore
And the *firm soil* win of the *watery main,*
Increasing store with loss and loss with store ;
When I have seen such interchange of state,
Or state itself *confounded* to decay ;
Ruin hath taught me thus to ruminate,
That Time will come and take my love away.
This thought is as a death, which cannot choose
But weep to have that which it fears to lose.

19

Devouring Time, blunt thou the lion's paws,
And make the earth devour her own sweet brood ;
Pluck the keen teeth from the fierce tiger's jaws,
And burn the long-lived phœnix in her blood ;
Make glad and sorry seasons as thou fleet'st,
And do whate'er thou wilt, *swift-footed* Time,
To the wide world and all her fading sweets ;
But I forbid thee one most heinous crime :
O, *carve* not with thy *hours* my love's *fair brow,*
Nor draw no *lines* there with thine *antique* pen ;
Him in thy course untainted do allow
For beauty's pattern to succeeding men.
Yet do thy worst, old *Time : despite* thy wrong,
My love shall in *my verse* ever live young.

18

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day ?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate :
Rough winds do *shake* the darling *buds of May,*
And *summer's* lease hath all too short a date :
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often in his gold complexion dimm'd ;
And every fair from *fair* sometime declines,
By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd ;
But thy eternal summer shall not *fade,*
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest ;
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal *lines* to time thou grow'st :
So long as *men* can *breathe,* or *eyes* can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

THE MINOR POET

60

Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore,
So do our minutes hasten to their end ;
Each changing place with that which goes before,
In sequent toil all forwards do contend.
Nativity, once in the main of light,
Crawls to maturity, wherewith being crown'd,
Crooked eclipses 'gainst his glory fight,
And Time that gave doth now his gift *confound.*
Time doth transfix the flourish set on youth
And *delves* the *parallels* in *beauty's brow,*
Feeds on the *rarities* of nature's truth,
And nothing stands but for his scythe to mow:
And *yet* to *times* in hope *my verse* shall stand,
Praising thy worth, *despite his cruel hand.*

54

O, how much more doth beauty beauteous seem
By that sweet *ornament* which truth doth give !
The rose looks *fair,* but *fairer* we it deem
For that sweet odour which doth in it live.
The canker-blooms have full as deep a dye
As the perfumed tincture of the roses,
Hang on such thorns, and *play* as wantonly
When *summer's breath* their masked *buds* discloses :
But, for their virtue only is their show,
They live unwoo'd and unrespected *fade ;*
Die to themselves. Sweet roses do not so ;
Of their sweet deaths are sweetest odours made :
And so of you, beauteous and lovely youth,
When that shall vade, by verse distills your truth.

55

Not marble, nor the gilded monuments
Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rhyme ?
But you shall *shine* more *bright in these contents*
Than unswept *stone,* besmear'd with sluttish time.
When wasteful war shall *statues overturn,*
And broils *root out* the *work of masonry,*
Nor Mars his sword nor war's quick fire shall burn
The living record of *your memory.*
'Gainst *death* and all-oblivious enmity
Shall you pace forth ; your praise shall still find room
Even in the *eyes* of all posterity
That wear this world out to the ending doom.
So, till the judgement that yourself arise,
You live in this, and dwell in *lovers' eyes.*

TREATMENT OF THE THEME.

Shakespeare's contribution contains the following four leading thoughts :

(a). My love is as fair as summer and summer's flowers. (18.1-10).
(b). Time and Death destroy all things terrestrial. (64.1-10).
(c). Therefore my love must die. (64.11-12).
(d). Nevertheless he shall live for ever in my verse. (19.13-14, 18.11-14).

IMMORTALIZED. (B.I.)

Patron's gifts and graces in immortal verse.

THE LAWYER

65

Since *brass*, nor *stone*, nor *earth*, nor *boundless sea*,
But sad *mortality* o'er-sways their power,
How with this *rage* shall beauty hold a plea
Whose action is no stronger than a flower ?
O, how shall *summer's honey breath* hold out
Against the wreckful siege of battering days,
When rocks impregnable are not so stout,
Nor gates of steel so strong, but Time decays ?
O fearful meditation ! where, alack,
Shall Time's best jewel from Time's chest lie hid ?
Or what strong hand can hold his *swift foot* back ?
Or who his spoil of beauty can forbid ?
O, none, unless this miracle have might,
That *in black ink* my love may still *shine bright*.

21

So is it not with me as with that Muse
Stirr'd by a *painted beauty* to his *verse*,
Who heaven itself for ornament doth use
And every fair with his *fair* doth *rehearse*,
Making a couplement of proud compare,
With sun and moon, with earth and sea's rich gems,
With *April's first-born flowers*, and all things *rare*
That heaven's air in this huge rondure hems.
O, let me, true in love, but truly write,
And then believe me, my love is as fair
As any mother's child, though not so bright
As those gold candles fix'd in heaven's air :
Let them say more that like of hearsay well ;
I will not praise that purpose not to sell.

63

Against my love shall be, as I am now,
With *Time's injurious hand* crush'd and o'erworn ;
When *hours* have drain'd his blood and fill'd *his brow*
With *lines* and *wrinkles ;* when his youthful morn
Hath travell'd on to age's steepy night,
And all those beauties whereof now he's king
Are vanishing or vanish'd out of sight,
Stealing away the treasure of his spring ;
For such a time do I now fortify
Against *confounding* age's cruel knife,
That *he* shall *never cut from memory*
My sweet love's beauty, though my lover's life :
His beauty shall *in these black lines* be seen,
And they shall *live*, and he *in them still* green.

THE HUMORIST

62

Sin of self-love possesseth all mine eye
And all my soul and all my every part ;
And for this sin there is no remedy,
It is so grounded inward in my heart.
Methinks no face so gracious is as mine,
No shape so true, no truth of such account ;
And for myself mine own worth do define,
As I all other in all worths surmount.
But when my glass shows me myself indeed,
Beated and *chopp'd* with tann'd *antiquity*,
Mine own self-love quite contrary I read ;
Self so self-loving were iniquity.
'Tis thee, myself, that for myself I praise,
Painting my age with beauty of thy days.

53

What is your substance, whereof are you made,
That millions of strange shadows on you tend ?
Since every one hath, every one, one shade,
And you, but one, can every shadow lend.
Describe Adonis, and the counterfeit
Is poorly imitated after you ;
On Helen's cheek all art of *beauty* set,
And you in Grecian tires are *painted* new :
Speak of the spring and foison of the year,
The one doth shadow of your beauty show,
The other as your bounty doth appear ;
And you in every blessed shape we know.
In all external grace you have some part,
But you like none, none you, for constant heart.

81

Or I shall live your epitaph to make,
Or you survive when I in earth am rotten ;
From hence *your memory death cannot take*,
Although in me each part will be forgotten.
Your name from hence immortal life shall have,
Though I, once gone, to all the world must die :
The earth can yield me but a common grave,
When you entombed *in men's eyes* shall lie.
Your *monument* shall be my gentle *verse*,
Which eyes not yet created shall o'er-read ;
And tongues to be your being shall *rehearse*,
When all the breathers of this world are dead ;
You still shall live—such virtue hath my pen—
Where *breath* most *breathes*, *even* in the mouths of *men*.

The Minor Poet follows S. in all four, *viz.* : (a) (54 *passim*) ; (b) (60.9-12) ; (c,) (54.11-12) ; (d) (60.13-14, 54.13-14, 55 *passim*). He introduces one new thought, namely (e) Beauty's value is enhanced by constancy. (54.1-4.14).

The Lawyer also follows S. in all four, *viz.* : (a) (65.4-5, 21.7) ; (b) (65 *passim*) ; (c) (63.10-12) ; and (d) (65.14, 63.13-14).

The Humorist follows S. in (a) (53.9-10) ; he omits (b) (already dealt with in No. 15

of the previous series); he follows him in (c) (81.1, and 7-8); and in (d) (81 *passim*). He also follows M.P. in (e) (53.13-14). He introduces two new thoughts, *viz.*: (f) his identity with The Patron (63 *passim*); and (g) The Patron the divine substance of which worldly phenomena are shadows (53 *passim*).

Four points deserve attention:

1. The really remarkable closeness with which M.P. and L. follow S.'s lead in their treatments of the theme. H.'s imitation is not so faithful, but it is as close as is consistent with his main object, which (as in the first series) is to burlesque the contributions of his fellow-competitors.

2. H.'s two new thoughts (f) and (g) are taken (in order to be burlesqued) from M.P.'s Sonnet No. 37 in the next series of the batch—Despondency Dispelled.

3. S.'s deliberate design of adapting the thoughts and even the language of the couplets of the first series in which the Poet expresses the confident opinion that the preservation of The Patron's memory depends on his marrying and getting a son, to the corresponding couplets of this series, which express his equally confident opinion that it depends on his being mentioned in his (The Poet's) immortal verse. All three of S.'s fellow-competitors faithfully copy him in employing this device, which, inartistic as it seems to us, is nevertheless thoroughly in keeping with the conventions of Elizabethan sonnetteering, and affords further evidence (if such evidence were needed) of the utter unreality of the sentiments professed by the fashionable sonnet-mongers. The reader is particularly requested to compare carefully S.'s 2.12-14, and 11.12 read with 3.13-14 in the M. A. series with his 19.12-14, and 18.12-14 in this series: M.P.'s 12.13-14, and 7.11-14 in the M. A. series with his 60.12-14, and 55.10-14 in this series: L.'s 5.11-14, and 10.13-14 in the M. A. series with his 65.12-14, and 63.13-14 in this series; and H.'s 16.12-14 in the M. A. series with his 81.10, and 81.13-14 in this series.

4. The close connection between this series and the preceding one (M. A.). Note:

(a). M.P.'s carrying on of the imagery of his last sonnet in the first series (No. 7) into the first of this series (No. 60).

(b). L.'s borrowings from these two last-named sonnets for his No. 63 in this series. Compare his "youthful morn," "age's steepy night," and "king" with M.P.'s "strong youth," "steep-up," "feeble age," "sacred majesty" (No. 7) and "crown'd" (No. 60).

(c). The carrying on into this series by M.P. and L. of thought (e) of the first series—The Patron's waging defensive war against Time and Death. Compare M.P.'s—

> *Time* doth transfix the flourish set on youth
> *And delves the parallels in Beauty's brow,*

and L.'s—

> Against the wreckful *siege* of battering *days*

in this series with S.'s—

> When forty *winters* shall *besiege thy brow*
> *And dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field*

in the first series.

VERBAL PARALLELISMS.

S. . . . by *Time's fell hand* defaced
M.P. . . . despite his [*Time's*] *cruel hand.*
L. With *Time's injurious hand* crush'd and o'erworn ;

S. *When* sometime lofty *towers* I see *down-razed,*
And *brass* eternal slave to *mortal rage ;*
And the *firm soil* win of the *watery main,*
M.P. Than unswept *stone* besmear'd with sluttish time.
When wasteful war shall *statues overturn,*
And broils *root out* the *work of masonry,*
L. Since *brass,* nor *stone,* nor *earth,* nor *boundless sea,*
But sad *mortality* o'ersways their power,
How with this *rage* shall beauty hold a plea

S. Or state itself *confounded* to decay ;
M.P. And Time that gave doth now his gift *confound.*
L. Against *confounding* age's cruel knife,

S. O ! *carve* not with thy *hours* my love's *fair brow,*
Nor draw no *lines* there with thy *antique* pen ;
M.P. And *delves* the *parallels* in *beauty's brow,*
L. When *hours* have drained his blood, and filled *his brow*
With *lines* and *wrinkles* . . .
H. Beated and *chopped* with tanned *antiquity,*

S. *Yet* do thy worst, old *Time ; despite* thy wrong,
My love shall in *my verse* ever live young.
M.P. And *yet* to *times* in hope *my verse* shall stand,
Praising thy worth, *despite* his cruel hand.

S. Rough winds do *shake* the darling *buds of May,*
And *summer's* lease hath all too short a date :
M.P. Hang on such thorns and *play* as wantonly
When *summer's breath* their masked *buds* discloses :
L. O, how shall *summer's honey breath* hold out
With *April's first-born flowers* . . .

S. *And every fair* from *fair* sometimes declines,
M.P. The rose looks *fair,* but *fairer* we it deem
L. *And every fair* with his *fair* doth rehearse,

S. *When* in eternal *lines* to time thou grow'st :
So long as *men* can *breathe,* or *eyes* can see,
So long *lives this,* and this gives life to thee.
M.P. *Even* in the *eyes* of all posterity
You live in these and dwell *in lovers' eyes.*
L. His beauty shall *in these black lines* be seen,
And they shall *live,* and he *in them still* green.
H. *When* you entombed *in men's eyes* shall lie.
You still shall live—such virtue hath my pen—
Where *breath* most *breathes, even* in the mouths of *men.*

M.P. But you shall *shine* more *bright in these contents*
L. That *in black ink* my love may still *shine bright.*

M.P. The living record of *your memory.*
'Gainst *death* and all-oblivious enmity
L. That he [Age, *i.e., Death*] shall never cut from *memory*
H. From hence *your memory death* cannot take,

Minor Parallelisms.—(1) *Swift-footed,* 19.6, 65.11 ; (2) *Fade,* 18.9, 54.10 ; (3) *Monuments.* 55.1, 81.9 ; (4) *Painted beauty,* 21.2, 53.7-8 ; (5) *Verse* . . . *rehearse,* 21.2-4, 81.9-11.

NOTES.

Shakespeare. (Nos. 64, 19, 18.)

The first two of Shakespeare's sonnets in this series are characteristically clear in thought and expression, and run very musically, but otherwise are not particularly noteworthy. But the third sonnet (18) belongs to a different category altogether. It is magnificent throughout,—from the perfect beauty of the opening quatrain to the sweep and rush of the triumphant final couplet. The rhythms are varied with the subtlest skill, and the majestic ninth line—

> But *thy* eternal summer shall not fade,

reverberates like a stroke on a gong. One of the great sonnets of the language, fit to stand beside that most lovely of ' Shakespearean ' sonnets—

> Bright star, would I were steadfast as thou art.

The first sonnet owes a good deal to a passage in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*—or rather perhaps to Golding's translation thereof (XV. 288-90) :

> Even so have places oftentimes exchanged theyr estate,
> For I have seene it sea which was substantial ground alate.
> Ageine where sea was, I have seene the same become dry land.

The Minor Poet. (Nos. 60, 54, 55.)

The quality of M.P.'s contributions to this series is decidedly above his average. The first quatrains of Nos. 60 and 55, are really fine, and the versification is flowing and easy throughout. Four of his ' characteristics ' are exemplified in this series : *Confused Thinking*, 60.11, 54.5-6, 55.7 ; *Slovenly Phrasing*, 60.11, 54.13-14, 55.9, 55.10 and 14 ; *Smooth Versification* throughout, esp. 60.1-4, 55.1-4 ; *Sound not Sense*, 60.11. 54.11, 55.4.

60.

1-4. In this quatrain M.P. follows S.'s example (in No. 64) and paraphrases a passage in Golding's translation of the *Metamorphoses*. M.P.'s passage (XV. 199-203) occurs some 80 lines earlier than S.'s :

> . . . But looke
> As every wave dryves other foorth and that that commes behynd
> Both thrusteth and is thrust itself. Even so the tymes by kynd
> Doo fly and follow both at once, and evermore renew.

M.P. was apparently determined to show that he could turn Golding's uncouth verses into poetry as well as S.

5-8. These four lines provide some fine confused reading ; and, as is very often the case with M.P., the key to the confusion of thought and language is his inordinate fondness for alliteration—

> *C*rawls to maturity, wherewith being *c*rowned,
> *C*rooked eclipses ' *g*ainst his *g*lory fight,
> And Time that *g*ave doth now his *g*ift confound.

DOWDEN explains : " The entrance of a child into the world at birth is an entrance into the main or ocean of light ; the image is suggested by l.1 where our minutes are compared to waves." But was the crawl-stroke known in Shakespeare's day ?

10. A close imitation of S.'s lines in the M. A. series (2.1-2):

> When forty winters shall besiege thy *brow*
> And *dig* deep *trenches* in thy *beauty's* field.

11. What is the meaning of this well-sounding line?

54.

Another saccharine sonnet like his No. 8 in the M. A. series. Here we have no less than five 'sweets'—one more than in No. 8. Both these sonnets are parodied (as already pointed out) by H. in his Nos. 16 and 13 in the M. A. series.

5-6. A typically inaccurate statement of fact. STEEVENS notes [my italics]: "*Shakespeare has not yet begun to observe the productions of nature with accuracy*, or his eyes would have convinced him that the cynorhodon is by no means of as deep a colour as the rose."

The last half of this sonnet is reminiscent of three well-known lines in Theseus' speech to Hermia in the opening scene of *Midsummer Night's Dream:*

> But earthlier happy is *the rose distilled*,
> Than that which *withering* on the virgin *thorn*,
> Grows, *lives*, and *dies* in single blessedness.

(*v.* note on L.'s No. 5 in the M. A. series).

11-12. POOLER notes: "Perhaps it were to enquire too curiously whether this means 'dead sweets' as 'swift extremity' means 'extreme speed': or whether 'deaths' may be used lightly for the ghosts of the flowers; see Wülckner Wrights' *gloss.*, p. 447*b*: 'manes'= dea*th*as, dea*th*godas: or for their corpses, 'death' being commonly used for death's head, and skeleton." A pity to waste so much erudition on M.P., who had a vague idea of what he wanted to say, but whose chief concern was to say it musically, *i.e., alliteratively*. These two lines, in fact, furnish one of the most flagrant examples of his abuse of alliteration:

> *D*ie to themselves: *s*weet ro*s*es *d*o not so;
> Of their *s*weet *d*eaths are *s*weetest o*d*ours ma*d*e.

13-14. "that" in line 14 apparently refers to "beauty" 13 lines higher up with several full stops between! "Distill," like "show" in line 9, is copied by L. in his No. 5 in the M. A. series, as already noted.

55.

1-4. This quatrain echoes *Lucrece* 944-6:—

> To ruinate proud buildings with thy hours,
> And *smear* with *dust* their *glittering golden* towers,
> To fill with worm-holes stately *monuments*.

On "unswept stone" POOLER notes, "*i.e.*, than in unswept stone 'in' being understood from 'in these contents'; my verse will be a better memorial than the inscription on your tomb. If a change is to be made I would rather read *Than on wept stone*, where *wept*=bewept, than with Stengel, *Than in swept stone*." Again the butterfly is broken on the wheel! M.P. got his alliterative effect—five s's and four t's, which was all he cared about.

8. "All-oblivious enmity" apparently means oblivion which is the enemy of all—a really outrageous inversion made with the object of providing a rhyme for "posterity."

10-14. Slovenly, far-fetched, and tautologous verses which would be mercilessly criticized if they appeared as the handiwork of the minutest of the minor poets of to-day. Why " even " ? To talk of printed matter " finding room " in people's eyes is not a little ridiculous. In line 11 the poet's verses are going to be looked upon by the *whole* of posterity, but in line 14 only by the ' lovers ' section thereof. And line 13 is hopelessly ungrammatical, even if we accept Beeching's explanation that " that "=when.

The Lawyer. (Nos. 65, 21, 63.)

The Lawyer's contribution to this series is, like M.P.'s, a very characteristic one. Five ' characteristics ' are exemplified : *Pedestrian Style*, 21.9-14 ; *The Attorney*, 65.3-4 ; *Clumsy Humour*, 65.14, 21.11, 63.13-14 ; *The Candid Friend*, 21.9-14, 63.1-2 ; *The Old Dog*, 21.1-8.

65.

4. " action." The commentators take this as equivalent to force or vigour, and quote *Julius Cæsar* I. iii. 77 :

> A man no mightier than thyself or me
> In personal action . . .

but this misses the legal technicalities ' plea ' and ' action.

13-14. A not very exhilarating *jeu d'esprit.*

21.

" That Muse " is M.P. ; throughout this sonnet L. is poking fun at him, and parodying his sonnets. The reader is invited to check the following references to M.P.'s efforts.

(a). How can my *Muse* want subject to invent,
When thou dost breathe, that pour'st into my *verse*
Thine own sweet argument, too excellent
For every vulgar paper to *rehearse*. (E. D., 38).
(b). A woman's face with Nature's own hand *painted*. (M. A., 20).
(c). O, how much more doth *beauty* beauteous seem
By that sweet *ornament* which truth doth give !
The *rose* looks *fair*, but *fairer* we it deem (B. I., 54).
(d). When *summer's* breath their masked *buds* discloses: (B. I., 54).
(e). Feeds on the *rarities* of nature's truth, (B. I., 60).
(f). Vouchsafe, right virtuous lord, with gracious eyes,
Those *heavenly lamps* which give the Muses light.

This quotation is from Barnes' dedicatory sonnet to Southampton prefixed to his *Parthenophe and Parthenophil* collection of sonnets published in 1593.

(g). . . . . Your *praise* shall still find room. (B. I., 55).
(h). Sonnet No. 7 in the M. A. Series, in which M. P. compares The Patron to the *sun*.

The only difficulty is line 6, " and moon with earth's and sea's rich gems." There are no full-moon faces, ruby lips, or pearly teeth in the *Sonnets*.

1-4. L.'s first reference to himself as the veteran of the party. When these lines were written Warner was thirty-six or thirty-seven—a man of late middle age according to the reckoning of those hard-living times—and so six years older than Shakespeare, eleven years older than Barnes, and fifteen years older than Donne and Southampton.

13-14. This couplet contains two gibes : (1) Barnes had printed and *sold* a volume containing his sonnet in praise of Southampton ; (2) L. insinuates that Barnes had no *personal* acquaintance with Southampton—the " painted beauty " of 12 is the " painted counterfeit " of H.'s 16 in the M. A. series, and may be identified with the Welbeck Abbey portrait of Southampton at the age of twenty-one.

63.

4-6. An echo from M.P.'s sonnet No. 7 in the previous series :

> Serving with looks his sacred *majesty ;*
> And having climbed the *steep-up* heavenly hill,
> Resembling strong *youth* in his middle age,

10. A reference to M.P.'s 60.12 in this series :

> And nothing stands but for *his scythe* to mow.

13-14. A humorous effort of the same type as the couplet of 65, but rather worse.

The Humorist. (Nos. 62, 53, 81.)

In this series H. continues very successfully to carry out his twofold plan of burlesquing the efforts of his fellow-competitors and of poking fun at The Patron. His three sonnets do not contain one serious line. His ' characteristic ' of *Subtle Humour* is well exhibited throughout his contribution ; *Compressed Thought*, 53.1-4 ; *Super-Concettist*, 62.13-14, 53.1-4 ; *The Polite Shirker*, 62 *passim*, 53.14.

62.

The ' argument ' is as follows : " I am sinfully in love with myself, and consider myself superior to the rest of mankind in good looks and everything else. But when I see my weather-beaten face in the looking glass, I realise that I am quite wrong, and that owing to the simple little fact that I am identical with you, I have been flattering myself that I possess a youthful beauty which is really *yours*." One would not suppose that this sort of thing could be taken seriously. But DOWDEN apparently does so. He notes " Perhaps the thought of jealousy in 61 suggests this : ' How self-loving to suppose my friend could be jealous of such an one as I—beated and chopped with tanned antiquity. My apology for supposing that others could make love to me is that my friend's beauty is mine by right of friendship.' " The fact is that this sonnet is not, as POOLER describes it, " A compliment in the form of a confession of vanity," but rather a profession of vanity in the form of a compliment. Donne was born in the same year as Southampton, and (as his portraits shew) was a handsome man of a dark, virile type. Southampton was fair and effeminate-looking. So Donne in pursuance of his fixed policy of shirking whenever he possibly can the task of plastering the Noble Patron with fulsome praise in the manner of his professional confrères, has hit on the device of devoting the greater part of his first sonnet to a half-serious proclamation of his satisfaction with his *own* personal appearance, and then abruptly pretending to conform to the rules of the game by offering the intentionally absurd explanation that his good looks really belong not to an ugly old man like himself, but to the youthful Southampton, of whom M.P. had in the M. A. series sung—

> And for a woman wert thou first created.

This is H.'s first reference to his ' self-love,' which, as the kind reader will discover in due course, is one of the most important factors in *The Polite Shirker's* tactical scheme of co-operation with his three colleagues. Whenever in the course of the Contest (four separate occasions altogether) they bring into action the Love-for-The-Patron sections of their forces, H. conforms to the movement by advancing his Self-Love section, either supported by Identity-with-The-Patron (as here), or else alone, in which latter case it is skilfully camouflaged as the real thing.

4. Taken from the Prayer-book phrase " grafted inwardly in our hearts."

5-9. In these lines H. makes sarcastic reference to S.'s line in his No. 3 in the M. A. series—

> Look in thy glass and tell the face thou viewest,

which seems to have struck his fellow-competitors as particularly funny ; also to M.P.'s " truth " (54), and L.'s " true " and " truly " (21) in this series ; and to M.P.'s " worth " (*passim*).

11. H. ironically applies to himself L.'s description of *himself* (63.2). " Tanned antiquity ", like ' yellow'd with his age ' in H.'s 17 in the previous series, is probably a reference to L.'s complexion.

13. Here we have the first appearance of the Identity-with-The-Patron formula.

14. The " praise " and " days " of the couplet, like the " verse " and " rehearse " of No. 81, is an echo from M.P.'s E. D. sonnet No. 38; and both M.P.'s and L.'s lines echo Constable's lines :

> That former poets praise the beauty of their *days*
> But all these beauties were but figures of thy *praise*.

53.

In this sonnet The Patron is the principal target of H.'s satire. He rags him first by affecting to regard him as divine, and secondly by eulogising him as an epicene beauty. POOLER's note on the first eight lines are as follows :

> *What is your substance* perhaps implying that it is divine, you are the ἰδέα of which your shadows are εἴδωλα. Platonism is often introduced by poets into strange surroundings, as if in revenge. . . *That . . . tend.* The sonnet is based on a pun : shadow (shade, 1.3.) is (1) the silhouette formed by a body that intercepts the sun's rays ; (2) a picture, reflection, or symbol. ' Tend ' means attend, follow as a servant, and is strictly appropriate to 'shadow' only in the first sense, though shadows is here used in the second ; . . . *Since . . . lend.* All men have one shadow each, in the first sense ; you being only one can yet cast many shadows in the second sense ; for everything good and beautiful is either a representation of you or a symbol of your merits . . . *set.* With this use of the imperative compare 89.1,3. The meaning seems to be if to Helen's loveliness were added all the charms that the art of beauty (whatever that may be) can compass, she would then be an image of yourself in foreign clothes. Without addition to her native beauty she would be only a bad likeness, like Adonis.

It seems odd that so competent a critic should have written so sound a note without (apparently) entertaining a suspicion that ' Shake-speare' was pulling the gentleman's leg.

The first quatrain ridicules M.P.'s absurd D. D. sonnet No. 37, in which he congratulates himself on making up his personal deficiencies by substantial borrowings from *the shadow* of The Patron's manifold excellencies :

> Whilst that this *shadow* doth such *substance* give.

H. wonders what stuff Southampton is made of which can vitalize people like Barnes by its mere reflections or emanations in this remarkable fashion. He is forced to conclude that he must be To Kalon itself, as L. had hinted in the rather absurd final couplet of his ' idolatrous ' sonnet No. 105 in the E. D. series—

> Fair, kind, and true, have often lived alone,
> Which three till now never kept seat in one.

Note too (as in that sonnet) an allusion to Southampton's motto, *Ung par tout, tout par ung.*

The second quatrain gibes at Southampton's effeminate appearance. There are three allusions :

(1). To the description of " rose-cheeked Adonis " in *V. and A.*

> ' Thrice fairer than myself,' thus she began,
> ' The field's chief flower, sweet above compare
> Stain to all nymphs, more lovely than a man,
> More white and red than doves and roses are.'

One infers that the hero of *Venus and Adonis* was intended to be a portrait of the dedicatee. Southampton was under twenty when S.'s poem was published.

(2). To M.P.'s indelicate sonnet No. 20 in the M. A. series, beginning :

> A woman's face with nature's own hand painted
> Hast thou, the master-mistress of my passion.

(3). To a *recently-painted* portrait of The Patron—the " painted counterfeit " of H.'s No. 16 in the M. A. series. It may be identified almost certainly with the Welbeck Abbey portrait of Southampton at the age of twenty-one. This depicts a beardless, pink-cheeked youth, arrayed in an extravagantly variegated kit, and with a thick lock of hair brought forward over the left shoulder and hanging half-way down to his waist, crimped and curled like a cart-horse's tail at a show.[1]

9. An allusion to M.P.'s No. 12 in the M. A. series.

14. An intentionally ambiguous line which echoes ironically the irreproachable sentiments of M.P.'s 54.1-2, and 13-14.

81.

1-2. These two seemingly pointless lines possibly veil a subtle gibe. If I predecease you, your name will live as long as you survive in your proper person ; if you predecease me, it will live as long as the epitaph I shall write for you is remembered.

4. Here is another of H.'s ambiguous reference to ' part ' and ' parts,' *cf.* 17.4, 53.13, 31.11.

7-14. S. in the final couplet of his contribution to this series had said hyperbolically but quite intelligibly :

> So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
> So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

M.P. at the end of his contribution had taken the first or *eyes* part of S.'s vaunt and elaborated and spoilt it ; and now H. at the end of *his* contribution takes up the second or *breath* part of S.'s couplet, and burlesques M.P.'s feeble performance by claiming that if he (M.P.) can provide The Patron with a permanent billet in posterity's *eyes*—

> When you entombed in men's eyes shall lie,

he (H.) can promise him one in posterity's *mouth*—

> You still shall live—such virtue has my pen—
> Where breath most breathes, even in the mouths of men.

—a patently comic last line. Note how H. works in M.P.'s " still " and " even."

SERIES No. 3.—Despondency Dispelled.

The Theme. The Poet, sunk in dejection, comforts himself by thinking of The Patron.

This one-sonnet series probably stood last in the first batch as a sort of Envoy, the Epistle Dedicatory series standing first.

[1] LEE notes :—Southampton's singularly long hair procured him at times unwelcome attentions. When, in January, 1598, he struck Ambrose Willoughby, an esquire of the body, for asking him to break off, owing to the lateness of the hour, a game of primero that he was playing in the royal chamber at Whitehall, the esquire Willoughby is stated to have retaliated by ' pulling off some of the Earl's locks.' On the incident being reported to the Queen, she ' gave Willoughby thanks for what he did, in the presence.'—(*Sydney Papers*, ii. 83).

SERIES NO. 3—DESPONDENCY

The Theme—The Poet sunk in dejection

SHAKESPEARE

29

When, *in disgrace with fortune* and men's eyes,
I all alone *beweep* my outcast state,
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,
And look upon myself, and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with *friends* possess'd.
Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least ;
Yet in these thoughts myself almost *despising*,
Haply I think on thee, and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate ;
For thy sweet *love* remember'd such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with *kings*.

THE MINOR POET

37

As a decrepit father takes delight
To see his active child do deeds of youth,
So I, *made lame by fortune's dearest spite*,
Take all my comfort of thy worth and truth ;
For whether beauty, birth, or wealth, or wit,
Or any of these all, or all, or more,
Entitled in thy *parts* do *crowned* sit,
I make my *love* engrafted to this store :
So then I am not lame, poor, nor *despised*,
Whilst that this shadow doth such substance *give*
That I in thy abundance am sufficed
And by a part of all thy glory *live*.
Look, what is best, that best I wish *in thee* :
This wish I have ; then ten times happy *me !*

TREATMENT OF THE THEME.

S.'s treatment of The Theme is very simple and consists of two thoughts only :

(a). A description of the causes of his despondency.

(b). The thought of The Patron's perfections dispels this despondency.

All the others follow him very closely. The *causes* of the despondency differ, but the *remedy* is the same in each of the four contributions.

VERBAL PARALLELISMS.

For a one-sonnet series the verbal parallelisms are remarkably close and numerous

S. When *in disgrace with Fortune* and men's eyes,
M.P. So I *made lame by fortune's dearest spite*,

S. I all alone *beweep* my outcast state,
L. Then can I *drown an eye* unused to flow,
And *weep* afresh *Love's* long since cancell'd woe,
H. How many a holy and obsequious *tear*
Hath dear religious *love* stol'n from *mine eye*,

S. Featur'd like him, like him with *friends* possess'd
L. For precious *friends hid* in *death's* dateless night,
H. And all those *friends*, which I thought buried.
As interest of the *dead* which now appear
But things removed which *hidden in* thee lie !

S. *Haply I think on thee*, and then my state,
L. But *if the while, I think on thee*, dear friend,

S. For thy sweet *love* remembered such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with *kings*.
M.P. Entitled in thy *parts* do *crowned* sit,
I make my *love* engrafted to that store :
H. And there *reigns love*, and all *love's* loving *parts*,
Who all their *parts* of me to thee did give.

Minor Parallelisms.—(1) *despise*, 29.9, 37.9 ; (2) *wealth*, 29.13, 37.5 ; (3) *give* . . . *live*, 37.10 and 12, 31.9 and 11 ; (4) *in thee* . . . *me*, 37.13-14, 31.13-14 ; (5) *lack*, 30.3, 31.2.

DISPELLED. (D.D.)

comforts himself by thinking of The Patron.

THE LAWYER

30

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the *lack* of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new wail my *dear* time's waste:
Then can I *drown an eye*, unused to flow,
For precious *friends hid* in *death's* dateless night,
And *weep* afresh *love's* long since cancell'd woe,
And moan the expense of many a vanish'd sight:
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
The sad account of fore-bemoaned moan,
Which I new pay as if not paid before.
But *if the while I think on thee*, dear friend,
All losses are restored and sorrows end.

THE HUMORIST

31

Thy bosom is endeared with all hearts,
Which I by *lacking* have supposed dead;
And there *reigns love*, and all *love's* loving *parts*,
And all those *friends* which I thought buried.
How many a holy and obsequious *tear*
Hath *dear* religious *love* stol'n from *mine eye*,
As interest of the *dead*, which now appear
But things removed that *hidden* in thee lie!
Thou art the grave where buried love doth *live*,
Hung with the trophies of my lovers gone,
Who all their *parts* of me to thee did *give*:
That due of many now is thine alone:
Their images I loved I view *in thee*,
And thou, all they, hast all the all of *me*.

NOTES.

Shakespeare. (No. 29)

A good example of the 'Shakespearean' form of sonnet—clearly and forcibly expressed, and beautifully balanced throughout.

1-9. It is possible that in these lines we get one of the very few glimpses of Shakespeare's real feelings to be found in the *Sonnets*. It is interesting to compare this *personal* sonnet, in which the poet (S.) is speaking in his own person, with the *dramatic* sonnet 91 (in the E. A. series), in which the poet (N.) is speaking in the person of a gilded youth of the day.

The Minor Poet. (No. 37.)

M.P.'s characteristics of *Confused Thinking* and *Slovenly Phrasing* are well displayed in this sonnet (4-7). It is a wholly unoriginal production—an amalgam of the ideas and language of S.'s 'copy' sonnet with the ideas and language of a certain sonnet in Sidney's *Arcadia*. From S. he gets: (1) the harshness of fortune, (2) his lack of beauty, (3) his lack of wit, (4) his being despised, and (5) his love for The Patron his only wealth. From Sidney's lines, which run as follows:

> Since in *sweet you all goods so richly reign*,
> That where you are no *wished* good can want.
> . . . . . .
> How can you then *unworthie* him decree,
> In whose *chief parts* your *worths implanted* bee.

he gets: (1) the royal state of The Patron's gifts and graces, (2) the wishing of all good things to him, (3) the conceit of his gifts and graces being displayed on a shield, and (4) the conceit of his own qualities being incorporated with them.

He very characteristically gets tangled up in his heraldic metaphor in lines 7 and 8, and has thereby caused a lot of trouble to the commentators. POOLER writes:

Entitled . . . sit. Perhaps—sit as rightful kings among your other good qualities; *cf.* "part" in lxxiv. 6, and lxxxi. 4. I doubt if "crowned" implies predominance over his other gifts and graces, it may mean merely that those named are princely in kind or degree. Sometimes to analyse a phrase of Shakespeare's into its ingredients is to lose the flavour. Entitled seems to mean "by a just title."

What he was, apparently, *trying* to say was that he was comforted by the thought that The Patron was not only full of "worth" but also "true," *i.e.*, constant to his love for him (M.P.). Therefore he was certain of having a share in all the ingredients that went to make up the aforesaid worth, *i.e.*, "beauty, birth, or wealth, or wit," et cetera—l. 6 being merely a poetical periphrasis for "et cetera."

Note his favourite "worth" again.

The Lawyer. (No. 30.)

The first four lines of this sonnet (which *in form* is very closely imitated from the first four of S.'s sonnet) are very finely expressed, and are as well known, perhaps, as any passage in the *Sonnets*—his predilection for legal terminology having in this instance served him well indeed. But the rest of the sonnet is on a much lower plane; here we have presented to us the image of a tradesman dolefully looking over his last year's books—cancelled, expense, tell over, accounts, pay, losses—and the effect is unpoetical to a degree. The characteristics exemplified are: *Pedestrian Style*, 5-14; *The Attorney*, 1-2; *The Accountant*, 5-14.

The Humorist. (No. 31.)

The Humorist, as usual, treats the theme in a vein of burlesque. His "special idea" is to take L.'s rather absurd declaration that when he thinks of The Patron "all losses are restored and sorrows end," *i.e.*, his "precious friends hid in death's dateless night" are brought back to life again, and to push it to the extreme of absurdity by saying, 'How foolish of me to bewail the death of my friends. I see now that they did not really die, but were merely incorporated in you, and so you are entitled to receive from me in one conglomerated lump the affection I felt for each of them singly.' This "special idea" is worked out according to the familiar formula of his "general idea," *i.e.*, to burlesque everything that seems to him burlesquable in the efforts of his fellow-competitors. Taking his lines in order, note "lacking" (L. 3), "reigns" and "parts" (M.P., 5 and 6); "dear" (L. 4, where it is used merely to eke out the line); "interest" (L.'s accountancy metaphor); "dead" and "hidden" (L. 6); "trophies" and "parts" (M.P.'s heraldic metaphor); "due" (L.'s accountancy as before); and compare the "live" and "give" of lines 9 and 11 with M.P.'s "give" and "live" in lines 10 and 12, and his "I view in thee" rhyming with "me" in his final couplet with the "I wish in thee" rhyming with "me" in M.P.'s final couplet.

Another advantage of this "special idea" is that it enables him to expatiate on his love for The Patron without incurring the reproach of servility—*The Polite Shirker* again. Other characteristics exemplified are, *Subtle Humour* (*passim*), and *Super-Concettist* (*passim*).

SERIES No. 4. Epistle Dedicatory.

The Theme. The Poet modestly commends to The Patron his first batch of adulatory sonnets.

As noted above, this series probably stood first in the first batch, series No. 3 standing last as the Envoy.

SERIES No. 4—EPISTLE

The Theme—The Poet modestly commends to The

SHAKESPEARE

26

Lord of *my love*, to whom in vassalage
Thy merit hath my duty strongly knit,
To thee I send this *written* ambassage,
To witness duty, not to show my wit:
Duty so great, which wit so poor as mine
May make seem bare, in *wanting words* to show it
But that I hope some good conceit of thine
In thy soul's thought, all naked, will bestow it
Till whatsoever star that guides my moving
Points on me graciously with fair aspect,
And puts apparel on my tatter'd loving,
To show me worthy of thy sweet respect:
Then may I dare to boast how I do love thee:
Till then not show my head where thou mayst
prove me.

THE MINOR POET

38

How can my Muse want subject to *invent*
While thou dost breathe, that pour'st into *my verse*
Thine own sweet *argument*, too *excellent*
For every vulgar paper to rehearse?
O, give thyself the thanks, if aught in me
Worthy perusal stand against thy sight;
For who's so *dumb* that cannot *write to thee*,
When thou thyself dost give *invention* light;
Be thou the tenth Muse, ten times more in worth
Than those old nine which rhymers invocate;
And he that calls on thee, let him bring forth
Eternal numbers to outlive long date.
If my slight Muse do please these curious days
The pain be mine, but thine shall be the praise.

TREATMENT OF THE THEME.

In this series S.'s three rivals give themselves a much freer hand than usual; each follows his own line without much regard to S.'s treatment of The Theme. S. protests affection for The Patron, apologizes for the inadequacy of his poetical offering, hopes that it will be received with favour, and promises, if Fortune smiles, to present something better later on. M.P. assures The Patron that inasmuch as he is both the subject and the inspiration of *his* offering, he is entitled to the credit of any success that may attend it. L. alleges The Patron's unique personality as his excuse for making him the sole theme of *his* offering. And H. explains that the overwhelming intensity of his affection for The Patron prevents him from prefixing to *his* offering any dedication at all.

VERBAL PARALLELISMS.

As a natural consequence of the divergencies in treatment verbal parallelisms are much fewer than usual.[1] Two good examples, however, occur:

S. Lord of my *love* to whom in vassalage
To thee I send this *written* ambassage,
May make seem bare in *wanting words* to show it,
M.P. For who's so *dumb* that cannot *write to thee*,
H. O, learn to read what *silent love* hath *writ*:
And *dumb* presagers of my speaking breast;

M.P While thou dost breathe that pour'st into *my verse*
Thine own sweet *argument*, too *excellent*
L. Therefore *my verse* to constancy confin'd,
Still constant in a wondrous *excellence*;
Fair, kind, and true is all my *argument*,

[1] On the other hand, the thoughts and phraseology of this one-sonnet series are imitated and parodied in the sonnets of *subsequent* series to a far greater extent than in the case of any other series—long or short.

DEDICATORY. (E.D.)

Patron his first batch of adulatory sonnets.

THE LAWYER.

105

Let not love be call'd idolatry,
Nor my beloved as an idol show,
Since all alike my songs and praises be
To one, of one, still such, and ever so.
Kind is my love to-day, to-morrow kind
Still constant in a wondrous *excellence ;*
Therefore *my verse* to constancy confined,
One thing expressing, leaves out difference.
' Fair, kind, and true,' is all my *argument,*
' Fair, kind, and true,' varying to other words ;
And in this change is my *invention* spent,
Three themes in one, which wondrous scope affords.
' Fair, kind, and true,' have often lived alone,
Which three till now never kept seat in one.

THE HUMORIST.

23

As an unperfect actor on the stage,
Who with his fear is put besides his part,
Or some fierce thing replete with too much rage,
Whose strength's abundance weakens his own heart ;
So I, for fear of trust, forget to say
The perfect ceremony of love's rite,
And in mine own love's strength seem to decay,
O'ercharged with burthen of mine own love's might.
O, let my books be then the eloquence
And *dumb* presagers of my speaking breast ;
Who plead for love, and look for recompense,
More than that tongue that more hath more express'd
O, learn to read what *silent love* hath *writ :*
To hear with eyes belongs to love's fine wit.

NOTES.

Shakespeare. (No. 26.)

This is a straight-forward, self-respecting dedication modelled on the prose dedication of *Lucrece.*

4. Note the reference to the two recognized motives for inditing a sonnet-sequence : (a) to compliment one's Patron (or Patroness), (b) to shew that one can do it as well as other people. To " unlock his heart " formed no part of the scheme of the Elizabethan sonnetteer.

9. Here S. commits the first of his two *gaffes* to which his fellow-competitors make satirical allusion.[1] The stars rule the destinies of the noble and the great, not *canaille* like player-poets.

The Minor Poet. (No. 38.)

This sonnet contrasts strongly with S.'s in all respects, and is a shockingly bad effort—even for M.P. It exhibits his worst characteristics in an exaggerated form : *Confused Thinking,* 1, 7, 11-14 ; *Slovenly Phrasing,* 12 ; *Forcing the Note, The Flunkey.* 9-14. Nevertheless it is commended to the very special attention of the reader. From the point of view of personal allusion and parody, it is the most important of all the Personal sonnets, because the three other competitors have (not unnaturally) singled it out as the chief peg on which to hang their ridicule of Barnes and his poetry. It is conceived very much on the same lines as his dedicatory sonnet to Southampton in his *Parthenophe and Parthenophil* collection of sonnets (published in 1593). This effusion

[1] The references are L. 14.1 and 10, and H. 15.4 in the M. A. Series, and H. 25.1 in the P. R. Series.

was also evidently well known to his three fellow-competitors, who satirize it freely. The last six lines may be quoted :

> Vouchsafe, right *virtuous* Lord with gracious *eyes*
> *Those heavenly lamps* which give the Muses light,
> Which give and take in course that holy fire,
> To view *my Muse* with your judicial sight :
> Whom, when time shall have *taught*, by *flight to rise*,
> Shall to thy *virtues*, of much *worth* aspire.

(The words and phrases in italics are those alluded to by the other three competitors in this or other series of the Personal Section.)

1. "Want subject to invent." What he presumably means to say is "lack a subject to exercise her invention (imagination) upon," but the words as they stand cannot bear this (or for the matter of that any other) meaning.

2-3. POOLER explains " You give me the abundance of your own sweetness as a subject for my verse." No doubt this is what he *meant* to say, but again the words as they stand do not convey this meaning.

3-4. Note the smug self-satisfaction of this reference to disappointed literary hangers-on who had *not* been invited to enter for the contest.

7. Why shouldn't a dumb man *write ?*

8. This is a puzzling line. The solution is that it is merely an echo from his *Parthenophil* dedicatory sonnet quoted above, in which Southampton's eyes are referred to as

> Those heavenly lamps which *give* the Muses *light*

9-10. A " monstrous and disgusting hyperbole " if ever there was one ! Drayton in a recently-published collection of sonnets entitled *Idea* had appointed his patroness a tenth Muse—

> And my fair Muse one Muse into the nine
> Makes everyone of these three nines a ten.

This is bad enough in all conscience, but Drayton's tenth Muse was at any rate a lady, and took her place modestly alongside the rest of her tuneful sisters. M.P. makes his new Muse a *man*—a brilliant young nobleman, warranted to develop a ninety-Muse power of inspiration.

Note M.P.'s " worth " again as in the *Parthenophil* sonnet.

11. Who is to " bring forth " immortal verse? The poet? His own " slight Muse "? Or the newly-appointed tenth Muse ? Apparently from line 14 the poet himself is to be brought to bed, though for some mysterious reason the tenth Muse, *i.e.*, Southampton, is to take credit for the result. This grotesque ' Obstetrics ' conceit naturally becomes one of the principal targets of his fellow-competitors' ridicule.

12. A really vile line.

13-14. Note again the amusing self-conceit of the young versifier whose recently-published volume of occasional verse had been favourably received by the public.[1]

The Lawyer. (No. 105.)

L.'s sonnet is of average quality. His characteristic of *Pedestrian Style* is evident

[1] LEE writes :—" Loud applause greeted the first book [*Parthenophe and Parthenophil*] . . . The veteran Thomas Churchyard, called Barnes ' Petrarch's scholar' ; the learned Gabriel Harvey bade him ' go forward in maturity as he had begun in pregnancy,' and ' be the gallant poet like Spenser ' ; the fine poet Campion judged his verse to be ' heady and strong.' "

throughout, especially in lines 8 and 10. He borrows " excellence," " argument " and " invention " from M.P., but otherwise his ' thoughts ' are original.

1-4. These four lines (which have a distinct flavour of the Church Service) were probably suggested by Juliet's lines :

> O ! swear not by the inconstant moon,
> . . . Swear by thy gracious self,
> Which is the god of my idolatry,

14. This absurd and awkwardly-sounding line (which contains a profane reference to the Trinity) was probably suggested by M.P.'s equally absurd line in his D. D. sonnet (37) :

> Entitled in thy parts do crowned sit,

The Humorist. (No. 23.)

The entire sonnet is an excellent example of the art of *Polite Shirking*. H., as usual, declines to treat the theme seriously, and very adroitly avoids his duty of supplying the meed of praise and flattery of one's patron expected in a dedicatory sonnet, by pretending that he is too shy to write one ; and by dint of explaining at length *why* he is so shy, succeeds in making up his fourteen lines as well as the others. The sonnet is written in a spirit of burlesque, and H.'s characteristic of *Subtle Humour* is prominent throughout. But its special interest lies in its *Personal Allusions* to his three fellow-competitors. It is the first of the two sonnets in which he deliberately lays himself out to make satirical references to each of them in turn,(1) referring to them in their " natural " order—S., M.P., L., and giving two lines to each as noted below.

1-2. Shakespeare. H. recalls some occasion (or occasions) on which the actor-poet suffered from stage fright and ' fluffed ' his lines.

3-4. The Minor Poet. (Barnes). This is a very interesting allusion. " Barnzy " (the name he was generally known by) had achieved a wide reputation as a blustering coward, and H. recalls some occasion (or occasions) on which he had found himself too strong to fight.(2) The commentators, it may be observed, pass over these cryptic lines in silence.

5-6. The Lawyer. A reference to L.'s sonnet in this series in which he describes and excuses his idolatrous rites and ceremonies in honour of his beloved idol, The Patron.

7-8. Note this ingenious application of H.'s " Self-love " formula mentioned above in the Notes on his No. 62 in the B. I. series. *Esoterically* " mine own love " = " my love for myself," and the meaning is that my self-love is so strong that it leaves no place for other affections.

9. " looks " should surely be read for the Quarto reading " books." The phrase " to hear with eyes " is bad enough if its meaning is " to infer from my looks the depth of my love for you " ; but if it is to be taken as a mere periphrasis for " to read," as it must be if " books " is retained, it is really *too* feeble. Moreover, " looks " suits the next line very much better. His looks are the actors in the dumb-show which precedes (as in the play-scene in Hamlet) the actual performance, *i.e.*, his batch of sonnets in which his " breast," *i.e.*, his emotions, is to be given ' a speaking part.'

(1) The other sonnet is No. 25 in the P. R. Series.

(2) *v. infra*, p. 77.

CHAPTER III.—THE PERSONAL SONNETS.—SECOND BATCH.

The second batch of Personal Sonnets consists of one series only—The Poet's Excuses. From the allusions scattered throughout this series it is clear that they were despatched to Southampton some time—probably some months at least—after he had received the three poets' imitations of Shakespeare's first batch. It would appear that Southampton became impatient, and hinted that a second batch of adulatory sonnets was overdue, playfully suggesting at the same time that the delay must be due to a diminution either in Shakespeare's affection for him, or his own good looks, or both. In response to these hints Shakespeare wrote his four sonnets in this series, which were duly sent for imitation to each of three other poets in turn, as his nine sonnets in his first batch had been.

This series is, perhaps, the most interesting of the thirteen, owing to the fidelity with which the three poets copy Shakespeare's treatment of The Theme, the exceptionally complete display of their characteristics of style and language, the regularity and clearness of the many verbal imitations and parallelisms, and, more than anything else, the number and variety of the allusions to the Contest and the competitors.

SERIES No. 5.—The Poet's Excuses.

The Theme. The Poet proffers his excuses for delaying to send a second batch of adulatory sonnets.

SERIES No. 5—

The Theme.—The Poet proffers his excuses for delaying

SHAKESPEARE

78

So oft have I invoked thee for *my Muse*
And found such fair assistance in my verse
As every *alien pen* hath got my use
And under thee their poesy disperse.
Thine eyes, that taught the *dumb* on high to sing
And heavy ignorance aloft to fly,
Have added feathers to the learned's wing
And given grace a double majesty.
Yet be most *proud* of that which I *compile*,
Whose influence is thine and born of thee :
In others' works thou dost but *mend* the *style*,
And arts with thy sweet graces graced be :
But thou art all my art, and dost advance
As high as learning my rude ignorance.

79

Whilst I alone did call upon thy aid,
My verse alone had all *thy gentle grace ;*
But now my gracious numbers are *decay'd*,
And my *sick Muse* doth give another place.
I grant, sweet love, thy lovely *argument*
Deserves the *travail* of a *worthier pen ;*
Yet what of thee *thy poet* doth *invent*
He robs thee of, and pays it thee again.
He *lends* thee virtue, and he stole that word
For thy behaviour ; beauty doth he give,
And found it in thy cheek : he can *afford*
No *praise* to thee but what in thee doth live.
Then thank him not for that which he doth say,
Since what he *owes thee thou thyself* dost pay.

102

My love is strengthen'd, though more weak in seeming ;
I love not less, though less the show appear :
That love is merchandized whose *rich* esteeming
The owner's tongue doth publish every where.
Our love was new, and then but in the spring,
When I was wont to greet it with my lays ;
As Philomel in summer's front doth sing,
And stops her pipe in growth of riper days :
Not that the summer is less pleasant now
Than when her mournful *hymns* did hush the night
But that wild music burthens every bough,
And sweets grow common lose their dear delight.
Therefore, like her, I sometime *hold my tongue*,
Because I would not *dull* you with my song.

106

When in the chronicle of *wasted time*
I see descriptions of the fairest wights,
And beauty making beautiful old rhyme
In *praise* of ladies dead and lovely knights,
Then, in the blazon of sweet beauty's best,
Of hand, of foot, of lip, of eye, of brow,
I see their *antique pen* would have express'd
Even such a beauty as you master now.
So all their *praises* are but prophecies
Of this our time, all you pre*figuring ;*
And, for they look'd but with divining eyes,
They had not *skill* enough *your worth* to sing :
For *we*, which now behold these present days,
Have eyes to *wonder*, but *lack tongues* to *praise*.

THE MINOR POET

85

My tongue-tied Muse in manners holds her still,
While comments of your *praise, richly compiled*,
Reserve their *character* with golden *quill*,
And precious phrase by all the Muses filed.
I think good thoughts, whilst other write good words,
And, like unletter'd clerk, still cry ' Amen '
To every *hymn* that able spirit *affords*,
In polish'd form of well refined *pen*.
Hearing you *praised*, I say ' 'Tis so, 'tis true,'
And to the *most* of *praise add* something *more ;*
But that is in my thought, whose love to you,
Though words come hindmost, holds his rank before.
Then others for the breath of words respect,
Me for my *dumb* thoughts, speaking in effect.

80

O, how I faint when *I* of you do *write*,
Knowing a better spirit doth use your name,
And in the *praise* thereof *spends all his might*,
To make me *tongue-tied*, speaking of your fame !
But since *your worth*, wide as the ocean is,
The humble as the *proudest* sail doth bear,
My saucy bark, inferior far to his,
On your broad main doth wilfully appear.
Your shallowest help will hold me up afloat,
Whilst he upon your soundless deep doth ride ;
Or, being wreck'd, I am a worthless boat,
He of tall building and of goodly *pride :*
Then if he thrive and I be cast away,
The worst was this ; my love was my *decay*.

86

Was it the *proud* full sail of *his* great *verse*,
Bound for the *prize* of all too precious *you*,
That did my *ripe* thoughts *in my brain inhearse*,
Making their *tomb* the *womb wherein they grew ?*
Was it his spirit, by spirits taught to write
Above a mortal pitch, that struck me dead ?
No, neither he, nor his compeers by night
Giving him aid, my verse astonished.
He, nor that affable familiar ghost
Which nightly gulls him with intelligence,
As victors, of my silence cannot boast ;
I was not *sick* of any fear from thence :
But when your *countenance fill'd up* his line,
Then lack'd I matter ; that enfeebled mine.

104

To me, fair friend, you never can be old,
For as you were when first your eye I eyed,
Such seems your beauty still. Three winters cold
Have from the forests shook three summer's pride,
Three beauteous springs to yellow autumn turn'd
In process of the seasons have I seen,
Three April perfumes in three hot Junes burn'd,
Since first I saw you fresh, which yet are green.
Ah, yet doth beauty, like a dial-hand,
Steal from his *figure*, and no pace perceived ;
So your sweet hue, which methinks still doth stand,
Hath motion, and mine eye may be deceived :
For fear of which, hear this, thou age un*bred* ;
Ere you were born was beauty's summer *dead*.

POET'S EXCUSES. (P.E.)

to send a second batch of adulatory sonnets.

THE LAWYER

82

I grant thou wert not married to *my Muse*,
And therefore mayst without attaint o'erlook
The dedicated words which writers use
Of their fair subject, blessing every book
Thou art as fair in knowledge as in hue,
Finding *thy worth* a limit past my *praise ;*
And therefore art enforced to seek anew
Some fresher stamp of the time-*bettering* days,
And do so, *love ; yet* when they have *devised*
What strained touches rhetoric can lend,
Thou truly fair wert truly sympathized
In true plain words by thy true-telling friend ;
And their gross painting might be better used
Where cheeks need blood ; in thee it is abused.

83

I never saw that you did *painting* need,
And therefore to your fair no *painting* set ;
I found, or thought I found, you did exceed
The barren tender of a poet's *debt :*
And therefore have I slept in your report,
That *you yourself*, being extant, well might show
How far a modern *quill* doth come too short,
Speaking of worth, what worth in you doth grow.
This *silence* for my *sin* you did impute,
Which shall be most my glory, *being dumb ;*
For I *impair* not beauty *being mute*,
When others would *give life* and *bring a tomb*
There lives more life in one of your fair eyes
Than both your poets can in *praise* devise.

84

Who is it that says *most ?* which can say *more*
Than this *rich praise*, that you alone are *you ?*
In whose confine immured is the store
Which should example where your equal *grew.*
Lean penury within that *pen* doth dwell
That to his *subject lends* not some small glory ;
But he that writes of you, if he can tell
That you are you, so *dignifies* his story.
Let him but copy what in you is writ,
Not making worse what nature made so clear,
And such a counterpart shall fame his wit,
Making his *style* admired every where.
You to your beauteous blessings add a curse,
Being fond on *praise*, which makes your *praises* worse.

108

What's *in the brain*, that ink may *character*,
Which hath not *figured* to thee my true spirit ?
What's new to speak, what new to register,
That may express my love, or thy dear merit ?
Nothing, *sweet boy ;* but yet, like prayers divine,
I must each day say o'er the very same ;
Counting no old thing old, thou mine, I thine,
Even as when first I hallowed thy fair name.
So that eternal love in love's fresh case
Weighs not the dust and injury of age,
Nor gives to necessary wrinkles place,
But makes antiquity for aye his page ;
Finding the first conceit of love there *bred*,
Where time and outward form would show it *dead.*

THE HUMORIST

100

Where art thou, *Muse*, that thou *forget'st so long*
To speak of that which gives thee *all thy might ?*
Spend'st thou thy fury on some worthless song,
Darkening thy power to *lend* base *subjects* light ?
Return, forgetful Muse, and straight redeem
In gentle numbers time so idly spent ;
Sing to the ear that doth thy lays esteem
And gives thy *pen* both *skill* and *argument.*
Rise, resty Muse, my love's sweet face survey,
If Time have any wrinkle graven there ;
If any, be a satire to *decay*,
And make Time's spoils despised every where.
Give my love fame faster than Time wastes life ;
So thou prevent'st *his scythe* and crooked knife.

101

O truant Muse, what shall be thy amends
For thy neglect of truth in beauty dyed ?
Both truth and beauty on my love depends ;
So dost thou too, and therein *dignified.*
Make answer, Muse : wilt thou not haply say,
' Truth needs no *colour*, with his *colour* fix'd ;
Beauty no *pencil*, beauty's truth to lay ;
But best is best, if never intermix'd ' ?
Because he needs no *praise*, wilt thou be *dumb ?*
Excuse not *silence* so, for't lies in thee
To make him much outlive a gilded tomb
And to be *praised* of ages yet to be.
Then do thy office, Muse ; I teach thee how
To make him seem long hence as he shows now.

59

If there be nothing new, but that which is
Hath been before, how are our *brains* beguiled,
Which, *labouring* for invention, *bear amiss*
The second *burthen* of a former *child !*
O, that record could with a backward look,
Even of five hundred courses of the sun,
Show me your *image* in some *antique book*,
Since mind at first in *character* was done.
That I might see what the *old world* could say
To this composed *wonder* of your frame ;
Whether *we* are mended, or whether better *they*,
Or whether revolution be the same.
O, sure I am, the wits of former *days*
To subjects worse have given admiring *praise.*

103

Alack, what *poverty* my Muse brings forth,
That having such a scope to show her *pride*,
The *argument*, all bare, is of *more worth*
Than when it hath my *added praise* beside !
O, blame me not, if *I* no more can *write !*
Look in your glass, and there appears a face
That over-goes my blunt invention quite,
Dulling my lines and doing me disgrace.
Were it not *sinful* then, striving to *mend*,
To *mar* the *subject* that before was well ?
For to no other pass *my verses* tend
Than of *your graces* and your *gifts* to tell ;
And more, much more, than in my verse can sit,
Your own glass shows you when you look in it.

TREATMENT OF THE THEME.

Shakespeare's treatment of The Theme contains seven main thoughts:

(a). I admit that I have failed to supply a second batch of adulatory sonnets. (102.13-14.)
(b). My first excuse is that [my Muse is sick at being cut out by M.P.] (79.4.)
(c). My second excuse is that I [did not want to bore you.] (102.14.)
(d). However there is no diminution in my love for you. (102.1, 2.)
(e). And I find you as good-looking as ever. (106.8—" now.")
(f). In response to your hints I have written a sonnet in praise of you, *viz.*, [No. 106.]
(g). But you must not expect my contributions to this series to be as good as the first. (79.3.)

All except one of these seven thoughts finds a place in the contribution of each of Shakespeare's three fellow-competitors. The references are as follows. [*N.B.*—The reader will notice that in (b), (c) and (f) above, Shakespeare's two 'excuses' and one 'sonnet-number' have been enclosed in square brackets. This is because each of the other three poets has his own pair of excuses, and (of course) his own sonnet-number, which must be substituted for Shakespeare's when his particular contribution is considered.]

(a). **M.P.** (86 *passim*); **L.** (83.5 and 9-10); **H.** (100.1-2 and 100.9-10.)

(b). **M.P.** [bashful and polite.] (85.1); **L.** [jealous.] (82.1 and 9-12); **H.** [forgetful, lazy and a truant.] (100.1 and 5, 100.9, 101.1.)

(c). **M.P.** [(1) I did not wish to "say ditto to Mr. Burke," and (2) S. had already used your face to fill up his line.] (85, 80, and 86 *passim*, 86.12-14); **L.** [I did not think your beauty needed the cosmetic of poetical eulogy.] (82.13-14, 83.1-2); **H.** [I found your face quite beyond my power of description.] (103.6-10.)

(d). **M.P.** (85.11-12, 80.14); **L.** (108 *passim*); **H.** omits.

(e). **M.P.** (104. *passim*); **L.** (108.7-8); **H.** (103.6-7, and 13-14.)

(f). **M.P.** [No. 104]; **L.** [No. 108]; **H.** [No. 59.]

(g). **M.P.** (80.1); **L.** (108.1-6); **H.** (103.5-8.)

Practically speaking, only one new main thought is introduced by another poet, *viz.*, **M.P.'s:**

(h). The miscarriage of the poetical offspring of his brain (86.3-4.) This thought is followed very closely by the two remaining competitors, **L.** (83.12) and **H.** (59.3-4.)

The reader's very particular attention is invited to this remarkable regularity. He is also invited to observe the extraordinary similarity *in construction* between the contributions of S., M.P. and L. In each case the first three sonnets are made up of excuses for the poet's Muse and more or less veiled references to the efforts of his fellow-competitors, while the last is a formal compliment to The Patron's beauty. H.'s treatment differs in two respects: *firstly* his references to the work of his fellow-competitors though very numerous are not direct, but made indirectly by parodying their language and thoughts; and *secondly*, he adds an effective touch of burlesque by putting his complimentary sonnet *third* (instead of last like the others) so that he may pour ridicule on it in his *fourth*.

THE PERSONAL SONNETS—SECOND BATCH

Verbal Parallelisms.

Note the reference to the Poet's Muse in the *first* line of the *first* sonnet of *each* of the four contributors.

Note the following five duplicated rhymes : (marked in the text by a brace)
(1) " Muse " and " use " in 78 (S.) and 82 (L.)
(2) " bred " and " dead " in 104 (M.P.) and 108 (L.)
(3) " you " and " grew " in 86 (M.P.) and 84 (L.)
(4) " dumb " and " tomb " in 83 (L.) and 101 (H.)
(5) " days " and " praise " in 106 (S.) and 59 (H.)

And note particularly how in the case of (1), (2), (3), and (4) the imitation occurs in exactly the same place in the *contribution* as in the ' copy ' contributions, and how even in the case of (5) the imitation occurs in exactly the same place in the *sonnet* as in the ' copy ' sonnet.

S. As every *alien pen* hath got my use
Deserves the travail of a worthier *pen* ;
M.P. In polished form of well-refined *pen*.
Reserve their character with golden *quill*
L. *Lean pen*ury within that *pen* doth dwell
How far a modern *quill* doth come too short,
H. And gives thy *pen* both skill and argument.

S. Thine eyes which taught the *dumb* on high to sing
Therefore like her I sometimes *hold my tongue*,
Have eyes to wonder but *lack tongues* to praise.
M.P. My *tongue-tied* Muse in manners holds her still,
Me for my *dumb* thoughts speaking in effect.
To make me *tongue-tied* speaking of your fame !
L. This *silence* for my sin you did impute,
Which shall be most my glory my *being dumb* ;
For I impair not beauty, *being mute*,
H. Where art thou Muse that thou *forget'st so long to speak*
Because he needs no praise wilt thou be *dumb* ?
Excuse not *silence* so, for't lies in thee

Note these twelve ' dumbs ' or their equivalents——exactly three apiece.

S. Deserves the *travail* of a worthier pen ;
M.P. That did my *ripe* thoughts *in my brain* inhearse,
Making their *tomb* the *womb wherein they grew* ?
L. What's *in the brain* that ink may character,
When others would *give life* and bring a *tomb*
H. . . . How are our *brains* beguiled,
Which, *labouring* for invention, *bear amiss*
The second *burthen* of a former *child* !

S. Deserves the travail of a *worthier* pen ;
They had not skill enough *your worth* to sing :
M.P. But since *your worth*, wide as the ocean is,
L. Finding *thy worth* a limit past my praise ;
H. The argument all bare is of *more worth*

S. He *lends* thee virtue . . .
L. That to his *subject lends* not some small glory ;
H. Darkening thy power to *lend* base *subjects* light ?

S. No *praise* to thee, but what in thee doth live.
In *praise* of ladies dead and lovely knights,
So all their *praises* were but prophecies
Have eyes to wonder but lack tongues to *praise*.
M.P. When comments of your *praise* richly compiled,
Hearing you *praised* I say ' 'Tis so,' 'Tis true,'
And to the *most* of *praise add* something *more* ;
And in the *praise* thereof spends all his might,
L. Finding thy worth a limit past my *praise* ;
That both your poets can in *praise* devise.
Who is it that says *most* ? which can say *more*
Than this rich *praise* that you alone are you ?
Being fond of *praise*, which makes your *praises* worse.

H. Because he needs no *praise* wilt thou be dumb ?
And to be *praised* of ages yet to be.
To subjects worse have given admiring *praise*.
Than when it hath my *added praise* beside !
Note these sixteen ' praise ' lines—exactly four apiece.

M.P Reserve their *character* with golden *quill*,
L. What's in the brain that *ink* may *character*,
H. . . . some antique *book*,
Since mind at first in *character* was done.

M.P. And in the praise thereof *spends all his might*,
H. To speak of that which gives thee *all thy might* ?
Spend'st thou thy fury . . .

MINOR PARALLELISMS.—Minor parallelisms are exceedingly numerous. (1) *compile*, 78.9 and 85.2 ; (2) *mend*, 78.11 and 103.9 ; (3) *style*, 78.11 and 84.12 ; (4) *decay*, 79.3 80.14 and 100.11 ; (5) *sick Muse*, 79.4 and 86.12 ; (6) *sweet love*, 79.5 and 108.5 ; (7) *argument*, 79.5 and 100.8 ; (8) *afford*, 79.11 and 85.7 ; (9) *rich*, 102.3, 85.2 and 84.2, *cf.* 103.1 ; (10) *hymn*, 102.10 and 85.7 ; (11) *dull*, 102.14 and 103.8 ; (12) *antique*, 106.7 and 59.7 ; (13) *figure*, 106.10, 104.10 and 108.2, *cf.* 59.7 ; (14) *skill*, 106.12 and 100.8 ; (15) *painting*, 83.1-2 and 101.6-7 ; (16) *sin*, 83.9 and 103.9 ; (17) *dignify*, 84.8 and 101.4 ; and many others.

NOTES.

Shakespeare. (Nos. 78, 79, 102, 106.)

The tone of Shakespeare's contributions to this series differs very markedly from the tone of his sonnets in the first batch. As has already been noted, it is clear that when he paid The Patron the compliment of sending him those first nine sonnets, he did not anticipate that they would be set as a ' copy ' for three other poets to imitate. As might have been expected therefore, they are merely exceptionally fine specimens of straightforward adulatory verse, entirely free from any suspicion of irony, parody, double-meaning or personal allusion. But the use to which they were put obviously made a continuance on these lines out of the question. And so we find that in the sonnets of this series (and, of course, this is also the case with all subsequent series) S. has dropped his original *natural* manner, and has adopted unreservedly the *artificial* manner demanded by the Rules of the Contest. In fact the spirit of The Contest dominates his entire contribution to a really remarkable extent. The first three sonnets are entirely made up of half-serious protests against the treatment accorded to his first batch, satirical allusions to the other three poets, and parodies of their language ; and even in the fourth ' complimentary ' sonnet he takes the opportunity of comparing the efforts of his fellow-competitors and himself with the productions of poets of former ages.

All the characteristics which distinguish S.'s work in the first batch are displayed to equal advantage in this series ; and, in addition, he is able for the first time to exhibit his consumate mastery of the delicate art of administering what Puttenham calls " a privy nippe " to a literary rival without transgressing the bounds of good taste.

78.

A protest against " The Contest " scheme generally, followed by references to each of his three rivals individually.

1-2. Suggested by M.P.'s ridiculous lines in his D.D. sonnet (No. 38) :

Be thou the tenth *Muse*, ten times more in worth
Than those old nine whom rhymers *invocate*.

S. had directly "invoked" The Patron in at least *three* of his sonnets in his first batch, *viz.*, Nos. 18 (B.I.), 29 (D.D.), and 26 (E.D.).

3. "under thee." As POOLER explains, "under your patronage and countenance."

Second quatrain. S. refers to the four contestants in the order H., S., L., and M.P. All of these had acknowledged the inspiring influence of The Patron's eyes.

The "dumb" poet is H., who in his E.D. sonnet (No. 23) had written.

> O let my looks be then the eloquence
> And *dumb* presagers of my speaking breast.
> O! learn to read what *silent love* hath writ:

His tribute to The Patron's eyes is to be found in his No. 17 in the M.A. series:

> If I could write *the beauty of your eyes.*

The 'heavy-ignorant' poet is S. himself (*v.* line 12) "my rude ignorance." *Cf.* also in the *V. and A.* dedication "my unpolished lines," and in the *Lucrece* dedication "my untutor'd lines." *His* tribute to The Patron's eyes is to be found in his first sonnet in the first batch:

> But thou contracted to *thine own bright eyes.*

The "learned" poet is L., *i.e.*, William Warner, who besides being a learned limb of the law, was well-known for his translations of Plautus. *His* tribute to The Patron's eyes is to be found in his sonnet No. 14 in the M.A. series:

> But *from thine eyes* my knowledge I derive,
> And constant stars, in them I read such art

The "grace" ful poet is M.P. Barnes was as fond of the word 'grace' as of the word 'worth.' LEE writes,[1] "after quibbling in Sonnet 72 [of the *Parthenophil* collection] on the resemblance between the *graces* of his cruel mistress's face and the *Graces* of classical mythology Barnes develops the topic in the next sonnet after this manner (the italics are my own):

> Why did rich nature *graces* grant to thee,
> Since thou art such a niggard of thy *grace*?
> O how can *graces* in thy body be?
> Where neither they nor pity find a place!
> Grant me some *grace*! For thou with *grace* art wealthy
> And kindly may'st afford some *gracious* thing."

Again in the dedicatory sonnet to Southampton (just quoted) he hopes that his "worthless leaves" may be "with your countenance *graced*," and begs him to turn his *gracious* eyes, "those heavenly lamps which gives the Muses light" on his creeping Muse. Southampton had kindly condescended to do so, and had thereby (according to S.) increased Barnes' previous liberal allowance of 'grace' 100 per cent.!

9. Here S. commits the second of the two *gaffes* to which his fellow-competitors make satirical allusion;[2] that great prince, Henry third Earl of Southampton may, in his leisure hours, condescend to take a certain amount of interest in contemporary literature and literary men, but to have "one of these harlotry players" who has

[1] Life, p. 666.

[2] The references are M.P. 80.6 and 12, and 86.1 in this series; L. 76.1 in the M.P. series; and H. 103-2 in this series, and 25.2 and 7 in the P.R. series.

addressed a set of complimentary verses to him, calling upon him to be " proud " of them is rather too much of a joke.

10. Another satirical reference to M.P.'s E.D. sonnet. ' Influence ' echoes the line :

> While thou dost breathe that *pour'st into* my verse,

and " born of thee " the complicated obstetrics of the last four lines.

11-14. The " others " are, of course, the other three competitors. S. hints that The Patron has ' helped ' them—or possibly (*v.* next line) the ' grace 'ful M.P. only—with their contributions to the First Batch.

79.

A continuation of the protest, followed by an ironical complaint that he had been cut out by M.P. The sonnet is a tissue of satirical references to Barnes' two dedicatory sonnets—the *Parthenophe* one, and his No. 38 in the E.D. series.

2-3. Barnes' " grace " again.

4. " another " is M.P.'s " slight Muse " which had superseded " those old nine " (No. 38), among whom S.'s was (presumably) included.

5-8. This quatrain parodies No. 38 very neatly. Barnes is called " thy poet " because he had dedicated *Parthenophe* to Southampton, and also (probably) because Southampton had given him pride of place among the competitors by sending S.'s contributions to him *first* of the three. " Muse," " argument " and " invent " echo the lines :

> How can my *Muse* want subject to *invent*,
> Whilst thou dost live that pour'st into my verse
> Thine own sweet *argument* . . .

" travail " glances at the " Obstetrics " conceit of the last four lines, and in the phrase " a worthier pen " S. makes the first of his two sarcastic allusions to Barnes' excessive fondness for the word ' worth,' which furnishes the competitors with such a fertile subject for their satire.

9. A reference to the *Parthenophe* sonnet wherein Barnes addresses Southampton as " right *virtuous* Lord," and hopes that his Muse

> " Shall to thy *virtues* of much worth aspire."

11-14. A recasting of the thoughts and phraseology of the two lines in No. 38 :

> O give *thyself* the *thanks*, if aught in me
> The pain be mine, but *thine* shall be the *praise*.

102.

S.'s silence was due, not to a weakening in his affection for The Patron, (on the contrary it had grown stronger) but to a feeling that with the three new competitors all warbling so sweetly *his* voice might spoil the concert.

3-4. Another hit at Barnes, whose *Parthenophe* sonnet-book with its fulsome dedication to Southampton had actually been published *for sale*. The reader will remember in the B.I. series L.'s scorn of this disgraceful business :

> I will not praise that purpose not to sell (21-14).

5-12. Very beautiful lines, far beyond the compass of any of his three imitators.

12. A neat allusion to M.P.'s two saccharine sonnets Nos. 8 in the M.A. series (four ' sweets ') and 54 in the B.I. series (five ' sweets ').

106.

The inevitable compliment to The Patron's unfading charms. His beauty surpasses that of anybody, man *or woman*, recorded in history. Both thought and language are taken from Constable's *Miscellaneous Sonnets*, No. VII. (1590):

> Miracle of the world I never will deny
> That *former poets praise* the *beauty* of their days;
> But all these *beauties* were but *figures* of *thy praise*,
> And all *those poets* did of *thee* but *prophesy*.

4. An echo from the *Faery Queene:*

> Fit for such *ladies* and such *lovely knights*

"*old* rhyme" is possibly a reference to Spenser's archaisms—"wight," for instance.

10 and **13.** "our" and "we," *i.e.*, S. himself and his three rivals.

12. Barnes' "worth" again.

The Minor Poet. (Nos. 85, 80, 86, 104.)

The structure of M.P.'s contribution is modelled on S.'s with really extraordinary exactness. His first sonnet, like S.'s, is entirely made up of allusions to the Contest and the contestants, complimentary references to the performances of his *confrères*, and a modest reference to his own: in his second and third sonnets he singles out S. for mingled praise and satire as he himself had been singled out by S.; and his fourth sonnet, like S.'s, "is the inevitable compliment to The Patron's unfading charms."

His four sonnets are much above his average in quality, his characteristic of *Smooth Versification* being displayed to great advantage throughout. Other characteristics exemplified are *Confused Thinking*, 80.9-12; *Slovenly Phrasing*, 85.6 and 8, 86.10, 104.10.

85.

1. A reference to S.'s "I sometime *hold* my *tongue*" (102.13).

2. "Reserve." "Deserve" should certainly be read, the line being obviously a paraphrase of S.'s:

> *Deserves* the travail ot a worthier *pen*;

and the meaning being "Deserves to be written with a golden quill." The language is slightly confused but eminently characteristic of M.P.

4. Meres, who appears to have been one of the "private friends" who were privileged to see S.'s "sugred sonnets," probably had this line in his mind when he wrote in *Palladis Tamia* (pub. 1598) "so I say that *the Muses* would speak with Shakespeare's *fine-filed phrase*, if they would speake English."

5. "Other," *i.e.*, his three fellow-competitors.

6-7. The omission *metri causâ* of "an" before "unletter'd clerk" is characteristic of M.P. (*cf.* "by children's eyes" in M.A. No. 9). Note that here M.P. is trying to ridicule S.'s perfectly correct use of the word 'hymn' in its classical sense for the song of the nightingale. "That able spirit," *i.e.*, Shakespeare. "Affords" is another attempt to burlesque S.'s language—to afford praise to a person (79.10-11) is intelligible English, but to afford a hymn is not.

10-14. A paraphrase of S.'s two lines:

> My love is strengthened, though more weak in seeming
> I love not less, though less the show appear (102. 1-2).

13. " other " *i.e.*, his three fellow-competitors.
14. An echo from H.'s E.D. sonnet (23.10) :

> The *dumb* presagers of my *speaking* breast.

80.

A compliment, more or less sincere, to Shakespeare's sonnetteering prowess.
2. The " better spirit " is S., as noted above.
5. Barnes' " worth " again.
6. " proudest." A sarcastic allusion to S.'s second *gaffe* in 78.9 of this series (*v.* note *in loc.*).
7-10. There is something wrong about this metaphor. Surely he does not mean that in order to prevent his poetical venture from coming to grief, S. requires a *larger* measure of The Patron's support than he (M.P.) does himself ? Barnes here reproduces a metaphor he has already used in his *Parthenophe* (No. 91) :

> My fancy's ship tost here and there by these,
> Still floats in danger, ranging to and fro,
> How fears my thoughts' swift pinnace thine hard rock ?

11. " worthless." " worth " again.
12. Another sarcastic reference to S.'s " pride."
13. *i.e.*, " if S. wins the Contest and I get nothing."

86.

From the point of view of general Shakespearean criticism this is certainly the most important sonnet in the whole collection, inasmuch as it contains a definite and unequivocal assertion that Shakespeare was in the habit of receiving secret assistance from others in the composition of his " great verse."
1. A fine line ; M.P.'s choice of a metaphor gives him the opportunity of saying exactly the right thing about S.'s poetry. Note yet another reference to S.'s " pride."
2. MASSEY, in his notes on this and the previous sonnet (80), writes about " The Rival Poet " as follows (my italics) :—

> Further, the description of this poet in his relationship to the Patron does not so much dwell on *what he has done for the Earl as what he is at present doing*. He is at work in the Earl's name, when the Poet writes sonnet 80, and Shakespeare is aware that his rival is then spending all his might, doing his utmost to honour the Earl and make our Poet " tongue-tied " in speaking of his patron's fame. He alludes chiefly *to work in progress not to work done. There is rivalry in a race then being run*, and Shakespeare says that if the rival should be victor over him, he will know and be able to say :—
>
> " The worst was this, my love was my decay."
>
> In sonnet 86, likewise, the Poet speaks of his rival's bark being " *bound for* the prize of all-too-precious you " not as having touched the shore, or reached the haven.

Transpose Shakespeare and The Rival Poet in this passage, and we have the real situation exactly—the race is only half over, and M.P. can still flatter himself that he has a chance.
5-10. These six lines are of extreme interest and importance. As we have seen, S. had singled out M.P. for attack, and scored heavily by satirical references to his dedications, his " worth," his " Obstetrics " conceit, his publishing profits from *Parthenophe*, etc. By the rules of the game the attack now passes to M.P. He has to do his best to get even with his assailant, and naturally aims at what he believes to be his weak spots. He has already satirized S.'s " pride " more than once, and he now

suddenly opens a formidable assault on his main position by asserting that the super-excellence of his poetry is due to the fact that it is, in part at any rate, the work of certain other people who have been secretly collaborating with him. The lines speak for themselves; but if the reader is disposed to make the objection that S.'s nightly visitors are not humans at all, he is invited to consider that he commits himself to one of two alternative hypotheses, viz.: (a) that the poet *bonâ fide* believed that S. was helped by an actual goblin or goblins, or (b) that it was merely his metaphorical way of hinting that his rival's inspiration came to him chiefly at night. Now (a) is not very probable on the face of it, and besides does not explain "his compeers," *i.e.*, *compères*, cronies, flesh-and-blood people indubitably; while (b) would make the lines quite pointless, and equally fail to account for "compeers." [1]

In lines 9-10 one particular spirit is indicated as the chief collaborator; and the terms "affable" and "gull" used with reference to this personage distinctly suggest that he is the poet's social and intellectual superior.[2] POOLER very pertinently asks: "Would good verse be inspired by the gulling of an affable ghost?" The answer is, that we are not dealing with "Shakespeare," but with the verse of a very minor poet whose besetting sin it is to use confused language and to prefer sound to sense; and that what he was trying to do was to combine the two ideas, (1) the condescension of a superior to an inferior, and (2) the treatment of the inferior as a butt or tool—"gull" being selected as affording a pleasing alliteration with "ghost" in the preceding line.

The commentators rather shirk their duty to this sonnet. LEE merely says:—"A compliment to the rival poet, and the main argument in favour of his identification with George Chapman; but Chapman's poetic style, though very involved, cannot be credited with exceptional dignity. Shakespeare's words will not bear too literal an interpretation": and POOLER dismisses the affable ghost as "probably the subject of some unrecorded conversation."

12. "Sick." A reference to S.'s "sick Muse" (79.4), *cf.* "faint" (80.1).

13. Probably a sarcastic reference to S.'s:

> Look in thy glass, and tell the *face* thou viewest, etc.

104.

1-3. In his sonnet No. 21 in the B.I. series L. had hinted pretty plainly that M.P. had no first-hand knowledge of The Patron's personal appearance, and that his eulogistic references thereto were inspired by his *portrait* only. M.P. here repels the insinuation. He had seen The Patron face to face "When first your eye I eyed," three years ago, and also quite recently "such seems your beauty *still*."

10. "And no pace perceived." Slipshod grammar. Either 'and' should go, or 'is' should be inserted before 'perceived.'

11-12. "Hue." Spelt 'hew' in Q. (*cf.* 20.7-8).

13-14. S. in *his* complimentary sonnet (106) had commiserated the chroniclers of *past* ages on their bad luck in not having seen the perfection of human beauty as exemplified in the person of The Patron. M.P. now improves on this by informing *future* ages in this melodious but rather foggy couplet that once The Patron is dead such perfection can never be seen again. "Thou age unbred" is slipshod for "All ye

[1] Two points about this counter-attack deserve notice: (1) Barnes could scarcely have made the charge so confidently and with such particularity if it was not known, or at any rate strongly suspected, by the members of Southampton's literary coterie that S. *had* been receiving outside assistance; (2) In neither of the two subsequently-written Personal Series in which S. refers to his own poetical work (P.R. and M.P.) does he make any attempt to deny it.

[2] A possible explanation of S.'s two *gaffes*—his 'star' and his 'pride.'

ages to come." Note " thou " changed to " you " in the next line ; apparently " thou wast " offended M.P.'s sensitive ear.

The Lawyer. (Nos. 82, 83, 84, 108.)

The Lawyer's contribution follows closely the pattern set by S. and M.P. His first two sonnets like theirs are made up of allusions to the Contest and the contestants ; the third contains more allusions mixed with adulation of The Patron ; and the fourth like theirs is an extravagant compliment, *viz.*, that L., having previously exhausted all possible forms of praise, can now only repeat himself.

All his characteristics are well displayed : *Pedestrian Style*, 83.6, and 10-11, 108.6 ; *The Attorney*, 84.9-11, 108.9 ; *The Accountant*, 108.1-3 ; *Crude Humour*, 83.13-14, 84.5 ; *The Candid Friend*, 82.9-12 ; *The Old Dog*, 82.6-8, 108.9-14.

82.

The esoteric meaning of this interesting sonnet may be given as follows : " I do not claim, like my friend M.P., that you are my Muse's *légitime*, and so I cannot object to your accepting ardent dedicatory verses from him and the other competitors. Besides, your beauty being equalled by your intelligence, you soon discovered that my old-fashioned compliments were below par, and so very rightly, you commissioned these young exponents of the newest school of poetry to write you flowery sonnets in the fashion of the day. Nevertheless, let them do their best, and then compare their effusions with mine, and you will find that after all it is my antiquated but trusty Muse who has really hit the mark."

The sonnet closely imitates S.'s 79 not only in sentiment but in construction. Note particularly the " I grant . . . yet . . . "

79. *I grant*, sweet *love*, thy lovely argument
Deserves the travail of a *worthier pen*
Yet what of thee *thy poet* doth *invent*.
82. *I grant* thou wert not married to my Muse
And therefore art enforced to seek anew
Some fresher stamp of the time-*bettering* days
And do so *love* ; *yet* when *they* have *devised*.

1-2. DOWDEN notes this as a reference to the " forsaking all others " of the marriage service. As already noted more than once, L. has a penchant for parodying the Prayer Book. He is alluding, of course, to M.P.'s peculiar *ménage à trois* described in ll. 9-12 of M.P.'s E.D. sonnet (already satirized by S. in his 78.10 in this series).

5. It is unfortunate that this line should bear such a very strong resemblance to Titania's apostrophe to her translated weaver—

Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful.

Or can it be that L. is taking a leaf out of H.'s book and showing that he too " can gleek upon occasion " ?

6-8. These three lines are very clumsily expressed. " Finding thy worth " apparently means " finding *for* thy worth ; " " the time-bettering days " = " days bettered by the time (*i.e.*, fashion) ; " and the " and " should begin l.6 instead of l.7. Note the reference to M.P.'s " worth."

9-14. These lines plus the first two of the next sonnet are an amalgam of two

lines from *Love's Labour's Lost*, Act IV., sc. iii., and two lines from H.'s 53 in the B.I. series :

L.L.L. Lend me the flourish of all gentle tongues
Fie *painted rhe'toric !* O, she *needs* it not.
No. 53. Oh Helen's *cheek* all art of beauty *set*,
And *you* in Grecian tires are *painted* new.

83.

The remaining twelve lines of this sonnet are an amalgam on the same lines, and the sonnet furnishes the first complete example of what may be called the " Shakespearizing " type of sonnet, of which two or three examples will be found in the Personal Series and many more in the Dramatic Series. In this type, the competitor, instead of confining himself to the imitation of words and phrases occurring in the contributions of his fellow-competitors, selects as the basis of his sonnet words and phrases occurring in a passage or passages in Shakespeare's plays and narrative poems. The usual ' Contest ' imitations may be worked in in addition, but the ' foreign ' Shakespearean material is the predominating factor.

It would appear then that when L. was examining S.'s second sonnet in this series for material for his own second sonnet he was struck by the resemblance between the last line :

Since what he *owes* thee thou thyself *dost pay*.

and the lines in S.'s recently published *Lucrece* :

Therefore that praise which Collatine *doth owe*
Enchanted Tarquin *answers* with surmise,

and on further investigation came to the conclusion that the whole stanza (No. 12) in which they occur could be parodied pretty easily, and accordingly took it as the basis or skeleton of his sonnet, padding it out ingeniously enough with allusions to his fellow-competitors and imitations of their phraseology in the usual way. The stanza is as follows :

Now thinks he that her husband's shallow tongue,
The niggard prodigal that *praised* her so,
In that high task hath *done her beauty wrong*,
Which far *exceeds* his *barren* skill to *show* :
Therefore that *praise* which Collatine *doth owe*
Enchanted Tarquin *answers* with surmise,
In *silent* wonder of still-gazing *eyes*. [1]

The " Contest " allusions and imitations are as follows :—

1-2. H.'s 53.7-8.

4-6. S.'s 79.14 in this series :

Since what he *owes* thee *thou thyself* dost pay.

7. The " antique pen " of S.'s 106.7 and " the golden quill " of M.P.'s 85.3—both in this series.

8. A gibe at M.P.'s " worth."

[1] Compare with L.'s deliberate imitation of a rival's verse Keats' unconscious plagiarism from the last two lines of this stanza in the famous simile which closes his great sonnet on Chapman's Homer :

Or like stout Cortez when with eagle *eyes*
He *stared* at the Pacific—and all his men
Look'd at each other *with* a wild *surmise*—
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

10. M.P.'s 85.14 in this series:

> Me for my *dumb* thoughts, speaking in effect.

12. The "others" are S. and M.P., with special reference to the latter. In the B.I. series both had promised "life" to The Patron:

> **S.** So long *lives* this, and this gives *life* to thee. (18)
> **M.P.** You *live* in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes. (55),

and in this series (86.4) M.P. had been obliged to confess that his immortalizing lines had died stillborn:

> That did my ripe thoughts in my brain *inhearse*,
> Making their *tomb* the womb wherein they grew ?

14. As S. had called M.P. "thy poet," L. now calls S. and M.P. "both your poets." As this is the first example of the "Shakespearizing" sonnet the reader may perhaps find it convenient to have it "parallelized," so as to display its peculiar construction. The *Lucrece* lines (plus the one *L.L.L.* line) are enclosed in brackets to distinguish them from those taken from the Sonnets.

No. 83	*References*
I never saw that you did *painting need*,	(Fie *painted* rhetoric ! O she *needs* it not.
And *therefore* to your *fair* no *painting set*,	On Helen's cheek all *art of beauty set*,
I found, or thought I found, you did *exceed*	(Which far *exceeds* his *barren* skill to *show* :)
The *barren tender* of a poet's *debt*.	(*Therefore* that *praise* which Collatine *doth owe*
And *therefore* have I slept in your report,	Since what he *owes* thee, *thou thyself* dost *pay*,
That *you yourself*, being extant, well might *show*	I see their *antique pen* would have expressed,
How far a *modern quill* doth come too short,	Reserve their character with golden *quill*,
Speaking of worth, what *worth* in you doth grow.	*Praising your worth* despite his cruel hand.
This *silence* for my sin you did impute,	(In *silent* wonder of still-gazing eyes.)
Which shall be most my glory being *dumb ;*	Me for my *dumb* thoughts, speaking in effect.
For I *impair not beauty* being mute,	(In that high task hath *done her beauty wrong*,)
When others *would give life and bring a tomb*.	*Making their tomb the womb wherein they grew ?*
There *lives* more *life in* one of your fair *eyes*	So long *lives* this, and this *gives life* to thee.
Than both your poets can in *praise* devise.	You *live* in this, and dwell *in* lovers' *eyes*.
	(Enchanted Tarquin *answers* with surmise,)

Note as characteristic of L.'s style:

(a). The clumsy construction of lines 7 and 8.

(b) The exceedingly clumsy effect of 'being dumb' at the end of line 10, followed by 'being mute' at the end of the next line.

(c). The humorous (!) antithesis between The Patron's *one* eye and the best efforts of *both* poets.

84.

5. Another characteristic example of L.'s primitive sense of humour. The pun 'pen'—'penury' is bad enough in all conscience, but with "lean" added from S.'s "a-lien pen" (78.3) one has little hesitation in putting it down as the vilest line in the *Sonnets*.

13-14. The abruptness with which The Candid Friend introduces this remarkably plain-spoken couplet is in L.'s best manner.

108.

The first two quatrains present us with an amusingly matter-of-fact description of

L.'s search for inspiration for this complimentary sonnet. The Accountant-poet sits in his office with his 'brain-register' before him, ready to inscribe any new item that occurs to him and enter its value in the figure column. But owing to S. and M.P. having already appropriated for *their* respective complimentary sonnets, the one the whole of the beauties of the *past*, and the other the whole of the beauties of the *future*, he can find nothing fresh to enter, and is reduced to repeating the same old compliments he had paid The Patron in the first sonnet of his first batch (No. 105 in the E.D. Series). The "prayers divine"—the same day after day—of line 5, like the "hallowed" of line 8, reproduce the Church Service atmosphere of that 'idolatrous' sonnet. The "first" of line 8 is interesting as showing that, unlike S. and M.P., L. had not paid literary court to The Patron before entering for the "Contest." Note "brain" and "character" borrowed from M.P.'s 81.3 and 85.3 respectively, and "figured" borrowed from the "prefiguring" of S.'s 106.10. Note too the 'pedestrian' effect of line 6. In the last six lines the veteran of the party repeats the description of his age-worn appearance given in the first quatrain of his No. 63 in the B.I. Series. The thirteenth line is clumsily phrased; it apparently means "Finding my affection for you deep-rooted, and as strong as when I first fell in love with you." On line 9 POOLER notes: "Malone who was a lawyer explains: 'By the case of love the poet means his own compositions,' *i.e.*, the pleadings."

The Humorist. (Nos. 100, 101, 59, 103.)

The Humorist's contribution is burlesque at its best and brightest. Throughout he sets four objects before him:—

(1). To burlesque his rivals' references to, and excuses for, their respective Muses in this series.
(2). To pull The Patron's leg.
(3). To parody words and phrases used by his rivals in their contributions to this and previous series.
(4). To attain these three objects without departing too noticeably from the tone and line of treatment of The Theme adopted by his rivals in this series.

He is amazingly successful all round. As regards (1) and (2) the reader is invited to read the four sonnets through as they stand, without troubling himself about italics and underlinings, and judge for himself. Perhaps the following attempt at a rendering of their esoteric meaning in the vulgar tongue may help him:

H. (*loq.*). "What's my Muse about, I wonder, that she hasn't been here all this time doing her duty by her Patron? Wasting her energies on some disreputable poem or other, I suppose, instead of composing respectable sonnets in praise of her good Patron who likes them so much. Ah, there you are, Muse. Come here at once and make up for lost time." (*The Muse reluctantly returns and sits down.*) "No, don't sit there doing nothing; get up and take a good look at your Patron's sweet face and see whether, in spite of S.'s express orders to the contrary, it has developed any wrinkles since you saw it last. If so, you will have to expatiate on Old Time's failure to do any real damage, pointing out that the wrinkles are an improvement rather than otherwise, and that owing to your efforts on his behalf his life is actually growing longer instead of shorter . . . But upon my word, Muse, I really don't know what excuse you *can* offer for going off like this and neglecting such a combination of truth and beauty as The Patron. You know what M.P. said about his being a beautiful rose dyed deep in truth, and L.'s

' prognostications ' that beauty and truth depend upon him to such an extent that when he dies they will die too. *You* depend upon him at any rate—that's what makes you so ' dignified,' as L. says. . . . What's that you say ? ' If he's as wonderful as you say, he doesn't want any painting from *my* brush.' Nonsense ! That's no excuse for saying *nothing*. Besides, you know quite well that if you care to exert yourself you can offer him a poetical tribute which will make his name live longer than even one of those elaborate tombs (what a vile rhyme L.'s " dumb " and ' tomb ' is, by the way !) which are so fashionable nowadays. Come Muse ! Don't be discouraged like L., just because S. and M.P. between them have pre-empted the whole of past and future history for their complimentary sonnets ; take my advice and go to *pre*-history—sing of what he looked like in his previous incarnation, fourteen thousand years ago or thereabouts."

(*The Muse takes his advice and obliges with No.* 59—*a languid imitation of S.'s No.* 106—*in which she wishes that she could see what The Patron's poetical contemporaries had said about him then, so that she might judge whether their verse was better, or worse, or exactly the same, as that of the competitors in the present Contest ; and finishes by opining emphatically that some of the people admired and praised by these prehistoric bards deserved it less than The Patron did*). H. *much annoyed and disappointed*) : " Tut ! Tut ! What a shockingly bad performance—spoiling a splendid chance like that ! We'd have done better to leave it alone after all." (*Addressing The Patron*) : " Please don't blame me for this failure. The fact is that having to compose a sonnet in praise of the remarkable face that confronts you in the glass has been too much for us altogether."

As regards object No. 3, the reader is referred to the notes on individual sonnets below. He will find that in most cases the words and phrases parodied have something unusual or quaint about them which lends itself to ridicule.

As regards No. 4, in the first place he is referred to the analysis of " The Treatment of The Theme " given above, and in the second place he is invited to note that successive generations of commentators have been completely deceived. They have all, apparently, accepted each of these four sonnets at its face value as a serious, *bona fide* compliment to The Patron. This is very odd ; one would have thought that the four couplets *alone*—especially the last two—would have aroused suspicion at a very early stage in the development of *Sonnets*' criticism.

The whole contribution is saturated with H.'s characteristics of *Subtle Humour* and *Personal Allusion ;* Sonnet No. 59 and the excuses for its intentional failure given in No. 103 furnish an excellent example of the *Polite Shirker ;* and *Compressed Thought* is exemplified in 101.7-9, 59.3-4.

100.

First Quatrain. Note the two echoes, one from M.P.'s 80.3 and the other from L.'s 84.6, both in this series :—

M.P. And in the praise thereof *spends all his might*
L. That to his *subject lends* not some small *glory*.

Note also his reference to Barnes' ' worth ' in line 3. The reference to the " base subjects " on which H.'s Muse is wasting her time, fits very well with the identification of The Humorist with Donne. Many of his early poems—the erotic *Songs and Sonnets*—are full of deliberately indecent expressions and allusions.

7-8. Note the echoes of S.'s " lays," " skill " and " argument," and of S., M.P., and L.'s " pen "—all in this series.

9-10. In his 19 in the B.I. Series, S., addressing Time, had said :—

> But I forbid thee one most heinous crime :
> O, *carve* not with thy hours *my love's fair brow*,
> Nor draw no *lines* there with thine antique pen.

H. now bids his Muse see whether this unusual order has been executed or not.

The Couplet. The first line is deliberately unrhythmical, and the second deliberately quaint. POOLER says, " scythe . . . knife, crooked scythe a hendiadys." It is a complicated echo of three lines taken from M.P. (B.I. 60), L. (B.I. 63), and H. himself (M.A. 126), respectively :—

> **M.P.** And nothing stands but for *his scythe* to mow:
> **L.** Against confounding age's cruel *knife*.
> **H.** Doth hold Times' fickle glass, *his sickle* hour (mower ?).

101.

First Quatrain. The references to " truth and beauty " parody two passages, one from M.P.'s No. 54 in the B.I. Series, and one from L.'s No. 14 in the M.A. Series :—

> **M.P.** O, how much more doth *beauty* beauteous seem
> By that sweet ornament which *truth* doth give !
> The canker-blooms have full as deep a *dye*.
> **L.** As *truth* and *beauty* shall together thrive,
> If from thyself to store thou would'st convert ;
> Or else of thee this I prognosticate :
> Thy end is *truth's* and *beauty's* doom and date.

The ungrammatical " and therein dignified " is, apparently, a double-barrelled parody of (1) M.P.'s ungrammatical " and no pace perceived " (104.10), and (2) L.'s unusual word " dignified " (84.8)—both in this series.

6-7. A paraphrase of L.'s 83.1-2, in this series :

> I never saw that you did painting need,
> And therefore to you fair no painting set ;

9-11. The reader's special attention is invited to this parody of L.'s faulty rhyme ' dumb ' and ' tomb ' in the corresponding sonnet (and almost exactly in the same place in the sonnet) No. 83. The modernized spelling of the text ruins its effectiveness. In the Quarto L.'s two words are spelt " dombe " and " tombe " so as to make a ' rhyme to the eye,' while in this sonnet H. spells them " dumb " and " tombe " so as to accentuate the disparity. Line 11 parodies M.P.'s lines in his 55 in the B.I. Series :

> Not marble nor *the gilded monuments*
> Of princes shall *outlive* this powerful rhyme.

Both the original and the parody refer to the practice of erecting elaborately decorated funeral monuments which began to come into fashion in the latter part of the sixteenth century. Thus we read in LEE's *Life*, (p. 496) that in 1591 the celebrated " tombmaker " Garret Johnson, " received the handsome sum of £200 for designing and erecting the elaborate tombs of the brothers Edward Manners, third Earl of Rutland, and John Manners, fourth Earl, which were set up in the church at Bottesford, Leicestershire, the family burying-place." These may be the very tombs referred to ; Roger Manners, the fifth Earl, was a very intimate friend of Southampton.

13-14. Note the subtle ambiguity of the last line. *Esoterically* " long hence " refers to the prehistoric *past* of the next sonnet.

59.

This is H.'s " complimentary " sonnet put third, (as noted above) so that it may be laughed at in the fourth. It is an *intentionally* feeble parody of S.'s complimentary Sonnet 106. Note " wasted time " and " old world " ; " prefiguring " and " image " ; " antique pen " and " antique book " ; while " we " and " they," " wonder," and the couplet rhymes, are common to both.

3-4. A complicated parody of M.P., The " labouring for invention " echoes his ' invent ' and the obstetrics of his E.D. Sonnet, No. 38 ; and the " brains " and " bear amiss " his " miscarriage " conceit in the corresponding sonnet (and in *exactly* the same place in the sonnet), No. 81 :—

> That did my ripe thoughts in my brain inhearse,
> Making their tomb the womb wherein they grew ?

And both M.P. and H. probably had in mind Shakespeare's phrase in his dedication of *V. and A.*–" But if the first *heir* of my *invention* prove *deformed.*"

5-12. All the commentators have gone astray in interpreting this passage. It is very odd that none of them should have realized that by a " course of the sun," the poet means not a solar *year* of 365 days, but a solar *cycle, i.e.*, 28 years, and that the allusion is to Plato's Great Year, at the end of which everything begins to happen all over again. But the latest editor of the *Sonnets* (MR. POOLER), writing in 1918, merely notes on line 6, " 500 may be intended to refer vaguely to the dawn of literature in England." One would scarcely pick out 1095 A.D. as an epoch-making date ! Now 500 × 28=14,000, which is near enough to Macrobius' estimate of 15,000 years for the *Magnus Annus Platonis.* Fourteen thousand years ago The Patron was blooming in his present beauty, and being " sonnetted " by prototypes of S., M.P., L., and H. The Muse wishes she could see the volume in which these effusions were ' charactered,' in order to compare them with the present lot.

13-14. This couplet is not only a piece of bare-faced impertinence, but one of the finest examples in the language of " the Art of Sinking in Poetry." Yet the commentators pass over it in silence.

103.

H.'s criticism of, and excuse for, the previous sonnet. His affected consternation at the failure of his Muse to rise to the height of her great argument is delightfully comic, and his double-edged compliments to The Patron's countenance are as skilfully executed as they are audaciously conceived. In addition, it is one of the most remarkable specimens of the ' mosaic ' or ' patchwork ' type of sonnet to be found in the collection. It is, literally, made up of scraps taken from the contributions of his three fellow-competitors, and fitted together with extraordinary ingenuity.

First Quatrain. Here H. makes satirical allusion to certain more or less ridicule-provoking thoughts and phrases used by his three rivals in their respective E.D. Sonnets, *viz.*, S.'s " poor wit," " bare," and " all naked " duty, M.P.'s parturient Muse and The Patron's sweet " argument," and L.'s threefold theme with its wondrous " scope " :—

> **S.** Duty so great which wit so *poor* as mine
> May make seem *bare* in wanting words to *show* it ;
> In thy soul's thought, *all naked* will bestow it.
> **M.P.** How can *my Muse* want subject to invent,
> Thine own sweet *argument*, too excellent
> And he that calls on thee, let him *bring forth*
> **L.** Three themes in one which wondrous *scope* affords.

He also parodies M.P.'s absurd line in this Series,

> And to the most of *praise add* something more ; (85.10),

and manages to get in allusions both to S.'s " pride " and M.P's " worth "—altogether a notable triumph !

Second Quatrain. Parodies S.'s 3.1-2 in the M.A. Series, and 102.14 in this series, M.P.'s 80.1 in this series, and L.'s 105.11 in the E.D. Series.

> **S.** *Look in thy glass* and tell the *face* thou viewest
> Because I would not *dull* you with my song.
> **M.P.** *O*, how I faint when *I* of you do *write*,
> **L.** And in this change is *my invention spent.*

Third Quatrain. Parodies S.'s 79.2 and 78.11, M.P.'s reference to The Patron's expected donations for the Contest prizes in 81.1-2, and L.'s 83.9 and 84.6.

> **S.** *My verse* alone hath all *thy gentle grace.*
> In others' works thou dost but *mend* the style,
> **M.P.** Was it the proud full sail of *his* great *verse*,
> Bound for the *prize* of all-too-precious you.
> **L.** This silence for my *sin* you did impute,
> For I *impair* not beauty being mute,
> That to his *subject* lends not some small glory.

Couplet. An outrageous insult camouflaged as a 'patchwork' of echoes from each of his three rivals :—

> **S.** *Look* in *thy glass*, and tell the *face* thou viewest (3).
> **M.P.** But when your *countenance fill'd up* his line (86).
> **L.** Which three before never *kept seat* in one. (105).

This preposterous couplet is passed over in silence by the commentators, like its predecessor.

Perhaps these complicated echoes and parodies will be better appreciated if the sonnet is " parallelized " after the fashion of L.'s 83 above.

103

Alack, what *poverty my Muse brings forth*,
That having such a *scope* to *show* her *pride*,
The *argument all bare*, is of *more worth*
Than when it hath my *added praise* beside !

O, blame *me* not, if *I* no more can *write !*
Look in your glass, and there appears a *face*
That *over-goes my blunt invention* quite,
Dulling my lines and doing me disgrace.
Were it not *sinful*, then, striving to *mend*,
To *mar* the *subject* that before was well?
For to no other pass *my verses* tend
Than of *your graces* and *your gifts* to tell ;
And more, much more, than in *my verse* can *sit*,
Your own glass shows you when you *look in* it.

Previous Sonnets

How can *my Muse* want *subject* to invent,
Thine own sweet *argument*, too excellent
Be thou the tenth Muse, ten times *more in worth*,
And he that calls on thee let him *bring forth*
And to the most of *praise add something more ;*
Duty so great which wit so *poor* as mine
May make seem *bare* in wanting words to *show* it.
In thy soul's thought *all naked* will bestow it ;
But be most *proud* of that which I compile,
Three themes in one which wondrous *scope* affords,
O, how *I* faint, when *I* of you do write,
Look in your glass and tell the *face* thou viewest
And in this change *is my invention spent*
Because I would not *dull* you with *my song*.
This silence for my *sin* you did impute,
In others' works thou dost but *mend* the style,
For I *impair* not beauty being mute,
My verse alone had all *thy gentle grace ;*
Bound for the *prize* of all-too-precious *you*,
Which three before never *kept seat* in one.

Note.—**BARNABE BARNES THE BUTT.**

The reader will not have failed to observe that in this one-series batch, as in the four series of the First Batch, most of the ' comic relief ' has been provided at the expense of The Minor Poet, Barnabe Barnes. In the Third Batch (to be considered in the next chapter), he will find an exactly similar state of affairs—the other three competitors hammering away again at his ' worth,' his sloppy language, and the addle-headed conceits of his E.D. sonnet, and The Humorist again going out of his way to sneer at him as a coward. Although all these references are duly noticed in the Notes on the texts of the sonnets in which they occur, no attempt has been made to give a full explanation in each individual case, as this would have meant a quite inadmissible amount of wearisome iteration. But if one collects these ' M.P.-ragging ' references and analyses them, one finds it easy to classify a large proportion of them—half at least—under one or other of four distinct *motifs* which keep on cropping up throughout the Personal section. And I think it should be possible, without straining the kind reader's patience too severely, to exhibit this four-*motif* classification in a separate explanatory Note. This then is the purpose of this Note. And I have thought it advisable to put it in *here*, instead of in its natural place at the end of the next chapter. The disadvantage of this arrangement is that the reader will have to take the references to the Third Batch on trust for the time being ; the advantage is that he will be put in immediate possession of the key to the more important of the many puzzles of that batch, which, as he will discover in due course, contains a larger number of ' difficult ' sonnets than all the other ten series put together.

But before entering on this classification, it would be as well, perhaps, to set down here what little is known of Barnes' life and literary career. He was a son of Richard Barnes, the well-known Bishop of Durham, and was born in 1569. He went up to Oxford in 1586, but left some years later without taking a degree. He joined Essex's expeditionary force against the Prince of Parma in 1591, but he must have returned to England in or before 1593, as his first literary venture—The *Parthenophil* collection of sonnets and odes—was published in that year. It was favourably received, though certain sonnets were censured for their extravagance and bad taste. In 1595 he published another collection of sonnets—this time of a religious character—which seem to have fallen rather flat. In 1607 he published a dull and unpleasant tragedy, *The Devil's Charter*. He died at Durham in 1609. For information about his personal character we have to rely almost entirely on the evidence of hostile witnesses. He took sides with Gabriel Harvey in that worthy's notorious quarrel with Nashe, and contributed a sonnet against Nashe to Harvey's *Pierce's Supererogation*, which was published in 1593. When Nashe in due course replied to Harvey's attack in his ferocious lampoon, *Have with you to Saffron Walden* (1595), he singled out Barnes for special attention. Some extracts may be quoted :—

Carnead. Hee (Harvey) *bids* Barnabe of the Barnes *be the gallant poet like Spenser, or the valiant souldiour like Baskervile, and ever remember his French service with such a generall.*

Respond. What his souldiourship is I cannot judge, but if ever you have a chaine to runne away with as hee did with a nobleman's steward's chayne at his Lord's enstalling at *Windsore* . . . Neither of these princockesses (Barnes or Chute) once cast up their noses towards Powles Churchyard, or so much as knew how to knock at a printing-house door, till they comforted themselves with *Harvey* who infected them with his own spirit of Bragganisme which after so increased and multiplied in them as no man was able to endure them. The first of them (which is *Barnes*) presently uppon it, because he would be noted, getting him a strange payre of Babilonian britches . . . and so went up and down towne, where he was generally laught out by the noblemen and ladies . . . One of the best articles against Barnes I have overslipt, which is, that he is in print for

a braggart in that universall applauded Latine poem of Master *Campion*; where in an epigram entitled in Barnum beginning:

Mortales decem tela inter Gallica caesos,[1]

he shews how he bragd, when he was in *France* he slue ten men, when (*fearfull cowbaby*) he never heard peice shot off but hee fell down flat on his face.

Campion, too, not content with satirizing "Barnzy's" cowardice, hints (in another epigram) that he had connived at an intrigue between Harvey and his own (Barnes') wife.

It is not on record that Barnes took any action against the authors of these remarkably libellous statements.

Other contemporary references to his personal character are few and unimportant. The general impression one receives is that though his contemporaries admitted (as modern critics also admit) that he possessed a *quantum* of the true poetic afflatus, they regarded him, generally speaking, as a weak, silly, and affected person, addicted to writing perfervid and unballasted verse. Such a man was a predestined butt.

To come now to the four leading 'M.P.-ragging' *motifs* mentioned above. The first three originate in the absurdities of his sonnet No. 38, and the fourth originates in his reputation as a blustering coward.[2]

It will be convenient to begin by quoting No. 38 again:—

How can my Muse want subject to invent.
Whilst thou dost breathe, that pour'st into my verse
Thine own sweet argument, too excellent
For every vulgar paper to rehearse?
O, give thyself the thanks, if aught in me
Worthy perusal stand against thy sight;
For who's so dumb that cannot write to thee,
When thou thyself dost give invention light;
Be thou the tenth Muse, ten times more in worth
Than those old nine which rhymers invocate;
And he that calls on thee, let him bring forth
Eternal numbers to outlive long date.
If my slight Muse do please these curious days
The pain be mine, but thine shall be the praise.

Motif No. 1. This may be called the '*Argument-Invention-Subject*' *motif.*

The absurdities of the first three lines are patent. By "want *subject* to *invent*," M.P. (to quote the notes on the sonnet),[3] "presumably means to say 'lack a subject to exercise her invention (imagination) upon,' but the words as they stand cannot bear this (or for the matter of that, any other) meaning."

[1] The text of the epigram is as follows:—
Mortales decem tela inter Gallica caesos
Marte tuo perhibes; in numero vitium est.
Mortales nullos si dicere, Barne, volebas.
Servaret numerum versus itemque fidem.

[2] Parolles in *All's Well*, "a great way fool, solely a coward," looks very much like a caricature of Barnes. Parolles was "beaten for picking a kernel out of a pomegranate," as, according to Nashe, Barnes was beaten for stealing a chain; his gartered sleeves and peculiarly-knotted scarf bear the same brand of cheap swagger as Barnes' "Babylonian britches"; and his explanation for refusing to fight—"What I dare too well do, I dare not do," might very well be the actual speech on which H. based his satirical reference to Barnes as—

Some fierce thing replete with too much rage,
Whose strength's abundance weakens his own heart.

[3] *V.* p. 53 supra.

Again, apart from the context, one would scarcely guess that " thine own sweet *argument* " means ' the subject of thine own sweetness '—which, in an unintentionally ludicrous metaphor, M.P. calls upon The Patron to pour into his empty verses.

Motif No. 2. This may be called the ' *Enigmatical Obstetrics* ' *motif.*

In the last six lines we get a hopeless muddle. At the beginning of the sonnet we find three normal people—one female, namely, M.P.'s Muse, and two males, namely, M.P. himself and his noble patron. Then without any warning, at the end of the sonnet we find the noble patron performing the part of a Super-Muse (of doubtful sex), and M.P. himself preparing to lie-in of a poem ! To quote the Notes again[1] " who is to ' bring forth ' immortal verse ? The poet, his own ' slight Muse,' or the newly-appointed tenth Muse. Apparently from line 14 the poet himself is to be brought to bed, but for some mysterious reason, the tenth Muse, *i.e.*, Southampton, is to take credit for the result."

Motif No. 3. This may be called the ' *Worth* ' *motif.*

Barnes had a curious passion for the word " worth," and dragged it in on all possible occasions, sometimes with a very incongruous effect. For instance, prefixed to his *Parthenophil* collection we find a dedicatory sonnet to Southampton, written very much on the lines of No. 38 in this collection. In that sonnet he brings in "worth " twice :—

> These *worth*less leaves which I to thee present,
> Shall to my virtues of much *worth* aspire :

(As pointed out in the Notes on No. 38, this *Parthenophil* sonnet was well known to all his three *confrères.*)

Here in his No. 38 we also have it twice :—

> *Worthy* perusal stand against thy sight ;
> Be thou the tenth Muse, ten times more in *worth.*

And in two other sonnets of the First Batch we have it again :—

> 60. Praising thy *worth* despite his cruel hand.
> 37. Take all my comfort of thy *worth* and truth.

Motif No. 4. This may be called the ' *Cowardice* ' *motif.*

The allusions made by Nashe and Campion (quoted above) shew that Barnes' reputation for cowardice was well established.

Now let us attempt to trace, batch by batch, the course of these four ' comic relief ' threads of the Personal sonnet-web.

First Batch.

Shakespeare. S., of course, has no reference. The two others open the ball.
The Lawyer. L. brings in Motif No. 1 once.

> 105. Fair kind and true is all my *argument,*
> And in this change is my *invention* spent,

The Humorist. H. brings in Motif No. 3 twice and No. 4 once.

> 16. Neither in inward *worth* nor outward fair,
> 62. And for myself mine own *worth* do define,
> As I all others in all *worths* surmount.
> 23. Or some fierce thing replete with too much rage,
> Whose strength's abundance *weakens his own heart* ;

[1] *v.* p. 54 *supra.*

(In the first six lines of this last sonnet, H. refers to each of his three competitors in their 'natural' order, S., M.P., L., giving two lines to each. These are lines 3 and 4.)

Second Batch.

Shakespeare. Here S. gets his first chance of ragging M.P., and, as pointed out in the Notes, he does rag him very thoroughly—especially in his three first sonnets, which are, in essence, a series of sarcastic allusions to M.P. expressed in a series of parodies of M.P.'s own phraseology. He brings in No. 1 once, No. 2 twice, and No. 3 twice. The best way, perhaps, to exhibit these five references will be to place the lines in which S. deliberately parodies or imitates the thoughts and language of M.P.'s sonnet No. 38 side by side with their models :—

S.	**M.P.** (No. 38.)
78. So oft I have invoked thee for *my Muse*	Be thou the tenth muse, ten times more in worth
. . . . .	Than those old nine which rhymers invocate ;
Yet be most proud of that which I compile,	How can *my Muse* want subject to *invent*,
Whose *influence is thine* and *born of thee* :	While thou dost breathe, that *pour'st into my* verse
79. I grant, sweet love, *thy lovely argument*	*Thine own sweet argument*, too excellent
Deserves the *travail* of a *worthier* pen ;	And he that calls on thee, let him *bring forth*
Yet what of thee thy poet *doth invent.*	When thou thyself *dost give invention light* ?
. . . . .	
No praise to thee but what in thee doth live.	The pain be mine, but thine shall be the praise.
Then thank him not for that which he doth say,	O, give thyself the thanks, if aught in me
106. They had not skill enough thy *worth* to sing.	*Worthy* perusal stand against thy sight.

(Note the skilful 'portmanteau' effect of

. . . . . thy lovely *argument.*
Deserves the *travail* of a *worthier* pen

—the three main *motifs* in a line and a half).

The Minor Poet. This is M.P.'s first opportunity of shewing that he is aware of the ragging to which he has been subjected. He wisely drops his indefensible *Argument-Invention-Subject* conceit for good, but attempts to justify his *Enigmatic Obstetrics* by presenting a simplified (but still decidedly comic) version, in which he appears as the sole parent of his poetical offspring, explaining why the accouchement he was expecting in his First Batch sonnet (No. 38) has resulted in a miscarriage.

86. That did my *ripe* thoughts in my brain inhearse
Making their tomb the womb wherein they grew.

He is still, however, unrepentant about 'worth' :—

80. But since your *worth*, wide as the ocean is,
Or being wreck'd, I am a *worth*less boat.

The Lawyer. L. gets in two allusions apiece to Motifs Nos. 1, 2, and 3 :—

82. I grant thou wert not *married to my Muse*,
Of their fair *subject*, blessing every book.
Finding thy *worth* a limit past my praise ;
83. Speaking of *worth* what *worth* in you doth grow.
While others would *give life and bring a tomb.*

(Note here the allusion to M.P.'s ' miscarriage ' development of his Motif No. 2.)

84 That to his *subject* lends not some small glory.

The Humorist. H. exploits the first three *motifs* in the most thorough going fashion, bringing in No. 1 no less than seven times, No. 2 twice, and No. 3 twice.

100. Where art thou Muse that thou forget'st so long
Spend'st thou thy fury on some *worth*less song ?
Darkening thy power to lend base *subjects* light ?
And gives thy pen both skill and *argument*.
59. . . . . how are our brains beguiled,
Which *labouring* for *invention bear amiss*
The second burthen of a former child.

(Note here how he, too, follows the ' miscarriage ' development of No. 2.)

To *subjects* worse have given admiring praise.
103. Alack, what poverty *my Muse brings forth*,
The *argument* all bare is of more worth
That overgoes my blunt *invention* quite,
To mar the *subject* that before was well ?

Third Batch.

As noted above, the kind reader will have to take the references and my explanations thereof ' on trust ' for the present.

Shakespeare. S. brings in No. 2 once and No. 3 twice.

116. Let me not to the *marriage* of true minds
Admit impediments.

(the reference is to the marriage of L.'s Muse to The Patron in his No. 82 in the Second Batch. L. is always boasting about his " truth.")

Whose *worth's* unknown although his height be taken.

(" whose " and " his " refer to M.P., and " unknown " means non-existent, nil.)

74. The *worth* of that is that which it contains.

The Minor Poet. M.P. sticks to his revised version of his *Obstetrics* conceit, and also to his ' worth.'

70. Thy *worth* the greater being woo'd of time ;
72. For you in me can nothing *worthy* prove ;
For I am shamed by that which *I bring forth*,
And so should you to love things nothing *worth*.

The Lawyer. L. brings in Nos. 1 and 2 twice each.

76. And keep *invention* in a noted weed,
Showing *their birth and whence they did proceed* ?
And you and love are all my *argument* ;
32. Had my friend's *Muse* grown with this growing age,
A *dearer birth* than this his love had brought,

The Humorist. H. brings in No. 2 once, No. 3 twice, and No. 4 once.

> 39. O, how thy *worth* with manners may I sing,
> 25. The *painful warrior famoused for worth*,
> After a thousand victories once foiled,
> Is from the book of honour razed quite.

(Note in the first-quoted line of No. 25, quite the neatest of all the 'portmanteau' allusions to M.P.; "painful" recalls his labour-pains in his No. 38, "warrior" is, of course, ironical, and "famoused for worth" is an even more direct gibe than S.'s "a worthier pen.")

. . . . . .

Perhaps it will make things clearer if these rather complicated pleasantries are set forth in tabular form. The following table shews them arranged in strictly chronological order—reading from left to right :—

BARNABE BARNES

SHAKESPEARE

THE MINOR POET

Explanation.

Reference to Motif No. 1.—underlined.
Do. Motif No. 2.—*italicized.*
Do. Motif No. 3.—**in bold type**
Do. Motif No. 4.—wavy ruled.

FIRST

(*Parth.* These **worth**less leaves which I to thee present
Shall to thy virtues of much **worth** aspire.)
38. How can *my Muse* want subject to invent,
Thine own sweet argument too excellent
Worthy perusal stand against thy sight;
When thou thyself dost give invention light?
Be *thou* the tenth *Muse* ten times more in **worth**
And he that calls on thee *let him bring forth*
The pain be mine but *thine shall be the praise.*
60. Praising thy **worth** despite his cruel hand.
37. Take all my comfort of thy **worth** and truth.

SECOND

78. How oft I have invoked thee for *my Muse*
Whose influence is thine and *born of thee:*
79. I grant, sweet love, thy lovely argument
Deserves the *travail* of a **worth**ier pen;
Yet what of thee thy poet doth invent
106. They had not skill enough thy **worth** to sing.

80. But since your **worth**, wide as the ocean is,
Or being wreck'd, I am a **worth**less boat,
86. That did my ripe thoughts in *my brain* inhearse,
Making their tomb the womb wherein they grew.

THIRD

116. Let me not to the *marriage* of true minds
Admit impediments. . . .
Whose **worth**'s unknown, although his height be taken.
74. The **worth** of that is that which it contains,

70. Thy **worth** the greater being woo'd of time;
72. For you in me can nothing **worth**y prove;
For I am shamed by that which *I bring forth,*
And so should you to love thing nothing **worth.**

THE BUTT.

THE LAWYER.

BATCH.

105. Fair, kind, and true is all my argument,
And in this change is my invention spent.

THE HUMORIST.

16. Neither in inward **worth** nor outward fair
62. And for myself mine own **worth** do define
As I all other in all **worths** surmount.
23. Or some fierce thing replete with too much rage,
Whose strength's abundance weakens his own heart;

BATCH.

82. I grant thou wert not *married to my Muse*,
Of their fair subject blessing every book.
Finding thy **worth** a limit past my praise;
83. Speaking of **worth** what **worth** in you doth grow
While others would *give life and bring a tomb*.
84. That to his subject lends not some small glory.

100. Where art thou, *Muse*, that thou forget'st so long
Spend'st thou thy fury on some **worth**less song,
Darkening thy power to lend base subjects light?
And give thy pen both skill and argument.
59. . . . How are *our brains* beguiled
Which *labouring* for invention, *bear amiss*
The second burthen of a former child!
To subjects worse have given admiring praise.
103. Alack, what poverty *my Muse brings forth*,
The argument all bare is of more **worth**
That overgoes my blunt invention quite,
To mar the subject that before was well?

BATCH.

76. And keep invention in a noted weed,
Showing *their birth and whence they did proceed?*
And you and love are all my argument;
32. Had *my friend's Muse* grown with this growing age
A dearer birth than this his love had brought.

25. The *painful* warrior famoused for **worth**,
After a thousand victories once foiled,
Is from the book of honour razed quite.
39. O, how thy **worth** with manners may I sing,

CHAPTER IV.—THE PERSONAL SONNETS.—THIRD BATCH.

As we have seen, Series Nos. 1 to 4 constituted the first batch of Personal Sonnets; after a certain interval, in response to a hint from The Patron, came Series No. 5, which in itself constituted the second batch; and now, after another interval of uncertain length, come the three last Series, Nos. 6, 7, and 8, plus The Patron's single Sonnet No. 121, which, though composed and despatched at different times, are yet all so intimately inter-connected as regards subject-matter that they may be conveniently treated as constituting the third (and final) batch.

The history of this batch may be taken to have been somewhat as follows: Some time after the receipt of the second batch of sonnets Southampton got into a fast set at Court, and started leading a dissolute life in London, rather 'dropping' his little coterie of literary hangers-on in consequence. Probably this was late in 1595 or early in 1596 when, as LEE tells us, he was "courting Elizabeth Vernon with too much familiarity." Anyhow, whatever the exact date, his new friends were doing so much harm to his reputation, and he had lost his interest in the Contest to such an extent, that the four poets decided to give him a gentle reminder of his duty to himself and to literature, and sent him the two-sonnet Series No. 6 (Patron's Peccadilloes) accordingly. Some of the criticisms of his conduct contained in these sonnets—especially in the contributions of The Lawyer and The Humorist—were decidedly pointed, and Southampton not unnaturally got annoyed. However he resolved to play the game, and retorted in kind with a "halting sonnet of his own pure brain" (No. 121), in which he turned the tables on his monitors with a vigorous *tu quoque*. This sonnet was apparently accompanied by a verbal or written communication, in which he declared that the poets had neglected him and not he the poets, warned them that he was not going to permit this sort of criticism again, and ordered them to send him a full poetical apology. The result was the four-sonnet Series No. 7 (Poet's Repentance), to which Shakespeare (followed, of course, by the other three) appended his two-sonnet Series No. 8 (The Moribund Poet) as a decisive intimation that no more batches of 'adulatory' sonnets were to be expected.

SERIES No. 6.—The Patron's Peccadilloes.

The Theme. The Poet mildly reproves The Patron for deserting him and getting into bad company.

SERIES No. 6—

The Theme.—The Poet mildly reproaches the Patron

SHAKESPEARE

33

Full many a glorious morning have I seen
Flatter the mountain-tops with *sovereign* eye,
Kissing with golden face the meadows green,
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy;
Anon permit the *basest clouds* to ride
With ugly rack on his celestial face,
And from the forlorn world his visage hide,
Stealing unseen to west with this disgrace:
Even so my *sun* one early morn did shine
With all-triumphant splendour on my brow;
But, out, alack! he was but one hour mine,
The region cloud hath masked him from me now.
Yet him for this my love no whit disdaineth;
Suns of the world may *stain* when heaven's *sun staineth.*

34

Why didst thou promise such a beauteous day,
And make me travel forth without my cloak,
To let *base* clouds o'ertake me in my way,
Hiding thy bravery in their rotten smoke?
'Tis not enough that through the cloud thou break,
To dry the rain on my storm-beaten face,
For no man well of such a *salve* can speak
That heals the wound and cures not the disgrace:
Nor can thy shame give physic to my grief;
Though thou repent, yet I have still the loss;
The offender's sorrow lends but weak relief
To him that bears the strong offence's cross.
Ah, but those tears are pearls which thy love sheds,
And they are rich and ransom all *ill deeds.*

THE MINOR POET

94

They that have power to hurt and will do none,
That do not do *the thing* they most do *show*
Who, moving others, are themselves as stone,
Unmoved, cold and to temptation slow;
They rightly do inherit heaven's graces
And husband nature's riches from expense;
They are the lords and owners of their faces,
Others but stewards of their excellence.
The summer's flower is to the summer sweet,
Though to itself it only live and die,
But if that flower with *base* infection meet,
The *basest* weed outbraves his dignity:
For *sweetest things turn sourest by their deeds;*
Lilies that fester *smell* far worse than *weeds.*

70

That thou art blamed shall not be thy defect,
For slander's mark was ever yet the fair;
The ornament of beauty is suspect,
A crow that flies in heaven's sweetest air.
So thou be good, slander doth but approve
Thy worth the greater, being woo'd of time;
For *canker* vice the *sweetest buds* doth love,
And thou present'st a pure *unstained* prime.
Thou hast pass'd by the ambush of young days,
Either not assail'd, or victor being charged;
Yet this *thy praise* cannot be so *thy praise,*
To tie up envy evermore enlarged:
If some *suspect* of *ill* mask'd *not thy show,*
Then thou alone *kingdoms* of hearts shouldst owe.

TREATMENT OF THE THEME.

The general tone of the sonnets in this series is sober and restrained. There is a notable absence of personal allusions, and The Humorist's contribution is, for once, not conceived in a spirit of ragging and burlesque. It would seem that the poets intended their hints and warnings to be taken more or less seriously.

Shakespeare deals with The Theme very tactfully. His chief complaint is that The Patron has withdrawn the light of his countenance from him. He touches very lightly indeed on the injustice of such conduct, and assumes that The Patron has already repented thereof even unto tears.

The Minor Poet characteristically evades the issue altogether, and elects to represent The Patron as an innocent victim of lying and malicious rumours.

The Lawyer's treatment is in striking contrast to The Minor Poet's. In his best *Candid Friend* manner he tells The Patron in so many words that he has become a sensualist and a lover of low company. He, however, bids him not repine, as everybody has faults, and even *he* (The Lawyer) is not altogether exempt. One wonders, by the way, whether this last bit of information had the soothing effect on Southampton contemplated by the author.

PATRON'S PECCADILLOES. (P.P.)

for deserting him and getting into bad company.

THE LAWYER

69

Those parts of thee that the world's *eye doth view*
Want no*thing* that the thought of hearts can mend ;
All *tongues*, the voice of souls, give thee that due,
Uttering bare truth, even so as foes commend.
Thy outward thus with outward *praise* is *crown'd ;*
But those same tongues, that give thee so thine own,
In other accents do this *praise* confound
By seeing farther than the eye hath shown.
They look into the beauty of thy mind,
And that, *in guess*, they measure *by thy deeds ;*
Then, churls, their thoughts, although their eyes were kind,
To thy fair *flower* add the rank *smell* of *weeds :*
But why thy *odour* matcheth *not thy show*,
The soil is this, that thou dost *common* grow.

35

No more be grieved at that which thou hast done :
Roses have thorns, and silver fountains mud ;
Clouds and eclipses *stain* both moon and *sun*,
And loathsome *canker* lives *in sweetest bud.*
All men make faults, and even I in this,
Authorizing thy trespass with compare,
Myself corrupting, *salving* thy amiss,
Excusing *thy sins* more than *thy sins* are ;
For to thy sensual fault I bring in sense—
Thy adverse party is thy advocate—
And 'gainst myself a lawful plea commence :
Such civil war is in my love and hate,
That I an accessory needs must be
To that *sweet* thief which *sourly* robs from me.

THE HUMORIST

95

How sweet and lovely dost thou make the shame
Which, like a *canker in the fragrant rose*,
Doth *spot* the beauty of thy *budding* name !
O, in what sweets dost thou *thy sins* inclose !
That *tongue* that tells the story of thy days,
Making lascivious comments on thy sport,
Cannot *dispraise* but in a kind of *praise ;*
Naming thy name blesses an ill report.
O, what a mansion have those vices got
Which for their habitation chose out thee,
Where beauty's veil doth cover every blot
And *all things turn* to fair *that eyes can see !*
Take heed, dear heart, of this large privilege ;
The hardest knife ill used doth lose his edge.

96

Some say, thy fault is youth, some wantonness ;
Some say, thy grace is youth and gentle sport ;
Both grace and faults are loved of more and less :
Thou makest faults graces that to thee resort.
As on the finger of a *throned queen*
The *basest* jewel will be well *esteem'd*,
So are those errors that in thee are seen
To truths translated and for true things deem'd.
How many lambs might the stern wolf betray,
If like a lamb he could his looks translate !
How many gazers mightst thou lead away,
If thou wouldst use the strength of all thy state !
But do not so ; I love thee in such sort,
As thou being mine, mine is thy good report.

The Humorist's condemnation of The Patron's conduct, though less clumsily expressed than The Lawyer's, is not a whit less severe.

As a natural result of these differences in treatment there is an absence of that close imitation of S.'s thoughts which distinguishes most of the other series. And though many resemblances are traceable—especially between The Lawyer and The Humorist—they can be sufficiently shewn, and more conveniently dealt with, under the next heading.

VERBAL PARALLELISMS.

Verbal parallelisms are numerous and close—most remarkably so when the disparity between the various treatments is considered.

S. Anon permit the *basest* clouds to ride
To let *base* clouds o'ertake me in my way.
M.P. But if that flower with *base* infection meet,
The *basest* weed outbraves his dignity.
L. . . . thou dost *common* grow.
H. The *basest* jewel will be well esteemed.

S. Suns of the world may *stain* when heaven's *sun staineth*.
M.P. And thou present'st a pure *unstained* prime.

L. Clouds and eclipses *stain* both moon and *sun*,
H. Doth *spot* the beauty of thy budding name !

S. And they are rich and ransom all *ill deeds*.
M.P. For *sweetest* things turn *sourest by their deeds*.
Lilies that fester *smell* far worse than *weeds*.
If some *suspect* of *ill* mask'd *not thy show*,
L. To that *sweet* thief that *sourly* robs from me.
And that *in guess*, they measure *by thy deeds ;*
To thy fair *flower* add the rank *smell* of *weeds :*
But why thy *odour* matcheth *not thy show*,

M.P. That do not do the *thing* they must do *show*,
For sweetest *things turn* sourest by their deeds ;
L. Those parts of thee *that* the world's *eye doth view*
Want *nothing* that the thoughts of hearts can mend.
H. And all *things turn* to fair *that eyes can see !*

M.P. For *canker* vice the *sweetest buds* doth love,
L. And loathsome *canker* lives in *sweetest bud*.
H. Which like a *canker* in the *fragrant* rose,

M.P. Yet this thy *praise* cannot be so thy *praise*,
L. Thy outward thus with outward *praise* is crown'd;
In other accents do this *praise* confound
H. Cannot *dispraise* but in a kind of *praise*.

Note the attributes of royalty bestowed upon the Patron by each of the four poets, *viz.* :—

S. Flatter the mountain-tops with *sovereign* eye,
M.P. Then thou alone *kingdoms* of hearts shouldst owe.
L. Thy outward thus with outward praise is *crown'd ;*
H. As on the finger of a *throned queen*.

Minor Parallelisms: (1) *Clouds*, 33.5, 35.3; (2) *salve*, 34.7, 35.7; (3) *thy sins*, 35.8, 95.4; (4) *tongue*, 69.6, 95.5.

NOTES.

Shakespeare. (Nos. 33, 34.)

Shakespeare's beautiful No. 33 is a supreme example of the sonnetteer's art and one of the best-known sonnets in the language. No. 34, though it lacks the wonderful word-painting of its predecessor, is nevertheless a notably good sonnet—clear, easy, and melodious throughout. And yet, on analysis, each of them proves to be a ' patch-work ' sonnet made up of thoughts and phrases borrowed from Shakespeare's own poems and plays, and ingeniously worked up into the semblance of an original poem. It would seem that Shakespeare had lately written his *First Part of Henry IV.*, which depicts his favourite hero in much the same situation as Southampton, *i.e.*, wasting his time and damaging his reputation by keeping disreputable company.[1] Now, in the play, Prince Hal takes an early opportunity of putting himself right with the audience by

[1] Indeed it is a tenable hypothesis that the same circumstances which suggested the eight sonnets of this series suggested also a good deal of the under-plot of the play ; Prince Hal might very well stand for that " great prince," Southampton, and his rowdy Boar's Head crew for some of Southampton's disreputable new companions. Falstaff, at any rate, appears to have been a portrait or caricature of an acquaintance of his ; we find Lady Southampton a few years later writing in a letter to her husband in Ireland : " Al the nues I can send you that I think wil make you mery is that I reade in a letter from London that Sir John Falstaf is by his Mrs. Dame Pintpot made father of a godly milers thum, a boye thats all heade and veri litel body ; but this is a secrit."

informing them in a soliloquy that he is misbehaving on purpose, in order to obtain greater *kudos* when he turns respectable later on :

> Yet herein will I imitate *the sun*,
> *Who doth permit the base contagious clouds*
> *To smother up his beauty from the world*,
> That when he please again to be himself,
> Being wanted, he may be more wonder'd at,
> *By breaking through the foul and ugly mists*
> *Of vapours that did seem to strangle him.*

Shakespeare now deliberately takes this passage as the basis of his two sonnets and applies it to Southampton. This was quite ' a happy thought ' ; it gave him an opportunity of paying a compliment to Southampton's character and position in society, of furnishing him with an excuse for his recent conduct, and of giving him a hint that reformation was overdue. But why he elected to construct his *entire contribution* on ' patch-work ' lines is a more difficult question. Perhaps the answer is that he was dissatisfied with the way in which L. had handled thoughts and phrases borrowed from his (S.'s) plays and poems in his ' Shakespearizing '. Sonnet No. 83 in the P.E. Series, and wanted to show him and the other competitors how it should be done. At any rate he has done so most thoroughly and decisively ; he has laid under contribution no less than seven different passages—all from his own works, and all dealing with the same subject, *viz.*, the glory of the rising sun—and yet has succeeded in producing a magnificently poetical and perfectly *spontaneous* effect.

The ' basic ' passage from *K. Henry IV.* has already been quoted ; the other six are as follows :—

(a). The dawn which rouses " sick-thoughted " Venus to seek the early-rising Adonis :

> 856. *The sun* arises in his *majesty ;*
> Who doth the world so *gloriously* behold,
> That cedar-tops and hills *seem burnished gold.*

(b). The dawn which parts Romeo from his bride (Act III., sc. 5) :

> Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
> Stands tip-toe on the *misty mountain-tops.*

(c). The dawn which gives the signal to Oberon and his fairy crew to hasten back to Fairyland (Act III., sc. 2) :

> Even till the eastern gate, all fiery-red,
> Opening on Neptune with fair blessed beams,
> *Turns into yellow gold* his salt *green streams.*

(d). The dawn of the Lady Blanch's wedding-day (*King John*, Act III., sc. 1.) :

> To solemnize this day *the glorious sun*
> Stays in his course and *plays the alchemist,*
> *Turning* with *splendour* of his precious *eye*
> The meagre cloddy earth *to glittering gold.*

(e) and (f). The moisture-dispelling beams of the early morning sun to which both Navarre and Longueville compare the glances of their mistress's eyes (*L.L.L.*, Act IV., sc. 3) :

> *Nav.* So sweet a *kiss* the *golden sun* gives not
> To those fresh morning drops upon the rose,
> As thy eye-beams, when their fresh rays have smote

The night of *dew* that on *my cheeks down-flows :*
So *ridest* thou *triumphing* in my woe.
Do but behold the *tears* that swell in me,
And they thy *glory* through my grief will show.
. . . . . .
Long. Then thou, fair *sun*, which on my earth *dost shine*,
Exhal'st this vapour-vow ; . . .
Thy grace, being gained, *cures all disgrace in me.*

Perhaps it will save the reader's time to ' parallelize ' these passages. The left-hand column below shows, in their proper order, the lines in the two sonnets in which the most conspicuous ' echoes ' occur ; and the right-hand column shows the echoed lines in an order designed to facilitate comparison of the verbal similarities.

Nos. 33 and 34	*Plays and Poems*
Full many a *glorious* morning have I seen	*The sun* arises in his *majesty ;*
Flatter *the mountain tops* with *sovereign eye,*	Who doth the world so *gloriously behold*
	That cedar tops and hills *seem burnished gold.*
	Stands tip-toe on *the* misty *mountain-tops.*
Kissing with *golden* face the meadows *green,*	So sweet a *kiss* the *golden sun* gives not
Gilding pale *streams* with heavenly *alchemy ;*	*Turns into yellow gold* his salt *green streams.*
	Stays in his course and plays the *alchemist,*
Anon *permit the basest clouds* to *ride*	Who doth *permit the base contagious clouds*
With *ugly rack* on his celestial face,	*By breaking through* the foul and ugly mists
And *from the forlorn world his visage hide,*	*To smother up his beauty from the world,*
Even *so* my *sun* one early morn *did shine*	Then thou, fair *sun*, which *on my* earth *doth shine,*
With all-*triumphant splendour on my* brow ;	*So ridest* thou *triumphing in my woe.*
Hiding thy bravery in their *rotten smoke ?*	Turning with *splendour* of his precious *eye*
'Tis not enough that *through the cloud thou break ;*	*Exhal'st this vapour*-vow . . . . .
To *dry the rain on my* storm-beaten *face,*	The night of *dew* that *on my cheek down flows ;*
That heals the wound and *cures not the disgrace.*	Thy grace, being gained, *cures all disgrace* in me.

The Minor Poet. (Nos. 94, 70.)

The Minor Poet's two sonnets are much above his average. It is probably because the theme is more ' actual ' than usual that he curbs his propensity for fine writing ; at any rate there is a notable absence of the sugary sentiment, the extravagant hyperboles, and the rickety metaphors which usually distinguish his work. The following characteristics are exemplified : *Smooth Versification* throughout ; *Sound not Sense*, 94.9, 70.12 ; *The Flunkey*, 70.8-14.

94.

2. *Cf.* ll. 7-8, 12 of his No. 20 in the M.A. Series.

14. This line is borrowed from the contemporary play, *Edward III.*, and occurs in a scene which some critics have attributed to Shakespeare.

70.

6. Barnes' " worth " again.

7-8. Probably suggested by the lines in 2 *Gent. Verona :*

. . . . as in the *sweetest bud*
The eating *canker* dwells, so eating *love*
Losing his verdure even in the *prime.*

8-14. This piece of characteristic flunkeyism stultifies M.P. himself and the other three competitors as well. If The Patron had done nothing wrong the *raison d'être* of the series disappears.

The Lawyer. (Nos. 69, 35.)

The Lawyer's contribution is of average merit and displays several of his characteristics to great advantage: *Pedestrian Style*, 35.5-9; *The Attorney*, 35.10-14; *Clumsy Humour*, 69-14, 35.9; *The Candid Friend, passim.*

69.

1-2. *Cf.* 94.2 in this series, and 20.7-8, 12 and 17.4 in the M.A. Series.

8. How do tongues see?

11-12. A pretty broad hint that the line taken by M.P., namely, that The Patron had done nothing wrong, was nonsense. That " these same tongues " = M.P. is plainly indicated by L.'s extraordinarily close imitation of his imagery and language (*v.* Parallelisms Nos. 3 and 4 above). L. insinuates that although M.P.'s " eyes were kind," *i.e.*, although *outwardly* he politely smiled approval on The Patron's doings, *inwardly* he thought harshly of him, and considered that he was acquiring an unsavoury reputation.

14. The *Candid Friend* with a vengeance.

35.

2-4. L. here takes M.P.'s imitation of the *Two Gent. of Verona* lines (70.7), and improves on it by superimposing an imitation of the lines in *Lucrece* (848-50):

> Why should the *worm* intrude the maiden *bud*?
> Or toads infect *fair founts* with venom *mud*?

7-8. The lines are not satisfactory as they stand. They should probably be read:—

> Myself corrupt *in* salving thy amiss,
> Excusing *thee* sins more than my sins are,

the idea being that to make excuses for your bad conduct is rather more sinful than that conduct itself—clumsily expressed, but quite in L.'s manner.

9. The same sense of humour which regarded a pun on " lean penury " and " alien pen " as funny (*v.* No. 84) is responsible for this effort.

The Humorist. (Nos. 95, 96.)

As noted above, The Humorist's most characteristic characteristics are absent from his contribution to this series. It is clear that The Patron's sexual conduct was becoming a matter of serious concern to his friends, and that the hints and warnings of this series were meant to be taken much more seriously than the more or less conventional compliments of the first two series. There is a certain amount of *double entendre* and a little satire at The Patron's expense, and *The Polite Shirker* reveals himself in the couplet of 96.

95.

1-4. Beautiful poetry. It is a pity that H.'s conception of his part as clown to the troupe did not allow him to give us more of the same quality here and elsewhere.

7. An unpleasing rhythmical effect—obviously intentional.

12-13. *Cf.* 69.2 in this series.

96.

9-12. A prophetic warning; Southampton seduced Elizabeth Vernon before ' making an honest woman of her ' in 1598.

13-14. The ambiguity is intentional.

THE LINK.

We now come to what is, from the point of view of The Theory, the most important sonnet in the whole collection, namely, The Patron's No. 121, in which he replies to the strictures passed upon him by the four poets in the last series. It is the indispensable link which joins together the eight sonnets of that series on the one hand and the sixteen sonnets of *The Poet's Repentance* series with its pendant, the eight sonnets of *The Moribund Poet* series, on the other. Moreover, it sheds a good deal of light on the real nature of the relations existing between The Patron and the competitors.

THE LINK. (No. 121.)

The Theme.—The Patron makes a 'tu quoque' reply to Series No. 6.

THE PATRON

121

'Tis better to be vile than vile esteemed,
When not to be receives reproach of being :
And the just pleasure lost, which is so deemed
Not by our feeling, but by others' seeing :
For why should others' false adulterate eyes
Give salutation to my sportive blood ?
Or on my frailties why are frailer spies,
Which in their wills count bad what I think good ?
No, I am that I am, and they that level
At my abuses reckon up their own :
I may be straight, though they themselves be bevel ;
By their rank thoughts my deeds must not be shown ;
Unless this general evil they maintain,
All men are bad and in their badness reign.

Few sonnets have puzzled the commentators more. The latest editor, POOLER, notes : " A very difficult sonnet, whether the subject is the prejudice against the stage (Burgersdijk), or some particular slander ; and if the latter, which seems likely, whether Shakespeare himself or his friend was slandered ; if his friend, Shakespeare identifies himself with him and writes as if the case were his own." Their chief stumbling-blocks appear to have been—

(a). The self-righteous and truculent tone, which contrasts so strikingly with that of the sonnets which immediately precede and follow it.

(b). The obscurity and strangeness of the language, especially in the first six and last two lines.

(c). The cryptic allusions to the wicked " others " who spy upon the poet's blameless actions.

These stumbling-blocks disappear when it is realised that the author—

(a). is not a professional " rogue and vagabond " attempting to justify his conduct in the eyes of his Noble Patron, but the Noble Patron himself vigorously 'strafing' his social inferiors for presuming to criticise his private life.

(b). is not a supreme master of the English language, embodying in deathless verse sentiments suitable to the 'gentle Shakespeare' of the

biographers, but a literary novice struggling to express in an unfamiliar medium a patently fictitious outburst of virtuous indignation.

(c). is not moralising " at large," but delivering a counter-attack in reply to the P.P. offensive, and turning against their authors various words and phrases used in that audacious enterprise.

The severest and most outspoken censure of The Patron's conduct was that passed by L., who concentrated S.'s and M.P.'s insinuations and warnings with regard to evil deeds, suspicious behaviour, deceptive appearances, malodorous weeds, etc., in the following lines :—

> And that in guess they measure by thy *deeds;*
> Then churls their *thoughts* although their *eyes* were *kind,*
> To thy fair flower add the *rank* smell of weeds :
> But why thy odour matcheth not thy *show,*
> The soil is this, that thou dost common grow.

The Patron now takes these lines as the basis of his own sonnet, and graciously accepting H.'s tactful suggestion that his irregularities were merely " sport " (95.6 and 96.2), retorts as follows :—

> For why should others false adulterate *eyes*
> *Give salutation* to my *sportive* blood ?
> By their *rank thoughts* my *deeds* must not be *shown.*[1]

He then goes on to admonish his monitors severely, the puzzling verb " reign " in his final couplet being an allusion to the *royal* position accorded to him by all the three poets in the P.P. Series, and the final couplet itself a lofty rebuke to them for accusing him of disreputable conduct and doing homage to him as a king of men in the same breath.

Thus interpreted the sonnet presents no particular difficulty, and might be paraphrased in the language of a young blood of the present day as follows :—

" Upon my word, it's better to lead a fast life and get what fun you can out of it, than to run straight and yet have people putting you down as a debauchee wallowing in hectic pleasures that exist only in their own imaginations. I know I make slips occasionally, and play the fool more than I should do, but that's no reason why a gang of *real* sensualists should hail me as one of themselves, and put their own vile construction on actions of mine which I know to be harmless. Your last batch of sonnets gives the whole four of you away hopelessly, because they make it clear that *your* working theory of life is that everybody is out to get as much vicious pleasure out of it as he can, and the finest fellow is the man who manages to get most. Anyhow, straight or crooked, I intend to ' gang ma ain gait.' The tone of your comments shows that you have disgustingly low minds, and I'll thank you to keep your thoughts to yourselves in future. Understand quite clearly that I am not going to have you people criticising my private conduct like this again."

Verbal Parallelisms.

The sonnet borrows thoughts and phrases from the P.P. Series, and is in turn extensively borrowed from by the four poets in the P.R. Series, where they have to accept their wigging with humility, and do their best to answer the counter-charges brought

[1] *Cf.* stanza 27 of *A Lover's Complaint,* beginning :

> All my offences that abroad you see
> Are errors of the blood, none of the mind,

where a wicked wolf in sheep's clothing (who bears a strong resemblance to Southampton) sets himself to betray a " young and simple " lamb.

against them by The Patron. In view of the 'structural' importance of this sonnet we may anticipate a little, (as in the Note on Barnes the Butt in the last chapter), and exhibit here not only The Link's borrowings from the last series, but also the counter-borrowings in the next series. The reader's particular attention is invited to the subjoined list of parallelisms shewing the 'backward-and-forward-chaining.' The extracts are arranged in *chronological* order, the passages from The Link being distinguished by italics. The borrowings and counter-borrowings are indicated by underlining in the usual way.

THE LINK. BACKWARD-AND-FORWARD-CHAINING.

(1) *Esteem-deem.*

P.P. **H.** The basest jewel will be well esteem'd,
For truth translated and for true things deemed.
Link. 'Tis better to be vile than vile esteem'd,
And the just pleasure lost which is so deemed.

(2) *False-judging eyes.*

P.P. **L.** Then churls, their thoughts, although their eyes were kind
H. Making lascivious comments on thy sport,
How many gazers might thou lead away
Link. For why should others' false adulterate eyes
Give salutation to my sportive blood?
And on my frailties why are frailer spies;

P.R. **S.** O never say that I was false of heart,
All frailties that besiege all kinds of blood,
Most true it is that I have look'd on truth
Askance and strangely . . .
Then give me welcome . . .
M.P. How have mine eyes out of their spheres been fitted,
L. . . . although to-day thou fill
Thy hungry eyes even till they wink with fulness,
To-morrow see again . . .

(3) *Bad-good-will.*

Link. That in their wills count bad what I think good?

P.R. **S.** To leave for nothing all thy sum of good;
M.P. Which rank of goodness would by ill be cured:
L. Book both my wilfulness and errors down,
H. So you o'ergreen my bad my good allow?
Which die for goodness, who have lived for crime.

(4) *Rank-thoughts-deeds-shown.*

P.P. **S.** And they are rich and ransom all ill deeds.
M.P. That do not do the things they most do show,
For sweetest things turn sourest by their deeds;
L. And that in guess they measure by thy deeds;
Then churls their thoughts although their eyes were kind
To thy fair flower add the rank smell of weeds:
But why thy odour matcheth not thy show,
Link. By their rank thoughts my deeds must not be shown;

P.R. **S.** Gored mine own thoughts, sold cheap what is most dear,
M.P. Which rank of goodness would by ill be cured:
L. The guilty goddess of my harmful deeds,

(5) *The 'Royalty' motif.*

P.P.	**S.**	Flatter the mountain tops with sovereign eye,
	M.P.	Then thou alone kingdoms of hearts should owe.
	L.	Thy outward thus with outward praise is crown'd ;
	H.	As on the finger of a throned queen
	Link.	*All men are bad, and in their badness reign.*
P.R.	**S.**	Never believe though in my nature reigned
	M.P.	Creep in 'twixt vows and change decrees of kings,
	L.	Were't aught to me I bore the canopy,
		With my extern the outward honouring,
	H.	Great princes' favourites their fair leaves spread.

SERIES No. 7.—The Poet's Repentance.

This series, which offers Southampton an *amende honorable* for the strictures and warnings of the P.P. series, may be reasonably supposed to have followed his Link sonnet pretty closely in point of time. Shakespeare (whose example was followed by The Minor Poet and The Lawyer) was plainly anxious to appease a justly-incensed Patron, and proceeded to do so by accepting completely his (Southampton's) version of the temporary estrangement, and by expressing profound contrition for offences which he (Shakespeare) never committed. This brings us back again into an atmosphere of complete artificiality ; and the series abounds in the extravagances, ironical allusions, parodies, and personalities which distinguish all the " Contest " Series except the P.P. series just discussed.

The Theme—The Poet contritely acknowledges the truth of the Patron's counter-charges, and asks to be forgiven.

SERIES No. 7—

The Theme.—The Poet contritely acknowledges the truth of

SHAKESPEARE

109

O, never say that I was false of heart,
Though absence seem'd my *flame* to qualify.
As easy might I from myself depart
As from my soul, which in thy breast doth lie:
That is my home of love: if I have ranged,
Like him that travels, *I return again;*
Just to *the time*, not with *the time exchanged*,
So that myself bring water for my stain.
Never believe, though in *my nature* reign'd
All frailties that besiege all kinds of blood,
That it could so preposterously be stain'd,
To leave for nothing all thy sum of good;
For *nothing this wide universe I call*,
Save thou, my rose; in it *thou art my all.*

110

Alas, 'tis true I have gone here and there,
And made myself a motley to the view,
Gored mine own thoughts, sold cheap what is most dear,
Made old offences of affections new;
Most true it is that I have look'd on truth
Askance and strangely: but, by all above,
These blenches gave my heart another youth,
And worse essays proved thee my best of love.
Now all is done, have what shall have no end:
Mine *appetite* I never more will *grind*
On newer proof, to try an older friend,
A god in love, to whom I am confined.
Then give me *welcome*, next my heaven the best,
Even to thy pure and most most loving breast.

120

That you were once *unkind* befriends me now,
And for that sorrow which I then did feel
Needs must I under my transgression bow,
Unless my nerves were brass or hammer'd steel.
For if you were by my unkindness shaken,
As I by yours, you've pass'd a hell of time;
And I, a tyrant, have no leisure taken
To weigh how once I suffer'd in your crime.
O, that our night of woe might have remember'd
My deepest sense, how hard true sorrow *hits*,
And soon to you, as you to me, then tender'd
The humble salve which wounded bosoms fits!
But that your trespass now becomes a fee;
Mine ransoms yours, and yours must ransom me.

116

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. *Love* is not *love*
Which *alters* when it *alteration* finds,
Or bends with the *remover* to *remove*:
O, no! it is an ever-fixed mark,
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's *unknown*, although his height be taken.
Love's not *Time's fool*, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his *bending sickle's* compass come;
Love alters not with his *brief hours* and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be *error* and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

THE MINOR POET

115

Those lines that I before have writ *do lie*,
Even those that said I could not love you dearer:
Yet then my judgement knew no reason why
My most full *flame* should afterwards burn clearer.
But *reckoning* Time, whose million'd *accidents*
Creep in 'twixt vows, and change decrees of kings,
Tan sacred beauty, *blunt* the *sharp'st* intents,
Divert strong minds to the course of altering things;
Alas, why, fearing of *Time's* tyranny,
Might I not then say 'Now I love you best,'
When I was certain o'er incertainty,
Crowning the present, doubting of the rest?
Love is a babe; then might I not say so,
To give full growth to that which still doth grow?

118

Like as, to *make* our *appetites* more *keen*,
With eager compounds we our palate urge;
As, to prevent our *maladies* unseen,
We sicken to shun sickness when we purge;
Even so, being *full* of your ne'er-cloying sweetness,
To *bitter* sauces did I frame my *feeding;*
And sick of welfare found a kind of meetness
To be diseased, ere that there was true needing.
Thus *policy* in love, to anticipate
The ills that were not, grew to faults assured,
And brought to medicine a healthful state,
Which, rank of *goodness*, would by ill be *cured:*
But thence I learn, and find the lesson true,
Drugs poison him that so fell sick of you.

119

What *potions* have I *drunk* of Siren tears,
Distill'd from limbecks foul as hell within,
Applying fears to hopes and hopes to fears,
Still losing when I saw myself to win!
What wretched *errors* hath my heart committed,
Whilst it hath thought itself so blessed never!
How have mine eyes out of their spheres been fitted,
In the distraction of this madding fever!
O benefit of ill! now I find true
That better is by evil still made better;
And *ruin'd love*, when it is *built* anew,
Grows fairer than at first, more strong, *far greater.*
So *I return* rebuked to my content,
And gain by ill thrice more than I have *spent.*

36

Let me confess that we two must be twain,
Although our undivided loves are one:
So shall those blots that do with me remain,
Without thy help, by me be borne alone.
In our two loves there is but one respect,
Though in our lives a separable spite,
Which though it *alter* not *love's* sole effect,
Yet doth it steal sweet hours from love's delight
I may not evermore acknowledge thee,
Lest my bewailed guilt should do thee shame,
Nor thou with *public kindness honour* me,
Unless thou take that *honour* from thy name:
But do not so; I love thee in such sort,
As thou being mine, mine is thy good report.

POET'S REPENTANCE. (P.R.)

his Patron's counter-charges, and asks to be forgiven.

THE LAWYER

111

O, for my sake do you with *Fortune* chide,
The guilty goddess of my harmful deeds,
That did not better for my life provide
Than *public* means which *public* manners breeds.
Thence comes it that my name *receives a brand*,
And almost thence *my nature* is subdued
To what it works in, like the dyer's hand ;
Pity me then and wish I were renew'd ;
Whilst, like a willing patient, I will *drink*
Potions of eisel 'gainst my strong *infection ;*
No *bitterness* that I will *bitter* think,
Nor double penance, to correct correction.
Pity me, then, dear friend, and I assure ye
Even that your pity is enough to *cure me.*

117

Accuse me thus : that I have scanted all
Wherein I should your great deserts repay.
Forgot upon your *dearest love* to call,
Whereto all bonds do tie my day by day ;
That I have frequent been with *unknown* minds,
And given to time your own dear-purchased right ;
That I have hoisted sail to all the winds
Which should transport me farthest from your sight.
Book both my wilfulness and *errors* down,
And on just proof surmise accumulate ;
Bring me within the level of your *frown*,
But shoot not at me in your waken'd hate ;
Since my appeal says I did strive to prove
The constancy and virtue of your love.

125

Were 't aught to me I bore the canopy,
With my extern the outward *honouring*,
Or laid *great bases* for eternity,
Which prove more *short* than waste or *ruining* ?
Have I not seen dwellers on form and favour
Lose all, and more, by paying too much *rent*,
For compound sweet forgoing simple savour,
Pitiful thrivers, in their gazing *spent* ?
No, *let me* be obsequious in thy heart,
And take thou my oblation, poor but free,
Which is not mix'd with seconds, knows no art
But mutual render, only me for thee.
Hence, thou suborn'd informer ! a true soul
When most impeach'd stands least in thy control.

56

Sweet love, renew thy force ; be it not said
Thy edge should *blunter* be than *appetite*,
Which but to-day by *feeding* is allay'd,
To-morrow *sharpened* in his former might :
So, love, be thou ; although to-day thou *fill*
Thy hungry eyes even till they wink with *fulness*,
To-morrow see again, and do not kill
The spirit of love with a perpetual dulness.
Let this sad interim like the ocean be
Which parts the shore, where two contracted new
Come daily to the banks, that, when they see
Return of love, more blest may be the view ;
Or call it winter, which, being full of care,
Makes summer's *welcome* thrice more wish'd, more rare.

THE HUMORIST

112

Your love and pity doth the *impression* fill
Which vulgar scandal *stamp'd* upon my brow ;
For what care I who calls me well or ill,
So you o'er-green my bad, my good allow ?
You are my all the world, and I must strive
To know my shames and praises from your tongue ;
None else to me, nor I to none alive,
That *my steel'd sense or changes* right or wrong.
In so profound abysm I throw all care
Of others' voices, that my adder's sense
To critic and to flatterer stopped are.
Mark how with my neglect I do dispense :
You are so strongly in my purpose bred
That all the world *besides* methinks are dead.

123

No, Time, thou shalt not boast that I do *change* :
Thy pyramids *built up* with newer might
To me are nothing novel, nothing strange ;
They are but dressings of a former sight.
Our dates are brief, and therefore we admire
What thou dost foist upon us that is old ;
And rather make them born to our desire
Than think that we before have heard them told.
Thy registers and thee I both defy,
Not wondering at the present nor the past,
For *thy records* and what we see *doth* lie,
Made more or less by thy continual haste.
This I do vow, and this shall ever be,
I will be true, despite thy scythe and thee.

124

If my *dear love* were but the *child* of state,
It might for *Fortune's* bastard be unfather'd,
As subject to Time's love or to Time's hate,
Weeds among weeds, or flowers with flowers gather'd
No, it was *builded* far from *accident* ;
It suffers not in smiling pomp, nor falls
Under the blow of thralled discontent,
Whereto the inviting time our fashion calls :
It fears not *policy*, that heretic,
Which works on *leases* of *short-number'd hours*.
But all alone stands *hugely* politic,
That it nor *grows* with heat nor drowns with showers
To this I witness call the *fools of time*,
Which die for *goodness*, who have lived for crime.

25

Let those who are in favour with their stars
Of *public honour* and proud titles boast,
Whilst I, whom *fortune* of such triumph bars
Unlook'd for joy in that I *honour* most.
Great princes' favourites their fair leaves spread
But as the marigold at the sun's eye,
And in themselves their pride lies buried,
For at a *frown* they in their glory die.
The painful warrior famoused for fight,
After a thousand victories once foil'd
Is from the book of honour razed quite,
And all the rest forgot for which he toil'd ;
Then happy I, that *love* and am *beloved*
Where I may not *remove* nor be *removed*.

Treatment of The Theme.

Shakespeare has eight main thoughts :—

(a). I admit that I have neglected you. (109.5-8, 120 *passim*).
(b). And given myself to folly and evil companions. (110.1-6).
(c). My reason for doing so was [that I wished to try the quality of my affection for you by experimenting on others.] (110.8-11).
(d). I repent and will not do so again. (110.7-12).
(e). Please forgive me and take me back into favour. (110.13-14).
(f). Because you are all the world to me. (109.13-14, 110-12).
(g). And your past unkindness should be set off against my present unkindness. (120 *passim*).
(h). My affection for you is too great to be weakened by time. (109 and 116 *passim*).

The Minor Poet ascribes *his* aberrations to the hallucinations of fever. He follows S. in (a) (118.5-7) ; in (b) (119.1-2, 5) ; in (c) (118 *passim*), *his* reason being that he hoped that his conduct would operate, partly as a dose of bitters which would enable him to enjoy The Patron's sweetness more keenly, and partly as a cathartic which would counteract the effects of partaking of the said sweetness too freely ; in (d) (119.13, 36.10) ; in (e) he *reverses* S.'s sentiment, and begs *not* to be taken back into favour lest The Patron's reputation should suffer (36 *passim*) ; he omits (f) and (g) ; and follows S. again in (h) (115 *passim*, 119.11-12).

The Lawyer also ascribes *his* aberrations to bad health. He represents himself as suffering from a severe infectious disorder, and is willing to take any amount of the nastiest medicines that may be prescribed for him. He then shifts the scene to a law-court, and represents himself as an accused person charged with neglecting The Patron ; the " suborned informer " who brings the charge further insinuating that his former professions of affection for The Patron were insincere. L. pleads Guilty to the charge of neglect, but Not Guilty to the charge of insincerity. He follows S. in (a) (117.1-4) ; in (b) (111.2, 117.5 and 9) ; in (c), *his* reasons being first that he belongs to a soul-deadening profession which has almost obliterated the primitive purity of his character (111.3-7), and secondly, that he wished to test the strength of The Patron's affection for him (117.13-14) ; in (d) (111.9-12) ; in (e) (111.8 and 13-14) ; he omits (f) and (g) ; and follows S. again in (h) (56 *passim*).

The Humorist characteristically takes an entirely different line. The stories about him are mere vulgar scandal (112.1-2) ; and so far from admitting that he has neglected The Patron, he actually apologizes for cultivating him to such an extent as to make him neglect everybody else (112 *passim*). This line of treatment, of course, precludes him from following S. in (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), and (g) ; but he echoes him wholeheartedly in (f) (112.5-14), and (h) (123.13-14, 124 *passim*, 25.3-14).

It would appear that the reason why M.P., L., and H. have omitted (g) is that in the P.P. Series they had all laid stress on The Patron's *general* conduct, whereas S. had concerned himself almost exclusively with the wrong done to himself *individually*.

Verbal Parallelisms.

Both verbal parallelisms and ' echoes ' from other sonnets are very numerous in this series. The echoes will be dealt with as usual in the Notes. The main verbal parallelisms are as follows :—

S. Like him that travels *I return* again
M.P. So *I return* rebuked to my content.

L. . . . That when they see
Return of love. . . .

S. Just to *the time*, not with *the time exchanged*,
. . . *Love* is not *love*
Which *alters* when it *alteration* finds.
M.P. Alas ! why fearing of *Time's* tyranny,
Which though it *alter* not *love's* sole effect.
L. Forgot upon your *dearest love* to call,
And given to *time* your own dear-purchased right.
H. No, *Time*, thou shalt not boast that I do *change* :
If my *dear love* were but the child of state,

S. For *nothing this wide universe I call*,
Save thou, my rose ; in it *thou art my all*.
H. *You are my all the world* . . .
That all the world *besides*, methinks, are dead.

S. Mine *appetite* I never more will *grind*
M.P. Like as to *make* our *appetites* more *keen*,
. . . *blunt* the *sharp'st* intents,
L. Thy edge should *blunter* be than *appetite*,
To-morrow *sharpened* in its former might.

S. *Let me* not to the marriage of true minds
M.P. *Let me* confess that we two must be twain,
L. No, *let me* be obsequious in thy heart.
H. *Let those* who are in favour with their stars

Note that in the case of **S. M.P.** and **L.** the single line quoted is the first line of the last sonnet in the sequence.

S. . . . *Love* is not *love*
Or bends with the *remover* to *remove* ;
Love's not *Time's fool*, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending *sickle's* compass come.
H. To this I witness call the *fools of Time*,
I will be true despite thy *scythe* and thee ;
Then happy I that *love* and am *beloved*
Where I may not *remove* or be *removed*.

S. If this be *error* and upon me proved,
M.P. What wretched *errors* hath my heart committed.
L. Book both my wilfulness and *errors* down,

M.P. As to prevent our *maladies* unseen,
Even so being *full* of you ne'er-cloying sweetness,
To *bitter* sauces did I frame my *feeding ;*
Which rank of goodness would by ill be *cured* ;
What *potions* have I *drunk* of Siren tears,
L. Which but to-day by *feeding* is allay'd,
So love be thou ; although to-day thou *fill*
L. Which but to-day by *feeding* is allay'd
Thy hungry eyes even till they wink with *fulness ;*
Whilst, like a willing patient, I will *drink*
Potions of eisel 'gainst my strong *infection ;*
No *bitterness* that I will *bitter* think,
Even that your pity is enough to *cure* me.

M.P. And *ruin'd love*, when it is *built* anew,
Grows fairer than at first, more strong, far *greater*.
L. Or laid *great bases* for eternity,
Which prove more short than waste or *ruining?*
H. No, it [sc. my *love*] was *builded* far from accident ;
It suffers not in smiling pomp nor *falls*,
But all alone stands *hugely* politic.

M.P. Nor thou with *public* kindness *honour* me,
Unless thou take that *honour* from thy name.
L. Than *public* means which *public* manners breeds.
With my extern the outward *honouring*,
H. Of *public honour* and proud titles boast,
Unlook'd for joy in that I *honour* most.

Minor Parallelisms: (1) *Flame*, 109.2, 115.4; (2) *my nature*, 109.9, 111.6; (3) *welcome*, 110.13, 56.14; (4) *unknown*, 116.8, 117.5; (5) *brief hours*, 116.11, 124.10; (6) *unkind*, 120.1, 36.11; (7) *policy*, 118.9, 124.9; (8) *spent*, 119.14, 125.8; (9) *fortune*, 111.1, 124.2, 25.3; (10) *frown*, 117.11, 25.8.

NOTES.

Shakespeare. (Nos. 109, 110, 120, 116.)

The scheme of S.'s contribution is a very simple one. The first two sonnets acknowledge the general correctness of the charges brought against the poets in The Patron's Link sonnet, and repeat much of its phraseology. The third sonnet recalls the very similar charges brought by S. against The Patron in his No. 34 in the P.P. Series, and repeats much of its phraseology. The fourth sonnet refers to each of his three fellow-competitors in turn, allotting one quatrain to each competitor; each quatrain reproduces a striking 'thought' or metaphor used by the competitor in question in a previous sonnet, and repeats much of its phraseology.

The limitations imposed by this scheme, together with the ultra-artificiality of the sentiments which the poet is called upon to express, probably account for S.'s failure to attain his usual standard of artistic merit in this contribution. The sonnets run smoothly enough, but lack the distinction of many in the earlier series.

109.

1. Meets the charge of *falseness* brought by Southampton in l.5 of the Link sonnet. The emphasis is on the "heart"—S.'s eyes may have glanced aside and his judgment gone astray, (as he admits in the first six lines of the next sonnet) but his heart has been in the right place throughout.

8. The "stains" which in the P.P. sonnet No. 33 are ascribed to The Patron, are here transferred to himself 'according to plan,' the "water" he is ready to shed being the humble equivalent of the rich pearls which fell from The Patron's eyes in the couplet of No. 34.

9-12. These lines deliberately echo the Link sonnet, the catchwords being "reign," "frailties," "blood," and "good."[1]

110.

1-4. S. contritely admits that it was he, and not The Patron, who had really worn the fool's motley, and like old Khayyam, "sold his reputation for a Song." According to Prof. Dowden, however, the first two lines "are commonly taken to express his dislike for his life as a player."[2]

5-6. S.'s plea of Guilty to The Patron's charge of possessing "*false* adulterate *eyes*."

[1] *v.* p. 94 *supra*.

[2] But why not bring out the full professional inwardness of this remarkable revelation? Why not call it "a poignant confession by an eminent London tragedian that he had once sunk so low as to tour the provinces as Comic Lead"?

12. Probably a hit at L.'s irreverent allusion to the First Commandment in his E.D. sonnet No. 105 :—

> Let not my *love* be called *idolatry*,
> Nor my beloved as an *idol* show,
> Therefore my verse to constancy *confined*.

13. Echoes l.6 of the Link sonnet :—

> *Give salutation to* my sportive blood ?

120.

As already noted, this sonnet is a sort of palinode to S.'s 34 in the P.P. series, reversing the positions of The Patron and himself.

9. For " our " should probably be read " your."

10-14. These lines faithfully reproduce the imagery and phrasing of the last eight lines of No. 34, the catchwords being " sorrow," " salve," " wound," " ransomed," and " trespass " (" ill deeds "). Moreover, STAUNTON'S emendation of " shame " for " soon " in l.11 (which POOLER calls " needless ") gives yet another. This emendation is almost certainly right ; " soon " is feeble, and " [y]our night of woe " is certainly not a suitable subject for the verb " tendered." It is sufficient to put these five lines side by side with the five corresponding lines of the P.P. sonnet to justify Staunton :

34	120
For no man well of such a *salve* can speak	My deepest sense how hard true *sorrow* hits,
That heals the *wound* and cures not the disgrace ;	And soon [*shame*] to you, as you to me then, tender'd
Nor can thy *shame* give physic to my grief ;	The humble *salve* that *wounded* bosoms fits !
The offender's *sorrow* yields but weak relief	But that your *trespass* now becomes a fee ;
And they are rich and *ransom* all *ill deeds*.	Mine *ransoms* yours, and yours must *ransom* me.

116.

In this sonnet, as noted above, S. " refers to each of his three fellow-competitors in turn, allotting one quatrain to each competitor." He takes them in the order, L., M.P., and H.

First Quatrain. The reference is to the first two lines of L.'s first sonnet in the P.E Series (82)—one of the numerous satirical allusions to M.P.'s mysteriously epicene *ménage à trois* which forms the basis of his " Obstetrics " conceit—where L., addressing The Patron, says :—

> I grant thou wert not *married* to my Muse,
> And therefore mayst without attaint o'erlook
> The dedicated words which writers use,

and then, referring to himself in his favourite *rôle* of *The Candid Friend :*

> Thou *truly* fair were *truly* sympathised
> In *true* plain words by thy *true*-telling friend.

S. now, as one of the " writers " alluded to, replies—" If The Patron is thinking of committing matrimony with your ' true-plain ' but sympathetic Muse, please don't imagine that *I* am going to forbid the banns."

Second Quatrain. The reference is to the last ten lines of M.P.'s No. 80 in the P.E. Series, where he—possibly not without a suspicion of irony—humbly confesses his inferiority to S. in the following nautical metaphor :—

> But since your *worth*, wide as the ocean is,
> The humble as the proudest sail doth bear,
> My *saucy bark*, inferior far to his,
> On your broad main doth wilfully appear.
> Or being wrecked, I am a *worthless* boat,
> He of *tall* building and of goodly pride.

S. now takes over the metaphor, and unkindly observes that if he (S.) is a 'tall ship,' M.P. is a small bark whose "worth" (M.P.'s speciality) is "unknown," *i.e.*, nil, and "height" so insignificant as to be easily measured. The commentators have entirely misunderstood the last two lines. For some reason or other they have all, without exception, assumed that the relative clause in l. 8 refers to "star" instead of to its natural and immediate antecedent "bark." But though they have all gone off together on the wrong tack, no two of them steer exactly the same course, and the record of their divagations makes rather interesting reading. Perhaps the reader would like to judge for himself.

PALGRAVE explains line 8 thus: "Apparently whose stellar influence is unknown though his angular altitude has been determined." SCHMIDT, on the other hand, explains "unknown" as "inexpressible, incalculable, immense." DOWDEN partially accepts his view, and notes: "The passage seems to mean, as the star, over and above what can be ascertained concerning it for our guidance at sea, has unknowable occult virtue and influence, so love, beside its power of guiding us, has incalculable potencies. This interpretation is confirmed by the next sonnet (CXVII.) in which the simile of sailing at sea is introduced; Shakespere there confesses his wanderings, and adds as his apology

> I did strive to prove
> The constancy and virtue of your love—

constancy, the guiding fixedness of love; *virtue*, the 'unknown worth'." POOLER'S view again is slightly different. He says: "The unknown worth may be the power to attract as well as to guide, in fact, its full influence, and it is only those who love who know of this." Now, as DOWDEN remarks, the same simile reappears in the next sonnet (117), and here we find 'unknown' again in the phrase 'unknown minds,' which is thus glossed by the three last-named authorities: "such as I should be ashamed to mention" (SCHMIDT); "persons who may not be known, or obscure persons" (DOWDEN); "nonentities or, better perhaps, strangers" (POOLER). It would appear therefore that these three distinguished critics see nothing out-of-the-way in the fact that a great artist like Shakespeare should, in the course of one and the same simple metaphor running through two *consecutive* sonnets, deliberately confuse his readers by using a highly ambiguous adjective in two diametrically opposed senses. INGLEBY again after quoting Cæsar's reference to himself, as "constant as the northern star," observes: "Here human virtue is figured under the 'true-fix'd and resting quality' of the northern star. Surely, then, the 'worth' spoken of must be *constancy* or *fixedness*. The sailor must know that the star has this worth, or his latitude would not depend on its altitude. Just so without the knowledge of this worth in love, a man 'hoists sail to all the winds,' and is 'frequent with unknown minds.'" S. WALKER boldly proposes to read "whose *north's* unknown" explaining "As, by following the guidance of the northern star, a ship may sail an immense way, yet never reach the true north; so the limit of love is unknown. Or can any other good sense be made of 'north'? *Judicent rei astronomicae periti.*"

There are many other interpretations of varying degrees of ingenuity and profundity.

Third Quatrain. The reference is to H.'s 'Envoy' Sonnet (126) in the M.A. Series,

in which he warned The Patron that sooner or later he and his beauty would fall into the clutches of Time. The lines specially echoed are :—

> O thou, my lovely boy, who in thy power
> Dost hold Time's fickle glass, his sickle hour [mower] ;
> May time disgrace and wretched minutes kill.
> Yet fear her, O thou minion of her pleasure !

The " mower " in square brackets being my own emendation.

S. imposes limitations on the operations of H.'s ' bending sickle ' or ' sickle mower.' Time may capriciously preserve The Patron's good looks beyond the normal period, or on the other hand may suddenly destroy them as H. suggests, but he has no such power over his friend's affection for him.

The Couplet. These two lines seem rather pointless, unless, as alas ! is not unlikely, the point is an unseemly pun on a ' writ of error.'

The Minor Poet. (Nos. 115, 118, 119, 36.)

The Minor Poet's contribution is a feeble and sloppy performance. It exemplifies the following characteristics : *Confused Thinking*, 119.1-2 ; *Slovenly Phrasing*, 115.5-9, 36.7 ; *Sound not Sense*, 115.11, 119.3 and 10 ; *Forcing the Note*, 119.7-8, 36.10 ; *The Flunkey*, 36.11-14.

115.

1-2. POOLER asks " Can this refer to lost sonnets ? " Certainly no such sentiment is to be found in M.P.'s sonnets in the Personal Series—or in any other sonnet in the collection for the matter of that.

4. His " flame " is taken from S.'s (109.2).

5. Note the anacoluthon.

118.

M.P., like S., has been on the sick list, but while S. was a *surgical* case—incised wound in the cardiac region (120.12)—, M.P. was in the *medical* ward—high fever consequent on over-feeding and injudicious drug-taking. The grotesque medical metaphors which make up this sonnet prove M.P. to have been destitute of the saving grace of humour ; nobody with the most rudimentary sense of the ludicrous could have written this sonnet *seriously*.

12. " Rank " and " goodness " echo lines 8 and 10 of the Link Sonnet.

119.

First Quatrain. One had the idea that it was the Sirens' *songs*, not their tears, which lured men to destruction. Perhaps he is confusing them with crocodiles, who, as we know, invariably weep over their victims. Again, one had not realised that the Sirens' infernal " foulness " extended even to their lachrymal glands. l. 3. What does this well-sounding line *mean ?* The idea apparently is that he was afraid of things happening which he ought to be glad to think would happen, but can this meaning be extracted from M.P.'s English ?

7-8. M.P.'s hysterical plea of Guilty to The Patron's charge of possessing " false adulterate eyes."

10. POOLER notes " I do not know this proverb." Nor, one imagines, does any body else. Most of the other commentators have shirked the line, but POOLER tackles it manfully as follows : " Perhaps we should read *evil* for *better*. There is an Icelandic

saying rendered by W. Morris, ' Bettered is bale by bale that follows it.' " But why should " Shake-speare's " imperfect acquaintance with Icelandic have made him write nonsense in English ?

36.

7. " Love's sole effect." POOLER notes " perhaps its happy influence." But it is merely Barnesese for " the unity produced by love," as in his No. 55, " all-oblivious enmity,"=" oblivion the enemy of all." That this is the real meaning is proved by H.'s phrase—

And our dear love lose name of single one,

in his sonnet No 69 in the next (M.P. series), which parodies systematically the first seven lines of this sonnet. l. 10, " my bewailed guilt." DOWDEN notes, " Explained by Spalding and others as ' the blots that remain with Shakespere on account of his profession as an actor.' But perhaps the passage means : ' I may not claim you as a friend, lest my relation to the dark woman—now a matter of grief—should convict you of faithlessness in friendship.' " POOLER notes " If the guilt consisted, as some suppose, in Shakespeare's making himself an accessory after the fact to his friend's offence, it is hard to see who bewailed it, or how it could shame the offender. There is no clue to the meaning in Shakespeare's life or writings, but, if we will, we may call the expression ironical, and say that the friend may have been warned under pain of disinheritance against associating with disreputable persons such as players."

Alas for these fine-spun imaginings ! It is only the egregious Barnabe ' forcing the note.'

13-14. This couplet is ' lifted ' bodily from H.'s last sonnet in the preceding series (No. 96). In both cases the poet represents himself as the *alter ipse* of The Patron, and makes the fact the basis of an appeal to The Patron to be more careful of his behaviour. But whereas in H.'s sonnet he is warned against following a highly reprehensible line of conduct lest his bad reputation might reflect on the Poet's, here he is warned against being civil to the Poet in public lest the latter's bad reputation should reflect on his own —an interesting contrast in " characteristics."

The Lawyer. (Nos. 111, 117, 125, 56.)

The Lawyer's contribution is a very characteristic one. *Pedestrian Style* throughout —all the metaphors he borrows from M.P. and S. are treated in the most matter-of-fact fashion, and the couplets of 111 and 56 are verse only by courtesy ; *The Attorney*, 117 *passim*, 125.13-14 ; *The Accountant*, 117.9, 125.6-7 ; *Crude Humour*, 125.5 and 11 ; *The Candid Friend*, 125 *passim* ; *The Old Dog*, 125.11.

111.

1-7. DOWDEN notes " Continues the apology for his wanderings of heart, ascribing them to his ill-fortune that, as commonly understood, which compels him to a player's way of life." Now there is no doubt that the professional actor in the reign of Elizabeth might be described as depending on

Public means which public manners breeds.

which, as POOLER explains, means " a profession which does not promote independence and self-respect." But surely the rest of these semi-serious references to the unkindness of Fortune, and the effects of a long continuance in a degrading vocation, are not suitably

placed in the mouth of that rising young actor-poet, William Shakspere, son of John Shakspere the poverty-stricken Stratford tradesman. They suggest rather a middle-aged man whose career has fallen short of the promise and expectation of his youth, and therefore *are* very suitable in the mouth of that middle-aged solicitor, William Warner, author of *Albion's England*. Warner had been a 'University wit,' and at the age of twenty-eight had published a monumental poem which attained great and immediate popularity—so much so indeed that at one time he and Spenser were bracketted together as the Homer and Virgil of the age. Now at the age of thirty-seven he finds himself playing second fiddle to two young poets of a newer and more fashionable school, and grinding away for a livelihood at that least romantic of callings—an attorney in a London Court of Common Pleas.

8-14. Note how closely in the last half of this sonnet and the first half of the last sonnet (No. 56), L. imitates, or rather parodies, the language of M.P.'s medical sonnets, Nos. 118 and 119. L. like M.P. is a *medical* case—chronic attorneyitis.

117.

This sonnet also borrows from M.P.—this time from sonnet No. II, in his *Parthenophil*, where the scene is laid in the "Court of Steadfast Love." In this and the next sonnet we find L. in the dock, with The Patron as complainant, judge, and (apparently) appellate authority. The procedure is consequently rather irregular, but the arguments which make up the bulk of the two sonnets follow closely the familiar lines of a speech for the defence after a plea of Guilty—the gravity of the offence is minimized, criminal intention denied, a set of plausible excuses for 'my most unfortunate client' put forward, penitence professed, restitution offered, malice on the part of the prosecution suggested, and the better feelings of the Court eloquently appealed to. L. is, of course, thoroughly at home in this Old Bailey atmosphere, and sonnet 117 in particular positively reeks of legal technicalities.

4. Imitated from a line in Barnes' sonnet aforesaid, where the complainant "cries" in Court:

And if in *bonds* to thee my *love* be *tied*.

5-8. "Unknown" is used in the same sense as in S.'s 116 (from which L. borrows this nautical metaphor) *i.e.*, 'worthless.' The commentators interpret variously 'strangers,' 'nonentities,' 'such as I should be ashamed to mention.' These "unknown minds" are contrasted with the "true minds" of S.'s No. 116, and the "strong minds" of M.P's 115.

9-12. "Wilfulness" and "level" are echoes from ll.8-9 of the Link sonnet.

13-14. L.'s excuse is the reverse of S.'s in 110.11-12. S. misbehaved in order to try the strength of his love for The Patron, L. in order to try that of The Patron's love for him.

125.

This sonnet has puzzled the commentators a good deal. It is an attack on M.P.'s Flunkey-cum-Forcing The Note attitude towards The Patron, followed by a justification of L.'s own Candid Friend-cum-Old Dog ditto.

1-2. L. reiterates the charge he had brought against M.P. in his No. 69 in the P.P. series, that while extolling The Patron's sovereign beauty he had shirked saying what he really thought about his character—

Thy *outward* thus with *outward praise* is *crowned*;

3-8. L. here appropriates and develops in characteristic fashion M.P.'s simile in his corresponding sonnet (119) in which he compares his love for The Patron to a building (*v.* parallelism No. 10, and also ' lose ' and ' spent ' taken from lines 2 and 14 respectively). " Dwellers on form and favour "=M,P, who had particularly *dwelt on* The Patron's physical perfections, and who had *dwelt in* and (paid rent for) the aforesaid building—an unmeritorious pun. " Compound " also has apparently a double meaning : (1) compound, as opposed to simple, interest ; (2) the elaborate sugary sonnets (full of the word " sweet ") addressed by M.P. to The Patron. The general idea is that M.P. has missed his chance in the Contest by overdoing adulation of The Patron.

9. The emphasis is on " me " and " heart." *I* do not fawn upon you like M.P., but to your true *inward* self I offer an absolute devotion.

10-12. " Render " is a legal term " used in reference to its legal sense a ' return ' in kind, money, etc., under certain circumstances " (POOLER). " Seconds " is another pun like " dwellers." An oblation usually consisted of flour or meal, and ' seconds ' is the technical term for an inferior quality of flour ; " That our author's oblation was pure, unmixed with baser matter, is all that he meant to say " (STEEVENS). But there is also an esoteric allusion to people who acted as the competitors' ' seconds ' by giving them advice and assistance in compiling their contributions—" the compeers by night, giving him aid " who, according to M.P., taught Shakespeare to write, and astonished his (M.P.'s) verse (*v.* No. 81 in the P.E. series). That H. is here endorsing M.P.'s charge against S. appears probable from the fact that these three lines obviously imítate the last four lines of S.'s corresponding sonnet (No. 120) : " Poor oblation " answers to " humble salve," legal " render " to legal " tender," and " mutual " and " me for thee " to " mine and yours " and " you to me."

13-14. The " informer " who appears so abruptly is apparently the person who had told The Patron that The Poets had neglected him, and the people who had " suborned " him to do so are apparently certain envious members of Southampton's literary suite who had *not* been invited to enter for the Contest (*cf.* ll. 7-8 in H.'s corresponding sonnet No. 124). The sonnet may be freely translated as follows : " (You are annoyed with me for referring to your private life in the P.P. Series, but) would it have done me any good to render mere lip-service to your beauty, or to use it—lying as it does at the mercy of Time and Chance—as the foundation for the everlasting fabric of *my* love ? Look at M.P. who erected *his* love-house on this plan, and has been paying you as rent not a fair meed of praise but an extravagant amount of subtle and complicated flattery. He, poor fool, looks to get it back three times over in the shape of rewards from you, but he may go on looking till the Greek Calends—you are merely disgusted, and so far from finding increased favour in your sight he has lost even that favour with which you regarded him before the Contest was started. *I* am not like him ; *I* have built on the solid foundations of your qualities of head and heart, and *my* tribute of praise is not a fancy-rent of fulsome flattery but a plain simple free-will offering—all my own too, not adulterated with other people's additions—emblematic of our mutual affection. As for *you* you scoundrelly informer whom the disappointed aspirants to a place in the Contest have suborned to abuse our kind Patron's ear with false stories of our delinquencies, be off with you! The more lies you tell about an honest, true-hearted person like myself the less harm you do him ! "

56.

1-8. As already pointed out, these lines closely imitate or parody M.P.'s 118. Lines 5-8 give L.'s plea of Guilty to the charge of possessing " false adulterate eyes." In *his* case his eyes deceived him because they were drowsy from overfeeding.

9-14. These six lines are as bad as anything in the collection. The " two contracted *new* " (prob. a reference to the fact that The Patron's affair with L.'s Muse was of more recent date than the three others) are apparently Hero and Leander, and the " ocean " the Hellespont ; but the language is strained, confused, and bathetic throughout.

The Humorist. (Nos. 112, 123, 124, 25.)

The Humorist's contribution is a very subtly-conceived and elaborately-executed piece of work which will call for specially minute examination and analysis. In considering it the reader is requested to be good enough to adopt the following procedure :—

First. To read through the four sonnets as they stand without paying attention to the italics and underlinings. He will find that although the language is obscure and strange in places, and some of the allusions appear unusually cryptic, yet, broadly speaking, the four sonnets follow much the same lines as those of the other three competitors—the poet's misdemeanours are excused, the strength of his affection for The Patron insisted on, and Time's inability to affect it confidently anticipated.

Next. To read through the eight sonnets of the *next* (Moribund Poet) series, (attached as a pendant to, and despatched along with, the present series) noting particularly the following two points :

(a). All the poets except H. represent themselves as being at the point of death.

(b). L. admits the superior excellence of the other poets' contributions, referring particularly to their use of " new-found methods " and " compounds strange."

Next. To accept *provisionally* the following detailed explanation of the esoteric meaning of the present series offered by The Theory, namely :

A. The misdemeanour to which H. confesses is not the offence of neglecting The Patron (as in the case of the other three,) but the offence of breaking the rules of the Contest by taking a line of his own in his contributions to the six previous series.

B. The love whose unchanging quality he celebrates so eloquently is not his love for the Patron (as in the case of the other three,) but his love for *himself*—the " self-love " referred to in his No. 62 in the B.I. series, and his No. 23 in the E.D. series—" skilfully camouflaged as the real thing."

C. No. 123 alludes to S.'s magnificently successful ' Shakespearizing ' sonnet No. 33 in the P.P. series, and his almost equally successful ' palinodizing ' sonnet No. 73 in the M.P. series.

D. H. is throughout ridiculing the pusillanimity of his three colleagues in allowing The Patron's displeasure to scare them into making an announcement of their imminent (poetical) death.

E. H. has deliberately set himself the task of cramming into each sonnet as many personal allusions to his colleagues, satirical references to their poetical performances, and imitations and parodies of their language, as it will hold.

Finally. To test this explanation for himself by re-reading the four sonnets along with the detailed notes which he will find under each. In these notes the four *motifs* A. ' Rule-breaking,' B. ' Self-love,' C. ' Shakespearizing,' D. ' Dead competitors,' will be noted as they occur, and in the case of E. the personal allusions will be explained and the lines imitated will be quoted.

112.

Motif A. 'Rule-breaking,' with two introductions of *Motif. D.* 'Dead Competitors.'

Somebody had apparently complained (not without good reason) that H. was not 'playing the game'—that he had been taking undue liberties in the matter of treating the various themes, and in burlesquing the efforts of his colleagues. H. wittily defends himself against this "vulgar scandal" by arguing that as according to their own statements in the *next* series the three rivals must all be dying or dead, he need not pay any attention to their protests, or their feelings, or their literary methods, and is justified in looking to The Patron *only* for approbation or disapprobation. Thus the three poets are the "none" and "none" of l.6, the "others" of l.9, and the "all the world beside" of l.14; while the "critic" (censurer) and the "flatterer" are The Lawyer (*Candid Friend*) and The Minor Poet (*Flunkey*) respectively.

The first two quatrains are a tissue of echoes from the contributions of other competitors to this and the succeeding series.

1-2. "*Pity* me then, *dear friend*," "my name *receives a brand*" (L.III.).
3-4. Which in their wills *count bad* what I *think good* (Link 121).
5. For nothing this *wide universe* I call,
Save thou, my rose; in it *thou art my all.* (S. 109).
6. For I am *shamed* by that which I bring forth,
To hang more *praise* upon deceased I (M.P. 72).
7. The numerous references made to their own deaths by H.'s three rivals in the next series. *Alive* is used in a double sense—'living' and 'aware of the importance of.'
8. My deepest *sense* how *hard* true sorrow *hits* (S. 120).

This last line shows that instead of the unnatural "or changes" of the text, we should read "o'er charges," the reference being to a steel-clad jouster in a tournament. "Hard-hitting" would suggest the tilt-yard to an Elizabethan as naturally as it does the polo-ground or cricket-field to us. The commentators, by the way, cheerfully accept this extraordinary displacement of the word "or," and interpret generally "none but you can alter my fixed opinions whether they are right or wrong" (POOLER).

13-14. "In my purpose bred." A strange phrase of which the meaning seems to be "my purpose to look to you and to you only as the arbiter of the Contest is so strongly held that, etc."—H. 'plays to the whistle.' Note that he uses the rather unexpected word "purpose," carefully avoiding any word that would suggest *emotion, e.g.*, love, affection, heart, fancy, etc., any one of which would be more appropriate if the sentiment was really what it seemed to be on the surface. "All the world" (*tout le monde*), *i.e.*, every body else *connected with the Contest*; the three other competitors are moribund, and only the referee is left.

123.

Motif C. 'Shakespearizing,' followed (in the couplet) by *Motif B.* 'Self-Love.'

1-8. These eight lines echo L.'s contribution to the next series (Nos. 76 and 32). In these two sonnets L. had frankly admitted that his sonnets were inferior to those of his rivals—"outstripped by every pen," and "exceeded by the height of happier men"—and had referred particularly to S.'s two Shakespearizing sonnets in the P.P. series and his 'palinode' sonnet, No. 73, in the M.P. series, as exhibiting the "new-found methods" and "compounds strange" which had given S. occasion for "new pride." These eight lines may be 'parallelized' with nine lines from the two sonnets imitated.

123

No, *Time*, thou shalt not boast that I do *change*:
Thy pyramids built up with *newer* might
To me are nothing *novel*, nothing *strange*;
They are but *dressings of a former sight*.
Our dates are brief, and therefore we admire
What thou dost foist upon us that is *old*;
And rather make them *born to our desire*
Than think that we before have heard them *told*.

76 and 32

Why is my verse so barren of *new* pride;
So far from variation and quick *change*?
Why with the *time* do I not glance aside
To *new-found* methods and to compounds *strange*?
For all my best is *dressing old* words *new*.
A dearer *birth* than this his *love* had brought,
For as the sun is daily new and *old*,
So is my love still telling what is *told*.

Note the rhymes (1) ' change-strange,' and (2) ' old—told.'

9-12. In this quatrain H. refers to each of his three rivals in turn (in the order, L., S., and M.P.), by echoing phrases used by them in this and the P.E. series, namely :—

L. What's new to speak, what new to *register*, (108. P.E.)
S. When in the *chronicles* of *wasted time*
And we that now behold the *present* days,
Have eyes to *wonder*, but lack tongues to praise. (106. P.E.)
M.P. But *reckoning* Time whose million'd accidents
Those lines that I before have writ *do lie*, (115. P.R.)

Note the ambiguity of the last line of the sonnet. The casual reader would naturally suppose that the person to whom H. was vowing everlasting fidelity was The Patron, the initiated would understand that (as circumstantially signified in the next sonnet) it was *himself*.

124.

Motif B. ' Self-Love,' followed (in the couplet) by *Motif D.* ' Dead Competitors.'

The sonnet is constructed on the model of S.'s last sonnet in the series (No. 116); each gives a list of things which the poet's love cannot be, do, or suffer, set forth in phraseology borrowed from his three fellow-competitors, and each starts its fourth line with an emphatic " No." But whereas S.'s ' love ' is Love in the abstract with a special reference to the affection existing between himself and the Patron, H.'s " dear love " is his love for *himself*. Hence it is that he is able to declare so confidently that it has been, is, and will be, immune from the various vicissitudes experienced by the ' loves ' of the other three. The reader is requested to note two points: (a) the intentional ambiguity of the ' love ' references—H. is particularly careful, both here and in the preceding and succeeding sonnets, to avoid using any language which would *distinctly* mark his ' love ' as being connected with The Patron; (b) the ingenuity displayed in getting into the couplet so large a number of the vicissitudes aforesaid, and so large a proportion of the original words and phrases used to describe them.

This sonnet is regarded by the commentators as being one of the most ' difficult ' in the collection, and their notes thereon exhibit an interesting diversity of opinion. In order that the reader may be in a position to compare the interpretations of the leading authorities both with each other and with the interpretation offered by The Theory, I shall summarize them briefly as each ' difficulty ' comes up for examination.

1-2. An amalgam of M.P.'s " Love is a babe " (115.13) and L.'s " Fortune " (111.1); H.'s (self)-love is *not* the fruit of a ' guilty ' amour between Fortune and ' state ' (*i.e.*, circumstance or chance), and has *not* been deprived of a father's natural protection in consequence.

DOWDEN explains " the child of state " as ' born of place and power and pomp '; BEECHING as the offspring of " circumstances of nature and fortune, explained by ' accident ' in line 5 "; POOLER thinks the reference may be to " a courtier or statesman, subject to the vicissitudes of politics and Fortune's wheel."

3-4. Based on S.'s " Time's bending sickle " (116.9-10) with a side reference to the ' flowers ' and ' weeds ' of the P.P. Series (M.P. 94.9-14, L. 69.12).

POOLER thinks that " strictly ' weeds ' may denote courtiers or public men neglected ; ' flowers ' those in favour."

5-6. An amalgam of (a) M.P.'s " *ruin'd* love, when it is *built* anew " (119.11), (b) M.P. s " Time whose million'd *accidents* " (110.5), and (c) L. s reference to the smiling flatterers who " bore the canopy," and came to grief thereby (125). " Pomp " like " canopy " connotes royalty.

POOLER thinks that the allusion may be to " the house that was founded upon a rock, St. Matt. VII. 25," and the meaning " My love is not withered by the sun of prosperity ; I do not in my prosperity, neglect my friend, or, perhaps he does not neglect me in his."

7-8. The two most obscure lines in this obscure sonnet. They contain a cryptic and highly elliptical allusion to L.'s informer (125.13), but the exact meaning is not quite clear. Probably " discontent " = disgruntled aspirants to a place in the " Contest " who had suborned him to deliver a blow against the favoured Four by telling lies about them to The Patron. Taking this view one might paraphrase as follows : " Nor is it destroyed by the blow dealt by certain disappointed rivals of ours who, envious of the favour with which you regarded us, have seized the present favourable opportunity [*sc.* that afforded by your resentment by being criticised by us in the P.P. series] of indulging a malignity which has hitherto been kept in check by fear, [and have tried to make you believe that we have behaved badly to you]. Note " *our* fashion." It is not ' the ' as it would naturally be if it referred to the fashion of the day, or ' my ' as it would naturally be if it referred to the popularity of the author of the sonnet (who starts by speaking of " *my* dear love ").

The commentators' views are as follows : DOWDEN explains " when time puts us, who have been in favour out of fashion." TYLER says " the poet is alluding pretty evidently to the discontent existing after the death of Essex. The discontent was ' thralled ' as being kept down and held in subjection." BEECHING says " the main reference here is to the Jesuit intrigues, ' the blow of thralled discontent ' being the ' Powder plot ' and ' thralled discontent ' the discontent of a party held down by penal enactments." CASE tentatively suggests that there is an " allusion in ' thralled discontent ' and ' our fashion ' to his [*sc.* S.'s] affairs as an actor." And POOLER comparing l. 12 " nor drowns with showers," says " the idea seems to be that the rain does not beat it down, or if the flower has now become a tree in Shakespeare's phantasmagoria, there may be a reference to its being hewn down."

Third Quatrain. These cryptic lines are the result of an attempt on H.'s part to cram into a single quatrain no less than five echoes from his rivals' contributions ; (1) M.P.'s " *policy* in love " which " grew to faults assured " (118.9-10), and his ruined love which when rebuilt " *grows* fairer than at first more strong, far *greater* " (119.10-12) ; (2) L.'s building tenants who paid " too much *rent* " (125.6) and laid " *great* bases for eternity which proved more *short* than waste or ruining " (125.3-4) ; (3) The " flames " of S.'s and M.P.'s fires which rose and sank according to circumstances (109.2 and 115.4) ; (4) S.'s love which does not alter with Time's " *brief* hours " (116.11)—all in this series ; and (5) the hot sunshine succeeded by *rain* squalls of S.'s 33 and 34 in the previous (P.P.) series. " Heretic " is the only allusion unaccounted for. Note " all alone "—H's love is *sui generis* and self-contained.

The commentators are rather puzzled by " heretic " except BEECHING, who suggests that if " policy " has an " allusion to the Guy Fawkes' plot, there is special point in the

epithet 'heretic' as a *paraprosdokian.*" (!) So also for l. 11 he remarks that "a friendship like the poet's is a great building like the Houses of Parliament, only not subject to such dangers." DOWDEN merely notes "love itself is infinitely prudent, prudent for eternity." Line 12 is a very strange one, and STEEVENS suggested "glows" for "grows," arguing (reasonably enough one would think) that "though a *building* may be drowned, *i.e.*, deluged with rain, it can hardly *grow* under the influence of heat." For this he was rebuked by MALONE, who observed "Our poet frequently starts from one idea to another. Though he had compared his affection to a building he seems to have deserted that thought; and here, perhaps, meant to allude to the progress of vegetation, and the accidents that retard it." Successive generations of orthodox editors have endorsed this reprobation of Steevens' audacious criticism of the sacrosanct Swan of Avon, one of the latest of them, MR. GERALD MASSEY, poet and Bardolater, specially distinguishing himself by amiably adding: "The obtuseness and impertinence of this critic [Steevens] are at times insufferable; to see him in Shakespeare's company at all causes a general sense of uncomfortableness such as Launce may have felt respecting the manners of his dog Crab."

13-14. The esoteric meaning of this very neat and ingenious couplet is clear. The "fools of Time" (116.9) are the other three competitors; they had all allowed their affection for The Patron to be *tampered with by Time* (S. 109.6-7, 116.9; M.P., 115.5-9; L., 117.5-6—all in this series); they are all *dead* or dying men (The Moribund Poet series *passim*); their deaths all appear to be connected with the misuse of The Patron's *goodness* (S., 109.12; M.P., 118.12-14; L., 117.2 and 111.9-14—all in this series); and all of them appear to have been *criminally* neglectful of The Patron (S., 110 *passim*, 120 *passim*; M.P., 36.3 and 10; L., 111.2, 117.1-3—all in this series). They are called as "witnesses" (a) to prove that their respective 'loves' have suffered the things enumerated above, and (b) to certify that H.'s peculiar kind of love has not suffered and is not likely to suffer anything of the sort. The sudden introduction of these three witnesses for the defence imitates the sudden introduction of the "suborn'd informer"—the witness for the prosecution—of L.'s 'corresponding' sonnet No. 125.

The commentators interpret as follows: DOWDEN, "I call to witness the transitory unworthy loves (fools of time = sports of time. See 116.9) whose death was a virtue since their life was a crime." WYNDHAM, "who are so much the dupes of Time that they attach importance to the mere order of sequence in which events occur, and believe that a deathbed repentance can cancel a life of crime." BEECHING, "I believe the allusion here is to the Jesuit conspirators whose object in life was to murder the king, and who when caught posed as martyrs to the faith."

Even with the explanations supplied by The Theory the sonnet remains obscure and confused; without them it is a sheer nightmare—or rather let us say in the more reverent language of the commentators who remember *Whose* work they are speaking of—a paraprosdokian phantasmagoria.

25.

Motifs. B. 'Self-Love' and D. 'Dead Competitors.'

This interesting sonnet is full of personal allusions; in each of the first two quatrains H. is laughing at his three *confrères* collectively and severally, and in the third he gets in a very shrewd thrust at M.P.

First Quatrain. The references to the poets are as follows:

S. His two *gaffes, viz.*, his 'star' and his 'proud' verse.

M.P. The 'public' kindness with which The Patron 'honoured' him (36.11).

L. The outward 'honour' which he stoutly refused to pay to The Patron in public (125.1-2), and the 'public' means of livelihood provided for him by 'Fortune' (111.1-4).

In line 3 note the pride that apes humility: Donne was at the time a brilliant young man of fashion, engaged in rapidly getting through a large patrimony in the company of the choicest spirits of the day. Note also the subtle ambiguity of line 4: "unlook'd for" seems to be used adverbially in a sense about half-way between 'unsuspected' and 'unexpectedly.' The esoteric meaning of the quatrain appears to be something like this: "Fortune has arranged my life on other lines than those of my esteemed colleagues. *I* cannot talk about 'my star' and my 'proud verse' which have gained for me the *honourable* title of Chief Sonnetteer like S., or regard it as an *honour* to be nodded to in public by The Patron like M.P., or earn my livelihood in the *honourable* profession of the law like L.; *I* have other ideas about honour, and pay it to somebody whom I delight to honour more than anybody else in the world [*i.e.*, himself]."

Second Quatrain. The "great princes' favourites," like "those who are in favour with their stars" of the first quatrain are, of course, H.'s three fellow-competitors, all of whom are dying (in the M.P. series) from the effects of The Patron's displeasure conveyed in his Link sonnet. The references are

S. *Flatter* the mountain tops with sovereign *eye*
Even so my *sun* one early morn did shine (P.P. 33).
Where yellow *leaves* or few or none do hang (M.P. 73)

and, of course, his 'pride' again.

M.P. My name be *buried where my body is* (M.P. 72).
L. Bring me within the level of your *frown* (P.R. 117).

Note the shockingly bad rhythm of the sixth line:—

But as the marigold at the sun's eye.

Third Quatrain. In this quatrain 'Barnes the Butt' is the sole object of H.'s attack. The first line (as already noted in Chapter II above) was printed in the original 1609 edition and in all subsequent editions down to the middle of the eighteenth century:—

The painful warrior famoused for *worth*,

Then THEOBALD, "the Porson of Shakespearean criticism," brought his critical acumen to bear on the passage, and, discovering that lines 9 and 11 did not rhyme, brilliantly amended 'worth' into 'fight,' and 'fight' it has remained ever since.[1] Now this sort of thing—in which the earlier commentators indulged very freely—did not, as a rule, do much harm, but in this particular instance it has taken a good deal of 'punch' out of H.'s blow at M.P.; and the kind reader is therefore requested to restore the Quarto reading and read '*worth*'—M.P.'s '*worth*' again, needless to say. One may conjecture that H. originally wrote 'fight,' but seeing an opportunity for getting in an extra dig at M.P., subsequently altered it to 'worth,' and the 'quite' of line 11 to 'forth' accordingly, and that owing to his own negligence or that of a transcriber, the MS. from which the printer set up the text gave effect to the first alteration, but not to the second.

[1] This, by the way, is the gentleman who, writing to a literary friend, expressed himself as follows:—"I ever labour to make the smallest deviation that I possibly can from the text; never to alter at all when I can by any means explain a passage with sense; nor ever by an emendation to make the author better when it is probable that the text came from his own hand."

This remarkably effective line which gets into its ten syllables three separate and distinct allusions to M.P., all of an uncomplimentary character, namely (1) to his absurd 'Obstetrics' conceit, (2) to his tiresome harping on the word 'worth,' and (3) to his reputation as a cowardly braggart, has already been discussed in the 'Barnes the Butt' Note in Chapter III above, to which the reader is invited to refer. Lines 11 and 12 contain further echoes from M.P. *viz.* (1) the loss of honour referred to in his No. 36.10-12 in this series, and (2) the lines in his No. 72 in the next series :—

> After my death, dear love, *forget* me *quite*
> For you in me can nothing *worthy* prove.

It seems not a little odd that all the commentators should have taken these four cryptic lines *seriously* at their face value. In the first place, 'painful' is not a very suitable epithet for a warrior ; in the second place, while it is an allowable poetical exaggeration to speak of a man as " the hero of a *hundred* fights " a *thousand* is patently absurd ; and in the third place, it is not true that a veteran soldier who happens once in a way to be honourably defeated has his name forthwith " razed quite " (a very strong expression) from the Book of Honour—as the histories of famous captains abundantly testify.

The Couplet. The phraseology is borrowed from S.'s last sonnet in this series (No. 116) :—

> . . . *Love* is not *love*
> Which . . . bends with the *remover* to *remove.*

It gives a broad hint as to the real nature of H.'s peculiar 'love' ; the only case in which a lover *may* not be removed from the loved one is when the two are identical.

The reader is now in a position to appreciate the many exemplifications of H.'s characteristics furnished by his four sonnets in this series : *Compressed Thought,* 123 *passim,* 124 *passim, esp.* ll. 7-8 ; *Deliberate Dissonance,* 25.6 ; *Subtle Humour, Personal Allusion,* and *The Polite Shirker,* throughout.

SERIES No. 8.—The Moribund Poet.

With this series 'The Contest' comes to an end ; *why* it came to an end at this point can be conjectured only—possibly 'by command,' possibly because Shakespeare decided that in view of his little tiff with The Patron over the P.P. Series he had done quite enough to " witness duty." At any rate, these eight sonnets shew quite clearly that it *has* come to an end, and round it off very neatly.

The Theme.—The dying Poet commends to The Patron his completed tale of adulatory sonnets.

Thus the theme of the *last* of the eight Contest series is the analogue and complement of the theme of the *first* (the E.D. series), " The Poet modestly commends to the Patron his first batch of adulatory sonnets."

SERIES No. 8—

The Theme.—The dying Poet commends to The Patron

SHAKESPEARE

73

That time of year thou mayst in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.
In me thou see'st the twilight of such day
As after sunset fadeth in the west;
Which by and by black night doth take away,
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.
In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire,
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,
As the death-bed whereon it must expire,
Consum'd with that which it was nourish'd by.
This thou perceivest, which makes thy love more strong,
To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

74

But be contented: when that fell arrest
Without all bail shall carry me away,
My life hath in *this line* some interest,
Which for memorial still with thee shall stay.
When thou reviewest this, thou dost review
The very part was consecrate to thee:
The *earth can have but earth*, which is his due;
My spirit *is thine, the better part of me*:
So then thou hast but lost the dregs of life,
The prey of worms, my body being dead;
The coward conquest of a wretch's knife,
Too base of thee to be remembered.
The worth of that is that which it contains,
And that is this, and this with thee remains.

THE MINOR POET

71

No longer mourn for me when I am dead
Than you shall hear the surly sullen bell
Give warning to the world that I am fled
From this vile world, *with vilest worms to dwell*:
Nay, if you read *this line*, remember not
The hand that writ it; for I love you so,
That I in your sweet thoughts would be forgot,
If thinking on me then should make you woe.
O, if, I say, *you look upon this verse*
When I perhaps *compounded am with clay*,
Do not so much as my poor name rehearse,
But let your love even with my life decay;
Lest the wise world should look into your moan,
And mock you with me after I am gone.

72

O, lest the world should task you to recite
What merit lived in me, that you should *love*
After my death, dear love, forget me quite,
For you in me can nothing worthy *prove*;
Unless you would devise some virtuous lie,
To do more for me than mine own desert,
And hang more praise upon deceased I
Than niggard truth would willingly impart:
O' lest your true love may seem false in this
That you for love speak well of me untrue,
My name be buried where my body is,
And live no more to shame nor me nor you.
For I am shamed by that which I bring forth,
And so should you, to love things nothing worth.

TREATMENT OF THE THEME.

Shakespeare's general sentiment is 'I am old and shall die soon; but though my body must decay in the grave, my sonnets will live and remain with you,' and this sentiment is more or less faithfully reflected by The Minor Poet and The Lawyer. The Humorist, *more suo*, takes a diametrically opposite line. *He* will not join the others in playing Pantaloon to The Patron's Harlequin; when he sees The Patron well-stricken in years, then, and not till then, will he consent to look upon his own death as imminent. Nor will he follow them in affecting to regard his sonnetteering career as closed; on the contrary, he looks forward to continuing his output of adulatory verse in circumstances less embarrassing to his native modesty.

The framework on which S.'s two sonnets are built is made up of four thoughts:

(a). The Poet's approaching death.
(b). The Poet's estimate of the value of his own sonnets.
(c). The Patron's remembrance of the Poet himself.

MORIBUND POET. (M.P.)

his completed tale of adulatory sonnets.

THE LAWYER

32

If thou survive my well-contented day
When that churl Death *my bones with dust shall cover*,
And shalt by fortune once more *re-survey*
These poor rude lines of thy deceased lover,
Compare them with the bettering of the time,
And though they be outstripp'd by every pen,
Reserve them for my love, not for their rhyme
Exceeded by the height of happier men.
O, then vouchsafe me but this loving thought:
'Had my friend's Muse grown with this growing age,
A dearer birth than this his love had brought,
To march in ranks of better equipage:
But since he died, and poets better *prove*,
Theirs for their style I'll read, his for his *love*.'

76

Why is my verse so barren of new pride,
So far from variation or quick change?
Why with the time do I not glance aside
To new-found methods and to compounds strange?
Why write I still all one, ever the same,
And keep invention in a noted weed,
That every word doth almost tell my name,
Showing their birth and where they did proceed?
O, know, sweet love, I always write of you,
And you and love are still my argument;
So all my best is dressing old words new,
Spending again what is already spent:
For as the sun is daily new and old,
So is my love still telling what is told.

THE HUMORIST

22

My glass shall not persuade me I am old,
So long as youth and thou are of one date;
But when in thee time's furrows I behold,
Then look I death my days should expiate.
For all that beauty that doth cover thee
Is but the seemly raiment of my heart,
Which in thy breast doth live, as thine in me
How can I then be elder than thou art?
O, therefore, love, be of thyself so wary,
As I, not for myself, but for thee will;
Bearing thy heart, which I will keep so chary
As tender nurse her babe from faring ill.
Presume not on thy heart when mine is slain;
Thou gavest me thine, not to give back again.

39

O, how thy worth with manners may I sing,
When *thou art all the better part of me*?
What can mine own praise to mine own self bring?
And what is 't but mine own when I praise thee?
Even for this let us divided live,
And our dear love lose name of single one,
That by this separation I may give
That due to thee which thou deservest alone.
O absence, what a torment wouldst thou *prove*,
Were it not thy sour leisure gave sweet leave
To entertain the time with thoughts of *love*,
Which time and thoughts so sweetly doth deceive,
And that thou teachest how to make one twain,
By praising him here who doth hence remain!

(d). The Patron's remembrance of the Poet's verses.

M.P. and L. use exactly the same framework, and H. uses as much of it as he can consistently with his peculiar treatment of The Theme.

(a). S. (*passim*): M.P. (*passim*): L. 32 *passim*: H. (22 *passim*).

(b). S. places considerable value on his verse (74 *passim*); M.P. declares his to be worthless, and is thoroughly ashamed of it (72 *passim*); L. admits his inferiority to the other poets (32 *passim*); and H. does so by implication in offering the excuse that as he and The Patron are identical, good manners prevented him from praising him as he would have wished (39.1-4).

(c) and (d). S. says 'Forget *me* but remember my *verses*' (74 *passim*); M.P. says 'Forget both *me* and my *verses*—both are worthless' (*passim*); L. says 'Remember my *verses*, inferior though they are, for the love you bear *me*' (32 *passim*); and H. (who is not going to die yet awhile) says 'Leave *me*, and you will find the *verses* I am going to write better worth remembering' (39.5-14).

THE PALINODES.

But the feature which gives an unique interest to this series is what may be called the *palinodic* character of each of the four contributions. Imitations and parodies of the thoughts of his colleagues are, of course, common in S.'s contributions as they are in those of the other three; and he, like them, shews no hesitation in referring to his own previous sonnets when (as for instance in the P.R. series) the argument requires it. But his procedure in this series is of a totally different character. He selects from three of his own sonnets three separate thoughts, and deliberately *reverses* them, emphasising his new departure by allotting exactly one quatrain to each thought. *His example is followed by all three of his colleagues*; each of them selects one of his own previous sonnets and deliberately reverses its sentiment, while following its phraseology more or less closely.

Shakespeare's palinode is contained in the first of his two sonnets (No. 73). In his *first* quatrain the thought selected is from his No. 102 in the P.E. Series. *Then*, in exquisite verse, he compared his sonnetting of his Patron to the promise of spring and the plenty of summer: *now*, in verse more exquisite still, he laments that his inspiration has left him; there has come a "frost, a killing frost," and "all is winter now."

102

Our love was new and then but in the *spring*,
When I was wont to greet it with my lays;
As *Philomel* in summer's front doth *sing*,
And stops her pipe in growth of riper days;
Not that the *summer* is less pleasant now
Than when her mournful hymns did hush the night,
But that wild *music* burthens every *bough*,
And *sweets* grown common lose their dear delight.

73

That *time of year* thou mayst in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those *boughs* which shake against the cold,
Bare ruin'd choirs, where late the *sweet birds sang*.

In his *second* quatrain the thought selected is from his great sonnet No. 33 in the P.P. Series. *Then* he compared his Patron's favour to the glorious beams of the morning sun: *now* there is no question of any temporary overclouding, of alternating sunshine and shower; the sun of The Patron's favour has set for ever, and there remains only a grey twilight soon to fade away into the hopeless blackness of the night.

33

Full many a glorious morning have I seen
Flatter the mountain-tops with sovereign eye,
Even so my sun one early morn did shine
With all-triumphant splendour on my brow.

73

In me thou see'st the twilight of such day
As after sunset fadeth in the West;
Which by and by black night doth take away,
Death's second self, which seals up all in rest.

In his *third* quatrain the thought selected is from his first sonnet in the P.R. Series (No. 109). *Then* he compared his love for his Patron to a brightly-burning fire: *now* there is no flame, nothing but the dull glow of a few embers soon to be smothered in the ashes of a passion exhausted by its own intensity.

Though absence seemed my flame to qualify:

In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire,
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,
As the death-bed whereon it must expire,
Consumed with that which it was nourish'd by.

The Minor Poet's palinode is partly in his first sonnet, partly in his second. The sonnet selected is his No. 38 in the E.D. series. *Then* he could write in a spirit of jaunty condescension: *now* his self-depreciation is almost abject.

38

How can my Muse want subject to invent,
While thou dost breathe, that pour'st into *my verse*
Thine own sweet argument, too excellent
For every vulgar paper to *rehearse?*
O, give thyself the thanks, if aught *in me*
Worthy perusal stand against thy sight;
For who's so dumb that cannot write to thee,
When thou thyself dost give invention light?
And he that calls on thee, let him *bring forth*
Eternal numbers to outlive long date.
Be thou the tenth Muse, ten times more in *worth*
Than those old nine which rhymers invocate;
If my slight Muse do please those curious days,
The pain be mine, but thine shall be the *praise.*

71-72

O, lest the world should task you to recite
What merit lived in me, that you should love
After my death, dear love, forget me quite,
For you *in me* can nothing *worthy* prove;
O! if, I say, you look upon *this verse*
When I perhaps compounded am with clay,
Do not so much as my poor name *rehearse,*
But let your love even with my life decay;
For I am shamed by that which *I bring forth,*
And so should you, to love things nothing *worth.*
To do more for me than mine desert,
And hang more *praise* upon deceased I
Than niggard truth would willingly impart.

[*Note* the rhymes (1) verse—rehearse, (2) bring forth—worth].

The Lawyer, like S., confines his palinode to one sonnet, and like M.P. selects his sonnet in the E.D. Series (No. 105). *Then* he proposed to take The Patron's perfections as the sole theme of his verse, confidently relying on its inexhaustibility and the "wondrous scope" it would afford him: *now* after following this plan he finds that he has to apologize for the barrenness and monotony of the results.

105

Since *all alike* my songs and praises be
To one, of one, still such, and ever so.
Therefore *my verse* to constancy confined,
Fair, kind, and true is all *my argument,*
Fair, kind, and true *varying* to other *words*;
And in this *change* is my *invention spent,*
Three themes *in one,* which wondrous scope affords.

76

Why is *my verse* so barren of new pride,
So far from *variation* or quick change?
Why write I *still all one, ever the same,*
And keep *invention* in a noted weed,
And you and love are still *my argument*;
So all my best is dressing old *words* new,
Spending again what is already *spent.*

[Note the rhyme argument—spent.]

The phraseology of the original sonnet could scarcely have been reproduced more faithfully.

The Humorist's palinode, like M.P.'s, is contained partly in his first and partly in his second sonnet. He selects for his treatment his first sonnet in the B.I. Series (No. 62). *Then* he was old and his Patron young, and his praise of his own beauty was declared to be really the praise of his Patron's: *now* he not only repudiates the suggestion that he is older than his Patron, but declares that his praise of his Patron's beauty is really praise of his own.

62

But when *my glass shows me* myself indeed,
Beat'd and chopp'd with tann'd *antiquity,*
And for myself *mine own worth* do define,
As I all other in all *worths* surmount.
'Tis *thee, myself that for myself* I *praise*
Painting my *age* with *beauty of thy days.*

22 and 39

My glass shall not *persuade me* I am *old,*
But when in thee *time's furrows I behold,*
O! how thy *worth* with manners may I sing,
What can *mine* own *praise to my own self* bring?
And, what is't but *mine own* when I *praise* thee?
As I not *for myself but for thee* will,
And all *the beauty that doth cover thee.*

Again an exact reproduction of the original phraseology.

The reader's particular attention is invited to this quartet of palinodes; he will find nothing like it anywhere else in the *Sonnets.*

Verbal Parallelisms.

As a result of the two facts, *first* that S.'s fellow-competitors are copying not so

much his language as his methods, and *second* that H. takes an entirely different line from the rest, the list of *internal* verbal parallelisms and imitations is a good deal shorter than in most of the preceding series.

Note the rhyme prove-love used once by each of the three competitors, M.P., L., and H.

Note the *exactly* regular placing of the eight lines beginning with " O " (M.P. 3, L. 2, H. 3). Three lines ruled horizontally through the text would eliminate the lot.

S. My life has in *this line* some interest,
When thou reviewest this, (sc. *verse*) *thou dost review*
M.P. Nay, if you read *this line* remember not
O ! if, I say, *you look upon* this *verse*
L. And shalt, by fortune, once more *re-survey*
These poor rude *lines* . . .

S. The *earth* can have but *earth*, which is his due ;
M.P. When I perhaps compounded am with *clay*,
L. When that churl Death my bones with *dust* shall cover.

S. My spirit is thine, *the better part of me* :
H. When thou art all *the better part of me ?*

S. The *prey of worms*, my body being dead.
M.P. From this vile world with vilest *worms to dwell.*

N.B. References to the affection between The Patron and the Poet—*my* love, *your* love, *our* love—occur in such profusion that it would be tedious to tabulate them.

NOTES.

In reading the eight sonnets of this series it should be borne in mind that the " death " to which the competitors refer means *esoterically* the conclusion of The Contest, and that each of them is estimating the value of his own contributions and anticipating The Patron's verdict. They all seem to realize pretty well that it will be " Eclipse first, the rest nowhere."

Shakespeare. (Nos. 73, 74.)

In this series S. gives us of his very best. After the lengthy and tiresome business of worrying out the inner meaning of H.'s four crabbed sonnets in the P.R. Series, it is truly refreshing to turn to this transparently clear and perfectly melodious verse, and marvel anew at S.'s effortless mastery of his instrument and his material.

73.

In this beautiful sonnet S. paints a most convincing portrait of himself as a disillusioned, neglected, decrepit old man sadly remembering the happy days of yore, [some months distant !] when he was an inspired young poet basking in the favour of a much-loved Patron. The picture is a masterpiece, perfect in composition, tone, atmosphere—everything ; and it presents us with yet another striking proof of the utter unreality of the sentiments expressed in the sonnets.

74.

This sonnet is conceived in the same spirit as his contribution to the B.I. series, and its final couplet recalls the final couplet of that series—

So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

THE PERSONAL SONNETS—THIRD BATCH

The Minor Poet. (Nos. 71, 72.)

The Minor Poet acknowledges his defeat in pathetic terms. The following characteristics are exemplified: *Slovenly Phrasing*, 72.7; *Smooth Versification* throughout; *Sound not Sense*, 71.4; *Forcing the Note* throughout; *The Flunkey*, 71.7-8, 72.12-14.

71.

This sonnet contains several echoes from 2 *Henry IV*. Compare.

Henry IV. Part 2.

Sounds ever after as a *sullen bell*
Remembered tolling a departing friend.
That thou art crowned, not that *I am dead.*
Only *compound me with forgotten dust;*
Give that which gave thee life unto the worms.

71

No longer mourn for me when *I am dead*
Than you shall hear the surly *sullen bell*
Give warning to the world that I am fled
From this vile world, with vilest *worms* to dwell:
Nay, if you read this line, *remember* not
When I perhaps *compounded am with clay.*

6-8. The Patron's convenience is the only thing to be considered by the obsequious Poet.

9-10. Note the unpleasing effect of the unnecessary expletives 'I say' and 'perhaps.'

13-14. This looks as if M.P. had begun to realize his position as the butt of his fellow-competitors.

72.

An amusing feature of this sonnet is the emergence of a striking contrast between the respective attitudes of S. and M.P. towards their own sonnetteering performances both *in posse* and *in esse*. In the E.D. series S. modestly apologized for the short-comings of his first batch, and hoped, with the kind assistance of The Patron, to do better another time. M.P., on the other hand, despising the efforts of the ordinary ruck of vulgar versifiers, kindly informed his Patron that he (The Patron) might take the credit for the applause to be given to his own (M.P.'s) superior performance. *Now* in this series S., his tale of sonnets completed, reviews them with legitimate satisfaction, and can tell his Patron

The *worth* of that is that which it contains,
And that is this, and this with thee remains.

M.P. on the other hand is overwhelmed with shame when he contemplates the inferiority of his own productions.

For I am shamed by that which I bring forth,
And so should you to love things nothing *worth.*

4. Another example of M.P.'s "worth." See also line 14.

7. A particularly flagrant example of 'rhyme-hunting.'

13-14. S.'s two other fellow-competitors admit their inferiority more or less. But M.P. is not only ashamed of his verses, but calls shame on his Patron for liking them!

Note in l. 13 the last appearance *in his own verse* of M.P.'s over-worked 'Obstetrics' conceit.

The Lawyer. (Nos. 32, 76.)

The Lawyer's contribution is rather above his average in literary merit, and unlike M.P.'s, is written in a more or less dignified tone. The *Old Dog* characteristic pervades both sonnets to the exclusion of the rest.

32.

5. *Cf.* his line in the P.E. Series (No. 82).

Some fresher stamp of the *time-bettering* days.

6. L. modestly assumes that *his* place in the final order will be last.

8. 'Height' carries on the metaphor of the 'tall' ship mentioned in M.P.'s 80.12 in the P.E. series, and satirically imitated by S. in 116.8 in the P.R. series.

10-11. A hit at M.P.'s 'Obstetrics' conceit, combined with a satirical reference to his 'babe' (115 in the P.R. series), who is 'still growing.' Compare M.P.'s—

> *Love* is a *babe*; then might I not say so
> To give full *growth* to that which still doth *grow*.

12. *Cf.* Marston in his *Pygmalion*:—

> And then ensues my stanzas, like odd bands
> Of voluntaries and mercenarians,
> Which, like soldados of our warlike age,
> *March* rich *bedight* in warlike *equipage*
> Glittering in dawbed lac'd accoustrements,

L. is No. 3 in a section made up of three "mercenarians" and one "voluntary."

76.

1-4. An allusion to Shakespeare. Here L. falls into line with the other two by making sarcastic allusions to S.'s "pride"; but it is *new* pride, and S. had "glanc'd aside to *new*-found methods, and to compounds *strange*," *i.e.*, he had left the straightforward sonnetteering track in order to 'Shakespearize' (P.R. series), and "palinodize" (No. 73 in this series), and had thereby set a new fashion of "compounding" sonnets out of scraps taken from one's own previous writings.

5. *Cf.* his lines in the P.E. Series (108).

> . . . but yet like prayers divine,
> I must each day say o'er the very same,
> Counting no old thing old, thou mine, I thine
> Even as when at first I hallowed thy fair name.

L. seems to make a speciality of profane references to the Church Service, *v.* 1-4 and 12-14 of his E.D. sonnet (No. 105).

7-8. Clumsy and ungrammatical English. Note another and final hit at M.P.'s 'Obstetrics' conceit.

The Humorist. (Nos. 22, 39.)

As *The Old Dog* dominates L.'s contribution to this series, so *The Polite Shirker* dominates H.'s. If the reader will kindly first re-read the second quatrain in H.'s E.D. sonnet (No. 23), his No. 62 in the B.I. series, and his Nos. 124 and 25 in the P.R. series, and then read these two sonnets, he will be in a position to appreciate his ingenious and systematic use right through the Contest of his two formulæ *Self-Love* and *Identity-with-the-Patron* for the purpose of shirking his duty as an 'adulatory' sonnetteer. Neither of these formulæ is used by any of the other competitors.

The other characteristics exemplified are: *Deliberate Dissonance*, 39.10; *Subtle Humour* and *Personal Allusion* throughout.

22.

The three other poets in painting their harrowing pictures of a dying Poet bidding farewell to a grief-stricken Patron have of necessity rather 'slopped over' with fictitious pathos. H. neatly gets out of the awkward situation by applying Sidney's famous conceit—

My true love hath my heart and I have his,
By just exchange the one to the other given ; etc.,

to the case of The Patron and himself, thereby ensuring that they shall die *simultaneously*.

8. An inapposite and ludicrous line which clearly marks H.'s purpose of burlesquing the ' Exchange of Hearts ' conceit throughout the sonnet. Donne was exactly the same age as Southampton.

9-12. An amusing piece of doggerel. H. assures The Patron that he intends to take the greatest possible care of Number One, not for selfish reasons—Oh, dear, no !—but solely on account of The Patron's heart, which he is carrying about inside him. It seems odd that the commentators should take all this nonsense seriously.

39.

As in 62 of the B.I. series, H. here uses his ' Identity ' formula to avoid adulation of The Patron ; in that series by boldly praising himself on the ground that Poet= Patron, in this series by modestly refusing to praise The Patron on the ground that Patron=Poet.

1. A final hit at M.P.'s " worth," conveyed in a parody of the first line in his No. 85 in the P.E. series—

My tongue-tied Muse in *manners* hold her still.

2. A parody of S.'s line in his No. 74 in this series—

My spirit is *thine, the better part of me.*

The rest of the sonnet is an ingenious burlesque of seven lines in M.P.'s No. 36 in the previous series. Compare :—

36.

Let me confess that *we two must be twain,*
Although *our undivided loves* are *one* :
So shall those blots that do with me *remain,*
Without thy help, by me be borne *alone*
In our two loves there is but one respect,
Though in our *lives* a *separable* spite,
Which though it alter not *love's sole effect,*

39

Even for this *let us divided live,*
And *our dear love lose name of single one,*
That by this *separation* I may give
That due to thee which thou deservest *alone.*
And that thou teachest how to make one *twain,*
By praising him here who doth hence *remain* !

[Note the rhymes (1) twain—remain, (2) one—alone.]

Note the irony underlying line 8, and the subtly ambiguous couplet. One gathers that The Patron's *legitimate* due would not amount to very much, and has little difficulty in guessing which of the two parted friends is to be the real object of H.'s poetical eulogies.

. . . . .

And so ends this notable Contest. Southampton must have found some difficulty in awarding the *second* prize.

CHAPTER V.—THE DRAMATIC SONNETS.

The specially *human* interest of the sonnets is confined to the eight Personal series just disposed of. In these sonnets one has caught a glimpse of Shakespeare actually at work. Or rather, perhaps, one ought to say at *play*—a great artist good-naturedly consenting to oblige a munificent patron by dashing off a number of little masterpieces of line and colour to serve as models for three lesser brethren of the brush, painting against him and each other in a comradely atmosphere of studio chaff. This atmosphere is entirely lacking in the five series of Dramatic sonnets we have to deal with in this chapter. The competitors vary from series to series, and they speak merely as mouthpieces of a common employer. Consequently, each series is merely a self-contained specimen of the art of competitive sonnetteering; we have no prolonged battle of wits carried on from series to series, no thrust and counter-thrust of parody, satire, and personal allusion, no sidelights on the varying fortunes of the combat and the temperaments of the combatants—nothing in short of the unity and *intimacy* of the Personal sonnets which give them their unique psychological value and significance. The Dramatic sonnets present certain interesting features peculiarly their own, as the reader will discover in due course, but considered as psychological documents they take rank a long way below their predecessors.

There are fifty-two Dramatic sonnets divided into five series as follows:—

Series No. 9. (21 sonnets). *Absence.* Theme: The Lover separated from his Mistress describes his feelings.

Series No. 10. (9 sonnets). *Estrangement Anticipated.* Theme: The Lover sorrowfully anticipates the loss of his Mistress' affections.

Series No. 11. (6 sonnets). *Intrigue.* Theme: The Lover is annoyed at discovering an intrigue between his Mistress and his best friend.

Series No. 12. (12 sonnets). *The Dark Lady.* Theme: The Lover deplores his infatuation for a frail and fickle brunette.

Series No. 13. (4 sonnets). *Will.* Theme: The Lover solicits a second place in the favours of a light woman in love with another man.

These series differ from the Personal series in five respects:—

1. They are not adulatory sonnets addressed to a man, but amatory sonnets addressed to, or complaining about, a woman.

2. The competitors do not speak in their own persons but in that of their employer—a young aristocrat and courtier.

3. In every series except the last one-sonnet series the number of the competitors is not four but three.

4. The competitors are not the same throughout. In Series 9 they are The Minor Poet, The Lawyer and The Humorist. In Series 10, 11, 12, they are Shakespeare, The Lawyer, and The Newcomer. In Series 13 they are the three last-named plus The Humorist.

5. There is nothing in the sonnets themselves to suggest either their chronological order or any historical connection between any one series and any other. In other words there are no personal allusions to the competitors, and, with two exceptions, no 'outside' verbal parallelisms.

In all other respects they follow the lines of the Personal series exactly, and those 'Rules of the Contest' which can still apply are conformed to with equal if not greater strictness.

The Theory is unable to give us any certain information as to the identity of the employer, (or employers), the addressees, (there are at least two of them), or the circumstances in which the various series came to be written. There seems to be nothing however in the way of accepting the hypothesis that the Employer is identical with The Patron of the Personal series, who was encouraged by their success to inaugurate a second competition (or series of competitions) in which he was to figure as the Poet-Lover deploring the waywardness and cruelty of the object (or objects) of his affection. On this hypothesis the *Absence* series would be a sort of Consolation Race for the three defeated competitors in the Personal Contest, and come first in order of time; and its theme might have been suggested by one of Southampton's frequent and prolonged absences from England which are a feature of his personal history from 1596 to 1598.

SERIES No. 9.—Absence.

The Theme.—The Lover separated from his Mistress describes his feelings.

SERIES No. 9—

The Theme.—The Lover separated from

THE MINOR POET

98

From you have *I been absent* in the spring.
When proud-pied April, dress'd in all his trim,
Hath put a spirit of youth in every thing,
That heavy Saturn laugh'd and leap'd with him.
Yet not the lay of *birds*, nor the sweet smell
Of different *flowers* in odour and in hue,
Could make me any *summer's* story tell,
Or from their proud lap pluck them where they grew:
Nor did I wonder at the lily's white,
Nor praise the deep vermilion in the rose;
They were but sweet, but *figures* of *delight*,
Drawn after you, you *pattern* of all those.
Yet seemed it winter still, *and*, *you away*,
As with your shadow I with these did play.

99

The forward violet thus did I chide:
Sweet thief, whence didst thou steal thy sweet that smells,
If not from my love's breath? The purple pride
Which on thy soft cheek for complexion dwells
In my love's veins thou hast too grossly dyed.
The lily I condemned for thy hand,
And buds of marjoram had stol'n thy hair;
The roses fearfully on thorns did stand,
One blushing shame, another white despair;
A third, nor red nor white, had stol'n of both,
And to his robbery had annex'd thy breath;
But, for his theft, in pride of all his growth
A vengeful canker eat him up to death.
More flowers I noted, yet I none could see
But sweet or colour it had stol'n from thee.

47

Betwixt *mine eye and heart* a league is took,
And each *doth good turns* now unto the other:
When that mine eye is *famished for a look*,
Or heart in love with sighs himself doth smother,
With my love's *picture* then *my eye* doth *feast*
And to the painted banquet bids my *heart*;
Another time mine eye is my heart's guest
And in his *thoughts* of love doth share a *part*:
So, either by thy picture or my love,
Thyself *away art present* still with me;
For thou not farther than my *thoughts* canst move,
And I am still with them and they with thee;
Or, if they sleep, *thy picture* in my *sight*
Awakes my heart to heart's and eye's delight.

48

How careful was *I*, when *I took my way*,
Each trifle under truest bars to thrust,
That to my use it might unused stay
From hands of falsehood, in sure wards of trust
But thou, to whom my *jewels* trifles are,
Most worthy comfort, now my greatest grief,
Thou, best of dearest and mine only care,
Art left the prey of every vulgar *thief*.
Thee have I not *lock'd up* in any *chest*,
Save where thou art not, though I feel thou art,
Within the gentle *closure* of *my breast*,
From whence at pleasure thou mayst come and part;
And even thence thou wilt be *stol'n*, I fear,
For truth proves thievish for a prize so dear.

THE LAWYER.

97

How like a winter hath *my absence* been
From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year!
What freezings have I felt, what dark days seen
What old December's bareness every where!
And *yet* this time removed was *summer's* time;
The teeming autumn, big with rich increase,
Bearing the wanton burthen of the prime,
Like widowed wombs after their lords' decease;
Yet this abundant issue *seem'd* to me
But hope of orphans and unfathered fruit;
For *summer* and his pleasures wait on thee,
And, *thou away*, the very *birds* are mute;
Or, if they sing 'tis with so dull a cheer
That leaves look pale, dreading the *winter's* near.

75

So are you to my *thoughts* as food to life,
Or as sweet-season'd showers are to the ground
And for the peace of you I hold such strife
As 'twixt a *miser* and his wealth is found;
Now proud as an enjoyer, and anon
Doubting the *filching* age will *steal* his *treasure*;
Now counting best to be with you alone,
Then better'd that the world may see my *pleasure*;
Sometime all full with *feasting* on your *sight*,
And by and by *clean starved for a look*;
Possessing or pursuing no delight,
Save what is had or must from you be took.
Thus do I pine and surfeit day by day,
Or gluttoning on all, or all away.

46

Mine eye and heart are at a mortal war,
How to divide the conquest of thy sight;
Mine eye my heart *thy picture's sight* would bar,
My heart mine eye the freedom of that right.
My heart doth plead that thou *in him dost lie*,
A *closet* never *pierced with crystal eyes*,
But the defendant doth that plea deny,
And says in him *thy fair appearance lies*.
To 'cide this title is impannelled
A quest of *thoughts*, all tenants to the *heart*;
And by their verdict is determined
The clear eye's moiety and the dear heart's *part*:
As thus; mine eye's due is thine outward *part*,
And my heart's right thine inward love of *heart*.

50

How heavy do *I journey on the way*,
When what I seek, my *weary travel's* end,
Doth teach that ease and that *repose* to say,
'Thus far the miles are measured from thy friend!'
The beast that bears me, tired with my woe,
Plods dully on, to bear that weight in me,
As if by some instinct the wretch did know
His rider loved not speed, being made from thee
The bloody spur cannot provoke him on
That sometimes anger thrusts into his hide;
Which heavily he answers with a groan,
More sharp to me than spurring to his side;
For that same groan doth put this in my mind:
My grief lies onward, and my joy behind.

ABSENCE.

his Mistress describes his feelings.

THE HUMORIST

113

Since I left you mine eye is in my mind,
And that which governs me to go about
Doth part his function and is partly blind,
Seems seeing, but effectually is out;
For it no *form* delivers to the heart
Of *bird*, of *flower*, or *shape*, which it doth latch:
Of his quick objects hath the mind no part,
Nor his own vision holds what it doth catch;
For if it see the rudest or gentlest sight,
The most sweet favour or deformed'st creature,
The mountain or the sea, the day or night,
The crow or dove, it *shapes them to your feature*;
Incapable of more, replete with you.
My most true mind thus maketh mine untrue.

114

Or whether doth my mind, being crown'd with you,
Drink up the monarch's plague, this flattery?
Or whether shall I say, mine eyes saith true,
And that your love taught it this alchemy,
To make of monsters and things indigest
Such cherubims as your sweet self resemble,
Creating every bad a perfect best,
As fast as objects to his beams assemble?
O, 'tis the first; 'tis flattery in my seeing,
And my great mind most kingly drinks it up:
Mine eye well knows what with his gust is 'greeing,
And to his palate doth prepare the cup:
If it be poison'd, 'tis the lesser sin
That mine eye loves it and doth first begin.

24

Mine eye hath play'd the painter and hath stell'd
Thy beauty's form in table of *my heart*;
My body is the frame wherein 'tis held,
And perspective it is best painter's art.
For through the painter must you see his skill,
To find where *your true image pictured lies*;
Which *in my bosom's shop* is hanging still,
That hath his *windows glazed with thine eyes*.
Now see what *good turns* eyes for eyes have *done*:
Mine eyes have drawn thy shape, and thine for me
Are windows to *my breast*, where through the sun
Delights to peep, to gaze therein on thee;
Yet eyes this cunning want to grace their art,
They draw but what they see, know not the heart.

52

So am I as the *rich*, whose blessed key
Can bring him to his sweet *up-locked treasure*,
The which he will not every hour *survey*,
For blunting the fine point of seldom *pleasure*.
Therefore are *feasts* so solemn and so rare,
Since, seldom coming, in the long year set,
Like stones of worth they thinly placed are,
Or captain *jewels* in the carcanet.
So is the time that keeps you as *my chest*,
Or as the wardrobe which the robe doth hide,
To make some special instant special blest,
By new unfolding his imprison'd pride.
Blessed are you, whose worthiness gives scope,
Being had, to triumph, being lack'd, to hope.

NOTE

In this and all the remaining four series of the Dramatic Section—

(1) *Italics* indicate an 'inside' Verbal Parallelism, *i.e.*, a parallelism between a passage in the Series and another passage in the same series.

(2) Underlining indicates a Shakespearean 'echo,' *i.e.* a verbal parallelism between a passage in the series and a passage in one of Shakespeare's plays or poems.

THE MINOR POET (*continued*)

27

Weary with toil, *I haste me* to my bed,
The dear *repose* for limbs with *travel* tired ;
But then begins a *journey* in my head,
To work my mind, when body's work's expired :
For then *my thoughts*, from *far where I abide*,
Intend a zealous pilgrimage *to thee*,
And *keep my drooping eyelids open* wide,
Looking on darkness which the blind do see ;
Save that my soul's *imaginary sight*
Presents *thy shadow* to my *sightless view*,
Which like a jewel hung in ghastly night,
Make black night beauteous and her old face new.
Lo, thus, by day my limbs, by night my mind,
For thee and for myself no quiet find.

28

How can *I then return* in happy plight,
That am *debarr'd the benefit of rest* ?
When day's oppression is not eased by night,
But *day* by *night*, and *night* by *day*, oppress'd ?
And each, though enemies to either's reign,
Do in consent shake hands to torture me :
The one by toil, the other to complain
How far I toil, still *farther off from thee*.
I tell the *day*, to please him thou art bright,
And dost him grace when clouds do blot the heaven
So flatter I the swart-complexion'd *night* ;
When sparkling stars twire not thou gild'st the even.
But *day* doth daily draw my sorrows longer,
And *night* doth nightly make grief's strength seem stronger.

57

Being your slave, what should I do but tend
Upon the *hours* and *times* of your desire ?
I have no precious time at all to spend,
Nor services to do, till you require.
Nor dare I chide the world-without-end hour
Whilst *I*, my sovereign, *watch* the clock for you.
Nor think the bitterness of absence sour
When you have bid your servant once adieu ;
Nor dare I question with my *jealous thought*
Where you may be, or your affairs suppose,
But, like a *sad* slave, stay and think of nought
Save, *where you are* how happy you make those.
So true a fool is love that *in your will*.
Though you *do* any thing, he thinks no *ill*.

THE LAWYER (*continued*)

51

Thus can my love excuse the slow offence
Of my dull bearer when from thee I speed :
From *where thou art* why should *I haste me* thence ?
Till *I return*, of posting is no need.
O, what excuse will my poor beast then find,
When swift extremity can seem but slow ?
Then should I spur, though mounted on the wind,
In winged speed no motion shall I know :
Then can no horse with my desire keep pace ;
Therefore *desire*, of perfect'st love being made,
Shall neigh—no *dull flesh*—in his *fiery* race ;
But love, for love, thus shall excuse my jade ;
Since from thee going he went wilful-slow,
Towards thee I'll run and give him leave to go.

61

Is it thy will thy image should *keep open*
My heavy eyelids to the weary night ?
Dost thou desire my slumbers should be broken,
While *shadows like to thee* do *mock my sight* ?
Is it thy spirit that thou send'st from thee
So far from home into my deeds to pry,
To find out shames and idle hours in me,
The scope and tenour of thy *jealousy* ?
O, no ! thy love, though much, is not so great :
It is my love that keeps *mine eye* awake ;
Mine own true love that *dost my rest defeat*,
To play the watchman ever for thy sake :
For thee *watch* I whilst thou doth wake elsewhere
From me far off, with others all too near.

58

What god forbid that made me first *your slave*,
I should *in thought* control your *times* of pleasure
Or at your hand the account of *hours* to crave,
Being your vassal, bound to *stay your leisure !*
O, let me suffer, being at your beck,
The imprison'd absence of your liberty ;
And patience, tame to sufferance, bide each check,
Without accusing you of injury.
Be where you list, your charter is so strong
That you yourself may privilege your time,
Do what you will ; to you it doth belong
Yourself to pardon of self-doing crime.
I am to wait, though waiting so be hell,
Not blame your pleasure, be it *ill* or well.

TREATMENT OF THE THEME.

The Minor Poet's contribution contains nine main thoughts.

(a). The Lover finds the seasons altered by the absence of his Mistress. (98).
(b). The Lover finds traces of his Mistress in the flowers of the spring. (98, 99).
(c). The Lover's heart and eyes assert their respective rights in his Mistress. (47).
(d). The Lover compares his Mistress to a feast. (47).
(e). The Lover compares his Mistress to a treasure. (48).

THE HUMORIST (*continued*)

43

When most I wink, then do *mine eyes* best see,
For all the day they view things unrespected;
But when I sleep, in dreams they look on thee,
And, darkly bright, are bright in dark directed.
Then thou, whose shadow shadows make bright,
How would *thy shadow's* form form happy show
To the clear day with thy much clearer light,
When to *unseeing eyes* thy *shade* shines so!
How would, I say, *mine eyes* be blessed made
By looking on thee in the living day,
When in dead night thy fair imperfect shade
Through heavy sleep on *sightless eyes* doth stay!
All *days* are *nights* to see till I see thee,
And *nights* bright *days* when dreams do show thee me.

44

If the *dull* substance of my *flesh* were thought,
Injurious distance should not stop *my way*;
For then, despite of space, I would be brought,
From limits far remote, where thou dost stay.
No matter then although my foot did stand
Upon the *farthest earth removed from thee*;
For nimble *thought* can jump both sea and land,
As soon as think the place where he would be.
But, ah, *thought* kills me, that I am not *thought*,
To leap large lengths of miles when thou art gone,
But that, so much of earth and water wrought,
I must *attend time's leisure* with my moan;
Receiving nought by elements so slow
But heavy tears, badges of either's woe.

45

The other two, slight air and purging *fire*,
Are both with thee, *wherever I abide*;
The first *my thought*, the other my *desire*,
These *present-absent* with swift motion slide.
For when these quicker elements are gone
In tender embassy of love *to thee*,
My life, being made of four, with two alone
Sinks down to death, oppress'd with melancholy;
Until life's composition be recured
By those swift messengers return'd from thee,
Who even but now come back again, assured
Of thy fair health, recounting it to me:
This told, I joy; but then no longer glad,
I send them back again, and straight grow *sad*.

(f). The Lover recalls the circumstances of his departure from his Mistress. (48, 27.)
(g). The Lover's couch is haunted by the image of his Mistress. (27, 28).
(h). The Lover anticipates his return to his Mistress. (28).
(i). The Lover gives way to melancholy forebodings of what is happening to his Mistress in his absence. (57).

The Lawyer follows M.P. in (a) (97 *passim*); he omits (b) but substitutes a reference to the *fruits* of *autumn* (97.6-10); he follows him in (c) (46 *passim*); in (d) (75.9-14);

in (e) (75.3-6); in (f) (50 *passim*, 51.1-3); in (g) (61.1-7); in (h) (51.1-14); in (i) (61.12-14, and 58 *passim*). He introduces one new thought (j) *viz.*, a comparison of his love (desire) to fire. (51.9-11).

The Humorist follows M.P. in (a) (113 and 114 *passim*); in (b) (113.5-12); in (c) (24 *passim*); in (d) (114 *passim* and 52.5); in (e) (52 *passim*); he omits (f); he follows him in (g) (43 *passim*); in (h) (44 *passim*); in (i) (45 *passim*); and he elaborates L.'s new thought (j) (44.11-14, 45.1-9).

This similarity of treatment is indeed remarkable in so long a series; but what is more remarkable even than the fidelity with which L. and H. copy M.P.'s thoughts, is the fact that they both deal with them almost exactly *in the same order* as he does. A tabular statement will make the point clear.

Thought	*Sonnet-Number*		
	(M.P.)	(L.)	(H.)
(a). Seasons Altered	1.	1.	1-2.
(b). Mistress and Flowers	1.2.	1.	1.
(c). Eye and Heart	3.	3.	3.
(d). Feast	3.	2.	2-4.
(e). Treasure	4.	2.	4.
(f). Lover's Departure	4.	4-5.	–
(g). Hallucinations and Dreams	5.	6.	5.
(h). Lover's Return	6.	5.	6.
(i). Melancholy Imaginings	7.	6-7.	7.

[*N.B.*—The "Sonnet-Number"= the position in the contribution occupied by the sonnet containing the 'thought' referred to in the first column.]

The reader's particular attention is invited to this extraordinary regularity There is nothing like it in any other series.

Verbal Parallelisms.

As might be expected from the extraordinary uniformity of treatment, parallelisms are exceptionally numerous and close. They are also rather more 'mixed-up' than usual. (*v.* Nos. 1 and 4 in the list.)

M.P. *From you* I have been *absent* in the spring,
Yet not the lays of *birds* nor the sweet smell
Of different *flowers* in odour and in hue
Could make me any *summer's* story tell,
They were but sweet *figures* of delight,
Drawn after you, you *pattern* of all those.
Yet seem'd it winter still, *and, you away,*
L. *How like a winter* has my *absence* been
From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year!
And *yet* this time removed was *summer's* time;
For *summer* and his pleasures wait on thee,
Yet this abundant issue *seem'd* to me
And, thou away, the very *birds* are mute;
H. *Since I left you* my eye is in my mind,
For it no *form* delivers to the heart
Of *bird* or *flower* or *shape* which it doth latch:
The crow or dove, it *shapes them to your feature.*

M.P. Betwixt *mine eye and heart* a league is took,
L. *Mine eye and heart* are at a mortal war,

H. *Mine eye* hath played the painter, and hath stell'd
Thy beauty's form in table of *my heart.*

M.P. And each *doth good turns* now unto the other :
H. Now see what *good turns* eyes for eyes have *done*

M.P. When that *mine eye* is *famish'd for a look,*
With my love's *picture* then *my eye* doth *feast*
Or, if they sleep, *thy picture* in my *sight,*
L. *Mine eye* my heart *thy picture's sight* would bar,
Some time all full with *feasting* on your *sight,*
And by and by clean *starved for a look ;*
And says in him *thy fair appearance lies.*
H. To find where *your true image pictured lies*
The which he will not every day *survey,*
Therefore are *feasts* so solemn and so rare.

M.P. *Within* the gentle *closure* of *my breast,*
L. *My heart* doth plead that thou *in him* dost lie,
A *closet* never *pierce'd with crystal eyes,*
H. Which *in my bosom's shop* is hanging still,
That hath his *windows glazed with thine eyes.*

M.P. But thou to whom my *jewels* trifles are,
Are left the prey of every vulgar *thief.*
Thee have I not *lock'd up* in any *chest,*
For even thence thou wilt be *stol'n,* I fear,
L. As 'twixt a *miser* and his wealth is found ;
Doubting the *filching* age will *steal* his *treasure ;* }
Then better'd that the world may see my *pleasure :* }
H. So am I as the *rich* whose blessed key
Can bring him to his sweet *up-locked treasure,* }
For blunting the fine point of seldom *pleasure.* }
Or captain *jewels* in the carcanet.
So is the time that keeps you as my *chest.*

M.P. *How* careful was *I* when I took *my way,*
Weary with toil I haste me to my bed,
The dear *repose* for limbs with *travel* tired ;
But then begins a *journey* in my head,
L. *How* heavy do *I journey* on *the way,*
When what I seek, my *weary travel's* end,
Doth teach that ease and that *repose* to say,
H. Injurious distance should not stop *my way.*

M.P. For then *my thoughts,* from far *where I abide,*
Intend a zealous pilgrimage *to thee,*
H. Are both with thee, *wherever I abide,*
The first *my thought,* the other my desire.
In tender embassy of love *to thee.*

M.P. And *keep my drooping eyelids open* wide
L. Is it thy will thy image should *keep open*
My heavy eyelids to the weary night.

M.P. Save that my soul's *imaginary sight*
Presents *thy shadow* to my *sightless view,*
That am *debarr'd the benefit of rest ?*
L. While *shadows like to thee* do *mock my sight*
Mine own true love that dost *my rest defeat,*
H. How would *thy shadow's* form form happy show
Though heavy sleep on *sightless eyes* doth stay.

M.P. How far I toil, still *farther off from thee.*
L. *From me far off,* with others all too near.
H. Upon the *farthest earth removed from thee ;*

M.P. *Being your slave*, what should I do but *tend*
Upon the *hours* and *times* of your desire ?
Nor dare I question with my *jealous thought*
L. The scope and tenor of thy *jealousy ?*
What God forbid that made me first *your slave*,
I should *in thought* control your times of pleasure,
Or at your hand the account of *hours* to crave,
Being your vassal, bound to *stay your leisure !*
H. I must *attend time's leisure* with my moan.

L. Therefore *desire*, of perfect'st love being made,
Shall neigh—no *dull flesh*—in his *fiery* race ;
H. If the *dull* substance of my *flesh* were thought,
The other two slight air and purging *fire*,
The first my thought the other my *desire*.

[N.B.—The numerous parallelisms based on the various meanings of ' thought,' *viz.* (1) *cogitatio*, (2) *cogitatum*, (3) imagination, (4) melancholy, have been omitted from this list because they are so complicated that they could not be properly exhibited without taking up too much space. They have, however, been duly italicised, and are recommended to the reader's attention.]

Minor Parallelisms.— (1) *present-absent*, 47.10, 45.4 ; (2) *I haste me*, 27 ; 51.3 ; 1 ; (3) *I return*, 28,1 51.4 ; (4) *days and nights*, 28 *passim*, 43.13-14 ; (5) *I watch*, 57.6, 61.13 ; (6) *do, will*, 57.13-14, 58.11 ; (7 *where you are*, 57.12, 51.3 ; and many others.

NOTES

In this series The Minor Poet appears as fugleman for the first (and last) time. Having no original contribution of Shakespeare's to copy from, he (acting possibly under orders) " Shakespearizes " instead, *i.e.*, he borrows extensively from Shakespeare's poems and early plays as Shakespeare himself had done in his two sonnets in the P.P. series. In this he is faithfully followed by the other two competitors, with the result that this single series exhibits a larger number of Shakespearean ' echoes ' than can be found in all the rest of the sonnets put together. The Minor Poet borrows from *Venus and Adonis, Lucrece, Midsummer Night's Dream, Romeo and Juliet, Richard II.* and *Henry IV. ;* The Lawyer from *Venus and Adonis, Lucrece, Midsummer Night's Dream, Love's Labour's Lost, Henry IV.*, and *Henry V.;* The Humorist from *Lucrece, Midsummer Night's Dream, Two Gentlemen of Verona, King John, Richard III., Henry IV.* and *Henry V.*

These borrowings have been *underlined* in the text. This convenient device of underlining can be diverted from its old purpose, because in all these five Dramatic series there are to be found two instances, and two instances only, of a parallelism between a passage in one series and a passage in another series *belonging to the Dramatic section.* The reader will therefore please to bear in mind that in this and all the rest of the Dramatic series words and passages have been underlined in the text in order to call attention to Shakespearean ' echoes,' *not*, as in the Personal section to ' outside verbal parallelisms.' He will observe that in some sonnets in this series, *e.g.*, 98, 97, 51, 45, these echoes are so numerous that they give the text the appearance of patchwork pure and simple. The identification and sorting out of these patches is the main object of these Notes.[1]

[1] I have not hitherto directly invited the reader's attention to the step-by-step progress of my demonstration of the truth of The Theory. But at this point I cannor refrain from asking him to consider carefully the significance of the fact that this sudden and arbitrary change in the meaning of a very freely-used symbol can be made without the slightest risk of causing confusion.

The Minor Poet. (Nos. 98, 99, 47, 48, 27, 28, 57).

The change from the ' Personal ' to the ' Dramatic ' form affects only one of M.P.'s characteristics, *viz., The Flunkey.* The remainder continue in undiminished force, and are all represented in this series—in many cases in an exaggerated degree. *Smooth Versification, passim ; Sound not Sense,* 98.8, 47.4, 28.4 ; *Slovenly Phrasing,* 98.6, 27.12-13, 28.5-6 ; *Confused Thought,* 99.2-3 and 11.8 ; *Forcing the Note,* 99.3-5 and 11-12, 28.9-12.

98.

This sonnet is M.P.'s first original (!) contribution. In design it is a variation on the theme of one of Petrarch's best-known sonnets (42) beginning—

> Zefiro torna e'l bel tempo rimena,
> E ifiori e l'erbe, sua dolce famiglia,
> E garrir Progne e pianger Filomena,
> E primavera candida e vermiglia.
> . . . . .
> Ma per me, lasso, tornano i più gravi
> Sospiri . . .

In execution it is an interesting piece of patchwork made up almost entirely of phrases taken from certain passages in (a) Shakespeare's early plays, (b) The Personal Sonnets, and (c) one of Constable's *Diana* sonnets. The mutual relations between these passages are in several cases so interesting, and the passages themselves in *all* cases so well worth quoting for their own sakes, that instead of merely exhibiting the ' echoed ' lines, one is tempted to go a bit farther and essay a sort of *réconstitution du vol* by exhibiting also the similarities of thought and language which may be supposed to have linked the passages together in M.P.'s mind, and influenced him in selecting them as his material.

To begin with then, one may assume that The Patron's separation from his Mistress which The Poet was called upon to celebrate in song took place *in the spring.* This circumstance apparently (and very naturally) reminded M.P. of Shakespeare's lovely lines in the P.E. series (No. 102)—

> Our love was new, and then but *in the spring*
> When I was wont *to greet it with my lays* ;
> As *Philomel in summer's front doth sing.*
> And stops her pipe in growth of riper days :
> Not that the summer is less pleasant now
> Than when her mournful hymns did hush the night,
> But that wild music burthens every bough,
> And *sweets* grown common lose their dear *delight,*

and his own imitation thereof in the same series (No. 104)—

> Three *winters* cold
> Have from the forests shook three *summer's pride,*
> Three beauteous *springs* to yellow autumn turn'd
> In process of the seasons have I seen,
> Three *April perfumes* in three hot Junes burn'd,
> Since first I saw you *fresh,* which yet are green.

These last-quoted lines of his own seem to have started M.P. off on two divergent trains of thought : (a) The triumph of spring over winter, and (b) The decay of summer.

To take (a) first. It would seem that the passage that first suggested itself to M.P.'s mind in connection with this ' train ' was that most delightfully poetical of dance-invitations, Old Capulet's speech to Paris, in which he promises him—

Such comfort as do *lusty young men* feel
When *well-apparel'd April* on the heel
Of limping *winter* treads, even such *delight*
Among *fresh* female buds shall you this night
Inherit at my house.

The Capulet's " lusty young men " rejoicing in the first flush of Nature's springtide and their own seem in their turn to have suggested that splendid picture of youthful vigour and exuberance painted in *Henry IV. I.*:

Hotspur. Where is his son,
The nimble-footed madcap Prince of Wales,
And his comrades, that daff'd the world aside,
And bid it pass ?
Vernon. All furnish'd, all in arms,
All plum'd like estridges that wing the wind
Baited like eagles having lately bath'd,
Glittering in golden coats, like images,
As full of spirit as the month of May,
And gorgeous as the sun at *midsummer,*
Wanton as *youthful* goats, *wild* as *young* bulls.
I saw young Harry, with his beaver on,
His cushes on his thighs, gallantly arm'd,
Rise from the ground like feather'd Mercury,
And vaulted with such ease into his seat,
As if an angel dropp'd down from the clouds,
To turn and wind a fiery Pegasus
And witch the world with noble horsemanship.
Hotspur. No more, no more : worse than the sun in March
This praise doth nourish agues. Let them come ;
They come like sacrifices *in their trim,*
And to the fire-ey'd maid of smoky war
All hot and bleeding will we offer them.

And his " well apparell'd April " appears to have recalled a line from one of Sidney's sonnets :

May then *young,* his *pied weeds* showing.

To return now to the other train of thought (b). It would seem that the first lines to suggest themselves in this connection were the well-known ones in Titania's speech to Oberon, (*Midsummer Night's Dream, Act II., sc.* 1) which have the " alteration of the seasons " as their keyword :—

'The seasons alter : hoary-headed frosts
Fall in the *fresh lap* of the *crimson rose,*
And on old Hiems' thin and icy crown
An *odorous chaplet of sweet summer buds*
Is, as in mockery, set.

The " crimson rose " in its turn seems to have suggested the lines from Constable's recently published *Diana* sonnet (I-IX) beginning :—

My lady's presence makes *the roses red*
Because to see her lips they blush for shame.
The *lily's* leaves for envy *pale became,*

and the general sentiment of this sonnet to have brought to M.P.'s mind the similar conceit in H.'s B.I. Sonnet (No. 53) :—

Describe Adonis, and the *counterfeit*
Is poorly imitated after you ;
Speak of the spring and foison of the year,
The one doth *shadow* of your *beauty* show,
The other as your bounty doth appear ;
And you in every blessed shape we know.

which in its turn seems to have been responsible for the slight turn to Constable's conceit given by M.P. in the latter portion of his sonnet.

One can now see how M.P., with these seven passages in his mind—or most probably actually before him in black and white—selected, adapted, and pieced together his material into a rather unusual-looking but still ear-satisfying unity. Barnes' remarkable gift of musical expression rarely fails him, and has certainly served him well here. Practically every line of the sonnet can be accounted for :—

98	*References.*
From you I have been absent *in the spring*,	Our love was new and then but *in the spring*,
When proud-*pied April*, *dress'd in all his trim*,	Such comfort as do lusty *young men* feel
Hath put a *spirit* of *youth* in every thing,	When *well-apparel'd April* on the heel
That heavy Saturn laugh'd and leap'd with him.	*May* then *young* her *pied weeds* showing.
	They come like sacrifices *in their trim*,
Yet nor the *lay* of *birds*, nor the *sweet smell*	As full of *spirit* as the month of *May*,
Of different *flowers* in *odour* and in hue,	When I was wont to greet it with my *lays*,
Could make me any *summer's* story tell,	As *Philomel* in *summer's* front doth sing,
Or from their proud *lap* pluck them where they grew:	An *odorous* chaplet of *sweet summer buds*
	Fall in the fresh *lap* of the *crimson rose*,
Nor did I wonder at the *lily's white*,	My lady's presence makes the *roses red*,
Nor praise the *deep vermilion in the rose;*	The *lily's* leaves for envy *pale* became,
They were but *sweet*, but *figures* of *delight*,	And *sweets* grown common lose their dear *delight*.
Drawn after you, you *pattern* of all those.	Describe Adonis, and the *counterfeit*
Yet seem'd it winter still, and, you away,	Is poorly *imitated after you*,
As with *your shadow* I with these did play.	The one doth *shadow of your* beauty show.

6. Note the un-Shakespearean transposition *metri causa* of " different " and " flowers."

7. An allusion to the title of the play from which the poet was borrowing.

8. Note the senseless alteration of " fresh " to " proud "—apparently to get an alliterative effect with " lap " and " pluck."

11. Malone not unreasonably asked " What more could be expected of flowers ? "

99.

This sonnet is a continuation of 98 and forms with it a single continuous poem. It is a straightforward, barefaced plagiarism of Constable's *Diana* Sonnet No. 1, IX., from which M.P. had already started borrowing in the latter half of 98. It is worth while ' parallelizing ' the two sonnets for comparison.

The forward *violet* thus did I chide :	" My lady's presence makes *the roses* red,
Sweet thief, whence didst thou steel *thy sweet that smells*,	Because to see her lips they *blush for shame.*
If not *from my love's breath* ? The *purple* pride	
Which on thy soft cheek for complexion dwells	The *lily's leaves* for envy *pale* became ;
In my love's *veins* thou hast too grossly *dyed.*	And her *white hands* in them this envy bred.
The *lily* I condemn'd for thy *hand*,	The Marigold her leaves abroad doth spread ;
And buds of marjoram had stol'n thy hair ;	Because the sun's and her power are the same.
The roses fearfully on thorns did stand,	The *violet* of *purple colour* came,
One *blushing shame*, another white despair ;	*Dyed* in the *blood* she made my heart to shed.
A third, nor red nor white, had stol'n of both,	In brief. *All flowers* from her *their virtue take ;*
And to his robbery had annexed *thy breath* ;	From *her sweet breath their sweet smells do proceed ;*
But, for his theft, in pride of all his growth,	The living heat which her eyebeams doth make
A vengeful canker eat him up to death.	Warmeth the ground and quickeneth the seed.
More *flowers* I noted, yet I none could see	The rain, wherewith she watereth the flowers
But *sweet* or *colour* it had stol'n from thee.	Falls from mine eyes, which she dissolves in showers."

The reader will notice that this sonnet has fifteen lines instead of fourteen, the first line being redundant. A fondness for fifteen-line sonnets is a characteristic of Barnes ;

his *Parthenophe* and *Parthenophil* contain no less than eighteen fifteen-liners, *i.e.*, more than 10 per cent. of the whole.

7. Note that the lady was a blonde; the commentators say that the colour of marjoram buds is 'dark auburn.'

8. As DOWDEN remarks "'To stand on thorns' is an old proverbial phrase." A puerile conceit.

9. How does one blush *white?* It would seem that Constable's conceit about the red rose blushing for shame brought to M.P.'s mind the French sonnetteer's line from which it was imitated—

> Telle rouge de honte, ou de désespoir pâle,

and he stupidly mistook the meaning of the second " de " and mistranslated accordingly. This must be the reason—it would have been just as easy for him to translate correctly, *e.g.*,

> One blushing shame, one white-fac'd with despair;

11. But see ll. 2 and 3. The lady's breath smells of roses and violets at the same time. M.P. has taken literally the statement in ll. 8-9 of Constable's sonnet about his mistress being responsible for the sweet smells of *all* flowers.

These two examples of the way in which M.P. cheerfully perpetuates absurdities 'on authority' throws an interesting sidelight on his sloppy mentality.

12. Apparently an echo from *Romeo and Juliet*, II. 111-30—

> Full soon the *canker death eats up* that plant.

47.

This tiresome conceit of the lover's heart fighting, or disputing, or co-operating with his eyes is driven to death by Elizabethan sonnetteers. LEE writes " The war between the eye and the heart is a favourite topic among the Renaissance sonnetteers, the cue being given by their master Petrarch whose sonnet LV. is a dialogue between a poet and his eyes, and sonnet XCIX. is a companion dialogue between the poet and his heart. Ronsard treats the conceit in an ode (Bk. IV. Ode 20). Among English versions contemporary with Shakespeare the most familiar are Watson's *Tears of Fancie* (1593) XIX. and XX., a pair of sonnets closely resembling Shakespeare's sonnets XLVI. and XLVII., Drayton's *Idea* XXIII., Barnes' *Parthenophil* XX., and Constable's *Diana* Decade VI., Sonnet VII." There are several others.

The reader is requested to note for future comparison with the respective imitations of the other two competitors that in this sonnet the Mistress' " picture " is an actual portrait which the Lover carries about with him.

In this sonnet and every succeeding one in M.P.'s contributions (Nos. 48, 27, 28, and 57) the reader will find faint echoes from a passage in *Richard II.*, Act I., sc. iii, where old John of Gaunt bids farewell to his son Bolingbroke, whom the King has just condemned to banishment :—

> Gaunt. Thy *grief* is but thy *absence* for a time.
> Boling. Joy *absent, grief* is *present* for that time.
> Gaunt. What is six winters? they are quickly gone.
> Boling. To men in joy; but *grief* makes *one hour ten*.
> Gaunt. Call it a *travel* that thou tak'st for pleasure.
> Boling. *My heart will sigh* when I miscall it so,
> Which finds it an inforced *pilgrimage*.
> Gaunt. The sullen passage of thy *weary steps*
> Esteem as foil wherein thou art to set
> The *precious jewel* of thy *home return*.

Boling. Nay, rather, every tedious stride I make
Will but remember me *what a deal of world*
I *wander* from the *jewels* that I love.

In this sonnet the echoes are in lines 4 and 10. This continual harping on this 'banishment' motif lends colour to the hypothesis that the Employer is Southampton, and that his absence from his Mistress was not altogether a voluntary one, but due to the Queen having given him 'leave to travel'—a well-understood euphemism.

48

5. Note the echo from the *Richard II.* passage—

I wander from *the jewels that I love.*

6. M.P.'s "worth" again. "Most worthy comfort" is rather an unusual way of addressing one's ladye-love.

The latter part of the sonnet is full of Shakespearean echoes from two lines in *Venus and Adonis* and from what certainly look like their respective echoes in *Lucrece* :—

(1) *V. and A.*	Into the *quiet closure of my breas* ;
Lucrece.	She wakes her heart by beating on her *breast*,
	Some purer *chest* to *close* so pure a mind.
No. 48.	Thee have I not *locked up* in any *chest*,
	Within the *gentle closure of my breast*,
(2) *V. and A.*	*Rich preys* make *true* men *thieves*,
Lucrece.	Of that *rich jewel* he should keep unknown
	From *thievish* ears, because it is his own ?
No. 48.	For *truth* proves *thievish* for a *prize so dear.*

27.

The echoes from the *Richard II.* passage are in ll. 1, 2 and 6.

5. "When body's work," "my" left out *metri causa*. This slovenly dropping of inconvenient but necessary small words is characteristic of M.P.

11-12. An echo from *Romeo and Juliet* I., V. 48—

It seems she *hangs* upon the *cheek of night*,
Like a rich *jewel* in an Ethiop's ear.

13-14. POOLER excuses this slovenly couplet by explaining "By a sort of chiasmus *thee* and *myself* have changed places." But even so, to say that a man's limbs are tired *because of himself* is quaint, to say the least of it.

28.

The echoes from the *Richard II.* passage are in ll. 1 and 8.

5-6. The bad grammar of these two lines is apparently due to M.P.'s determination to get his alliterative effect at all costs—

And *e*ach though *e*nemies to *e*ithers reign.

7-8. POOLER notes "To *complain*, i.e. by complaining, i.q. by causing me to complain." But even this far-fetched explanation fails to explain the second line: what M.P. *wanted* to say was apparently "the other by reminding me that the further I pursue my toilsome journey, the further I remove myself from thee, thereby making me complain"

57.

The echo from the *Richard II.* passage is in lines 5-6.

7-9. An echo from H.'s sonnet No. 39 in the M.P. series—

> O *absence* what a torment thou wou'dst prove,
> Were it not thy *sour* leisure gave sweet leave
> To entertain the time with *thoughts* of love.

13-14. " will " is printed *Will* in the Quarto. Cf. *Pass. Pil.* X. 8, and Notes on the Will series *infra.*

The Lawyer. (Nos. 97, 75, 46, 50, 51, 61, 58)

The change from Personal to Dramatic of course cuts out two of L.'s characteristics, *viz.*, *The Candid Friend,* and *The Old Dog.* The remaining four however are well exemplified, *viz.*, *Pedestrian Style,* 46.11-14, 61-9; *The Attorney,* 46 *passim,* 58.9-12; *The Accountant,* 58-3; *Clumsy Humour,* 75-2, 51.13-14, 61.12-13.

The way L. sets about getting into his contribution its proper quota of Shakespearean echoes is rather amusing and very characteristic. As we have seen, M.P. after concentrating a large number of echoes in his initial sonnet (no doubt with the object of calling attention to a special feature introduced for the first time) spreads the rest more or less evenly over the remaining six; taking care in all cases to harmonize them with their surroundings. L. now in *his* initial sonnet ' sees ' most of M.P.'s echoes and goes several better, with a most ludicrous effect; and then keeps the rest of his contribution entirely free of echoes with the exception of one sonnet (No. 51). It would seem that " The Old Dog " was rather bored with this new trick he had to learn, but was willing to perform it in a thorough and business-like fashion *twice,* in order to get it over, and show that he could do it when he chose as well as the youngest of them.

97.

The first thing that strikes one about this sonnet is that in construction, in sentiment, and in phrasing it follows its model M.P.'s No. 98 with extraordinary accuracy. Most of these similarities between the two sonnets have been noted under the head " Verbal Parallelisms " above, but for the sake of completeness they may be reproduced here :—

98.

From you have I *been absent* in the spring,
Yet nor the *lay of birds,* nor the sweet smell
Could make me any *summer's* story tell,
Yet seem'd it *winter* still, *and you away,*

97.

How like a *winter* hath my *absence been*
From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year!
And yet this time remov'd was *summer's* time;
Yet this abundant issue *seem'd* to me
And thou away, the very *birds* are mute;

But when one looks more closely into the two sonnets a still more striking bond of similarity becomes apparent. If the reader will kindly turn back to the notes on M.P.'s No. 97 he will see that the three chief passages laid under contribution for echoes are (a) Shakespeare's P.E. sonnet No. 102, 5-12, (b) Titania's speech in *Midsummer Night's Dream,* Act II., Sc. 1, and (c) Constable's *Diana* sonnet No. I., IX. Now in this sonnet, as will now be shown, L. also has three main sources from which he draws his echoes, and these three sources are (a) *the same* sonnet of Shakespeare's, (b) *the same* speech of Titania's, and (c) *the same* sonnet of Constable's! But he wears his rue with a difference; his general plan in every case is to avoid thoughts and phrases already ' conveyed ' by M.P.; and to seek his harvest in portions of the field left unvisited by his predecessor. Let us investigate this remarkable *tour de force,* taking the three passages in order.

(a) *Shakespeare's sonnet No.* 102. From the eight lines quoted in the notes to 98 he takes three thoughts (unappropriated by M.P.), viz., (1) the change of spring and early summer to late summer and autumn, (2) the stopping of the song of birds, and (3) the pleasures of summer:

102

As *Philomel* in summer's front doth sing,
And *stops her pipe* in *growth* of *riper days:*
Not that the *summer* is less *pleasant* now

97

The teeming *autumn*, big with rich *increase*,
For *summer* and his *pleasures* wait on thee,
And, thou away, the very *birds are mute.*

But there is still another echo also strictly 'according to plan.' The reader will notice that the passage quoted under No. 98 ends at line 12, the final couplet having been omitted from the quotation as irrelevant. Let it be added now:

Therefore, like her, I sometimes hold my tongue,
Because I would not *dull* you with my *song,*

and we get the echo—

Or if they *sing,* 'tis with so *dull* a cheer.

(b) *Titania's speech.* In the notes to 98, five lines only have been quoted (107-111) of which M.P. has appropriated three, viz., 108, 110 and 111. L. now, 'according to plan' neatly appropriates the remaining two, viz., 107 and 109.

Titania.

The seasons alter; hoary-headed *frosts*
And on *old Hiems' thin* and icy crown

97

What *freezings* have I felt, what dark days seen,
What *old December's* bareness everywhere.

[*N.B.*—In the last-quoted passage L. has also contrived to bring in his own astonishingly good line in his No. 5 in the M.A. series:

Beauty o'er *snow'd,* and *bareness every where.*]

But Titania's speech goes on directly:

. . . the spring, the summer,
The childing autumn, angry winter, change
Their wonted liveries, and the mazed world,
By their *increase,* now known not which is which,
And *this* same *progeny* . . .

and then, after a few lines of altercation with Oberon, she goes on to recall her friendship with the "little changeling boy"'s mother:

When we have laugh'd to see the sails conceive
And grow *big*-bellied with the *wanton* wind;
Which she, with pretty and with swimming gait
Following—her *womb* then rich with my young squire,

thus giving us the echoes—

The teeming autumn, big with *rich increase,*
Bearing the *wanton* burthen of the prime,
Like widowed *wombs* after their lords' decease:
Yet *this* abundant *issue* seem'd to me.

(c) *Constable's sonnet.* In the notes under 99 this sonnet has been quoted in full. The reader will remember that in that sonnet (99) M.P. had exploited it for echoes

pretty exhaustively. However there *are* gleanings which L. now makes the most of. M.P. has made a partial use of lines 2 and 3 in order to praise the lily-white hands of his ladye-love:

Const. *The lily's* leaves for envy pale became,
And her *white hands* in them this envy bred.
M.P. *The lily* I condemned for thy *hand.*

L. now takes the rest of it:

That *leaves look pale* dreading the winter's near.

But the most characteristic echo is taken from the last four lines of Constable's sonnet which M.P. had left entirely untouched and therefore lawful prize for L.:

The living heat which her eyebeams doth make
Warmeth *the ground,* and quickened the seed,
The rain, wherewith she watereth the flowers
Falls from mine eyes, which she dissolves in *showers.*

The showers watering the ground in the pleasant summer season brought to L.'s mind the culinary conceit in Lucrece (line 796):

Seasoning the earth with *showers* of silver brine,

and gave him an opportunity of perpetrating a wretched pun on the seasoning of food and the season of the year in the first two lines of 75 (which is a continuation of 97):

So are you to my thoughts as food to life,
Or as sweet-*seasoned showers* are to the *ground.*[1]

But there is yet another, and entirely fresh source of echoes from which L. draws in this sonnet. It is a 'double-headed' spring so to speak, and presents a perplexing problem to the Shakespearean scholar. The two passages are:

(1) The sparring between Navarre and Berowne in Act I., Sc. i., of *Love's Labour's Lost,* and

(2) Tarquin's remarks when he pricks his finger with Lucrece's needle (*Lucrece,* lines 330-4).

L.L.L.

Berowne is like an envious *sneaping frost*
That bites the first-born infants of *the spring.*
Well, say I am; why should proud summer boast
Before *the birds* have any *cause to sing?*

Lucrece

"So, so," quoth he, "these lets attend the time,
Like little *frosts* that sometimes threat *the spring,*
To add a more rejoicing to the prime
And give the *sneaped birds* more *cause to sing.*

That one of these Shakespearean passages plagiarizes the other is obvious to the most cursory reader. So, too, the intimate connection in thought and phraseology between these two passages and the sonnet under discussion has only to be pointed out to be instantly recognised

With all these passages plus M.P.'s 'copy' sonnet (No. 98) before us we can account fully for every line in this sonnet:—

[1] *C. A Lover's Complaint,* 17-18

Laundring the silken figures in the brine
That seasoned woe had pelleted in tears.

97

How *like a winter* has my absence been
From you, the *pleasures* of the fleeting year !

What *freezings* have I felt, what dark days seen !
What *old December's bareness everywhere !*
And yet this time remov'd was *summer's* time ;
The teeming autumn, big with *rich increase*,

Bearing the *wanton* burthen *of the prime*,

Like widowed *wombs* after their lord's decease :
Yet this abundant *issue seemed* to me
But hope of orphans and *unfathered fruit* ;
For *summer* and his *pleasures* wait on thee,
And, thou away, the very *birds are mute.*

Or, if they *sing*, 'tis with so *dull* a cheer
That *leaves* look *pale*, dreading the *winter's* near.
So are you to my thoughts as food to life,
Or as *sweet-seasoned showers* are to *the ground.*

References.

From you I have been *absent* in the spring,
Yet *seem'd it winter* still, and, you away,
Not that the *summer* is less *pleasant* now
The seasons alter ; hoary-headed *frosts*
And on *Old Hiems'* thin and icy crown
Beauty o'ersnowed, and *bareness every where.*
The childing autumn, angry winter, change
By their *increase* now knows not which is which
That bites the first-born infants *of the spring*,
And grow *big-bellied* with the *wanton* wind ;
Her *womb* then *rich* with my young squire,
And *this same progeny* of evil comes
Why should I joy in any *abortive birth*
Not that the *summer* is less *pleasant* now
Yet seem'd it *winter* still, *and, you away*,
And *stops her pipe* in growth of riper days.
Before *the birds* have any cause to *sing.*
Therefore like her I sometimes *hold my tongue*
Because I would not *dull* you with my *song.*
The lily's *leaves* for envy *pale* became,
Seasoning the earth with *showers* of silver brine,
Warmeth *the ground* and quickeneth the seed.

Now it would be unreasonable to expect anybody to construct an elaborate mosaic like this from fragments of disconnected metaphors and tropes, and still keep his imagery consistent and his logical thread unbroken throughout ; and L. comes to bad grief at least twice, viz. :—

(a) **10.** *Puzzle*—Find the parents. POOLER says : " A hendiadys ; the imagery seems blurred beyond recognition or recovery. Autumn may be understood as the earth in autumn and is evidently the mother, but who is the father ? Possibly, the prime = spring. Summer and autumn are indistinguishable. ' Yet ' must repeat the ' yet ' of l. 5, for to say a mother is a widow *yet* her child is a orphan is absurd." BEECHING explains : " It was the *early* autumn, and so the crops and fruits could as yet only be spoken of as a ' hope.' They would be orphans, because in the friend's absence summer seemed dead." The reader will note that POOLER says that " summer and autumn are indistinguishable," and that BEECHING implies the same about summer, *early* autumn, and—" the prime " ! This is as near to calling the passage nonsense as the Great Shakespeare Taboo will allow orthodox commentators to go.

(b) **11-14.** Here the matter-of-fact L. takes M.P.'s subjective " Yet *seem'd* it winter still " which governs the fanciful imagery about birds and flowers in 98 and 99, and transforms it into a series of objective statements, each more absurd than the other, about the actual changes in natural phenomena produced by his Mistress's absence. The feathered warblers of the grove actually do alter their summer song, or shut up shop altogether ; observing their unusual behaviour the summer foliage actually does proceed to change colour as though at the approach of autumn ; but instead of changing to mere ordinary brown, yellow, or red it actually turns *pale* to show how frightened it is !

The commentators follow the birds' example, and leave these lines severely alone.

75.

3-4. POOLER explains " the peace of you " as " the peace that comes to me from your friendship " and " strife 'twixt a miser and his wealth " as " a struggle . . . between pride of possession and fear of loss." Quite right no doubt, but the lines are a most clumsy and uncouth attempt to say so.

10. An unusually close imitation of ' the copy '—M.P.'s 47.3.

46.

A legal variant[1] of M.P.'s No. 47—suggested by Constable's *Diana* sonnet beginning—

> My heart mine eye accuseth of his death,
> Saying his wanton sight bred his unrest :
> Mine eye affirms my heart's unconstant faith
> Hath been his bane, and all his joys represt.

As we have seen, in 47, the only ' picture ' of the Mistress was an actual portrait. Here we have in addition to the actual portrait which belongs to the eye a mental representation of her which belongs to the heart. This was apparently suggested by Constable's *Diana* sonnet No. 5—

> Thine eye the glass where I behold my heart,
> Mine eye the window through the which mine eye
> May see my heart, and there myself espy.
> In bloody colours how thou painted art.

This passage together with the line from M.P.'s 48—

> Within the gentle closure of thy breast.

accounts for the cryptic line 6—

> A closet never pierced with crystal eyes,

concerning which POOLER says, " This gives a reason for refusal ; the heart is not open to inspection."

9. " cide." The Quarto has ' side.' We surely ought to read " 'size," *i.e.*, ' assize ' (*cf.* in the next line ' quest ' for ' inquest.')

11-14. The reader's particular attention is called to the extraordinarily clumsy and inartistic effect produced by using the rhymes ' heart ' and ' part ' twice in five successive lines. No contributor except The Lawyer could have done it.

50.

The first three lines are a combination of the first line of M.P.'s 48 with the first three lines of his 27.

9-12. Every English lover of the horse will be glad to know that our great national poet did *not* write these brutally callous lines.

51.

This is the second of L'.s two ' patch-work ' sonnets in which he doggedly determines to shew what he *can* do in the way of piecing together Shakespearean echoes. It is quite as intricate as its predecessor (97). The basic idea of the sonnet is to develop the thought of a " return in happy plight."

The Lover is to return, as he went, on horseback, and L. ransacks his memory—or his library—for passages in Shakespeare referring to horses. The first passage that, apparently, occurred to him was the episode of Adonis' runaway nag in *V. and A.* This gave him :—

> Let me *excuse thy courser*, gentle boy,
> His eye, which scornfully glistens *like fire*,
> Shows his hot courage and his high *desire*.
> . . . . . the high *wind* sings
> Fanning his hairs who wave like feather'd *wings*.

[1] Lord Campbell, a former Lord Chief Justice, commenting on Shakespeare's knowledge of law, said of this sonnet : " I need go no further than this sonnet, which is so intensely legal in language and imagery that without a considerable knowledge of English forensic procedure, it cannot be fully understood."

Then the two gallops in *Lucrece*, namely, (a) Tarquin riding post from Ardea to Collatium, and (b) Lucrece's groom riding post from Collatium to Ardea. These gave him :—

(a) From the besieged Ardea all in *post*,
Borne by the trustless *wings* of false *desire*,
Lust-breathed Tarquin leaves the Roman host,
And to Collatium bears the lightless *fire*
Which, in pale embers hid, lurks to aspire,
(b) The *post* attends, and she delivers it,
Charging her sour-fac'd groom to hie as fast
As lagging *fowls* before the Northern *blast*.
Speed more than *speed* but *dull* and *slow* she deems :
Extremity still urges such extremes.

Then the ' horsy ' passage in *Henry V.* (Act III., Sc. vii.) where the Dauphin bores his friends with his praises of his matchless steed :—

" I will not change my horse with any that treads but on four pasterns. *Ca, ha !* He bounds from the earth as if his entrails were hairs : *le cheval volant*, the Pegasus *qui a les narines de feu !* When I bestride him *I soar*, I am a hawk ; he trots the air . . . he is *pure air and fire* ; and the *dull* elements of earth and water never appear in him but only in patient stillness while his rider mounts him ; he is indeed a horse ; and all other *jades* you may call *beasts* . . . *his neigh* is like the bidding of a monarch."

These four passages provide the framework of the sonnet, but there are several other echoes more or less suggested by " catchwords " in them and in M.P.'s ' copy ' sonnets, *viz.* :

(1) Line 3 is a combination of the *language* (not the *thought*) of M.P.'s 27.1 and his 57.12.

(2) Line 5 is a reminiscence (through the ' excuse ' of the *V. and A.* passage) of the line in *Lucrece* :

O ! *what excuse* can *my* invention *make ?*

(3) Line 7 is a reminiscence (through the ' riding post ' and ' wings of the wind ' of the *Lucrece* passages) of Rumour's line in the Introduction to the second part of *Henry IV.* :

Making *the wind my post-horse* . . .

(4) Line 9 is a reminiscence (through the combination of the thoughts of ' desire ' and ' fast travelling ') of Hermia's line in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* :

My legs *can keep no pace with my desires.*

(5) Line 10 is a reminiscence (suggested by the " lightless fire " and " aspire " of the (a) passage in *Lucrece*) of the lines in *V. and A.* :

Love is a spirit all *compact of fire*,
Not gross to sink, but light, and will aspire.

The echoes are too scattered and mixed up to allow of anything in the nature of a *réconstitution du vol*, and it is rather difficult to parallelize them as was done in the case of M.P.'s 98 and L.'s 97. However, the reader may possibly find the subjoined attempt of some assistance.

Thus can my love *excuse* the *slow* offence
Of my *dull bearer* when from thee I *speed*:

From *where thou art* why should *I haste me* thence?

Till *I return* of *posting* is no need.
O, what excuse can my poor *beast* then find,
When swift *extremity* can seem *but slow?*

Then should I spur though *mounted on the wind*
In *winged speed* no motion shall I know:

Then *can no* horse *with my desire keep pace;*
Therefore *desire, of perfect'st love being made*

Shall *neigh—no dull* flesh—in his *fiery* race

But *love*, for love, shall thus *excuse* my *jade.*

Let me *excuse* thy courser, gentle boy,
Speed more than *speed* but *dull* and *slow* she deems
Borne by the trustless *wings* of false *desire*,
Weary with toil *I haste me* to my bed,
Save, *where you are*, how happy you make those.
How can *I then return* in happy plight,
O, what excuse can my invention make?
Extremity still urges such extremes.
Speed more than *speed but* dull and *slow* she deems
Making the wind my post-horse . . .
. . . The high *wind* sings
Fanning his hairs which wave like feather'd *wings.*
When *I bestride him* I soar, I am a hawk;
My legs *can keep no pace with my desires.*
Love is a spirit all *compact of fire*,
He is pure air and *fire;* and the *dull* elements
Of earth and water *never appear in him.*
His *neigh* is the bidding of a monarch.
Let *me excuse thy courser*, gentle boy,
And all other *jades* you may call *beasts.*

The final couplet appears to be more or less original. It enshrines a characteristic pun on the two meanings of 'go,' *viz.*, 'depart' and 'walk.'

The commentators gallantly do their best to interpret this extraordinary hotch-potch as though it were an ordinary, straightforwardly-written sonnet; but one can see that they are uneasily aware that there is something wrong.

61.

This sonnet is a *cento* of thoughts and phrases from M.P.'s last three sonnets in this series.

7. POOLER explains that "shames and idle hours" is a hendiadys, the meaning being 'to see how badly I spend my spare time.' If so, it is very clumsily expressed.

9. A 'pedestrian' line.

12-14. A humorously-intended variant of M.P.'s 57.1-6

58.

This sonnet is a paraphrase in the technical phraseology of law and accountancy of M.P.'s 57.

6. An extremely clumsy and obscure line, the meaning of which is, apparently, "suffer your absence, which though it represents liberty to you, means imprisonment to me" (BEECHING). Probably the secondary meaning of liberty, *i.e.*, licentiousness, is partly responsible for the complication of thought

The Humorist. (Nos. 113, 114, 24, 52, 43, 44, 45.)

The change from Personal to Dramatic cuts out two of The Humorist's most characteristic 'characteristics,' *viz.*, *Personal Allusion* and *The Polite Shirker.* The remaining four are all exemplified, some in an exaggerated form—*Subtle Humour* in particular. H. not only parodies the words and phrases of his fellow-competitors in the ordinary way, but uses his Shakespearean echoes in a spirit of burlesque: M.P. has used his echoes throughout in good faith to provide material for and give point to his contribution; L. has used them in two sonnets only, piecing them together into an extraordinary patchwork in order to show how he *can* do it; but H. uses them to emphasize his ridicule, and make his extravagances still more extravagant. *Compressed*

Thought, 24, 43, 44, 45, *passim*; *Deliberate Dissonance*, 113.9, 24.4, 45.8; *Super-Concettist*, 113.5-12, 24 *passim*, 52.9, 43.5-6 and 13.14, 44.10-14, 45.5-8.

113-114.

In these two initial sonnets (which form one continuous poem) the main *motif* is the same as that employed by his two predecessors in theirs, *viz.*, the effect produced by the Mistress's absence on the Lover's visual observation of the phenomena of Nature, but H., as the reader will see for himself, gives the idea a characteristically ingenious and extravagant turn. He follows his predecessors, too, in introducing a large number of Shakespearean echoes, spreading them however more or less evenly over the two sonnets instead of concentrating them in one like M.P. in 98 and L. in 97. It will be rather interesting to try to follow up the lines of H.'s thought in selecting and arranging these echoes.

First then the 'absence and eye-deception' formula seems to have suggested the tricks played with Lysander's eyes which made him leave Hermia, and brought to H.'s mind Hermia's speech in Act III., Sc. ii. :—

> Dark night that from *the eye his function takes*
> The ear more quick of apprehension makes.
> Wherein it *doth impair the seeing sense*
> But why unkindly didst *thou leave me* so ?

and the cognate passage in the next Act (Act IV., Sc. i.) :—

> Methinks I see these things with *parted eye*
> When every thing *seems* double . . .

These two passages seem to have suggested Olivia's lines in *Twelfth Night*, Act I., Sc. v. :—

> I do I know not what, and *fear* to find
> *Mine eye* too *great* a *flatterer* for *my mind.*

And this in turn to have suggested (naturally enough) the lines in Henry V.'s soliloquy on the disadvantages of being a king (*Henry V.*, Act IV., Sc. i.) :—

> . . . Than they in *fearing*,
> What *drinkest thou* oft, instead of homage sweet,
> But *poison'd flattery*, O ! be sick, *great greatness.*

This drinking of a poisoned cup by a king almost inevitably brought to mind the King's death-bed scene in the last act of *King John* :—

> Hub. *The King*, I fear, is *poison'd* by a monk.
> Ba. How did he take it ? who *did taste to him* ?

And then a few lines further on in the same scene his eye was caught by Salisbury's lines to Prince Henry :—

> Be of good comfort, prince ; for you are born
> To set a *form* upon that *indigest*,
> Which he hath left so *shapeless* and so *rude.*

which seem to have struck him as being capable of being worked into "the pattern-drawing" conceit of M.P.'s 98 and 99.

Finally the 'indigest,' 'shapeless,' and 'rude' of this last-quoted passage would inevitably suggest the passages in which Richard Crookback's kinsfolk and he himself refer to his unprepossessing appearance :—

Clifford. Hence, heap of wrath, foul *indigested* lump,
As crooked in thy manners as thy *shape*.
K. Hen. To wit an *indigest deformed* lump.
Glo. But I that am not *shap'd* for sportive tricks.
I, that am *rudely* stamp'd and want love's majesty,
Cheated of *feature* by dissembling nature,
Deform'd, unfinished, sent before my time.

The echoes from these eight passages can be best exhibited by parallelizing them in the usual way. It will not be necessary to quote the two sonnets entire, as the fifteen lines containing the echoes can, except for one slight displacement, be given in their proper order :—

113-114	*References*
Since *I left you* mine *eye* is in my mind.	But why unkindly didst *thou leave me* so ?
And that which governs me to go about	Dark night that from *the eye his function takes*,
Doth *part his function* and is *partly blind*,	Wherein it doth *impair the seeing sense*
Seems seeing, but effectually *is out ;*	Methinks I *see* these things with *parted eye*
	When everything *seems* double.
For it no *form* delivers to the heart	To set a *form* upon that *indigest*,
For if it see the *rud'st* or gentlest sight,	Which he hath left so *shapeless* and so *rude*.
The most sweet favour or *deformed'st* creature,	But I that am not *shap'd* for amorous tricks,
The crow or dove, it *shapes* them to your *feature :*	I that am *rudely* stamp'd and want love's majesty,
To make of monsters and things *indigest*	Cheated of *feature* by dissembling nature,
Or whether doth *my mind*, being crown'd with you,	*Deformed*, unfinished . . .
Drink up the monarch's plague, this *flattery ?*	What *drink'st* thou oft, instead of homage sweet,
O, 'tis the first ; 'tis *flattery* in my seeing,	But *poison'd flattery*, O ! be sick *great greatness*.
And *my great mind* most *kingly drinks it* up	*Mine eye* too *great* a *flatterer* for *my mind*.
If it be *poison'd*, 'tis the lesser sin	*The King* I fear, *is poison'd* by a monk.
That *mine eye* loves it and *doth first begin*.	How did he take it ? Who *did taste to him* ?

24.

This sonnet is commended to the reader's closest attention. It is an encyclopædic parody, not only of his two fellow-competitors' Heart and Eye sonnets but also of many other previous effusions in which French and English sonnetteers have harped remorselessly on the same unexhilarating theme. A good many echoes from these sources have been quoted in the Notes to Nos. 47 and 46. Here are some more :—

Il ne fallait, madame, autres *tablettes*
Pour vous *graver* que celles *de mon âme* (Ronsard)
My mistress seeing her fair *counterfeit*
So sweetly *framed* in her bleeding *breast*, (Watson)
I figured in the *table of my heart*
The goodliest *shape* that the world's eye admires (Daniel).

No doubt there are plenty of others.

Three points may be noted :—

(a). The lady's " picture ", which in M.P.'s 47 was an actual portrait, and in L.'s 46 had provided itself with a mental replica, is in H.'s sonnet a mental image *only*.

(b). L.'s incredibly clumsy duplicate rhyming of " heart " and " part " in 46.10-14 is neatly and unobtrusively parodied in the duplicate rhymes of " heart " and " art " in this sonnet.

(c). The absurd " peeping sun " of 11-12 is a Shakespearean echo introduced (as usual with H. in this series) " to emphasize his ridicule, and make his extravagances more extravagant." It is taken from *Lucrece* (1088-90)—

O *eye of eye*,
Why pry'st thou through *my window*? Leave thy *peeping*.

The commentators' loyal attempts to make some kind of sense out of this jumbled mass of echoes are rather pathetic. Take for instance POOLER'S note on line 7. ". . the imagery is here changed; in l. 4 Shakespeare's eye is the brush, his heart the canvas, his body the frame, of his friend's picture. The second quatrain, 5-8, is connected with the first by the punning explanation *of* 'perspective'; but by a turn of this strange kaleidoscope, the body ceases to be the frame, for a part of it, viz., the bosom, has become a shop or studio in which the picture hangs. The windows of this shop are the friend's eye looking in. The sun also can see the picture, presumably by gazing through the back of the friend's head. We can hardly take 'thine eyes' (l. 8) to mean the picture's eyes, though 'thee' (l. 12) means the picture, for in that case the sun would have to see the picture by peeping through the picture's eyes."

A 'real nightmare' sonnet, like his 124 in the P.R. series.

52.

In this, as in the previous sonnet, H. uses his Shakespearean echoes to heighten the tone of burlesque in which he treats his fellow-contributors' "feast" and "treasure-chest" *motifs*. The first echo is from *I. Henry IV.*, Act III., Sc. ii.

Thus did I keep my person fresh and *new*,
My presence *like a robe* pontifical
Ne'er seen but wonder'd at; and so my state,
Seldom but sumptuous, showed like a *feast*,
And won by *rareness such solemnity*.

The second which accounts for the cryptic line—

So is the time that keeps you as my chest,

is a complicated affair involving three separate passages, *viz.*, (1) L.'s sonnet No. 65 in the B.I. series; (2) M.P.'s 'copy' sonnet No. 48 in this series; and (3) *Lucrece*, l. 761.

No. 65. Shall *Time's* best *jewel* from *Time's chest* lie hid?
No. 48. But thou to whom my *jewels* trifles are,
Thee have I not *locked up* in any *chest*,
Within the gentle *closure* of my *breast*.
Lucrece. Some purer *chest* to *close* so pure a mind.

N.B.—The "wardrobe" of line 10 is a reminiscence of the "closet" of L.'s 46.6, which again derives from the "closure" of M.P.'s 48.11. This punning on the two meanings of "chest," which seems so feeble to us, was obviously considered humorous by the Elizabethans.

Note in ll. 7 and 13 H.'s ridicule of M.P.'s fondness for "worth", the phrase specially glanced at being M.P.'s rather grotesque description of his Mistress as his "most worthy comfort" (48.6).

43.

In this "super-conceited" sonnet H. parodies the language of M.P.'s 27 and L.'s 61, but the key to its *construction* is the burlesquing of M.P.'s fancy for doubling a word in the same line as exhibited in his 28. Compare the two sonnets:

28

But *day* by *night*, and *night* by *day* oppressed?
But *day* doth *daily* draw my sorrows longer,
And *night* doth *nightly* make griefs *strength seem stronger*.

43.

And, *darkly bright*, are *bright* in *dark* directed.
And thou, whose *shadow shadows* doth make *bright*,
How would thy *shadows' form form* happy show
All *days* are *nights* to *see* till I *see* thee,
And *nights* bright *days* when dreams do show thee me.

The Shakespearean echoes in this sonnet are taken from Valentine's soliloquy in *Two Gent. of Verona*, Act III., Sc. i, just after the Duke has sentenced him to *banishment* for daring to make love to his daughter :—

> . . . banish'd from her
> Is self from self—a deadly banishment !
> *What light is light*, if Silvia be not seen ?
> What joy is joy, if Silvia be not by ?
> Unless it be to think that she is by
> And feed upon *the shadow of perfection.*
> Except I be by Silvia *in the night*,
> There is no music in the nightingale ;
> Unless *I look on* Silvia *in the day*,
> *There is no day* for me *to look upon.*

Cf. with this passage the sentiment and language of the last six lines of this sonnet, especially :

> By *looking on* thee *in the living day*,
> When *in dead night* thy *fair imperfect shade*
> *All days are nights to see till I see thee.*

The passage was no doubt brought to H.'s mind by the very similar ' banishment ' passage in *Richard II.* drawn upon so freely by M.P. in the last five sonnets of his contribution to this series (*v.* Notes on Nos. 47, 48, 27, 28 and 57).

44.

The Shakespearean echoes in this sonnet are rather interesting. In the first line H. gets " the *dull* substance of my *flesh* " from L.'s remarkable steed Desire in No. 51, " no *dull flesh* in his fiery race." This line apparently recalled its original—the passage in *Henry V.* in which the Dauphin brags about his charger (quoted at length in the Notes to that sonnet) " he is pure *air* and *fire ;* and the *dull elements of earth and water* never appear in him." This passage accounts for line 11,

> But that so much *of earth and water* wrought,

also for the " elements " of line 13, and the " air " and " fire " of the first line of the next sonnet (No. 45). Also this ' horsy ' conversation between the Dauphin and his friends apparently recalled the line in the ' Induction ' to the play, in which Chorus tells the audience :

> Think when we talk of horses that you see them,

and goes on to remark :

> For 'tis *your thoughts* that now must deck our kings,
> Carrying them here and there, *jumping o'er* times.

Another converging line of recollection comes from the ' measuring of miles ' by L.'s maltreated " dull bearer " in No. 50. These measured miles separating him from his love appear to have recalled the Bastard's speech in *King John*, Act I., Sc. i. :

> . . . *Large lengths of sea and shore*
> Between my father and my mother lay.

At any rate, the two last-quoted passages are, between them, clearly responsible for the two lines :

> For nimble *thought* can *jump* both *sea and land*
> To *leap large lengths of miles* when thou art gone,

45.

The Shakespearean echoes in this sonnet though just as unmistakable as in the others

are not so much 'on the surface'; and besides, they are mixed up rather more than usual with parodies of the thoughts and phrases occurring in the sonnets of his two fellow-competitors in this series.

They are drawn from three sources:

(1) The 'horse and four elements' prose passage in *Henry V.* (already quoted at length in the case of M.P.'s 51). This may be regarded as an 'over-flow' from the preceding sonnet.

(2) Valentine's sonnet to Silvia in *Two Gent. of Verona*, Act III., Sc. i., which begins—

> *My thoughts* do harbour with my Silvia nightly,
> And *slaves* they are to *me that send them* flying,

and goes on—

> My *herald thoughts* in thy pure bosom rest them.

H.'s selection of this passage seems to have been determined by the two circumstances that Valentine's sonnet is separated by only a single short speech from the 'banishment' passage from which he got the echoes for his No. 43 (*v.* Notes above), and that its first two lines fitted in excellently with the final sonnets of his two fellow-competitors, both of whom had used 'thoughts' and 'slave' as their main *motifs*.

(3) The despatch and return of the post in *Lucrece* (1359 et. seq.):

> But long she thinks till he *returns again*,
> But yet the *duteous vassal* scarce *is gone*
> But now the mindful *messenger come back*.

These lines would appear to have been suggested to him (a) by L.'s use of the same passage for his 'posting' conceit in No. 51, and (b) by the "vassal" of L.'s 58.4 (which again connects with the "slaves" and "servants" of Valentine's sonnet).

As noted above, H. has mixed up with these echoes a good many parodies of phrases and thoughts occurring in his fellow-competitors' sonnets in this series, viz.:

> 47. Thyself *away art present* still with me;
> For thou not *farther* than *my thoughts* canst move,
> And I am still with them, *and they with thee*;
> 27. For then *my thoughts*, from far *where I abide*,
> *Intend a*[1] zealous pilgrimage *to thee*.
> 51. Then can no horse with *my desire* keep pace;
> In winged *speed* no *motion* shall I know:
> 57. And like a *sad* slave stay and think of nought.

With these passages before us the nine lines in which the echoes occur can be exhibited in a parallelism in the usual way:—

No. 45	*References*
The other two, *slight air and* purging *fire*,	He is *pure air and fire* . . .
Are both *with thee wherever I abide;*	For then *my thoughts* from far *where I abide*,
	And I am still with them, and they *with thee:*
	My thoughts do harbour with my Silvia nightly,
The first *my thought*, the other *my desire*.	Then can no horse with *my desire* keep pace
	In winged *speed* no *motion* shall I know:
These *present-absent* with *swift motion* slide,	Thyself *away art present still* with me;
For when these quicker *elements are gone*	The dull *elements* of earth and water *never appear*
	And yet the duteous vassal scarce *is gone*,
In tender embassy of love *to thee*,	*Intend a* zealous *pilgrimage to thee*,
By those swift *messengers return'd* from thee,	My *herald thoughts* in thy pure bosom rest them;
Who even now *come back again*, assured	But now the mindful *messenger come back*,
	But long she thinks ere he *return again*,
I send them back again, and straight grow *sad*.	And slaves they are to me *that send them* flying:
	And like a *sad* slave stay and think of nought.

[1] This neat little pun on "in tender" and "intend a" was probably introduced to shew L. that he could beat him at his own game.

One point in connection with the ' Shakespearizing ' sonnets of this series must have forced itself on the reader's notice, namely, that the people who worked out the echoes taken from the *plays* (the *poems* of course had been public property for years) must have had copies of the plays in question before them when they were writing ; the imitations are much too elaborate and recondite to be merely adaptations of chance lines and phrases caught by the ear at the theatre. Now if The Theory is correct in assuming that this series was written at latest in 1599, and possibly at the time of Southampton's departure from England in 1597, it follows that in many cases *printed* copies of the echoed plays could not have been available to the competitors. *Richard II.*, *Richard III.*, and *Romeo and Juliet* were first published in 1597, *Love's Labour's Lost* and *I. Henry IV.* in 1598, but *Henry V.* and *Midsummer Night's Dream* were not published till 1600. Moreover, two of the echoed plays, *Two Gentlemen of Verona* and *King John*, were never published *at all* until they appeared in the First Folio of 1623. The inference is that before the end of the century *written* copies of Shakespeare's plays were, like his sonnets, being freely circulated " among his private friends." It would seem that the importance of such MS. copies as possible sources of the various texts has been rather underrated by the experts. One receives the impression that they regard the *quarto* texts at any rate as of almost exclusively *theatrical* origin—taken from stage managers' and prompters' ' acting ' versions, actors' transcripts of their parts, shorthand notes taken during performances, and so forth.

SERIES No. 10.—Estrangement Anticipated.

In this series Shakespeare reappears as ' copy '-setter. The Minor Poet and The Humorist have disappeared (the former for good), and a new competitor makes his bow in the person of The Newcomer, who may probably be identified with Samuel Daniel, the author of the *Delia* collection of sonnets. The Lawyer completes the trio. The addressee is probably the lady of the Absence series, the tone of respectful homage being very much the same in both series.

The Theme. The Lover sorrowfully anticipates the loss of his Mistress's affection.

SERIES No. 10—

The Theme.—The Lover sorrowfully

SHAKESPEARE

88

When thou shalt be disposed to set me light,
And place my merit *in the eye* of scorn,
Upon thy side against myself I'll fight,
And prove thee virtuous, though thou art forsworn.
With mine own weakness being best *acquainted,*
Upon thy part I can set down a story
Of faults conceal'd, wherein I am attainted ;
That thou in losing me shalt win much glory :
And I by this will be a gainer too ;
For bending all my loving thoughts on thee,
The injuries that to myself I do,
Doing thee vantage, double-vantage me.
Such is my love, to thee I so *belong,*
That for thy right myself will bear all *wrong.*

89

Say that thou didst forsake me for some fault,
And I will comment upon that offence :
Speak of my lameness, and I straight will halt,
Against thy *reasons* making *no defence.*
Thou canst not, love, disgrace me half so ill,
To set a form upon desired *change,*
As I 'll myself disgrace ; knowing thy will,
I will acquaintance strangle and look *strange* ;
Be absent from thy walks ; and in my tongue
Thy sweet beloved name no more shall dwell,
Lest I, too much profane, should do it wrong,
And haply of our old acquaintance tell.
For thee, against myself I'll vow debate,
For I must ne'er love him whom thou dost hate.

90

Then *hate me* when thou wilt ; if ever, *now* ;
Now, while the world is bent my deeds to cross,
Join with the spite of fortune, make me bow
And do not drop in for an after-loss :
Ah, do not, when my heart hath 'scaped this sorrow,
Come in the rearward of a conquer'd woe ;
Give not a windy night a rainy morrow,
To linger out a purposed overthrow.
If thou wilt leave me, do not *leave me* last,
When other petty griefs have done their spite,
But in the onset come : so shall I taste
At first the very worst of fortune's might ;
And other strains of woe, which now seem woe,
Compared with loss of thee will not seem so.

THE LAWYER

49

Against that time, if ever that time come,
When I shall see thee frown on my defects,
When as thy love hath cast his utmost sum,
Call'd to that audit by advised respects ;
Against that time when thou shalt *strangely* pass,
And scarcely greet me with that sun, *thine eye,*
When love, *converted* from the thing it was,
Shall reasons find of settled gravity ;
Against that time do I ensconce me here
Within the knowledge of mine own desert,
And this my hand *against myself* uprear,
To guard the lawful *reasons on thy part* :
To *leave poor me* thou hast the strength of laws
Since why to love *I can allege no cause.*

149

Canst thou, O cruel ! say I love thee not,
When *I against myself with thee partake ?*
Do I not think on thee, when I forgot
Am of myself, all tyrant, for thy sake ?
Who hateth thee that I do call my friend
On whom frown'st thou that I do fawn upon ?
Nay, if thou lour'st on me, do I not spend
Revenge upon myself with present moan ?
What merit do I in myself respect,
That is so proud thy service to despise,
When all my best doth worship thy defect,
Commanded by the motion of thine eyes ?
But, love, *hate on,* for *now* I know thy mind ;
Those that can see thou lovest, and I am blind.

87

Farewell ! thou art too dear for my possessing,
And like enough thou know'st thy estimate :
The charter of thy worth gives thee releasing ;
My bonds in thee are all determinate.
For how do I hold thee but by thy granting ?
And for that riches where is my deserving ?
The cause of this fair gift in me is wanting,
And so my patent back again is swerving.
Thyself thou gavest, thy own worth then not knowing,
Or me, to whom thou gavest it, else mistaking ;
So thy great gift, upon misprison growing,
Comes home again, on better judgment making.
Thus have I had thee, as a dream doth flatter,
In sleep a king, but waking no such matter.

TREATMENT OF THE THEME.

Shakespeare has four main thoughts :

(a). Your love is the most precious of my possessions. (90.9-14).

(b). But I fear the time will come when that love will change to hatred. (88, 89, *passim*).

(c). When this happens I shall not dispute your right to change, but on the contrary will act as your advocate. (88, 89, *passim*).

(d). So let it happen *now* (90 *passim*).

ESTRANGEMENT ANTICIPATED. (E.A.)

anticipates the loss of his Mistress's affection.

THE NEWCOMER

91

Some glory in their birth, some in their skill.
Some in their wealth, some in their body's force ;
Some in their garments, though new-fangled ill ;
Some in their hawks and hounds, some in their horse;
And every humour hath his adjunct pleasure,
Wherein it finds a joy above the rest :
But these particulars are not my measure ;
All these I better in one general best.
Thy love is better than high birth to me,
Richer than wealth, prouder than garments' cost,
Of more delight than hawks or horses be ;
And having thee, of all men's pride I boast :
Wretched in this alone, that thou mayst take
All this away and me most wretched make.

92

But do thy worst to steal thyself away,
For term of life thou art assured mine ;
And life no longer than thy love will stay,
For it depends upon that love of thine.
Then need I not to fear the worst of *wrongs*,
When in the least of them my life hath end.
I see a better state to me *belongs*
Than that which on thy humour doth depend :
Thou canst not vex me with inconstant mind,
Since that my life on thy revolt doth lie.
O, what a happy title do I find,
Happy to have thy love, happy to die !
But what 's so blessed-fair that fears no blot ?
Thou mayst be false, and yet I know it not.

93

So shall I live, supposing thou art true,
Like a deceived husband ; so love's face
May still seem love to me, though alter'd new ;
Thy looks with me, thy heart in other place ;
For there can live no *hatred in thine eye*,
Therefore in that I cannot know thy *change*.
In many's looks the false heart's history
Is writ in moods and frowns and wrinkles *strange*,
But heaven in thy creation did decree
That in thy face sweet love should ever dwell ;
Whate'er thy thoughts or thy heart's workings be,
Thy looks should nothing thence but sweetness tell
How like Eve's apple doth thy beauty grow,
If thy sweet virtue answer not thy show.

The Lawyer follows S. closely in all four :
(a). (87.1, 6, 7, 11) ; (b) (49.1-8) ; (c) (49.9-14, 149.2) ; (d) (149.13-14, 87.1.)
The Newcomer follows S. in (a) (91 *passim*) ; (b) (93.2-6) ; but cannot follow him in (c) and (d), because he introduces the ingenious conceit that the shock of the discovery of the loss of her love would kill him on the spot.

VERBAL PARALLELISMS.

The number of verbal parallelisms is quite up to the average. There is a very close

resemblance in tone and treatment between S.'s first two sonnets 88 and 89, and L.'s first two sonnets 49 and 149, and a large number of parallelisms is the natural result. Owing to N.'s omission of thoughts (c) and (d) his contribution yields only two or three.

S. *And* place my merit *in the eye* of scorn,
L. *And* scarcely greet me with that sun *thine eye.*
N. For there can live no hatred *in thine eye.*

S. *Upon thy side against myself* I'll fight.
For thee against myself I'll vow debate.
L. And this my hand *against myself* uprear.
When I *against myself with thee partake ?*

S. *With mine own weakness* being best *acquainted.*
L. *Within the knowledge of mine own desert.*

S. *Upon thy part I can set down a story*
Against thy *reasons* making *no defence.*
L. To guard the lawful *reasons on thy part*
Since why to love *I can allege no cause.*

S. To set a form upon desired *change,*
I will acquaintance strangle and look *strange.*
L. When love *converted* from the thing it was,
Against that time when thou shalt *strangely* pass.
N. Therefore in that I cannot know thy *change.*
Is writ in moods and frowns and wrinkles *strange.*

S. For I must ne'er love him whom thou dost hate.
L. Who hateth thee that I do call my friend ?

S. Then *hate me* if thou wilt ; if ever *now* ;
L. But, love, *hate on,* for *now* I know thy mind.

Minor Parallelisms.—*wrong-belong,* 88.14, 92.5 ; *leave me,* 90.9, 49.13.

NOTES.

Shakespeare. (Nos. 88, 89, 90.)

Shakespeare's contribution strikes one as being rather below his average. WYNDHAM however is of the opinion that his No. 90 is as good a poem as any in the collection, and remarks that " the eloquence is peerless." It is undoubtedly a fine and subtly-constructed sonnet, but it is marred (in my humble judgment) by a prosaic fourth line and a feeble couplet.

The Lawyer. (Nos. 49, 149, 87.)

The Lawyer's contribution is rather above his average. *The Attorney* and *The Accountant* characteristics shew up with great effect, the former in 49.11-14 and 87 *passim,* the latter in 49.3-4, and 87.1-2.

49.

For some reason or other L., alone of the competitors, and in this sonnet only, chooses to indulge in a set of Shakespearean " echoes " of the Absence series type. The main passage selected is the King's conversation with Hubert in *King John,* Act IV., Sc. ii.—

King. To understand a *law*, to know the meaning
Of dangerous majesty, when, perchance, it *frowns*
More upon humour than *advised respect*.
Hub. Here is your *hand* and seal for what I did.
King. O ! *when* the last *account* 'twixt heaven and earth
Is to be made, then shall *this hand* and seal
Witness against us to damnation.

There is also a rather less definite echo from *Richard III.*, Act. III., Sc. vii, where Gloucester pretends to refuse the crown :—

Your love deserves my thanks ; but *my desert*
Unmeritable *shuns* your high request :
So mighty and so many *my defects*.

L.'s technical knowledge of law and accountancy is much in evidence in this sonnet, *e.g.*, l. 3. on which POOLER notes : " a metaphor from closing accounts on a dissolution of partnership ; cast=reckoned ; utmost=last ; advised respects=a deliberate consideration of our respective circumstances " ; and l. 11. on which BEECHING notes : " as a witness in a court of law, which is perhaps better than to take it as a metaphor from fighting."

149.

The lady, seeking to break off a love-affair which has ceased to interest her, is supposed to have taken advantage of the opening given in the final couplet of the preceding sonnet to load the Lover with the reproaches usual in such circumstances—" he does not really love her ; he never thinks of her when she is away ; he is friendly with people who dislike her ; he never pays her the little attentions that mean so much, etc., etc." In this sonnet the Lover proceeds to deal with these unfounded charges *seriatim*, until at the end of line 10 the justly-exasperated lady breaks in, and tells him that when he argues like that he makes her positively *hate* him. The word ' hate ' opens his eyes to the facts of the situation ; he accepts his dismissal, apologizes for his obtuseness in not taking the hint before, and prepares to take a dignified farewell of the inconstant fair one.

In line 11 note the first of the only two ' outside ' parallelisms to be found in the five Dramatic series. The line echoes (or, perhaps, is echoed by) S.'s line in No. 150 in the D.L. series —

That in my mind, thy worst all best exceeds ?

87.

This is the dignified farewell—a veritable legal *tour de force* which could hardly have been written by anybody but a professional lawyer.

The Newcomer. (Nos. 91, 92, 93.)

The Newcomer's versification is easy and pleasing, but his style lacks distinction, and his grip on his logical thread is at times uncertain.

91.

It is instructive to compare the truly " British Barbarian " list of the chief " goods " of life given in this *Dramatic* sonnet, in which the poet (N.) is speaking in the person of a rich young aristocrat[1], with the very different list given in the *Personal* (D.D. series)

[1]The commentators apparently find no difficulty in accepting this sonnet as an entirely natural and suitable expression of the personal sentiments of Will Shakspere, " one of those harlotry players," and son to Master John Shakspere, butcher, of Stratford-on-Avon.

sonnet No. 29, where the poet (S.) speaking in his own person complains of the hardships of his worldly lot, and voices the " splendid discontent " of the artist—

> Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,
> With what I most enjoy contented least.

92.

5-6. How can the loss of his Mistress's affection be " the least " of the " wrongs " ? There must be some confusion of thought here.

12. Why should he be " happy to die " ? He would die in misery knowing that his Mistress had ceased to love him. More confusion of thought.

93.

14. What he *means* is—

> If thy virtue answer not thy sweet show,

but this would not scan.

SERIES No. XI.—Intrigue.

The competitors are the same as in the last series, but the addressee is different. She is no longer the blonde divinity of the Absence and E.A. series, but is merely " a woman," and " colour'd ill " (*i.e.*, a brunette) at that.

The Theme. The Lover is annoyed at discovering an intrigue between his Mistress and his best friend.

SERIES No. II—

The Theme.—The Lover is annoyed at discovering

SHAKESPEARE

144

Two loves I have of *comfort* and despair,
Which like two spirits do suggest me still :
The better angel is a man right fair,
The worser spirit a woman colour'd ill.
To win me soon to hell, my female evil
Tempteth my better angel from my side,
And would corrupt my saint to be a devil,
Wooing his purity with her foul pride.
And whether that my angel be turn'd fiend
Suspect I may, yet not directly tell ;
But being *both* from me, *both* to each *friend*,
I guess one angel in another's hell :
Yet this shall I ne'er know, but live in doubt,
Till my bad angel fire my good one out.

40

Take all my loves, my love, yea, take them all ;
What *hast thou* then more than *thou hadst* before ?
No love, my love, that thou mayst true love call ;
All mine was thine before thou hadst this more.
Then, if *for my love* thou my love receivest,
I cannot blame thee for my love thou *usest* ;
But yet be blamed, if thou thyself deceivest
By wilful taste of what thyself refusest.
I do *forgive* thy robbery, *gentle thief*,
Although thou steal thee all my poverty ;
And yet, love knows, it is a greater *grief*
To bear love's wrong than hate's known injury.
Lascivious grace, in whom all *ill well shows*,
Kill me with spites ; yet we must not be foes.

THE NEWCOMER

41

Those *pretty wrongs* that *liberty* commits,
When I am sometime absent from thy heart,
Thy beauty and thy years full well befits,
For still temptation follows where thou art.
Gentle thou art, and therefore to be won,
Beauteous thou art, therefore to be assailed ;
And when a woman *woos*, what woman's son
Will sourly leave her till she hath prevailed ?
Ay me ! but yet thou mightest my seat forbear
And chide thy beauty and thy straying youth,
Who lead thee in their riot even there
Where thou art forced to break a twofold truth,
Hers, by thy beauty *tempting* her to *thee*,
Thine, by thy beauty being false to *me*.

42

That *thou hast* her, it is not all my *grief*,
And yet it may be said I loved her dearly ;
That she hath thee, is of my wailing chief,
A loss in love that touches me more nearly.
Loving *offenders*, thus *I* will *excuse* ye :
Thou dost love her, because thou know'st I love her ;
And for my sake even so doth she *abuse* me,
Suffering *my friend for my sake* to approve her.
If I lose thee, my loss is my love's gain,
And *losing* her, *my friend* hath found that *loss* ;
Both find each other, and *I lose both twain*,
And both *for my sake* lay on me *this cross* :
But here 's the joy : my friend and I are one ;
Sweet flattery ! then she loves but me alone.

TREATMENT OF THE THEME.

Shakespeare puts the best face possible on the situation (which is not saying much) by making his Lover uncertain throughout as to whether the friend has or has not actually succumbed to the siren. **The Newcomer,** on the other hand, divests his Lover of the last shred of self-respect ; he knows that the catastrophe *has* occurred, and fawns on them both, making all sorts of excuses for their conduct, and professing to like it! **The Lawyer** is not much better, but his Lover does at any rate give the lady a telling-off, and his friend appears to have had the decency to decline his further acquaintance.

VERBAL PARALLELISMS.

For a six-sonnet series the number of verbal parallelisms is pretty well up to the average.

S. *Tempteth* my better angel from my side,
Wooing his purity with her foul pride.
N. Hers, by thy beauty *tempting* her to thee,
And when a woman *woos*, what woman's son

S. And yet, love knows, it is a greater *grief*
But being *both* from me, *both* to each friend,
What *hast thou* then, more than *thou hadst* before ?
N. That *thou hast* her it is not all my *grief*.
And, *losing her, my friend* hath found that *loss ;*
Both find each other, and *I lose both* twain,

INTRIGUE.

an intrigue between his Mistress and his best friend.

THE LAWYER

133

Beshrew that heart that makes my heart to groan
For that deep wound it gives *my friend* and me
Is 't not enough to torture me alone,
But slave to slavery my sweet'st friend must be
Me from myself thy cruel eye hath taken,
And my next self thou harder hast engrossed :
Of him, myself, and thee, I am forsaken ;
A torment thrice threefold *thus to be crossed.*
Prison my heart in thy steel bosom's ward,
But then my friend's heart let my poor heart bail
Who'er keeps me, let my heart be his guard ;
Thou canst not then use rigour in my gaol :
And yet thou wilt ; for I, being pent in *thee,*
Perforce am thine, and all that is in *me.*

134

So, now I have confess'd that he is thine
And I myself am mortgaged to thy will,
Myself I 'll forfeit, so that other mine
Thou wilt restore, to be my *comfort* still :
But thou wilt not, nor he will not be free,
For thou art covetous and he is kind ;
He learn'd but surety-like to write for me,
Under that bond that him as fast doth bin
The statute of thy beauty thou wilt take,
Thou usurer, that put'st forth all to *use,*
And sue *a friend* came debtor *for my sake* ;
So him I lose through my unkind *abuse.*
Him have *I lost* ; *thou hast both* him and me :
He pays the whole, and yet am I not free.

L. For that deep wound it gives *my friend* and me.
Him have *I lost* ; *thou hast both* him and me.

S. Then, if *for my love* thou my love receivest,
N. Suffering *my friend for my sake* to approve her.
And both *for my sake* lay on me *this cross :*
L. And sue *a friend* come debtor *for my sake ;*
A torment thrice threefold *thus to be crossed.*

S. *I* do *forgive* thy robbery, *gentle thief,*
N. Loving *offenders,* thus *I* will *excuse* ye :
Gentle thou art . . .

S. *Lascivious* grace, in whom all *ill well shows,*
N. Those *pretty wrongs* that *liberty* commits.

Minor Parallelisms.—(1) *comfort,* 144.1, 134.4 ; (2) *use,* 40.6, 134.10 ; (3) *abuse,* 42.7, 134.12 ; *thee . . . me,* couplets of 41 and 133.

NOTES.

Shakespeare. (Nos. 144, 40.)

144.

This sonnet appeared (with slight variations) in *The Passionate Pilgrim* (1589).

1-7. Possibly a reminiscence of a line in *Love's Labour's Lost*—

Devils soonest tempt, resembling *spirits* of light.

12. Possibly a reminiscence of one of the best-known tales in the *Decameron*.

40.

8. A cryptic line which has not been satisfactorily explained by the commentators.

The Newcomer. (Nos. 41, 42.)

The Newcomer's contribution is gracefully and harmoniously written, especially No. 41.

41.

5-7. A reminiscence of a line in Suffolk's speech in 1 *Henry IV.*, Sc. v., iii.

> She's *beautiful and therefore to be woo'd*,
> She is *a woman*, *therefore to be won*.

12. "truth" = troth as often in the *Sonnets*.

42.

6. A rather feeble line.

9-14. A reminiscence of Proteus' speech in *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Act II., Sc. vi. :

> So Julia I lose, and Valentine I lose :
> If I keep them, I needs must lose myself ;
> If I lose them, thus find I by their loss,
> For Valentine myself, for Julia, Sylvia.
> I to myself am dearer than a friend.

Note the anacoluthon in line 10 ; "losing her" refers to the Lover and not to the friend.

The Lawyer. (Nos. 133, 134.)

L.'s *Attorney* and *Accountant* characteristics are very much in evidence in both these sonnets.

133.

6. "Engrossed." A technical legal term.

10-12. A complicated situation. One supposes that the author understood it. At any rate he obviously knows all about the routine of jail administration—duties of warders, rigorous imprisonment, bailing-out, and all the rest of it.

134.

This sonnet reeks of the County Court throughout.

9. As MALONE notes, "'statute' has here its legal signification, that of a security or obligation for money."

SERIES No. XII.—Dark Lady.

The addressee is apparently the same as in the previous series ; at any rate both ladies have the same character and colouring. Two of the competitors also are the same, *viz.*, The Newcomer and The Lawyer—there is no mistaking their respective characteristics—but the identity of the third, "the copy-setter," is very doubtful. The

arguments for and against identifying him with Shakespeare will be discussed below in the Notes.

The most interesting feature of this series is its extraordinarily close and thoroughgoing imitations of certain passages in *Love's Labour's Lost, viz.*, (a) the sparring-bout between Berowne and his three friends in Act IV., sc. iii., 231-end, and (b) their four love-sonnets. One sixteen-line passage and four separate lines have been printed alongside the three contributions for convenience of reference, and, as usual, the verbal parallelisms have been underlined in the text. The four love-sonnets, however, are too long to quote, and the echoes from them will be referred to in the Notes in the ordinary way ; but, in order to prevent confusion, *these* echoes have been left unmarked.[1]

The Theme. The Lover deplores his infatuation for a frail and fickle brunette.

[1] For the same reason the many other Shakesperean echoes which occur have also been left unmarked. This is the only series to which such restrictions have been applied.

NOTE.

In this Series underlining indicates *only* a verbal parallelism between a passage in the series and a passage in the printed extract from *Love's Labour's Lost*. Other Shakespearean echoes are left unmarked, and are explained in the Notes.

LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST. Act IV. Sc. iii.

Ber. My eyes are then no eyes, nor I Berowne.

. . . . . .

O! 'tis the sun that maketh all things shine.

King. By heaven, thy love is black as ebony.

Ber. Is ebony like her? O wood divine!
A wife of such wood were felicity.
O! who can give an oath? Where is a book
That I may swear beauty doth beauty lack,
If that she learn not of her eye to look:
No face is fair that is not full so black.

King. O paradox! Black is the badge of hell,
The hue of dungeons and the scowl of night;
And beauty's crest becomes the heaven's well.

Ber. Devils soonest tempt, resembling spirits of light.
O! if in black my lady's brows be deck'd,
It mourns that painting and usurping hair
Should ravish doters with a false aspect;
And therefore is she born to make black fair.

. . . . . .

And gives to every power a double power.

. . . . . .

King. Light wenches may prove plagues to men forsworn

SERIES No. 12—

The Theme.—The Lover deplores his

SHAKESPEARE (?)

132

Thine eyes I love, and they, as pitying me,
Knowing *thy heart torments me* with *disdain*,
Have put on black and loving mourners be,
Looking with pretty ruth upon my pain.
And truly not the morning sun of heaven
Better becomes the grey cheeks of the east,
Nor that full star that ushers in the even
Doth half that glory to the sober west,
As those two mourning eyes become thy face:
O, let it then as well beseem thy heart
To mourn for me, since mourning doth thee grace,
And suit thy pity like in every part.
Then will I swear beauty herself is black,
And all they foul that thy complexion lack.

148

O, me, what eyes hath Love put in my head,
Which have no correspondence with true sight!
Or, if they have, where is *my judgement* fled,
That censures falsely what they see aright?
If that be fair whereon my false eyes dote,
What means the world to say it is not so?
If it be not, then love doth well denote
Love's eye is not so true as all men's: no,
How can it? O, how can Love's eye be true,
That is so vexed with watching and with tears?
No marvel then, though I *mistake my view*;
The sun itself sees not till heaven clears.
O cunning Love! with tears thou keep'st me blind,
Lest eyes well-seeing thy foul faults should find.

150

O, from what power hast thou this powerful might
With insufficiency *my heart* to *sway?*
To make me give the lie to my true sight,
And swear that brightness doth not grace the day?
Whence hast thou this becoming of things ill,
That in the very refuse of thy deeds
There is such strength and warrantise of skill,
That, in my mind, *thy worst all best exceeds?*
Who taught thee how to make me love thee more,
The more I hear and see just cause of hate?
O, though I love what others do abhor,
With others thou shouldst not abhor my state:
If thy unworthiness raised love in me,
More worthy I to be beloved of thee.

140

Be wise as *thou art cruel*; do not press
My tongue-tied patience with too much disdain;
Lest sorrow lends me words, and words express
The manner of my pity-wanting *pain*.
If I might teach thee wit, better it were,
Though *not to love*, yet, love, to *tell me* so;
As testy *sick* men, when their *deaths* be near,
No news but health from their *physicians* know;
For, if *I should despair*, I should grow *mad*,
And in my *madness* might *speak* ill of thee:
Now this ill-wresting world is grown so bad,
Mad *slanderers* by mad ears believed be.
That I may not be so, nor thou belied,
Bear thine eyes straight, though *thy proud heart go wide*.

DARK LADY.

infatuation for a frail and fickle brunette.

THE NEWCOMER

127

In the old age black was not counted fair,
Or if it were, it bore not beauty's name ;
But now is black beauty's successive heir,
And beauty *slander'd* with a bastard shame ;
For since each hand hath put on nature's power,
Fairing the foul with art's false borrow'd face,
Sweet beauty hath no name, no holy bower,
But is profaned, if not lives in disgrace.
Therefore my mistress' eyes are raven black,
Her eyes so suited, and they mourners seem
At such who, not born fair, no beauty lack,
Slandering creation with a false esteem :
Yet so they mourn, becoming of their woe,
That every tongue says beauty should *look* so.

141

In faith, I do not love thee with mine eyes,
For they in thee a thousand errors note ;
But 'tis my heart that loves what they despise,
Who, in *despite of view*, is pleased to dote ;
Nor are mine ears with thy tongue's tune delighted ;
Nor tender feeling, to base touches prone,
Nor taste, nor smell, desire to be invited
To any sensual feast with thee alone :
But my five wits nor my five senses can
Dissuade *one foolish heart* from serving thee,
Who leaves *unsway'd* the likeness of a man,
Thy proud heart's slave and vassal wretch to be :
Only my plague thus far I count my gain,
That she that makes me sin awards me *pain*.

139

O call not me to justify the wrong
That thy unkindness lays upon my heart ;
Wound me not with *thine eye*, but with thy tongue
Use power with power, and slay me not by art.
Tell me thou lovest elsewhere ; but in my sight,
Dear heart, *forbear to glance thine eye aside* :
What need'st thou wound with cunning, when thy might
Is more than my o'er-pressed defence can bide ?
Let me excuse thee : ah, my love well knows
Her pretty looks have been mine enemies ;
And therefore from my face she turns my foes,
That they elsewhere might dart their injuries :
Yet do not so ; but since I am near slain,
Kill me outright with looks, and rid my *pain*.

147

My love is as a fever, longing still
For that which longer nurseth the disease ;
Feeding on that which doth preserve the ill,
The uncertain *sickly* appetite to please.
My reason, the *physician* to my love,
Angry that his prescriptions are not kept,
Hath left me, and *I desperate* now approve,
Desire his *death*, which *physic* did except.
Past cure I am, now reason is past care,
And frantic-mad with evermore unrest ;
My thoughts and *my discourse* as *madmen's* are,
At random from the truth vainly express'd ;
For I have sworn thee fair, and thought thee bright,
Who art as black as hell, as dark as night.

THE LAWYER

130

My mistress's eyes are nothing like the sun ;
Coral is far more red than her lips' red ;
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun ;
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.
I have seen roses damask'd, red and white,
But no such roses see I in her cheeks ;
And in some perfumes is there more delight
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.
I love to hear her speak, yet well I know
That music hath a far more pleasing sound :
I grant I never saw a goddess go,
My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground :
And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare
As any she belied with false compare.

137

Thou blind fool, Love, what dost thou to mine eyes,
That they behold, and see not what they see ?
They know what beauty is, see where it lies,
Yet *what the best is take the worst to be.*
If eyes, corrupt by over-partial looks,
Be anchor'd in the bay where all men ride,
Why of eyes' falsehood hast thou forged hooks,
Whereto the *judgement* of my heart is tied ?
Why should my heart think that a several plot
Which my heart knows the wide world's common [place
Or mine eyes seeing this, say this is not,
To put fair truth upon so foul a face ?
In things right true my heart and eyes have erred,
And to this false plague are they now transferred.

131

Thou art as tyrannous, so as thou art,
As those whose beauties *proudly* make them *cruel* ;
For well thou knowest to *my dear doting heart*
Thou art the fairest and most precious jewel.
Yet, in good faith, some say that thee behold,
Thy face hath not the power to make love groan :
To say they err I dare not be so bold,
Although I swear it to myself alone.
And to be sure that is not false I swear,
A thousand groans, but thinking on thy face,
One on another's neck, do witness bear
Thy black is fairest in my judgement's place.
In nothing art thou black save in thy deeds,
And thence this *slander*, as I think, proceeds.

152

In loving thee thou know'st I am forsworn
But thou art twice forsworn, to me love swearing ;
In act thy bed-vow broke, and new faith torn,
In vowing new hate after new love bearing.
But why of two oaths' breach do I accuse thee,
When I break twenty ! I am perjured most ;
For all my vows are oaths but to misuse thee,
And all my honest faith in thee is lost :
For I have sworn deep oaths of thy deep kindness,
Oaths of thy love, thy truth, thy constancy ;
And, to enlighten thee, gave eyes to blindness,
Or made them swear against the thing they see ;
For I have sworn thee fair ; more perjured I,
To swear against the truth so foul a lie !

Treatment of The Theme.

All the competitors have apparently taken for their text Berowne's half-serious profession of despair at finding himself in love with the "black" Rosaline (*Love's Labour's Lost*, Act III., Sc. i., 204 *et seq.*) :

> Nay, to be perjur'd, which is worst of all ;
> And, among three, to love the worst of all ;
> A whitely wanton with a velvet brow,
> With two pitch balls stuck in her face for eyes ;
> Ay, and by Heaven, one that will do the deed
> Though Argus were her eunuch and her guard.

Shakespeare's contribution contains eight main thoughts :—

(a). Your eyes are black but comely. (132.4-9).
(b). And I swear that you are beautiful. (132.13-14).
(c). Alas ! Neither my eyes nor my judgment can be trusted where you are concerned. (148.1-12, 150.3-4).

These three thoughts are taken from the *L.L.L.* lines printed in the text. The next five are more or less original.

(d). For you are neither beautiful nor virtuous. (148.13-14, 150 *passim*).
(e). And treat me cruelly. (132.2, 140.1-4).
(f). Yet I am besottedly in love with you. (150.6-7, 140.9).
(g). If you have ceased to love me do not tell me so. (140.5-8).
(h). And look on me kindly as you used to do. (140.13-14).

The Newcomer follows S. in (a) (127.10-14) ; in (b) (147.13) ; in (c) (141.1-4, 9-10) ; in (d) (147.14) ; in (e) (141.12-14, 139.1-2, 7, 10, 12-13) ; in (f) (141.10-12, 147.1-12) ; he contradicts (g) (139.3-5) ; and follows (h) (139.3, 5-6), and again contradicts it (139. 13-14).

The Lawyer follows (S.) in (a) (130.1, 13-14) ; in (b) (131.7-8, 152.13) ; in (c) (137 *passim*, 152.12) ; in (d) (131.1-2, 5-6, 137.4, 10, 152.14) ; in (e) (131.1-2) ; in (f) (131. 3-4) ; and omits (g) and (h). He introduces a new thought (i) that he in loving her is forsworn, and she is doubly forsworn—once to her husband, and once to him.

Verbal Parallelisms.

Verbal parallelisms are exceptionally numerous and close. Of the fourteen items that will be quoted in full, seven contain references to the *L.L.L.* passages printed in the text and seven do not. It will be convenient to exhibit them in two separate lists.

(a) *L.L.L. Parallelisms.*

(L.L.L.	If that she learns not of *her eye* to *look :*
	O ! 'tis *the sun* that maketh all things shine.)
(S.)	*Thine eyes* I love, and they as pitying me,
	Looking with *pretty* ruth upon my pain.
N.	Therefore *my mistress' eyes* are raven black,
	Her *pretty looks* have been my enemies ;
L.	*My mistress' eyes* are nothing like *the sun.*
(L.L.L.	O ! if in *black* my lady's brows be *deck'd,*
	It *mourns* . . .
	And beauty's crest *becomes* the *heavens'* well.)
(S.)	Have *put on black* and loving *mourners* be,
	And truly not the *morning* sun of *heaven*
	As those two *mourning* eyes *become* thy face :
	And *suit* thy pity like in every part.
N.	Her eyes *so suited,* and they *mourners* seem
	Yet so they *mourn, becoming* of their woe.

(L.L.L. That *I may swear* beauty doth *beauty lack*,
No face is *fair* that is not *full* so *black*.)
(S.) Then *I will swear beauty* herself is *black*,
And all they *foul* that thy complexion *lack*.
N. *For I have sworn thee fair*, and thought thee bright,
Who art as *black* as hell, as dark as night.
L. *For I have sworn thee fair*, more perjured I,
To swear against the truth so *foul* a lie.

(L.L.L. Should ravish *doters* with a *false aspect*;
And therefore is she *born to make black fair*.)
(S.) If that be *fair* whereon my *false* eyes *dote*,
Lest eyes well-seeing thy *foul* faults should find.
N. In the old days *black* was not *counted fair*,
Who in despite of view is pleased to *dote*;
Fairing the *foul* with arts *false borrow'd face*,
At such who not *born fair*, no beauty lack,
L. For well thou know'st to my dear *doting heart*
To put *fair* truth upon so *foul a face*.

(L.L.L. *My eyes are then no eyes*, nor I Berowne :)
(S.) O me ! *what eyes* hath *Love* put in my head,
That have no correspondence with true sight !
N. In faith, I do not *love* thee with *mine eyes*,
Who *in despite of view* is pleased to dote,
L. Thou blind fool *Love*, *what dost thou to mine eyes*,
That they behold, and *see not what they see ?*

(L.L.L. And gives to every *power* a double *power*,)
(S.) O, from what *power* hast thou this *power*ful might
N. Use *power* with *power*, and slay me not by art.
L. Thy face hath not the *power* to make love groan.

(L.L.L. Light wenches may prove *plagues* to men forsworn ;)
N. Only my *plague* thus far I count my gain,
That she that makes me *sin* awards me pain.
L. In things right true my heart and eyes have *erred*,
And to this false *plague* are they now transferr'd.

(b) *Ordinary Parallelisms.*

(S.) Knowing *thy heart torments* me with *disdain*,
Be wise as *thou art cruel* . . .
N. *Thy proud heart's* slave and vassal wretch to be :
Wound me not with thine eye, but with thy tongue
L. *Thou art as tyrannous*, so as thou art,
As they whose beauties *proudly* make them *cruel*.

(S.) . . . where is *my judgement* fled,
That, in my mind, *thy worst all best exceeds ?*
L. Whereto the *judgement* of my heart is tied ?
Yet *what the best is take the worst to be*.

(S.) With insufficiency *my heart* to *sway ?*
N. Dissuade *one foolish heart* from serving thee,
Who leaves *unsway'd* the likeness of a man,
L. For well thou know'st to *my dear doting heart*

(S.) Though *not to love*, yet, love to *tell me* so ;
N. *Tell me thou lovest elsewhere* . . .

(S.) As testy *sick* men when their *deaths* be near,
No news but health from their *physicians* know ;
For if I should *despair*, *I should go mad*,
And in *my madness* might *speak* ill of thee :
N. The uncertain *sickly* appetite to please,
My reason, the *physician* to my love,
Hath left me, and I *desperate* now approve,
Desire his *death* which *physic* did except.
My thoughts and my *discourse as madmen's* are.

(S.) Mad *slanderers* by mad ears believed be.
N. *Slandering* creation with a false esteem :
L. And hence this *slander*, as I think, proceeds.

(S.) *Bear thine eyes straight*, though thy proud *heart* go wide.
Dear *heart, forbear to glance thine eye aside.*

This is a very striking list for a twelve-sonnet series. But it is by no means exhaustive as the reader may see for himself.

NOTES.

L.L.L. passage.

249. "Wood." Unnecessarily amended from 'word' (the reading of all the Quartos and Folios) by modern commentators who have failed to notice that the point—such as it is—of the whole passage is an abominable pun on 'heaven' and 'ebony' (often spelt 'heben' or 'hebonie').

253. "Full." Again (apparently) a wretched pun on 'full' and 'foul' (more akin in pronunciation in Elizabethan times then in ours).

255. "Scowl." Should surely be 'scroll' (often spelt 'scrowl'), in harmony with the heraldic 'word,' 'badge,' 'hue,' and 'crest.' A scroll in Heraldry is a ribbon inscribed with the motto or 'word', and placed directly beneath the shield.

(Shakespeare.) (Nos. 132, 148, 150, 140.)

Note how throughout his contribution (S.) parodies Berowne's mannerism of beginning a sentence with O ![1] He has five O's while the other two competitors have only one between them.

1-4. A reminiscence of four lines in No. 58 of Southwell's Poems (pub. 1595) referring to Christ's eyes :

In those dear *eyes* the registers of truth.
And in their happy joyes redrest my *ruth*.
And that they now are heralds of *disdain*,
That erst were ever *pittiers* of *my paine*.

5-9. These lines contain two additional reminiscences from *L.L.L.* :—

(a) So sweet a kiss the golden *sun* gives not
To those fresh *morning* drops upon the rose
As *thy eyebeams* . . .
Nor shines the silver moon *one half so bright*
As doth *thy face* through tears of mine give light
(b) My love, her mistress, is a gracious moon ;
She *an attending star*, scarce seen a light. (Act IV., Sc. iii.),

as well as one from *The Taming of the Shrew* (Act IV., Sc. v.) :

What *stars* do spangle *heaven* with such *beauty*,
As those two eyes become that heavenly *face* ?

[1] For examples see the duologue between Berowne and Costard in Act iii. and Berowne's speeches in Act v. scene iii. 232-289. This mannerism was, no doubt, characteristic of some actual person well-known to the particular audience for which the play was written (or, perhaps, revised).

Note (1) the very beautiful seventh line, and (2) the dreadful pun on 'morning' and 'mourning.'

This is a true 'Patchwork' sonnet, and practically every line can be accounted for.

No. 132

Thine *eyes* I love, *and they*, as *pitying me*,
Knowing thy heart torments me with *disdain*,
Have *put on black* and loving *mourners* be,
Looking with pretty *ruth* upon *my pain*.

And truly *not* the *morning sun* of *heaven*
Better *becomes* the gray cheeks of the east,

Nor that full *star* that *ushers in* the even

Doth *half that glory* to the sober west,
As those two mourning eyes become thy *face:*
O, let it then as well beseem thy heart
To *mourn* for me, since *mourning* doth thee grace,
And *suit* thy *pity* like in every part.

Then will *I swear beauty* herself *is* black,
And all they *foul* that thy complexion *lack*.

References

In those dear *eyes* the registers of truth,
And that they now are heralds of *disdain*,
O! if *in black* my lady's brows be *deck'd*,
It *mourns* . . .
And in their happy joyes re*drest* my *ruth*.
That erst were ever *pittiers of my paine*.
So sweet a kiss the golden *sun* gives *not*
And beauty's crest *becomes* the *heavens* well.
To those fresh *morning* drops upon the rose,
What *stars* do spangle *heaven* with such beauty,
She is an *attending star* scarce seen a light.
Nor shines the silver moon *one half so bright*
As those two eyes become that heavenly *face*.

And in thy happy joyes re*drest* my ruth.
That erst were ever *pittiers* of my paine.
That *I may swear beauty* doth beauty *lack*,
No face is fair that is not *full* so *black*.

148.

7-8. Feeble lines with a rather pointless pun on 'ay' and 'no.'

150.

4. POOLER notes "Equivalent to the converse, *viz.*, to swear that black is white, that you are lovely."

140.

6-7. Apparently suggested by a line in Dumaine's sonnet—

That the *lover, sick* to *death*.

The reader is now in a position to judge whether or not these four sonnets were written by Shakespeare. The arguments *for* may be summarized as follows:—

(1) It is probable *a priori* that the competitors should be the same as in the cognate series No. XI (Intrigue).
(2) The general level of excellence is high—superior to that of either of the other two competitors.
(3) Some individual lines, *e.g.*—

Looking with pretty ruth upon my pain.
Nor that full star that ushers in the even,

have the true Shakespearean ring.
(4) It is difficult to suggest any other contemporary author who could have written them.

The arguments *against* may be summarized as follows:—

(1) Although they are well-written and run musically, not one of the four possesses the indefinable distinction which marks most of Shakespeare's work in the *Sonnets*.
(2) The two 'Shakespearean' lines quoted in (3) above, owe a good deal to 'foreign' sources.

(3) It is difficult to understand why Shakespeare should have parodied (or imitated) his own *L.L.L.* in this thorough-going fashion.

(4) It is difficult to believe that Shakespeare committed the error of taste involved in adapting the reference to the Divine eyes in Southwell's religious poem to the secular sentiments of No. 132.

(5) Shakespeare's " regrettable fondness for paronomasia " might be held accountable for ' eye ' and ' no,' but ' morning ' and ' mourning ' is really inexcusable.

As already noted, The Theory has no solution of the problem to offer.

The Newcomer. (Nos. 127, 141, 139, 147.)

The Newcomer's contribution is not noteworthy. The versification is harmonious throughout, but the thought is often shallow and rather finicky.

127.

9-12. In explaining why his mistress's eyes are in mourning, N. had to find a different reason from (S.)'s, but this is *very* far-fetched.

141.

This sonnet presents a series of faint echoes from Venus' rhapsody on Adonis' manifold charms (*V. and A.* 433-450).

14. " pain "=punishment. The couplet apparently echoes Constance's speech in *King John*, Act II., Sc. i. :

> But God hath *made her sin* and her the *plague*
> On this remov'd issue, plagu'd for her,
> And with her *plague*, her *sin* ; his injury
> Her injury, the beadle to her *sin*.
> All *punished* in the person of this child.

139.

Again, in asking his mistress to look him straight in the eye, N. has to give a different reason from (S.)'s, and again it is a very far-fetched one.

13-14. A combination of echoes from H.'s No. 96 :

> *But do not so* ; I love thee in such sort,

and Constable's *Diana* V. 7-8—

> Dear ! If all other favours you shall grudge,
> *Do speedy execution with your eye.*

147.

5-7. Compare this unprofessional conduct with that of (S.)'s physician in the ' corresponding ' sonnet, No. 140.9.

9. An echo fron *L.L.L.* V. 228—

> Great *reason* ; for *past cure* is still *past care*.

14. A forcible-feeble line suggested by the lines—

> . . . *Black* is the badge of *hell*,
> The hue of dungeons and the scowl of *night*.

in the *L.L.L.* passage above.

The Lawyer. (Nos. 130, 137, 131, 152.)

The Lawyer's direct and rather brutal treatment of the theme offers a striking contrast to N.'s languid manner and ' pretty-pretty ' conceits. The following characteristics are exemplified : *The Attorney*, 137.9-10, 131.11-12 ; *Clumsy Humour*, 130 *passim* ; *The Candid Friend*, 130 and 131 *passim*.

130.

L.'s ' candid friend ' description of the lady's charms is the counterpart of his No. 21 sonnet in the B.I. series, in which he is equally frank about The Patron.

First Quatrain. Satirizes the conventional vocabulary of the sonnetteers of the day.

Second Quatrain. Contains the second instance of an ' outside ' verbal parallelism to be found in the Dramatic section. *Cf.* M.P.'s No. 99 in the Absence series—

> . . . the purple pride
> Which on thy soft *cheek* for complexion grows
> The *roses* fearfully on thorns did stand,
> A third, nor *red nor white*, had stolen of both,
> And to his robbery had annexed thy *breath*.

But even this instance is not entirely free from doubt. It is *possible* to regard these lines as an independent imitation of Constable's *Diana* sonnet quoted in the Notes on No. 99.

Third Quatrain. Echoes *L.L.L.* (The Love-sonnets and Berowne's speech in Act IV., Sc. iii.) :

> . . . Thy *voice* his dreadful thunder,
> Which, not to anger bent, is *music* and sweet fire.
> Thou being *a goddess*, I forswore not thee :
> O ! If the streets were paved with thine eyes,
> Her feet were much too dainty for such *tread*.
> The street should see as *she walked* over head.

The Couplet. Echoes his No. 21 in the B.I. series :

> Making a couplement of proud *compare*,
> With April's first-born flowers, and all things *rare*
> *And then*, believe me, *my love is as fair*
> As any mother's child. . . .

137.

9-10. An echo from *L.L.L.* 228—

> My lips are no *common* though *several* they be.

14. " Plague " imitates the " plague " in the couplet of N.'s corresponding sonnet, No. 141, but is probably used in a different sense, ' snare ' or ' trap.' Or is there an allusion to an offender sentenced to be set in the pillory or the stocks ? *Cf. King Lear*, Act I., Sc. ii.—

> . . . Wherefore should I
> Stand *in the plague* of custom. . . .

and the Prayer Book version of Psalm 38.17—

> And I truly am set *in the plague*,

which translates Jerome's " Quia ego ad *plagam* paratus sum."

131.

11-12. A long string of witnesses closely following each other into the box.

152.

L. is the only competitor who brings in the 'forsworn' motif which dominates *Love's Labour's Lost* throughout. *Cf.*—

> Subscribe to your *deep oaths*, and keep it too, (Act I.).
> If by me *broke*, what fool is not so wise
> To lose an *oath* to win a paradise ! (Act IV.).
> . . . And thereby all *forsworn*.
> Then leave this chat, and, good Berowne, now prove
> Our loving lawful, and our *faith* not *torn*. (Act IV.).

SERIES No. 13. Will.

The Theory provides no clue to the identity of the addressee of this series ; she was evidently (if she was a real person) a woman of low social status. The competitors are the three of the last series plus The Humorist ; the reference to " Will " (William Warner ?), in the last line of No. 136, seems to indicate that in these four sonnets they are, for once, speaking in their own persons. The Rabelaisian humour of this series would appeal to the dedicatee of *The Choise of Valentines.*

The Theme.—The Lover solicits a second place in the favours of a light woman in love with another man.

SERIES NO. 13—

The Theme.—The Lover solicits a second place in the

SHAKESPEARE.

143

Lo, as a careful housewife runs to catch
One of her feather'd creatures broke away,
Sets down her babe, and makes all swift dispatch
In pursuit of the thing she would have stay ;
Whilst her neglected child holds her in chase,
Cries to catch her whose busy care is bent
To follow that which flies before her face,
Not prizing her poor infant's discontent :
So runn'st thou after that which flies from thee,
Whilst I thy babe chase thee afar behind ;
But if thou catch thy hope, turn back to me,
And play the mother's part, kiss me, be kind :
So will I pray that thou mayst have thy ' Will,'
If thou turn back and my loud crying still.

THE NEWCOMER.

142

Love is my sin, and thy dear virtue hate,
Hate of my sin, grounded on sinful loving :
O, but with mine compare thou thine own state,
And thou shalt find it merits not reproving ;
Or, if it do, not from those lips of thine,
That have profaned their scarlet ornaments
And seal'd false bonds of love as oft as mine,
Robb'd others' beds' revenues of their rents.
Be it lawful I love thee, as thou lovest those
Whom thine eyes woo as mine importune thee
Root pity in thy heart, that, when it grows,
Thy pity may deserve to pitied be.
If thou dost seek to have what thou dost hide,
By self-example mayst thou be denied !

TREATMENT OF THE THEME.

Each of the four poets treats this unedifying theme in characteristic fashion. **Shakespeare** strikes just the right note, giving us a pretty *genre* picture, and making his points gracefully and neatly. **The Newcomer's** verse flows easily, and his allusions are not too obtrusive. In **The Lawyer's** contribution *The Attorney* and *The Accountant* loom large, and the wit (!) is as heavy-handed as usual. And **The Humorist,** who ' sees ' the Lawyer's immodesty and goes one *worse*, displays a perverted but characteristic ingenuity.

NOTES.

Shakespeare. (No. 143.)

2. A possible allusion to the plumed hats worn by the young bloods of the period.

The Newcomer. (No. 142.)

1-4. This quatrain is a combination of echoes from *Lucrece*, 240-3 :

> Hateful it is ; there is no *hate* in *loving* :
> I'll buy her *love* ; but she is not *her own*,
> The worst is but *denial* and *reproving*.

And two lines in Barnefield's *Affectionate Shepherd* :

> *Compare* the *love* of fair Queen Guendolin
> *With mine, and thou shalt find* how she doth *love*.

5-7. A combination of echoes from *Edward III.*, II., 1-10 :

> His cheeks put on *their scarlet ornaments*

and *Venus and Adonis*, l. 516 :

> Set thy *seal*-manual on my *wax-red lips*.

WILL.

favours of a light woman in love with another man.

THE LAWYER

136

If thy soul check thee that I come so near,
Swear to thy blind soul that I was thy 'Will.'
And will, thy soul knows, is admitted there;
Thus far for love, my love-suit, sweet, fulfil.
'Will' will fulfil the treasure of thy love,
Ay, fill it full with wills, and my will one.
In things of great receipt with ease we prove
Among a number one is reckoned none:
Then in the number let me pass untold,
Though in thy store's account I one must be;
For nothing hold me, so it please thee hold
That nothing me, a something sweet to thee:
Make but my name thy love, and love that still,
And then thou lovest me, for my name is 'Will.

THE HUMORIST

135

Whoever hath her wish, thou hast thy 'Will.'
And 'Will' to boot, and 'Will' in overplus;
More than enough am I that vex thee still,
To thy sweet will making addition thus.
Wilt thou, whose will is large and spacious,
Not once vouchsafe to hide my will in thine?
Shall will in others seem right gracious,
And in thy will no fair acceptance shine?
The sea, all water, yet receives rain still,
And in abundance addeth to his store;
So thou, being rich in 'Will,' add to thy 'Will'
One will of mine, to make thy large 'Will' more.
Let no unkind, no fair beseechers kill;
Think all but one, and me in that one 'Will.'

The Lawyer. (No. 136.)

6-10. An echo from Old Capulet's speech in *Romeo and Juliet* (Act I., Sc. ii.):

. . . of many, *mine being one*,
May stand *in number*, though *in reckoning none*.
. . . and you among the *store*
One more, most welcome, makes my *number* more.

14. An important piece of evidence in support of the identification of L. with William Warner.

The Humorist. (No. 135.)

10-12. *Cf.* the note on L'.s 136.6-10, above.

13. DOWDEN'S emendation seems certain—

Let no unkind "No" fair beseechers kill.

As POOLER points out the word "fair" is used as in the provincial saying, "Don't refuse a fair offer."

. . . . . .

Horum quattuor carminum veram vim quippe quae omnes commentatores fefellisse videatur hac mea canina latinitate quam brevissime exponam. "Will" verbum praecipue notandum. Hujus verbi sententiae diversae exhibentur septem: quattuor vulgares, videlicet, (a) voluntas, (b) testamentum, (c) libido, (d) Gulielmi praenominis forma curta: tres obsoletae, videlicet, (x) dilectus juvenis,[1] (y) mem. vir.,[2]

[1] *Cf.* LEE, *Life*, p. 151. "The name Willy was frequently used in contemporary literature as a term of familiarity without relation to the baptismal name of the person referred to. Sir Philip Sidney was addressed as 'Willy' by some of his elegists."

[2] Personifactum et praenomine familiari donatum. *Cf. L.L.L.* ii., 1.97-101 (res = (y): *M. Ado.* V., iv. 26 *seq.* "Hew" praenomen similiter in usu fuisse docent No. 20.7, et No. 104.11. Usum usque ad nostra tempora perstitisse videmus praenominibus mutatis.

(z) pud. mulieb.[1] Eruditis (x) satis cognita est, sed (y) et (z) adhuc non esse suspectae videntur.

Shakespeare. 4. res = (y). *Cf.* No. 20.12 ; 13 (a) cum (x).
The Newcomer. 13-14. Si, a me (z) tuum celans, istius (y) habere cupis, tibi negetur precor.
The Lawyer. 2. (b) cum (x) ; 3. (b) cum (c) ; 5. (c) ; 6. (y), (y) ; 7. res = (z) ;[2] 14. (d) (sc. William Warner).
The Humorist. 1. (a) cum (x) ; 2. (y), (d) (W.S.?) ; 4. (b) cum (?) *cf.* No. 20.11-12 ; 5. (z) ;[2] 6. (y), (z)—congr. sex. poscitur ; 7. (c) vel (y) ; 8. (b) cum (?) ; 11. (?), (?) ; 12. (a), (z) ;[2] 14. z (?).

Cum tractationis similitudines tum verborum parallelismata amplius explicare nolui, non quod in hac serie Theoria laboret, (plenissime enim eam esse vindicatam lector benevolus percipiet,) sed quia revera metum mihi injecit terribile illud ὑπονόημα διλόγχον.

The reader is strongly recommended to study Sir Sidney Lee's chapter on " The Will Sonnets " (*Life*, pp. 695-704) in the light of the above notes.

. . . . . .

And so, kind reader, you have been brought to the end of the Serial sonnets. Nothing remains for your consideration (in the next chapter) but fourteen occasional pieces of little value and uncertain authorship : and you now find yourself, for the first time, i a position to view Shakespeare's contributions to *Shake-Speares Sonnets* in their true perspective as they appeared to the little coterie for which they were written, and to appreciate the true significance of the earliest (and in my humble opinion still the best) description[3] of them as " his sugred sonnets among his private friends "—not strong meat like his tragedies, nor savoury and succulent like his comedies, but a dainty dish of fashionable confectionery to set before a select company of connoisseurs, sauced and garnished *à la Southampton* in honour of the noble host. It would be a mistake, I think, to approach them in *too* reverent a spirit ; we should not allow the commentators to make us forget that the Shakespeare of the *Sonnets* was not a staid twentieth-century professor acutely conscious of the sacro-sanctity of everything Shakespearean, but a young Englishman of the Renaissance who was living his life, not as a *littérateur* in a make-believe world of paper and ink, but as " a man in a world of men "—the romantic, exuberant, coarse-humoured world of Elizabethan England.

[1] Prob. ab (x) (*cf.* Fr. *mignon.*) *v.* No. 57.13-14. Alterum exemplum nusquam invenire potui certum, in *Two Gent. Ver.*, Act IV., Sc. ii., 94-5, dubium. " Grace " praenomen similiter in usu fuisse suspicor : *cf.* Barnes' *Parthenophil*, Nos. 48, 72, 73 (*v.p.*, *supra*), et *Two Gent. Ver.*, V. 165-6.
[2] *Cf.* No. 20.7, ubi " controlling " = in magnitudine praecellens. Ut plerumque apud fabulatores mediaevales nimia magnitudo feminae pro ludibrio viro pro honore habetur.
[3] In Meres' *Palladis Tamia* (1598).

CHAPTER VI.—THE NON-SERIAL SONNETS.

As noted at the end of the last chapter, the distribution of the 140 serial sonnets among the thirteen series having been completed, we are left with a residuum of fourteen non-serial or 'occasional' sonnets. Three of these sonnets are more or less connected with The Theory, but on the rest it sheds no light whatever. Now I am well aware that I have not the shadow of a right to inflict on the reader my views on individual Elizabethan sonnets—"Shake-speare's" or anybody else's—and my original intention, therefore, was to annotate the three 'Theory' sonnets only, and print the remaining eleven as they stand without comment of any kind. Subsequently, however, it struck me that such a procedure might possibly be ascribed to an unworthy desire to avoid coming to grips with inconvenient facts, *i.e.*, facts which could not be made to fit in with The Theory. Now this is not the case; and so after considerable hesitation I have decided to deal with these eleven in the same way as the rest. But I would particularly ask the kind reader to bear in mind the fact that the views expressed in the notes on these eleven sonnets have nothing whatever to do with The Theory; they are merely, as Mr. Pooler modestly says of his own observations on the autobiographical value of the *Sonnets*, "my own impressions, to which in the absence of sufficient evidence I attach no special importance."

The fourteen sonnets have been arranged in three groups:—(I.) *Adulatory*; *i.e.*, more or less connected with The Patron (Southampton); (77-122, 107, 66-67-68); (II.) *Philosophical*; (129, 146); and (III.) *Amatory*; (128, 138, 145, 151, 153-154).

NON-SERIAL OR

ADULATORY

77

Thy glass will show thee how thy beauties wear,
Thy dial how thy precious minutes waste ;
The vacant leaves thy mind's *imprint* will bear,
And of this book this learning mayst thou taste
The wrinkles which thy glass will truly show
Of mouthed graves will give thee *memory* ;
Thou by thy dial's shady stealth mayst know
Time's thievish progress to *eternity*.
Look, what thy memory cannot *contain*
Commit to these waste blanks, and thou shalt find
Those children nursed, deliver'd from thy *brain*
To take a new acquaintance of thy mind.
These offices, so oft as thou wilt look,
Shall profit thee and much enrich thy book.

66

Tired with all these, for restful death I cry,
As, to behold desert a beggar born,
And needy nothing trimm'd in jollity,
And purest faith unhappily forsworn,
And gilded honour shamefully misplaced,
And maiden virtue rudely strumpeted,
And right perfection wrongfully disgraced,
And strength by limping sway disabled,
And art made tongue-tied by authority,
And folly, doctor-like, controlling skill,
And simple truth miscall'd simplicity,
And captive good attending captain ill :
Tired with all these, from these would I be gone,
Save that, to die, I leave my love alone.

122

Thy gift, thy tables, are within my *brain*
Full *character'd* with lasting *memory*,
Which shall above that idle rank remain,
Beyond all date, even to *eternity*.
Or, at the least, so long as *brain* and heart
Have faculty by nature to subsist ;
Till each to razed oblivion yield his part
Of thee, thy record never can be miss'd.
That poor *retention* could not so much hold,
Nor need I tallies thy dear love to score ;
Therefore to give them from me was I bold,
To trust those tables that receive thee more :
To keep an adjunct to remember thee
Were to import forgetfulness in me.

67

Ah, wherefore with infection should he live
And with his presence grace impiety,
That sin by him advantage should achieve
And lace itself with his society ?
Why should *false painting* imitate his *cheek*,
And *steal dead* seeing of his *living* hue ?
Why should poor *beauty* indirectly seek
Roses of shadow, since his *rose* is *true* ?
Why should he *live*, now *Nature* bankrupt is,
Beggar'd of blood to blush through lively veins ?
For she hath no exchequer now but his,
And, proud of many, lives upon his gains.
O, *him she stores, to show what* wealth she had
In *days long since*, before these last so bad.

AMATORY.

128

How oft, when thou, my music, music play'st,
Upon that blessed wood whose motion sounds
With thy sweet fingers, when thou gently sway'st
The wiry concord that mine ear confounds,
Do I envy those jacks that nimble leap
To kiss the tender inward of thy hand,
Whilst my poor lips, which should that harvest reap,
At the wood's boldness by thee blushing stand !
To be so tickled, they would change their state
And situation with those dancing chips,
O'er whom thy fingers walk with gentle gait,
Making dead wood more blest than living lips,
Since saucy jacks so happy are in this,
Give them thy fingers, me thy lips to kiss.

145

Those lips that Love's own hand did make
Breathed forth the sound that said ' I hate.'
To me that languish'd for her sake :
But when she saw my woeful state,
Straight in her heart did mercy come,
Chiding that tongue that ever sweet
Was used in giving gentle doom ;
And taught it thus anew to greet ;
' I hate,' she alter'd with an end,
That follow'd it as gentle day
Doth follow night, who, like a fiend,
From heaven to hell is flown away ;
' I hate ' from hate away she threw,
And saved my life, saying ' not you.'

138

When my love swears that she is made of truth,
I do believe her, though I know she lies,
That she might think me some untutor'd youth,
Unlearned in the world's false subtleties.
Thus vainly thinking that she thinks me young,
Although she knows my days are past the best,
Simply I credit her false-speaking tongue :
On both sides thus is simple truth suppress'd.
But wherefore says she not she is unjust ?
And wherefore say not I that I am old ?
O, love's best habit is in seeming trust,
And age in love loves not to have years told :
Therefore I lie with her and she with me,
And in our faults by lies we flatter'd be.

151

Love is too young to know what conscience is ;
Yet who knows not conscience is born of love ?
Then, gentle cheater, urge not my amiss,
Lest guilty of my faults thy sweet self prove :
For, thou betraying me, I do betray
My nobler parts to my gross body's treason ;
My soul doth tell my body that he may
Triumph in love ; flesh stays no farther reason,
But rising at thy name doth point out thee
As his triumphant prize. Proud of this pride,
He is contented thy poor drudge to be,
To stand in thy affairs, fall by thy side.
No want of conscience hold it that I call
Her ' love ' for whose dear love I rise and fall.

Occasional Sonnets.

ADULATORY

107

Not mine own fears, nor the prophetic soul
Of the wide world dreaming on things to come,
Can yet the lease of my true love control,
Supposed as forfeit to a confined doom.
The mortal moon hath her eclipse endured,
And the sad augurs mock their own presage;
Incertainties now crown themselves assured,
And peace proclaims olives of endless age.
Now with the drops of this most balmy time
My love looks fresh, and Death to me subscribes,
Since, spite of him, I 'll live in this poor rhyme,
While he insults o'er dull and speechless tribes:
And thou in this shalt find thy monument,
When tyrants' crests and tombs of brass are spent.

68

Thus is *his cheek* the map of *days outworn*,
When *beauty lived* and *died* as *flowers* do now,
Before these bastard signs of fair were born,
Or durst inhabit on a living brow;
Before the golden tresses of the dead,
The right of sepulchres, were shorn away,
To *live* a second life on second head;
Ere *beauty's dead* fleece made another gay;
In him those holy antique hours are seen,
Without all ornament itself and *true*,
Making no summer of another's green,
Robbing no old to dress his *beauty* new;
And *him* as for a map *doth Nature store*,
To show false Art what beauty was *of yore*.

PHILOSOPHICAL

129

The expense of spirit is a waste of shame
Is lust in action; and till action, lust
Is perjured, murderous, bloody, full of blame,
Savage, extreme, rude, cruel, not to trust;
Enjoy'd no sooner but despised straight;
Past reason hunted; and no sooner had,
Past reason hated, as a swallowed bait,
On purpose laid to make the taker mad:
Mad in pursuit, and in possession so;
Had, having, and in quest to have, extreme;
A bliss in proof, and proved, a very woe;
Before, a joy proposed; behind, a dream.
All this the world well knows; yet none knows well
To shun the heaven that leads men to this hell.

146

Poor soul, the centre of my sinful earth,
. . . . . these rebel powers that thee array
Why dost thou pine within and suffer dearth,
Painting thy outward walls so costly gay?
Why so large cost, having so short a lease,
Dost thou upon thy fading mansion spend?
Shall worms, inheritors of this excess,
Eat up thy charge? is this thy body's end?
Then, soul, live thou upon thy servant's loss,
And let that pine to aggravate thy store;
Buy terms divine in selling hours of dross;
Within be fed, without be rich no more:
So shalt thou feed on Death, that feeds on men,
And Death once dead, there's no more dying then.

AMATORY

153

Cupid laid by his brand and fell asleep:
A maid of Dian's this advantage found,
And his love-kindling fire did quickly steep
In a cold valley-fountain of that ground;
Which borrow'd from this holy fire of Love
A dateless lively heat, still to endure,
And grew a seething bath, which yet men prove
Against strange maladies a sovereign cure.
But at my mistress' eye Love's brand new-fired,
The boy for trial needs would touch my breast;
I, sick withal, the help of bath desired,
And thither hied, a sad distemper'd guest,
But found no cure: the bath for my help lies
Where Cupid got new fire my mistress' eyes.

154

The little Love-god lying once asleep
Laid by his side his heart-inflaming brand,
Whilst many nymphs that vow'd chaste life to keep
Came tripping by; but in her maiden hand
The fairest votary took up that fire
Which many legions of true hearts had warm'd;
And so the general of hot desire
Was sleeping by a virgin hand disarm'd.
This brand she quenched in a cool well by.
Which from Love's fire took heat perpetual,
Growing a bath and healthful remedy
For men deceased; but I, my mistress' thrall,
Came there for cure, and this by that I prove.
Love's fire heats water, water cools not love.

NOTE

In this collection—
(1) *Italics* indicate a verbal parallelism between two passages in the same 'pair' (there are two 'pairs,' *viz.*, 77-122 and 67-68).
(2) Underlining indicates a Shakespearean 'echo,' as in the Dramatic Section.

I.—ADULATORY SONNETS. (Nos. 77-122, 107, 66, 67-68.)

Nos. 77, 122, and 107 are the three ' Theory ' sonnets referred to above, and are particularly commended to the reader's notice.

77.

If this sonnet and No. 122 had appeared in any collection except one hallowed by the name of Shakespeare, it is reasonable to suppose that they would by this time have been recognised for what they are—the first, an ironical compliment accompanying the gift of a memorandum-book; the second, an acknowledgment by the recipient thereof written in the same vein, and conveying a polite but unmistakable snub. Apart from the identity of tone and subject, such obvious points as the remarkable rhyme ' memory ' and ' eternity ' occurring in each sonnet, and the rhyme ' brain ' and ' contain ' in 77 echoed by ' brain ' and ' remain ' in 122, might, one would have thought, have attracted the notice of the commentators and put them on the right track. But the Great Shakespeare Taboo is too strong; such ' coincidences ' are of no account when regarded with the eye of faith, and both sonnets are reverently treated as the product of the same Master-Mind, the five latest editors interpreting variously as follows:—DOWDEN: " If I might hazard a conjecture, it would be that Shakspere, who had perhaps begun a new manuscript book with Sonnet LXXV., and who, as I suppose, apologized for the monotony of his verses in LXXVI., here ceased to write, knowing that his friend was favouring a rival, and invited his friend to fill up the blank pages himself." LEE cautiously notes on 77, " The sonnet possibly accompanied the gift of a memorandum-book," and, referring to No. 122, " apparently the reference is to the friend's gift to the poet of a memorandum-book which the latter had given away (line 11). In LXVII. *supra* the poet would seem to have made the same kind of present to the friend." BEECHING agrees with Steevens in thinking that this " sonnet was designed to accompany a present of a ' book consisting of blank paper,' " but he adds that " the phrases in lines 3 and 10, ' the vacant leaves,' ' these waste blanks ' seem to imply that the album was not altogether unwritten in; but they would be justified if the dedicatory sonnet occupied the first page. The sonnet is so out of key with what precedes and follows it, that it is best to treat it as an occasional poem to which we have not the complete clue." POOLER notes on 77, " Verses sent with a gift of a MS. book, and also perhaps a pocket dial, and a mirror," and on 122, " perhaps the vacant leaves of No. 77 filled with the friend's thoughts in prose or verse read and remembered by Shakespeare, and now given away." WALSH places the two sonnets side by side in a sub-group of four, and notes [my italics]; " There is absolutely nothing to show to whom the first four of *these utterly disconnected sonnets* were addressed." He is inclined to think that No. 77 is an early sonnet on account of " its unusual prosiness," while No. 122 is " apparently a late sonnet." He also quotes an ingenious interpretation by GODWIN, " who thinks the sonnet (No. 77) addressed by Shakespeare to himself, as the inscription in the blank book in which he proposed to write his sonnets; and accordingly Mr. Godwin places it first in his rearrangement."[1]

But it is only when we proceed to examine these two sonnets in the new light provided by The Theory that we find the very reasonable *a priori*, so to speak, assumption that No. 122 is a reply to No. 77 confirmed beyond all manner of doubt. In these two sonnets

[1] The reader will note that the sonnet begins—

Thy glass will show thee how thy *beauties* wear,

Aubrey tells us that Shakespeare was a " handsome well-shaped person," but even so . . . !

we find ourselves back again in the familiar ' Contest ' atmosphere. In each sonnet there are several unmistakable echoes of lines and phrases occurring in the first two batches of the " Contest " series ; and in these echoes or allusions we recognise the *personal* touch—the ragging spirit which is the peculiar feature of the ' Personal ' sonnets, and marks them off so definitely from the rest. No. 77 was obviously addressed to the Patron of the ' Contest ' by someone (in all probability one of the *competitors*) perfectly familiar with both the language and the esoteric significance of the sonnets in series 1-5 inclusive. No. 122 is as obviously The Patron's reply.

The ' general idea ' of this sonnet is to administer to The Patron a wholesome corrective to the fulsome praises of his beauty offered by Shakespeare and The Minor Poet in their references to his looking-glass and his sun-dial respectively. Compare S.'s—

3. Look in *thy glass* and tell the face thou viewest
Thou art thy mother's *glass*, and she in thee
Calls back the *lovely* April of her prime,
Despite of *wrinkles* this thy golden time.

with this sonnet's—

Thy glass will show thee how thy *beauties* wear,
The *wrinkles* which *thy glass* will truly show,

and M.P.'s—

104. Ah, yet doth beauty, like a *dial*-hand
Steal from his figure, and no pace perceived.

with this sonnet's—

Thou by thy *dial's shady stealth* shalt know,

and note in line 11—

Those *children* nurs'd *delivered* from thy *brain*,

yet another fling at M.P.'s famous ' Obstetrics ' conceit, the lines most directly imitated being part of one of H.'s satiric references thereto—

59. . . . how are our *brains* beguiled,
Which *labouring* for invention *bear* amiss
The second burthen of a former *child*

Everything points to The Lawyer as the author of the sonnet. Taking this view, one might paraphrase it somewhat as follows : " My colleagues S. and M.P., in extolling your marvellous beauty, have appealed to the evidence of your looking-glass and your sun-dial. Now this was a mistake, because what your glass will tell you is that your good looks are fading, and what your sun-dial will tell you is that you are foolishly wasting your precious time. So I send you herewith a note-book[1] that you may note down therein the *real* lessons which these two interesting objects will teach you from time to time ; for instance, the deeply-lined wrinkles faithfully reflected in the glass will put you in mind of deeply-dug graves ; and the slow movement of the shadow round the dial will put you in mind of the way in which Time is slowly but surely shortening your little span of life ; and so forth. Now you cannot be expected to keep all these salutary lessons permanently fixed in your memory, so jot them down in this note-book *at the time*, and later on, when you run your eye over the pages, you will be surprised to find that these thoughts—the ' children of your brain '—strike you as something quite fresh and novel. If you will make use of *their* glass and dial and *my* note-book in this way, you will greatly enrich the last-mentioned article and do yourself a deal of good at the same time."

[1] For " *the* vacant leaves " in line 3 read " these."

122.

This sonnet—The Patron's reply to 77—has a special interest as being the second of the two sonnets written by Southampton, (the first being No. 121 in the third batch of the Personal Sonnets). Its ' general idea ' is to retort on the author of 77 in his own vein of irony and parody, and at the same time to snub him for the undue liberties he has taken. The irony is more pronounced than in No. 121, and the Contest ' thoughts ' and phrases alluded to are such as specially lend themselves to ridicule. Take the following three ' parallelisms ' :

1. **L.** What's in the *brain* that ink may *character* (P.E. 108).
South. Thy gift, thy tables, are *within my brain*
Full *character'd* with lasting memory.

Apparently the first three lines of L.'s 108, with their picture of the " business-like poet in his office, keeping his brain-register written up to date, and ready at any time to enter a new item and note its value in the figure columns[1] " struck even his friends and admirers as being rather incongruous in a lyric poem.

2. **M.P.** *Eternal* numbers to *outlive* long *date*. (E.D. 38).
South. *Beyond* all *date* even to *eternity*.

Quite a good parody of M.P.'s absurd line.

3. **M.P.** The living *record* of your memory.
'Gainst death and *all-oblivious enmity* (B.I. 55).
H. Who all their *parts of me to thee* did give (D.D. 31).
South. Till each to *razed oblivion* yield his *part*
Of thee, thy *record* never can be miss'd.

M.P.'s violent inversion " all-oblivious enmity " = ' oblivion the enemy of all ' is parodied by " razed oblivion " = ' oblivion that erases everything ' ; and The Patron is apparently going to get rid of all the " parts " of other people with which he had been generously endowed by H.'s purposely grotesque conceit.

The sonnet is a very ' difficult ' one—one of the hardest nuts to crack in the whole collection. It is clearly intended to be ironical throughout, but as in his other sonnet (121) Southampton fails to make *all* his points as effectively as he might. The reason appears to be the same in each case, namely : that he is " a literary novice striving to express himself in an unfamiliar medium."[2] What he is *trying* to say appears to be something like this—" Many thanks for the note-book. I have transferred it (in imagination) to my brain, and there, like your own famous brain-register, it has been completely filled up with entries, that is to say, notes about yourself. So it has been ' enriched ' as you suggested, and will enjoy the distinction to which its wealth entitles it, till the end of time and long after (as our friend M.P. says). Or, if not *quite* so long as that, at any rate as long as Nature allows my heart and brain to remain exactly as they are at present. I can assure you that until the time comes when ' razed oblivion ' (as M.P. might say) shall have deleted your ' record ' from my thoughts and feelings, I shall not fail to remember you. As for the actual note-book—well, for one thing it might not be big enough to hold all I should like to write about you, for another thing I didn't need it as a token of your affection for me—(I fancy I can reckon *that* up without tally-sticks)—and lastly, to keep it merely as a *souvenir* would have suggested the distressing thought that I was in danger of forgetting your existence altogether. So I determined to trust to my more capacious *mental* register instead and gave it away to somebody else ! "

[1] *v. supra*, p. 71. [2] *v. supra*, p. 93.

The reader will not fail to appreciate the significance of the fact that Southampton's only two sonnets, 121 and 122, have been placed next each other in the collection.[1] The odds against this having happened *fortuitously* are (as I am credibly informed) 76 to 1.

107.

Most of the recent commentators agree with GERALD MASSEY in thinking that this sonnet was written to congratulate Southampton on his release from the Tower on the accession of James I. LEE writes: "Sonnet cvii., apparently the last of the series, was penned long after the mass of its companions, for it makes references that cannot be ignored to three events that took place in 1602—to Queen Elizabeth's death, to the accession of James I., and to the release of the Earl of Southampton, who was convicted in 1601 of complicity in the rebellion of the Earl of Essex, and had since that year been in prison in the Tower of London." POOLER quotes from Bacon's *Apophthegms:* "And yet at that time there was much speech of troubles and divisions about the Crown, to be after her decease; but they all vanished; and King James came in, in a profound peace;" and from Dekker's *The Wonderful Year:* "The Cedar of her government which had stood alone and bore no fruit, is now changed to an Olive upon whose spreading branches grow both Kings and Queens." In my humble judgment the evidence in favour of MASSEY'S view is conclusive.

This sonnet was one of the two selected by Coleridge (the other being No. 98 in the Absence series, which I have treated as a characteristic product of M.P.'s Muse) to exemplify Shakespeare's power of giving "a dignity and a passion to the objects which he presents." In deference to the judgment of so great a Shakespearean I have tried hard to bring myself to believe that this sonnet is the work of Shakespeare—Shakespeare, be it remembered, at the zenith of his power, the Shakespeare of Hamlet and Othello—but have not succeeded; the more I study it, the more disconnected and feeble it appears. I feel that I should be wanting in common honesty if I obeyed the dictates of prudence and passed over the question of authorship in silence; and so in all humility I propose to set forth for the consideration of the reader my reasons for believing that this sonnet was written in imitation of the Master's grand manner by an inferior hand.

The first two quatrains are much superior to the rest. The sonnet opens very finely, and though the first eight lines contain serious blemishes, the language is generally dignified and the versification pleasing. The last six lines, on the other hand, appear to me to be thoroughly bad—disconnected, confused, feebly expressed, and disfigured by 'rhyme-hunting.'

1-2. These two lines are certainly very striking, but the effect of awe and mystery produced by the dimly-suggested image of the World-Soul brooding over the future of humanity appears to be the result of accident rather than design. The 'Zeitgeist' is a modern conception, wholly foreign (as far as I am aware) to the spirit of Elizabethan poetry: the "prophetic soul" is a quotation from Hamlet; and, lastly, the *occasion* of the sonnet is, surely, unworthy of so impressively-sounding an exordium. As POOLER says, "prophetic" = 'apprehensive' or 'foreboding,' and the musically alliterative "The *wi*de *w*orl*d d*reaming on things to come" means merely 'the anxieties which every one felt as to the future.' The thought apparently is—"My own fears that S. would not be released, endorsed as they were by the popular belief that, in view of the disorders which might be expected to attend the beginning of the new reign, the King would not run the risk of setting at liberty so distinguished a rebel, have been happily falsified."

[1] *v.* p. 198 *infra.*

3-4. The meaning of these distinctly prosaic lines appears to be that the poet had taken a long lease of Southampton's love, and looked forward to enjoying it, but Southampton's incarceration had rendered his lease valueless to him, as he could exercise none of the rights of possession. (It may be noted that Southampton was sentenced to imprisonment *for life*.) " Yet " is very awkward ; it cannot possibly mean ' hitherto,' and must be used in its sense of ' nevertheless.' The meaning is, apparently : " Notwithstanding my own fears and the popular belief, etc., Southampton is out of prison, and my lease has again come into full operation " ; but can any such meaning be extracted either logically or grammatically from the words as they stand ?

6. " The sad augurs " = ' solemn politicians ' (POOLER).

7. Clearly a reminiscence of M.P.'s lines in No. 115 (P.R. series) :

> When I was *certain* o'er *uncertainty*,
> *Crowning* the present, doubting of the rest.

8. The rhythm of this line is defective unless the Elizabethans pronounced ' olives ' ' olíves.'

13-14. Why this abrupt " poetic vaunt of immortality "—as LEE calls it ? It has not been led up to in any way ; and besides, the " poor rhyme " of a single sonnet is rather an insecure foundation for so imposing a claim. Again, how can this sonnet be Southampton's monument ? All that has been said in his praise is that he " looks fresh "—wonderfully well *considering*—after his two years in the Tower. The answer to these questions seems to be that the author admired the sonnets of the B.I. series, and determined to write imitations thereof—even if he had to drag them in by the hair of the head. Compare :

> Since *spite of him* I'll *live* in *this poor rhyme*,
> While *he insults* o'er dull and speechless tribes :
> And thou in this *shalt* find *thy monument*,
> When *tyrants* crests and tombs of *brass* are spent,

with the following lines from the B.I. series :

> 19. Yet do thy worst, old Time ; *despite thy wrong*
> My love shall *in my verse* ever *live* young.
> 18. Nor shall *Death brag* thou wander'st in his shade
> 81. *Your monument shall be my gentle verse.*
> 55. Not marble nor the *gilded monuments*
> Of *princes* shall outlive *this powerful rhyme*.
> 64. And *brass* eternal slave to mortal rage.

" Tribes " is a good (or rather very *bad*) example of a ' dear-bought rhyme.' So is " spent."

The reader will note that the lines imitated are by Shakespeare, The Minor Poet, and The Humorist respectively. Coupled with the legal phraseology of lines 3-4, this fact suggests the possibility of this sonnet being a late effort on the part of our old friend The Lawyer.

66.

A typical ' Enueg ' sonnet turned into a perfunctory compliment to a patron by the last line. Its terse style and earnest tone contrast with the flowery language and conventional sentiment of Shakespeare's serial sonnets. If it is by him, it must have been written a good deal later than 1595—indeed, if, as seems likely, the patron is Southampton, and is identical with the addressee of 67 and 68, it must be dated not long before the publication of the sonnets in 1609.

67.

I cannot bring myself to believe that either this or the next sonnet is the work of Shakespeare. They are tacked on rather clumsily to No. 66, and the ridiculous solemnity with which the unholy practices of painting the face and wearing a wig are reprehended, has nothing in common with the philosophic pessimism of that sonnet; moreover, the pervading puritanical sentiment contrasts very oddly with the frank paganism of the Serial sonnets.

The final couplet is obviously a reminiscence of Shakespeare's lines in the M.A. series:

> Let those whom *Nature* has not made for *store*,
> Harsh, featureless and rude, barrenly perish (11.10-11).

and the words, "In days long since," would seem to imply that some years at least had elapsed since No. 11 was written. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine either this effusion or No. 68 figuring in a batch of "sugred sonnets," passing from hand to hand in Court circles at any time in the golden days of good Queen Bess. They would certainly not have commended themselves to that imperious lady, who detested Puritans, entertained a sufficiently exalted idea of the glories of her reign, and, as we read, "possessed no fewer than eighty attires of false hair." The sonnet was probably written not very long before the publication of the Quarto in 1609.

This is one of the 'difficult' sonnets, and though the commentators agree that it is a wonderful piece of work, no two of them explain it in quite the same way. Take, for example, POOLER'S note on *a single line*—line 7: "Beauty may be personified and denote whatever Power produces things beautiful. 'Indirectly' may mean 'by imitation.' instead of going straight to the fountain-head, Nature's store='his exchequer' of l. 11. So MR. WYNDHAM; 'Beauty is not "beauty indifferent and imperfect" (*Tyler*), but abstract Beauty personified and called "poor," as abstract Nature personified is stated to be "beggar'd" and with "no exchequer now but his."' DEAN BEECHING dissents, 'Shakespeare is usually faithful to rhetorical parallelism within the quatrain; and here "poor beauty" corresponds to "false painting," not to "bankrupt Nature."' With this PROF. CASE agrees: 'If 7 and 8 are properly to carry out the precedent thought, we must take "since" in the regular, but here rather awkward, sense, "because" and understand the whole as follows: Why should sin derive countenance from his society? Why should the natural hue of his cheek become the type for counterfeit? Why should inferior beauty artificially mimic roses because he has true ones?' One finds oneself wishing that the ingenious solvers of these remarkable conundrums had gone on to ask themselves a few more, *e.g.*, Why did Shakespeare write this feeble and obscure sonnet? Why did he go out of his way to insult his Patron by informing him that his (The Patron's) only justification for living on in this vale of tears was that he might stand as a valuable advertisement of Nature's ancient opulence? Why did he make a fool of himself by asserting that, owing to the wickedness of these latter days, the whole younger generation had been stricken with anæmia? And, finally, why have the commentators failed to include these three points in their lengthy lists of matters requiring explanation?

68.

A continuation of 67, written either by the same pious but mediocre versifier or by another of the same kidney. The latter hypothesis seems the more probable in view of the remarkable series of imitations of words and phrases occurring in the previous sonnet:—

67

Why should *false painting* imitate *his cheek*,
And *steal dead* seeing of his *living* hue ?
Why should poor *beauty* indirectly seek
Roses of shadow, since his *rose* is *true* ?
Why should he *live*, now *Nature* bankrupt is,
O, *him she stores, to show what* wealth she had
In *days long since*, before these last so bad.

68

Thus *is his cheek* the map of *days outworn*,
When *beauty lived* and *died* as *flowers do now*,
Ere *beauty's dead* fleece made another gay ;
Without all ornament itself and *true* ;
Robbing no old to dress his *beauty* new ;
And *him* as for a map *doth Nature store*,
To show false Art what beauty was *of yore*.

These are ' verbal parallelisms ' quite in the ' competitive ' style of the Serial sonnets. Note the clumsy and ungrammatical line 10, and the inartistic effect of the repetition in the final couplet of the ' map ' idea of the first line. Note, too, in lines 5-10 the direct imitation of the lines in the *Merchant of Venice* (iii. 2.92-7) :

So are those crisped snaky *golden locks*,
To be the dowry of a *second head*.
The skull that bred them in the *sepulchre*.
Thus *ornament* is but the guiled shore.

II. PHILOSOPHICAL SONNETS. (Nos. 129, 146.)

129.

A typical ' philosophical ' sonnet on a well-worn sonnetteering theme. *Cf.* Sidney's sonnet, *To Desire*, beginning—

Thou blind man's mark, thou fool's self-chosen snare,

and G.C.'s *Emaricdulfe*, No. 36, beginning—

O lust ! Of sacred love the foul corrupter.

Cf. also *V. and A.*, 799 *et. seq.*, and *Lucrece*, 211 *et. seq.*, 687 *et. seq.*

This sonnet presents no particularly striking or original features, and seems, in my poor judgment, to lack the sureness of hand of The Master. For instance, the line—

Before, a joy proposed ; behind, a dream,

would apply equally well to the most innocent of human pleasures—listening to Melba, for example, or climbing the Alps. Besides, it is an obvious echo from Tarquin's soliloquy in *Lucrece*—

What win I, if I gain the thing I seek ?
A dream, a breath, a froth of fleeting *joy* ; (211-12).

If Shakespeare wrote it (which I take leave to doubt), it must be one of his later efforts ; its terse sententiousness has nothing in common with the facile flow of his verse in the Serial sonnets.

146

This interesting sonnet, though superior in style and musical effect to Nos. 67 and 68, is written in very much the same puritanical spirit. While these two sonnets denounce the fashionable practices of using rouge and wearing false hair, this sonnet denounces the extravagant expenditure on clothes which was another besetting sin of the masculine worldling in the days of Elizabeth. But, interspersed with these exhortations against the vain adorning of the body, we find reflections of a deeper and more solemn character in which the body is regarded, not as something to be clad in richer or poorer garments, but as a garment *itself*—" this muddy vesture of decay," which is put off by the soul

at death and becomes " the prey of worms." Such a mixture of two thoughts very similar in appearance, but very different in degree, requires exceptionally careful handling if confusion is to be avoided ; and, as I venture to think, in this sonnet it has *not* been carefully handled. Moreover, the resultant confusion has been aggravated by a sudden change of metaphor in the ninth line : the body appears neither as the soul's " mansion," whose walls are " so costly gay " (*clothes* idea), nor as the soul's " charge," doomed to be eaten by worms (*spiritual* idea), but as the soul's " servant " who is to " pine " that his master may be fed. Whether this new metaphor is to be connected with the *clothes* idea or with the *spiritual* idea is a very difficult question to determine ; the words, " without be rich no more," would seem to indicate the former, the rest of the reference the latter.

Some other individual examples of ambiguity may be noted :—(a) What does " array " in the second line mean ? POOLER notes " this has been explained as ' beleaguer,' but no instance of this absolute use has been cited. The word is found, though rarely, in the sense of ' afflict,' and of ' defile.' " PROF. CASE writes : " The whole tone of the sonnet seems to ask for ' clothe ' or ' adorn.' " It seems clear that if ' clothe ' or ' adorn ' is not the only meaning, it is at any rate *one* of the meanings, *i.e.* the poet is perpetrating a pun. *Cf.* ' invest.'

It will be seen that the " Everyman " editor (in common with most other modern editors) shows two syllables missing from the beginning of the first line. The line reads thus in the Quarto :—

My sinfull earth these rebell powers that thee array,

i.e., two syllables too many. MALONE, therefore, suggested that " the compositor inadvertently repeated the last three words of the first verse in the beginning of the second, omitting two syllables." Most of the commentators accept his suggestion, and restore the ' omitted ' syllables by reading " Thrall to," or " Foil'd by," or " Leagued with," or " Why feed'st," etc., etc. But is not Malone's theory ' rather a large order ' ? One knows what havoc can be wrought in classical MSS. by ' dittography,' but, surely, a seventeenth-century sequence of English sonnets—written one verse to a line, and each line (presumably) beginning with a capital letter—is a different affair altogether. Need we assume, *first*, a compositor so absent-minded as, without the shadow of a typographical excuse, to bring forward three words from the end of one verse to the beginning of the next (changing a lower-case m to a capital M on the way), suppress two words (one beginning with a capital) in order to make room for them, and then leave the line with two redundant syllables after all ; and *second*, a proof-reader so extraordinarily incompetent as to pass over such a complicated mass of easily-detectable mistakes ? Would it not be more reasonable to suppose that the MS. itself was in fault ; and that the editor, finding the text confused by erasures and interlineations, and having no author to refer to (the book being a piratical venture on the part of the noted pirate T.T.), did his unprosodical best ? In the Quarto line the deictic " these " strikes one as rather uncalled-for, and, like " that " and " thee," a word which might easily be misread or misplaced when printing from an MS. disordered by a series of ' author's corrections.' I do not see why we should not read simply—

My sinfull earth *that* rebbel powers array,

taking the line as a parenthesis.

(b). Why " that " in l. 10 ? If it refers to " loss," (as it should do) what is the meaning ? If to " servant," why not " him " ?

(c) What is the meaning of " So shalt thou feed on Death " ? The soul is to feed on (or at the expense of) the body, but how can it be said that " body " = " Death " ?

This sonnet has been greatly praised by a great many of the best judges ; MASEFIELD, for instance (than whom no one living is better qualified to give an opinion in such a matter), calls it the noblest of Shakespeare's sonnets. I have tried very hard to see it in this light, but with complete want of success. No one can deny that it possesses a majestic music of its own, or that its author had a fine ear for metrical cadence and a fine instinct for literary expression ; but still I cannot bring myself to believe that it was written by Shakespeare. This I regard as a most unfortunate circumstance ; I have not the slightest claim to pose as an authority in such matters, and it is only because I feel that everybody who undertakes the office of a commentator is bound, however ill-qualified he may be, to say what he really thinks about his author's work, that I have ventured to express so heterodox an opinion. I note briefly for what they are worth the reasons on which it is based :

1. The sonnet suffers throughout from *confusion of thought.* To me it seems an impossible task to determine at what points the poet passes from his ' clothes ' theme to his ' spiritual ' theme, and vice versa. This ambiguity, in the case of an author so well endowed with the gift of literary expression, is explainable only on the supposition that he has lost his grip on his logical thread—seduced perhaps by the music of his own verse—and is not very clear in the matter himself. Could one suppose such a thing of Shakespeare ?
2. The sentiment of the sonnet (as in sonnets 67 and 68) is typically puritanical in its appreciation of the sinfulness of little sins. Can one imagine Shakespeare solemnly sitting down to indite a sonnet to himself, condemning his extravagant expenditure on his wardrobe ?
3. The sonnet breathes a religious spirit throughout, and its author seems to have been a sincere Christian, profoundly conscious of the insignificance of this world as compared with the next. Can this be said of Shakespeare—I do not say the Shakespeare of the Serial sonnets, because their notably unchristian character may be accounted for on the hypothesis that the poets deferred to the Patron's tastes and wishes in such matters—but [1] the Shakespeare of the Plays ? It is no doubt true that Shakespeare never " unlock'd his heart," but still, is it too presumptuous to fancy that from the way in which he makes his great ' intellectual ' characters envisage the mystery of existence in the supreme emotional crises of their lives, one may gather some little inkling of his own mental attitude towards the radical problems of religion and philosophy ? One cannot help thinking that if Shakespeare had possessed a tithe of the faith which animated the author of

[1] I have spoken above (p. 181) of " the frank paganism of the Serial sonnets." But this is a libel on pagan religions and philosophies. The true ' Philosophy of Shakespeare's Sonnets ' is an utterly soulless materialism. A great many of them deal with the greatest themes of all—Love, Time, Death—but anything less spiritual than the way these themes are handled it would be difficult to conceive. Love is nearly always one of two things : either a degrading passion for an unworthy mistress, or else such an emotional bond as may be supposed to exist between a vain and munificent patron on the one side and an obsequious sonnetteer on the other. Time is merely the arch-annihilator, and the only chance one has of defeating him is either to beget a son in one's own image, or else to get oneself written about by a fashionable poet. Death is the end of all things ; the dead poet dwells with worms for a space, and is then compounded with clay, while his spirit, "the better part of him," survives—in his verses! Of the ideas of Divine love, life as a preparation for eternity, the Resurrection and the Judgment, as of all the other great Christian tenets, there is no trace whatever. Such words as heaven, hell, angel, cherub, saint, devil, bless, religious, hallowed, cross, worship, etc., are common enough, but they are always used either metaphorically or else with a deliberately irreverent intention. We get " god " and " goddess," but the God of the Christians does not appear even once in the whole collection.

this sonnet, we should have had something a good deal less unchristian in sentiment than Hamlet's famous soliloquy on 'The Great Perhaps,' and Prospero's homily to the newly-plighted lovers on the theme:

> . . . We are such stuff
> As dreams are made on, and our little life
> Is rounded with a sleep.

III.—AMATORY AND EROTIC SONNETS. (Nos. 128, 138, 145, 151, 153-154.)

Six trifling pieces of little interest—literary or otherwise.

128.

POOLER notes, "Un-Shakespearean in sound and rhythm." I cordially agree.

138.

Almost certainly by Shakespeare; it is written in his manner, and is much superior to the *Passionate Pilgrim* version.

145.

Puerile in conception and amateurish in execution. Shakespeare *couldn't* have written it.

151.

Not, I think, by Shakespeare—this sort of thing is not characteristic of his *verse*.

153-154.

POOLER notes, "Prof. Dowden gives what seems to be the ultimate origin of this and the following sonnet, as discovered by Hertzberg in the Greek Anthology *Epigrammata* (Jacob) ix. 65 and i. 57; by Marianus and Zenodotus respectively." Zenodotus' epigram is not much to the point, but Marianus' is. It is thus translated by POOLER: "Here under the plane trees, overcome with soft slumber, slept Eros, after giving his torch in charge of the nymphs. Then, said the nymphs, to one another, 'Why hesitate? Would that with this we had extinguished at the same time the fire in the heart of men.' But when the torch kindled the very waters, the water is hot that the amorous (?) nymphs pour thence into the bath."

POOLER notes against each sonnet, "Probably not by Shakespeare." Certainly the stiff-jointed versification and frigid conceits of 153 are not in the least like his work, while as for 154, though the two first quatrains are written gracefully enough, the last six lines are distinctly unShakespearean in style and rhythm. Note, too, in the lines—

> *And so* the general of hot desire
> *Was sleeping by a* virgin *hand dis*arm'd,

an obvious echo from the Ghost's speech in *Hamlet*—

> *Thus was I, sleeping, by a* brother's *hand*
> Of life, of crown, of queen, at once *dis*patch'd.

My own views, to which, as I have previously observed, I attach no special importance, are as follows:—

1. Shakespeare did not write either of these two sonnets.
2. They are the work of two different hands. No. 154 is so much the better version

of the two, that if the same author had written both, he would have been compelled by his sense of the fitness of things to destroy No. 153.

3. Both sonnets give one the impression of having been written ' with the eye on the object,' *i.e.*, on a picture or engraving, not on a mere passage in a book. If there happened to be such a concrete representation of Marianus' pen-picture hanging up in the seventeenth-century prototype of the King's Pump-Room at Bath, it might very well have inspired two ' distinguished strangers ' to inscribe these two little poems in the seventeenth-century prototype of the Visitors' Album.

• • • • •

All the hundred and fifty-four sonnets have now been accounted for in five ' expository ' chapters, of which this is the last. It is by these five chapters that The Theory must stand or fall. In other words, kind reader, the convention which has governed the writing of these chapters throughout, *i.e.*, the convention that " the first nine Propositions of The Theory have been proved and accepted as correct," now ceases to operate, and is delivered up to you for judgment. *Fiat justitia.*

The four chapters still remaining to be written are designed to be merely an appendix, in which the more important implications and corollaries of The Theory will be discussed from a rather different point of view, and in a rather less uncompromising spirit.

CHAPTER VII.—THE ORDER OF THE SONNETS.

As a recent editor (MR. C. M. WALSH) well remarks :—

" The condition in which this edition [the 1609 Quarto] presents us Shakespeare's hundred and fifty odd sonnets is most unsatisfactory. Imagine even if the eighteen sonnets of Milton had been handed down without any superscriptions indicative of the persons addressed, or of the occasions on which they were composed ; how difficult it would be to make out their meaning ! Had Wordsworth's three or four hundred come to us in such naked shape, their case would have been hopeless. The slightest title imposed by the poet himself, with an occasional authoritative date, have a value which we hardly appreciate until we deal with such wastrels as Shakespeare's sonnets, that offer no such aids. Consequently, these sonnets present a mystery and set a problem."

The problem of their order has been attacked from many sides and by a great variety of writers. The extremists of one school see in the Quarto order nothing but an entirely arbitrary arrangement—sonnets sprinkled out of a pepper-box, so to speak—while the extremists on the other side find no difficulty in reading the whole collection as one continuous poem. Walsh's *Shakespeare's Complete Sonnets* is a good example of the ' pepper-box ' school, while in Dowden's *Shakespeare's Sonnets* we have what is certainly the most thoughtful and reasonable presentment of the case from the ' continuous poem ' point of view. Let us hear these two authorities speak for themselves.

WALSH says :—

Thorpe's arrangement of the sonnets is as poor as could be expected of a purloiner who published stolen goods without a title, without a preface, and without a note, but with innumerable misprints and with two misstatements in the little information he did vouchsafe to give. We need not hesitate to pronounce it worthless. It is neither chronological nor according to subjects. It opens with the longest possible groups of sonnets, and so at the start conveys the impression of orderliness—a clever trick, which has deceived most of the subsequent editors. For the bell-wether was chosen one of the most striking of the sonnets, so that the series at once plunges *in medias res*. But after this group there is breaking up and a scattering. Occasionally two or three sonnets which obviously treat of the same subject, and of which one is a direct continuation of another, are brought into juxtaposition ; but these can be matched by others that plainly belong together and are placed apart. Almost all editors have complained of the inappropriate position of some particular sonnets. It is strange they do not admit unauthoritativeness in the entire sequence. Yet nothing can be plainer than that Thorpe's arrangement of the sonnets is of no more help to our understanding of their development than is the Folio-editors' arrangement of the plays.

DOWDEN says :—

Various attempts have been made by English, French, and German students to place the sonnets in a new and better order, of which attempts no two agree between themselves. That the sonnets are not printed in the Quarto, 1609, at haphazard, is evident from the fact that the Envoy, cxxvi., is rightly placed ; that poems addressed to a mistress follow those addressed to a friend ; and that the two Cupid and Diana sonnets stand together at the close. A nearer view makes it apparent that in the first series, I.—CXXVI., a continuous story is conducted through various stages to its termination ; a more minute inspection discovers points of contact or connexion between sonnet and sonnet, and a natural sequence of thought, passion and imagery. We are in the end convinced that no arrangement which has been proposed is as good as that of the Quarto. But the force of this remark seems to me to apply with certainty only to sonnets I.—CXXVI. The second series, CXXVII.-CLIV., although some of its pieces are evidently connected with those which stand near them, does not exhibit a like intelligible sequence ; a better arrangement may perhaps be found ; or, it may be, no

possible arrangement can educe order out of the struggles between will and judgment, between blood and reason; tumult and chaos are perhaps a portion of their life and being. . . . The sonnets may be divided at pleasure into many smaller groups, but I find it possible to go on without interruption from I. to XXXII., from XXXIII. to XLII.; from XLIII. to LXXIV.; from LXXV. to XCVI.; from XCVII. to XCIX.; from C. to CXXVI. I do not here attempt to trace a continuous sequence in the sonnets addressed to the dark-haired woman, CXXVII.-CLIV.; I doubt whether such continuous sequence is to be found in them.

Now, when the case is viewed from the new standpoint provided by The Theory, the truth is seen to lie between these two extremes. The evidence (wholly internal) gives us the following solution of the problem.

The Solution.

The editor (in all probability T.T. himself), having before him a MS. of the sonnets arranged in their original thirteen series and one 'Occasional' group precisely as they have been arranged in this book, decided to break up the series and rearrange the sonnets in such a way as to conceal their *competitive* character, and give them the appearance of having been written by a single author. He accordingly set to work as follows:—

(a) First he selected as the framework of his rearrangement the four longest series in the collection, *viz.*, M.A. (19), A. (21), P.E. (16), P.R. (17), plus a group made up of the three distinctively feminine series, *viz.*, I. (6), D.L. (12), and W. (4), added to the 14 non-serial or 'Occasional,' sonnets (36 altogether). This group may be called the "Mistress and Miscellaneous" group—M.M. for short.

(b) Then taking these four 'major' series, he rearranged the sonnets in each series so as to substitute a 'natural sequence' order for the original competitive order.

(c) Then taking the M.M. group, he removed all the sonnets (9) addressed to or referring to a *man*.

(d) Then, again, taking the four 'major' series in the order M.A., A., P.E., and P.R., he proceeded to fill in the framework by 'working into' them, singly or in batches, the sonnets of the six remaining 'minor' series (E.D., B.I., D.D., P.P., M.P., E.A.) plus the 'rejections' from the M.M. group—54 in all—on a system of 'catchwords' designed to give the reader an impression of continuity. It is difficult to explain this catchword system without giving actual examples, but it will be sufficient to note here that the resemblances which attracted T.T.'s attention and led him to insert a 'minor' sonnet (or sequence of sonnets) between two sonnets of a 'major' series are very often—in fact nearly always—merely verbal, and of an entirely superficial character.

While doing this he also in a few cases shifted on the same catchword system a sonnet from one 'major' series to another. (This shifting was practically confined to the A. series which has 8 out of 21 thus displaced, the rest having only 5 between them.)

(e) Then taking up the emasculated M.M. group he thoroughly broke it up, with the object of disguising the competitive character of its longest series, D.L. (12 sonnets), using his catchword system whenever he had a chance.

(f) Finally, he made a careful revision of the whole collection, and in several cases where he found that the juxtaposition of two sonnets had made the artificiality of his catchword system too glaringly obvious, he slightly altered their order.

"But," the reader will say, "this so-called 'solution' is wide enough and vague enough to cover *any* arrangement of the sonnets!" This, on the face of it, is very nearly true. But the case is really not so black as it looks, and he is respectfully requested to suspend final judgment until he has read to the end of this chapter and checked for himself the detailed analysis of the order which is now to be set before him.

Here then is a scheme of the *Sonnets* in their Quarto order, divided into five sections

on the principle noted above. *First,* M.A. section (42 sonnets); *Second,* A. section (33 sonnets); *Third,* P.E. section (33 sonnets); *Fourth,* P.R. section (18 sonnets); *Fifth,* M.M. group (28 sonnets).

1ST SECTION. (M.A.) NOS. 1-42.

M.A.
(1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5 + 6 + 7 + 8 + 9 + 10 + 11 + 12 + 13 + 14 + 15 + 16 + 17)

B.I. **M.A.** *B.I.* *M.P.* *E.D.* *A.* *P.R* *E.D.* *A.*
— *[18 + 19]* × **(20)** — *[21]* × *[22]* — *[23]* — *[24]* — *[25]* — *[26]* — *[27 + 28]* — *[29 +*

D.D. *M.P.* *P.P.* *P.R.* *D.D.* *E.D.* *M.P.* *I.*
30 + 31] — *[32]* × *[33 + 34 + 35]* — *[36]* — *[37]* — *[38]* — *[39]* — *[40 + 41 + 42]* ×

2ND SECTION. (A.) NOS. 43-75.

A. *E.A.* **A.** *B.I.* *P.R.*
(43 + 44 + 45 + 46 + 47 + 48) — *[49]* × **(50 + 51 + 52)** — *[53 + 54 + 55]* — *[56]* —

A. *P.E.* *B.I.* **A.** *B.I.* *O.* *P.P.*
(57 + 58) × *[59]* — *[60]* × **(61)** — *[62 + 63 + 64 + 65]* × *[66 + 67 + 68]* × *[69 + 70]* ×

M.P. **A.**
[71 + 72 + 73 + 74] × **(75)** ×

3RD SECTION. (P.E.) NOS. 76-108.

M.P. *O.* **P.E.** *B.I.* **P.E.**
[76] — *[77]* — **(78 + 79 + 80)** — *[81]* × **(82 + 83 + 84 + 85 + 86)** — *[87 + 88 + 89*

E.A. *P.P.* *A.* **P.E.**
+ 90 + 91 + 92 + 93] — *[94 + 95 + 96]* × *[97 + 98 + 99]* × **(100 + 101 + 102 +**

E.D. **P.E.** *O.* **P.E.**
103 + 104 × *[105]* × **(106)** — *[107]* × **(108)** ×

4TH SECTION. (P.R.) NOS. 109-126.

P.R. *A.* **P.R.**
(109 + 110 + 111 + 112) — *[113 + 114]* × **(115 + 116 + 117 + 118 + 119 + 120**

O. **P.R.** *M.A.*
+ 121) × *[122]* — **(123 + 124 + 125)** — *[126]* ×

5TH SECTION. (M.M. GROUP). NOS. 127-154.

D.L. **O.** **D.L.** **I.** **W.** **D.L.** **O.**
(127) . (128 . 129) . (130 + 131 + 132) — **(133 + 134)** — **(135 + 136). (137)** — **(138)** —

D.L. W. I. O. D.L. *E.A.* D.L.
(139 + 140 + 141) — (142 + 143) . (144) — (145 . 146) — (147 + 148) — [*149*] — (150)

O. D.L. O.
— (151) . (152) . (153 + 154).

Five simple symbols are used :

(1). ( ) encloses a sonnet or sequence of sonnets belonging to a ' major ' series in its own section, *e.g.*, **(78 + 79 + 80)**.

(2). [ ] encloses a sonnet or sequence of sonnets belonging to either (a) a ' major ' series *outside* its own section, or (b) a ' minor ' series, initials and numbers being italicised, *e.g.*, (a) [*113 + 114*], (b) [*94 + 95 + 96*].

(3). + before a sonnet indicates that it belongs to the same series as its predecessor.

(4). — before a sonnet indicates that it belongs to a different series from its predecessor, but is connected with it (the predecessor) either by natural sequence of thought or on the T.T. catchword system.

(5). x before a sonnet indicates that it belongs to a different series from its predecessor, and is not connected with it (the predecessor) either by natural sequence of thought or on the T.T. catchword system.

I shall now attempt to ' reconstitute the crime ' section by section, first drawing the kind reader's attention to two points which he is requested to bear in mind when perusing my explanations.

Point No. 1. I shall not attempt to trace the connection between two sonnets joined by the symbol +, *i.e.*, sonnets of the same series changed by T.T. from their *competitive* order to their *natural sequence* order (*v.* para. (b) of the solution above). The connection is in all cases apparent ; and indeed the fact that two sonnets belong to the same series is alone enough to ensure a greater or less degree of connection between them, either in thought, or language, or both.

Point No. 2. DOWDEN (*v.* the extract from his edition quoted on p. 187 above) recognises only seven solutions of continuity in the first 126 sonnets, *viz.*, after Nos. 32, 42, 58, 74, 96, 99, and 126 itself. I accept all these seven, but I find that there are, in addition, no less then fifteen other points at which I am unable to trace any connection —either by natural sequence of thought, or by a T.T. catchword between a sonnet and the one which immediately follows it, *viz.*, after Nos. 19, 21, 49, 60, 65, 68, 70, 75, 81, 104, 105, 107, 108, 114 and 121. I have, therefore, marked all these points with the hiatus mark x , making with the seven admitted by Prof. Dowden altogether twenty-two hiatuses which my ' Catchword ' theory will have to explain away.

1ST SECTION. (M.A.) Nos. 1-42.

M.A.
(1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5 + 6 + 7 + 8 + 9 + 10 + 11 + 12 + 13 + 14 + 15 + 16 + 17)—

B.I. **M.A.** *B.I.* *M.P.* *E.D.* *A.* *P.R.* *E.D.* *A.*
[*18 + 19*] x **(20)** — [*21*] x [*22*] — [*23*] — [*24*] — [*25*] — [*26*] — [*27 + 28*] — [*29 +*

D.D. *M.P.* *P.P.* *P.R.* *D.D.* *E.D.* *M.P.* *I.*
30 + 31] — [*32*] x [*33 + 34 + 35*] — [*36*] — [*37*] — [*38*] — [39] — [40 + 41 + 42] x

The reader is requested to observe that in this section the main or 'framework' series is not broken up by the insertion of 'foreign' sonnets as in the three other sections, but stands practically solid at the beginning, the foreign sonnets following it one after another on the catchword system like beads on a string. Now T.T.'s reason for adopting this procedure may have been, as WALSH says, to "convey the impression of orderliness"; but I am inclined to think, there was a still stronger reason, *viz.*, that he could not have done otherwise without exposing the artificiality of his catchword system. As I have noted above [1] ". . . in this series the central thought 'Marry and beget a son' swamps all the others. It predominates in all four of Shakespeare's sonnets, and appears more or less prominently in all except three (Nos. 15, 20, and 126) of the rest." The reader will observe that of the three sonnets mentioned in this extract, No. 15 is so obviously a continuation of 14 that it could not have been displaced without creating a suspicion of a deliberate rupture; No. 20 *is* separated from the solid block of the series by the only break in its continuity; and the twelve-lined No. 126 has been taken far away to the end of the fourth section to mark the division between the 'man' and 'woman' sequences of sonnets.

17.)-*18*[+. The 'live' in the last line of 17 and 18 might be regarded as the catchword connecting them, but it seems pretty clear that the original connection was between 17 and 19, and that we have here an example of a transposition effected on revision to conceal the too obvious catchwording.

17. Who will believe *my verse* in time to come,
And stretched metre of an *antique* song.
You should *live* twice, in it and *in my rhyme.*
19. Nor draw no lines there with thine *antique* pen;
My love shall *in my verse* ever *live* young.

+*19*]+(**20**). A 'natural' hiatus. The main series is continued after the insertion of *18*+*19*.

DOWDEN explains the connection as follows: "Shakespere, confident of the immortality of his friend in verse, defies Time."

(**20**)-[*21*]. Catchword, 'painted' in the first line of 20 and second line of 21.

[*21*] x [*22*]. Hiatus caused by transpositions made to conceal catchwording, the original connection having been between 19 and 22.

19. Yet do thy worst *old* Time; despite thy wrong
My love shall in my verse *ever live young.*
22. My glass shall not persuade me I am *old*
So long as *youth and thou are of one date.*

DOWDEN explains the connection as follows: "The praise of his friend's beauty suggests by contrast Shakspere's own face marred by time. He comforts himself by claiming his friend's beauty as his own."

[*22*]-[*23*]-[*24*]. These three sonnets are all connected by the catchwords 'heart' and 'breast.'

22. Is but the seemly raiment of my *heart,*
Which in thy *breast* doth live as thine in me:
Bearing thy *heart* which I will keep so chary

[1] p 26

23. Whose strength's abundance weaken his own *heart*,
And dumb presagers of my speaking *breast*.
24. Thy beauty's form in table of my *heart* ;
Are windows to my *breast*, . . .

There is a supplementary connection between 23 and 24, *viz.*, the peculiar performances of the human eye, described in the last line of 23 and the first and following lines of 24.

[*24*]-[*25*]. Catchword, ' The sun's eye.'

24. Are windows to my breast, where-through *the sun*
Delights to *peep*.
25. But as the marigold at *the sun's* eye,

[*25*]-[*26*]. Catchwords, ' move ' and ' love.'

25. Then happy I, that love and am *beloved*
Where I may not remove or be *removed*.
26. Till whatsoever star that guides my *moving*
And puts apparel on my tattered *loving*,

[*26*]-[*27*+. Catchword, the ' moving ' of 26.9 suggests the ' journey ' of 27.3.

+*28*]-[*29*+. Catchword, the ' sorrow ' and ' grief ' of the last line of 28 are echoed by the ' beweep ' of the second line of 29. Moreover, there is a close resemblance in tone and sentiment.

+*31*]-[*32*]. Catchwords, ' grave ' and ' love.'

31. Thou art the *grave* where *buried* love doth live,
Hung with the trophies of *my lovers gone*.
32. When that churl death *my bones with dust shall cover*,
These poor rude lines of *thy deceased lover*.

[*32*] × [*33*+*34*+*35*]. This batch of three P.P. sonnets has been displaced for much the same reasons as are responsible for the hiatus between 21 and 22, *i.e.*, sonnets have been transposed to conceal too-obvious catchwording. It would seem that T.T.'s original arrangement was as follows : 31 . 33 . 34 . 35 . 40 . 41 . 42 ., the catchwording being as follows—between 31—33, ' eye,' ' sovereign,' ' flattery.'

31. And there *reigns* love and all love's loving parts,
How many a holy and *obsequious* tear
Hath dear religious love stol'n from mine *eye*,
33. *Flatter* the mountain tops with *sovereign eye*.

and between 35—40, ' thief,' ' rob.'

35. To that *sweet thief* which sourly *robs* from me.
40. I do forgive thy *robbery, gentle thief*,

He subsequently inserted 32 between 31 and 33 (on the catchwords ' grave ' and ' love ' as noted above), and between 35 and 40 a string of four single sonnets, each connected with its predecessor by catchwords, as will be explained below.

DOWDEN admits the hiatus between 32 and 33.

+*35*]-[*36*]. A number of catchwords turning on the thought common to both sonnets, *viz.*, the poet's admission of his own sinfulness. Compare the ' faults,' ' trespass,' ' thyself corrupting,' and ' sins ' of 35 with the ' confess,' ' blots,' and ' bewailed guilt ' of 36.

[*36*]-[*37*]. Here also the connection is in the *sense*. The whole of 37 fits in very well as an expansion of the final couplet of 36.

. . . I love thee in such sort
As thou being mine, mine is thy good report.

[*37*]-[*38*]. Catchword, ' ten times.'

37. This wish I have ; then *ten times* happy me !
38. Be thou the tenth Muse, *ten times* more in worth.

[*38*]-[*39*]. (a) Catchword, ' worth,' (b) very close similarity in form ; ' how,' ' when ' (rhetorical questions).

38. *How* can my Muse want subject to invent,
When thou thyself dost give invention light ?
Be thou the tenth Muse, ten times more in *worth*
39. O *how* thy *worth* with manners may I sing,
When thou art all the better part of me ?

[*39*]-[*40*+. (a) Catchwords, ' love ' and ' deceive ' (b) similarity in form ; ' what ' ? (rhetorical question).

39. *What* can mine own praise to mine own self bring ?
To entertain the time with thoughts of *love*,
Which time and thoughts so sweetly doth *deceive*.
40. *What* hast thou then more than thou hadst before ?
I cannot blame thee for my *love* thou usest ;
But yet be blamed, if thou thyself *deceivest*

+*42*] × Natural hiatus—the end of the section. DOWDEN admits hiatus.

2ND SECTION. (A.) NOS. 43-75.

A. *E.A.* **A.** *B.I.* *P.R.*
(**43** + **44** + **45** + **46** + **47** + **48**) — [*49*] × (**50** + **51** + **52**) — [*53* + *54* + *55*] — [*56*]

A. *P.E.* *B.I.* **A.** *B.I.* *O.*
— (**57** + **58**) × [*59*] — [*60*] × (**61**) — [*62* + *63* + *64* + *65*] × [*66* + *67* + *68*] ×

P.P. *M.P.* **A.**
[*69* + *70*] × [*71* + *72* + *73* + *74*] × (**75**) ×

This is the most difficult of all the sections. No less than eight of the sonnets of the main series are missing, and it may very well be that their transference to other sections is accountable for a good deal of the confusion in the catchword order which we shall find from Nos. 65 to 75.

+**48**)-[*49*]. Connected by the *sense*. The first line of 49 is a very natural-looking continuation of the final couplet of 48, and the whole sonnet fits in very well as an expansion of the thought of the loss of the beloved, contained in that couplet.

[*49*] × (**50**+. A natural hiatus—the main series is continued after the insertion of 49.

DOWDEN does not admit the hiatus, but merely says :—" 50. This sonnet and the next are a pair. . . . The journey l.1 is that spoken of in 48.l.1."

+ **52**)-[*53*+. Catchwords, ' blessed ' and ' robe.'

52. *Blessed* are *you* whose worthiness gives scope,
Or as the wardrobe which the *robe* doth hide,
53. And *you* in every *blessed* shape we know.
And you in Grecian *tires* are painted new.

+*55*]-[*56*]. Catchwords, ' love ' and ' dwelling in eyes.'

55. You live in this, and *dwell in lovers' eyes.*
56. So *love* be thou ; although to-day thou *fill*
Thy hungry eyes. . . .

[*56*]-(**57**+. Catchword, ' sad interim ' (56), echoed by ' bitterness of absence ' (57).

58) ×[*59*]. Hiatus due to a series of displacements which I shall attempt to explain when dealing below with 65×66. DOWDEN admits hiatus.

[*59*]-[*60*]. Catchwords, ' parturition ' and ' infancy.'

59. Which, *labouring* for invention, *bear amiss*
The second burden of a former *child !*
60. *Nativity*, once in the main of light,
Crawls to maturity . . .

[*60*] ×(**61**). Natural hiatus; the main series is continued after insertion of 59 and 60. DOWDEN does not admit the hiatus, but merely says : " The jealous feeling of 57 reappears in this sonnet."

(**61**)-[*62*+. Catchword, ' mine eye.'

61. It is my love that keeps *mine eye* awake ;
62. Sin of self-love possesseth all *mine eye.*

65] ×[*66*+*67*+*68*] ×[*69*+*70*] ×[*71*+*72*+*73*+*74*]. Here we have three hiatuses which constitute the most difficult problem in the whole of T.T.'s arrangement. The difficulty may, as I have suggested above, be caused to some extent by the transference to other sections of an unusually large number of main series sonnets. I will, however, now deal with these three hiatuses together, and consider at the same time the hiatus 58×59 left over for future examination. I regret that I shall only be able to suggest clues ; I cannot pretend to give a complete explanation.

In the first place, then, it would seem that T.T. had collected a number of sonnets on the catchword, ' sea-shore.'

56. Let this sad interim like the *ocean* be
Which parts the *shore*, where two contracted new
Come daily to the *banks* . . .
60. Like as the *waves* make towards the pebbled *shore,*
Nativity, once in the *main* of light,
64. When I have seen the hungry *ocean* gain
Advantage on the kingdom of the *shore,*
And the firm soil win of the *watery main,*
65. Since brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor *boundless sea,*

—and then a number on the catchword, ' death.'

64. This thought is as a *death*, which cannot choose
66. Tired with all these, for restful *death I* cry,
Tired with these, from these would *I* be *gone,*
71. No longer mourn for me when *I* am *dead*
And mock you with me after *I* am *gone,*

and had then connected the two sets together through 64, the only sonnet which contains *both* catchwords. While trying to work the two sets into a natural-looking sequence, he noticed other catchwords which suggested other sonnets and an altered arrangement. Five of these catchwords are traceable—three previously noted and two new. The three already noted are ' bitterness of absence,' connecting 56 and 57 ; ' parturition and infancy,' connecting 59 and 60, and ' mine eye,' connecting 61 and 62. The two new ones are :—

(1) ' thy will,' connecting 57 and 61.

57. So true a fool is love that in *your will,*
61. Is it *thy will* thy image should keep open

(2) 'beauty' and 'ornament,' connecting 68 and 70.

68. Ere *beauty's* dead fleece made another gay :
Without all *ornament*, itself and true.
70. The *ornament* of *beauty* is suspect.

Why T.T. inserted this mass of interconnected foreign sonnets at this particular point in the collection is a question which it is difficult to answer. Its only possible catchword connections with the main series appear to be (a) between 50 and 66—"*tired* with my woe" (5), and '*Tired* with all these (*bis*)' (66), and (b) between 61 and 62, through the 'mine eye' catchword noted above. A possible explanation is that T.T. in playing out his long game of Patience with his pack of 154 sonnet-cards, used this section as his 'rubbish- heap'; possibly, too, there was a connection (through the 'beauty' and 'ornament' catchwords) between 54 on the one side and 68 and 70 on the other.

54. O how much more doth *beauty* beauteous seem
By that sweet *ornament* which truth doth give !

As I have already said, I can make no attempt to retrace T.T.'s manipulations of the catchwording, and I must content myself with suggesting that at one stage of his arrangement (a) 64.66. 71, and (b) 68.70, were in sequence.

DOWDEN does not admit any of these three hiatuses. He explains the connection between 65 and 66 as follows: "From the thought of his friend's death, Shakspere turns to think of his own, and of the ills of life from which death would deliver him": the connection between 68 and 69 as follows: "From the thought of his friend's external beauty, Shakspere turns to think of the beauty of his mind, and the popular report against it": the connection between 70 and 71 as follows: "Shakspere goes back to the thought of his own death, from which he was led away by 66.14 'to die, I leave my love alone.' The world in this sonnet is the 'vile world' described in 66."

+*74*](**75**). Natural hiatus; the main series is continued after the insertion of the thirteen foreign sonnets, 62-74.

DOWDEN admits the hiatus.

(**75**)× Natural hiatus—the end of the section.

DOWDEN does not admit the hiatus, but merely says:—"Is this an apology for Shakspere's own sonnets—of which his friend begins to weary—in contrast with the verses of the rival poet, spoken of in 78-80?"

3RD SECTION (P.E.) Nos. 76-108.

M.P. *O.* **P.E.** *B.E.* **P.E.** *E.A.*
[*76*] —[*77*]— (**78** + **79** + **80**) — [*81*] × (**82** + **83** + **84** + **85** + **86**) — [*87* + *88* + *89* +

E.A. *P.P.* *A.* **P.E.**
90 + *91* + *92* + *93*] — [*94* + *95* + *96*] × [*97* + *98* + *99*] × (**100** + **101** + **102** + **103** +

E.D. **P.E.** *O.* **P.E.**
104) × [*105*] × (**106**) — [*107*] × (**108**) ×

It will be seen that only one sonnet (59) belonging to the framework series is missing from this section. There are eighteen foreign sonnets, including a solid block of seven sonnets of the E.A. series.

[*76*]-[*77*]-(**78**+. The two sonnets 76 and 77 are prefixed to the first block of the

framework series on the catchword system. Originally, 76 immediately preceded 79, but a transposition was made on revision because the catchwording was altogether too obvious, *i.e.* :

76. Why is *my verse* so barren of new pride,
And keep *invention* in a noted weed,
Shewing their *birth* and whence they did proceed ?
And you and *love* are still my *argument.*
79. *My verse* alone had all thy gentle grace ;
I grant, sweet *love,* thy lovely *argument*
Deserves the *travail* of a worthier pen ;
Yet what of thee thy poet doth *invent*

But even in the present order the catchwording is apparent, *i.e.* :

76. Shewing their *birth* and whence they did *proceed* ?
77. These *children* nursed, *delivered from* thy brain,
78. Whose influence is thine, and *born of thee.*

+**80**)-[*81*]. Catchword, ' decay '—the last word of 80 echoed by ' rotten ' in the second line of 81.

[*81*]× (**82**+. Natural hiatus ; the main series continued after the insertion of 81. DOWDEN explains the connection as follows : " His friend had, perhaps, alleged in playful self-justification that he had not married Shakspere's Muse, vowing to forsake all other and keep him only unto her."

+86)-[*87*+. Catchword, ' too precious you.'
86. Bound for the prize of all *too precious you,*
87. Farewell ! *thou* art *too dear* for my possessing.

+*93*]-[*94*+. Catchwords, ' face,' ' sweet,' ' show,'
93. That in thy *face sweet* love should ever dwell ;
If thy *sweet* virtue answer not thy *show* !
94. They are the lords and owners of their *faces,*
For *sweetest* things turn sourest by their deeds ;
That do not do the thing they must do *show,*

+*96*]× [*97*+*98*+*99*]× (**100**+**101**+ **102** +'**103** + **104**) × [*105*] × (**106**). These four hiatuses are the result of two very striking and interesting instances of slight transpositions made on final revision in order to conceal the artificiality of the catchword system. The kind reader is respectfully requested to read first, *as a whole,* the block of three foreign sonnets, 97+98+99, and then again as a whole, the block of five framework sonnets, 100+101+102+103+104, and note, first, the extraordinary similarity between 97+98 on the one hand and 102+104 on the other, and, secondly, the catchword arrangement between 99 on the one hand and 101 on the other. I will quote at length.

97+98 and 102+104. Catchwords, ' summer and winter,' and ' lays of birds.'
97+98. For *summer* and his pleasures wait on thee,
And thou away, the very *birds are mute* ;
Or, if they *sing,* 'tis with so dull a cheer
That leaves look pale, dreading the *winter's* near.
From you have I been absent in the *spring,*
When *proud*-pied *April* dressed in all his trim,
Yet nor the *lays of birds* nor the *sweet smell*
Could make me any *summer's* story tell,
Yet seem'd it *winter* still . . .
102+104 Our love was new, and then but in the *spring*
As *Philomel* in Summer's front doth sing,
And *stops her pipe* in growth of riper days :
. . . Three *winters* cold
Have from the forests shook three *summers pride,*
Three beauteous *springs* to yellow autumn turned
Three *April perfumes* in three hot Junes burned.

99 and 101. Catchwords, ' dye ' and ' colour.'

99. In my love's veins thou hast too grossly *dyed*.
But sweet or *colour* it had stol'n from thee.
101. For thy neglect of truth in beauty *dyed* ?
Truth needs no *colour*, with his *colour* fixed.

And then let him compare the framework sonnet No. 103, with the foreign sonnet 105, and note the really extraordinary similarities based on a string of catchwords, ' scope,' ' argument,' ' invention,' ' seat.'

103. That having such a *scope* to shew her pride,
The *argument*, all bare, is of more worth
That over-goes my blunt *invention* quite,
And more, much more, than in my verse *can sit*
105. Three themes in one, which wondrous *scope* affords.
Fair, kind, and true, is all my *argument*,
And this in change in my *invention* spent,
Which three till now never *kept seat* in one.

One can give a shrewd guess as to what has happened in this case. It would seem that T.T. was left with a string of seven framework sonnets arranged in the following ' natural sequence ' order, 102, 104, 100, 101, 103, 106, 108.[1] Attracted by the extraordinary similarities in each case, he brought down (a) 97 and 98 (plus, of course, 98's obvious continuation 99), from the A. series, and prefixed the block to 102, and (b) 105 from the E.D. series and inserted it after 103. While doing this, he noticed a feasible catchwording arrangement between 99 and 101 (' dye ' and ' colour '), and accordingly put 101 next to 99, the order then reading 97, 98, 99, 101, 102, 104, 100, 103, 105, 106, 108. On a final revision, made (as I have explained more than once) with the object of eliminating instances of too glaringly artificial catchwording—he (very reasonably) judged 99-101 and 103-105 to belong to that category, and accordingly inserted the only non-catchword sonnet (100) between 99 and 101, and then transposed 103 and 104. Thus 96 x 97 is a natural hiatus due to the insertion on the catchword system of the block of three A. sonnets before a resumption of the framework series ; 99 x 100 is a hiatus due to a ' revisional ' insertion of a masking sonnet, 100 ; 104 x 105 is a hiatus due to a ' revisional ' transposition of 103 and 104 ; and 105 x 106 is a natural hiatus due to the resumption of the framework series after the insertion of 105.

DOWDEN admits the hiatuses between 96 and 97, and 99 and 100. He does not admit the two others. He explains the connection between 104 and 105 as follows : " To the beauty praised in 100, and the truth and beauty in 101, Shakspere now adds a third perfection, kindness ; and these three sum up the perfections of his friend " ; and the connection between 105 and 106 as follows : " The last line of Sonnet 55 declares that his friend's perfections were never before possessed by one person. This leads the poet to gaze backward on the famous persons of former ages, men and women, his friend being possessor of the united perfections of both man and woman (as in Sonnets 20 and 53)."

(**106**)-[*107*]. Catchwords (a) ' time ' rhyming with ' rhyme ' ; (b) ' prophecy ' and ' divining ' corresponding to ' augur ' and ' presage.'

(a) 106. When in the chronicles of wasted *time*
And beauty making beautiful old *rhyme*
107. Now with the drops of this most balmy *time*
Since spite of him I'll live in this poor *rhyme*.
(b) 106. So all their praises were but *prophecies*
Of this our time, all you *prefiguring* ;
And, for they look'd but with *divining* eyes,
107. Not mine own fears, nor the *prophetic* soul
And the sad *augurs* mock their own *presage*.

[1] That this is the most natural ' natural sequence ' is a fact which the reader is respectfully requested to verify for himself.

[*107*]×(**108**). A natural hiatus ; the framework series is resumed after the insertion of 107.

DOWDEN explains the connection as follows :—" How can ' this poor rhyme,' which is to give us both unending life (107.10-14), be carried on ? Only by saying over again the same old things. But eternal love, in ' love's fresh case ' (an echo of ' my love looks fresh,' 107.10), knows no age, and finds what is old still fresh and young."

(**108**)× A natural hiatus—the end of the section.

DOWDEN explains the connection as follows :—" The first ardour of love is now renewed as in the days of early friendship (107.13-14). But what of the interval of absence and estrangement ? Shakspere confesses his wanderings, yet declares that he was never wholly false."

4TH SECTION (P.R.) Nos. 109-126.

P.R. *A.* **P.R.**
(**109** + **110** + **111** + **112**) — [*113* + *114*]×(**115** + **116** + **117**+**118** + **119** + **120** + **121**)

O. **P.R.** *M.A.*
×[*122*] — (**123** + **124** + **125**) — [*126*]×

This is the easiest of all the sections. Of the 17 sonnets of the framework series (taking as part of the series Southampton's No. 122, to which the 16 P.R. sonnets are a reply), only three, *viz.*, 15, 36, and 56 are missing. There are only four foreign sonnets, *viz.*, 113-114, from the A. series, and the single sonnets, 122 and 126.

+**112**)-[*113*+. Sense-connection. I accept DOWDEN's explanation, which is as follows : " In connexion with 112, the writer's mind and senses are filled with his friend ; in 112 he tells how his ear is stopped to all other voices but one beloved voice ; here he tells how his eye sees things only as related to his friend."

+*114*]×(**115**+. A natural hiatus ; the framework series is resumed after the insertion of the block, 113-114.

DOWDEN explains the connection as follows : " Shakspere now desires to show that love has grown through error and seeming estrangement."

+**121**)×[*122*]. Natural hiatus due to the insertion on the catchword system of 122 before 123. Also T.T. may have had the happy thought of putting Southampton's only two sonnets side by side.

DOWDEN does not admit the hiatus, but merely says :—" An apology for having parted with tables (memorandum-book), the gift of his friend."

[*122*]-(**123**+. Catchwords, ' date ' and ' records.'

122. Beyond all ***date***, even to eternity ;
Of thee, ***thy record*** never can be missed.
123. Our ***dates*** are brief, and therefore we admire
For ***thy records*** and what we see doth lie.

+**125**)-[*126*]. Catchwords, ' render ' and ' control.'

125. But mutual ***render***, only me for ***thee***:
When most impeach'd stands least ***in thy control***.
126. O thou, my lovely boy, ***who in thy power***
And her quietus is to ***render thee***.

[*126*]x. Natural hiatus—the end of the section.
DOWDEN admits hiatus.

5TH SECTION (M.M. Group) Nos. 127-154.

D.L. (127) . O. (128 . 129) . D.L. (130 + 131 + 132) — I. (133 + 134) — W. (135 + 136) . D.L. (137) — O. (138)

— D.L. (139 + 140 + 141) — W. (142 + 143) . I. (144) — O. (145 . 146) — D.L. (147 + 148) — *E.A.* [*149*] — D.L. (150)

— O. (151) . D.L. (152) . O. (153 . 154).

This is the one and only *feminine* section. In sonnets Nos. 1-126, of which the first four sections are composed, when a person is directly or indirectly addressed, that person either plainly is, or conceivably might be, a *man*; in sonnets Nos. 127-154, which make up this section, the addressee (if there is one) is plainly in every case a *woman*.

As explained at the beginning of this chapter, this section originally consisted of an artificial group made up of the 22 sonnets of the three distinctively feminine series, D.L. (12), I. (6), and W. (4), *plus* the 14 non-serial or Occasional sonnets—36 in all. T.T.'s first step in dealing with this group was (as has been noted above) to take out of it all the sonnets addressed to or concerned with a *man*. His idea was apparently this, "I find I cannot do as I have done in the other sections, that is to say, take the longest series (D.L.) as the framework, and work in the rest on the catchword system.[1] I must get my single-author effect some other way. The best way will be to arrange the sonnets to look like a sort of appendix made up of a number of more or less disconnected sonnets addressed to the poet's mistress on the lines of Daniel's *Delia* or Constable's *Diana*. Nos. 129 and 146 can remain because it was the custom for an amorist poet to put in a 'moral' sonnet or two, but every sonnet even remotely suggesting that the poet is addressing a man must go, and find accommodation elsewhere."[2]

So he eliminated the 10 'man' sonnets, *viz.*, 3 from the I. series (40.41 and 42), and 6 from the Occasional Group, *viz.*, the sequence, 66, 67 and 68; 77 and its reply, 122; and the single sonnet, 107. *No other sonnet is missing.*

This elimination reduced the number in the section to 27, and left the longest series, D.L. (12 sonnets), in a very dominating position. Now, this series happens to be, perhaps, the most obviously 'competitive' of the whole thirteen,[3] and it was imperatively necessary, therefore, to disguise its real character as thoroughly as possible. So T.T. broke it up small—into no less than seven separate pieces—and distributed the pieces more or less evenly throughout the section, at the same time making the most ingenious use of the very scanty opportunities for working his 'catchword' system afforded him by his material. He introduced only one sonnet from outside, *viz.*, No. 149 of the E.A. series, which simply *had* to be put in between 148 and 150.[4]

The net result of all this manœuvring is a dislocated order which has no parallel in any of the other four sections. This exceptional feature has been admitted by critics

[1] A glance at the Non-serial Sonnets given on p. 174 above will convince the reader of the impracticability of such an arrangement.
[2] The reader is requested to read these sonnets and judge for himself the sex of the person addressed.
[3] v. *supra*, p. 162.
[4] v. *infra*, p. 201.

of every school; even a 'whole-hogger' like MACKAIL, who accepts sonnets 1-126 as "a continuous, ordered, and authentic collection," characterises 127-154 as "a miscellaneous and disordered appendix in which 153 and 154 are pretty certainly not by S., 128 and 145 are very doubtful, and a plausible case can be made against 135, 136 and 143." But this is rather too strong; although the order is generally so dislocated that I have thought it useless to mark the *hiatuses*, I have continued to mark connections (some certain, some probable), between sonnets or batches of sonnets on the familiar catchword system in no less than ten cases, which I now present for the reader's kind consideration.

+132)-(133+. Catchword, 'Heart the torturer.'

132. Knowing *thy heart torments* me with disdain
133. Beshrew that *heart* that *makes my heart to groan*.

+134)-(135+. Catchword, 'thy will.'

134. And I myself am mortgag'd to *thy will*
135. Whoever hath her wish, thou hast *thy will*.

137)-(138). Catchwords, 'false' and 'true.'

137. Why of eyes *false*hood hast thou forged hooks
To put fair *truth* upon so foul a face
In things right *true* my heart and eyes have erred
And to this *false* plague are they now transferred.
138. When my love swears that she is made of *truth*
Unlearned in the world's *false* subtleties.
Simply I credit her *false*-speaking tongue;
On both sides thus is simple *truth* suppress'd

(138)-(139+. Catchword, 'tongue' (probably).

138. Simply I credit her false-speaking *tongue*
139. Wound me not with thine eye, but with thy *tongue*.

+141)-(142+. Catchword, 'sin.'

141. That she that makes *me sin* awards me pain
142. Love is *my sin*. . . .

(144)-(145. Catchwords, 'fiend' and 'hell.'

144. And whether that my angel be turned *fiend*
I guess one angel in another's *hell*
145. Did follow night, who, like a *fiend*
From heaven to *hell* is flown away.

146)-(147+. Catchwords (a) 'feed on,' (b) 'death.'

146. So shalt thou *feed on Death*, that *feeds on* men
147. *Feeding on* that which doth preserve the ill,
Desire is *death*. . . .

+148)-[*149*]. Catchwords, 'love,' 'eyes,' 'faults,' 'blind'

148. Oh, cunning *Love!* with tears thou keep'st me *blind*
Lest *eyes* well-seeing thy foul *faults* should find
149. When all my best doth worship thy *defect*,
Commanded by the motion of thine *eyes*?
But, *love*, hate on, for now I know thy mind;
Those that can *see* thou lov'st, and I am *blind*.

[*149*]-(150). Catchwords, 'defect,' 'all best.'

149. When *all my best* doth worship *thy defect*,
150. That, in my mind, *thy* worst *all best* exceeds?
With *insufficiency* my heart to sway?

The reader is invited to recognise in the dovetailing of 149 into 148 and 150 quite one of the neatest things in the whole of T.T.'s performance. The sonnet fully deserves its distinction as the only 'foreigner' admitted to the section.

(150)-(151). Catchword, 'rising of love' (probably).

150. If *thy* unworthiness *rais'd love* in me,
151. Triumph in *love*; . . .
But *rising* at *thy* name. . . .

. . . . . .

In setting before the kind reader this analysis of the Order I have not knowingly concealed or slurred over any difficulty. And though I am not so foolish as to imagine that I have managed to hit the mark *every* time, I do claim that the general accuracy of my 'Catchword' theory has been established. Professor Dowden was the most devoted and loyal of Shakespeareans, and it is to his sturdy faith in his great author that one must ascribe the singular aberration of his fine literary *flair*, which prevented him from realizing that he was not, so to speak, puzzling out the line of a real live fox, but merely following a drag laid by a very wily customer indeed, who had 'lifted' whenever he thought the scent was getting a bit too good to be true.

CHAPTER VIII.—THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE RIVAL POETS.

As the reader is aware, Proposition VIII. of The Theory runs as follows :

The Minor Poet may be identified with Barnabe Barnes (with absolute certainty) ; *The Lawyer* with William Warner (with practical certainty) ; *The Humorist* with John Donne (with great probability) ; and *The Newcomer* with Samuel Daniel (probably).

The purpose of this chapter is to give a short summary of the evidence *in favour of* each of these identifications. The ' Characteristics ' of the four competitors will be taken as proved, and no attempt will be made to discuss the claims of possible rival candidates.

When one examines in detail the great mass of work left by the Elizabethan sonnetteers the point that strikes one, first and last, is its extraordinarily unoriginal and imitative character.[1] The list of ' themes ' admissible to the *pléiadiste* sonnetteer was a very limited one, and when the late sixteenth-century ' University wit ' sat down to indite his sonnet-sequence all he could do (or indeed was expected to do) was to compose variations on the treatment of one or more of these themes by one or more of his many predecessors. And so it happens that when we find, as we often do, two sonnets by different authors resembling each other so closely that any hypothesis but that of deliberate ' copying ' is out of the question, it is impossible to decide which of the two occupants of the " cage of parrots " [2] is the copy-setter unless the dates of composition of both sonnets are known. Take Drayton for instance—the strongest, and perhaps the most consistently successful, of them all. His collection of *Idea* sonnets was published in so many different forms, and at such widely-separated intervals of time, that the dates of many of even the best known of them have not yet been agreed upon by the experts. And consequently the interesting question whether Drayton ' copied ' Shakespeare's sonnets, or Shakespeare Drayton's, takes rank as in one of those Shakespearean problems concerning which critical opinion is most sharply divided. Canon Beeching, in a " Note on Drayton's Sonnets " included in his edition of Shakespeare's sonnets, writes as follows :—

> The reader of Drayton's sonnets in the order of their publication is struck by two very remarkable changes of style. Drayton began to write sonnets in the manner of Daniel ; then he passed from this style to that of Sidney ; finally he adopted, as far as he could, the style of Shakespeare. . . . Neglecting, however, all questions of word borrowing, which can seldom be conclusively settled, I prefer to rest my case on the broader ground of style. I would ask anyone to whom the Shakespearean rhythm is distinct and familiar to read Drayton's last sonnets, especially " You best discerned of my interior eyes." " Like an adventurous seafarer am I," " To nothing better can I thee compare," " Some misbelieving and profane in love," above all, " Why should your fair eyes with such sovereign grace," and " Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part," and, if he detects, as he must, some fellowship, I would put to him this question, If a poet at one time could write so like Daniel that his "Clear Ankor, on whose silver-sanded shore" is as good and as characteristic of Daniel as any sonnet that charming writer ever produced, and at another time so not unlike Sidney that his " My heart was slain, and none but you and I," suggests at once the *Astrophel and Stella*, is it reasonable, when in turn we find him writing in the school of Shakespeare, that he should be accounted Shakespeare's master and not his pupil ?

[1] *v.* extracts from Sir Sidney Lee and Mr. J. M. Robertson, *supra* p. 21.
[2] Mr. Robertson's phrase (*v. supra*, p. 21.

In the present problem the conditions are different. There is no dispute about *dates*—these are fixed (within narrow limits) by The Theory ; what has to be done is to convict the author of *authorship* on the evidence of his style alone. It is needless to dilate on the peculiar difficulties of such a task.

As the work of the Elizabethan sonnetteers is not very easily accessible, I have thought it convenient to give here a selection from some of the best known of them. But the twenty-four sonnets printed below are not to be regarded as an attempt at an anthology ; they have been selected, partly in order to exhibit (as far as possible) the range of Elizabethan sonnetteering, and partly to illustrate what has been said above about its ' imitative ' character. At the same time it is believed that no sonnet has been selected which is not a good and characteristic example of its author's style. The two principal practitioners, Daniel and Drayton, are represented by six sonnets apiece ; Sidney and Constable by three apiece ; Spenser and Barnes by two apiece ; and Griffin and Peele by one apiece.

Twenty-Four Elizabethan Sonnets.

1 (*Sidney*).

In martial sports I had my cunning tried,
And yet to break more staves did me address :
While with the people's shouts, I must confess,
Youth, luck and praise even filled my veins with pride.
When Cupid having me, his slave, descried
In Mars' livery, prancing in the press,
" What now, Sir Fool ! " said he (I would no less),
" Look here, I say ! " I looked, and Stella spied :
Who, hard by, made a window send forth light :
My heart then quaked, then dazzled were mine eyes,
One hand forgot to rule, th' other to fight.
Nor trumpets' sound I heard, nor friendly cries ;
My foe came on, and beat the air for me,
Till that her blush taught me my shame to see.

2 (*Drayton*).

In pride of wit, when high desire of fame
Gave life and courage to my lab'ring pen,
And first the sound and virtue of my name
Won grace and credit in the ears of men :
With those the thronged theatres that press,
I in the Circuit for the laurel strove,
Where the full praise, I freely must confess,
In heat of blood, a modest mind might move.
With shouts and claps at every little pause,
When the proud Round on every side hath rung,
Sadly I sit, unmoved with the applause,
As though to me it nothing did belong.
No public glory vainly I pursue ;
All that I seek is to eternize you !

3 (*Daniel*).

These plaintive verse, the posts of my desire,
Which haste for succour to her slow regard,
Bear not report of any slender fire,
Forging a grief, to win a fame's reward.
Nor are my passions limned for outward hue,
For that no colours can depaint my sorrows ;
Delia herself and all the world may view
Best in my face, where cares hath tilled deep furrows
No bays I seek to deck my mourning brow
O clear-eyed Rector of the holy Hill !
My humble accents bear the olive bough,
Of intercession to a tyrant's will.
These lines I use t'unburden mine own heart ;
My love affects no fame, nor 'steems of art.

4 (*Drayton*).

Taking my pen with words to cast my woe,
Duly to count the sum of all my cares,
I find my griefs innumerable grow,
The reckonings rise to millions of despairs.
And thus dividing of my fatal hours.
The payments of my Love I read and cross ;
Subtracting, set my sweets unto my sours ;
My joys' arrearage leads me to my loss.
And thus mine eyes a debtor to thine eye,
Which by extortion gaineth all their looks ;
My heart hath paid such grievous usury,
That all their wealth lies in thy beauty's books,
And all is thine which hath been due to me,
And I a bankrupt, quite undone by thee !

5 (*Daniel*).

Let others sing of Knights and Palladins,
In agéd accents, and untimely words,
Paint shadows in imaginary lines,
Which well the reach of their high wit records :
But I must sing of thee, and those fair eyes.
Authentic shall my verse, in time to come,
When yet the unborn shall say, " Lo, where she lies !
Whose beauty made him speak, that else was dumb '
These are the arks, the trophies I erect,
That fortify thy name against old age ;
And these thy sacred virtues must protect
Against the dark, and Time's consuming rage.
Though th' error of my youth they shall discover,
Suffice they shew I lived, and was thy lover.

6 (*Drayton*).

Whilst thus my pen strives to eternize thee,
Age rules my lines with wrinkles in my face ;
Where, in the map of all my misery,
Is modelled out the World of my disgrace :
Whilst in despite of tyrannizing Times,
Medea-like, I make thee young again,
Proudly thou scorn'st my world-outwearing rhymes
And murder'st virtue with thy coy disdain.
And though in youth my youth untimely perish,
To keep thee from oblivion and the grave,
Ensuing ages yet my rhymes shall cherish,
Where I entombed my better part shall save ;
And though this earthly body fade and die,
My name shall mount upon eternity !

7 (*Daniel*).

Read in my face, a volume of despairs,
The wailing Iliads of my tragic woe ;
Drawn with my blood, and printed with my cares,
Wrought by her hand that I have honoured so.
Who, whilst I burn, she sings at my soul's wrack,
Looking aloft from turret of her pride :
There my soul's tyrant 'joys her in the sack
Of her own seat, whereof I made her guide.
There do these smokes, that from affliction rise,
Serve as an incense to a cruel dame ;
A sacrifice thrice-grateful to her eyes,
Because their power serves to exact the same.
Thus ruins she, to satisfy her will,
The Temple where her name was honoured still.

8 (*Drayton*).

Yet read at last the story of my woe,
The dreary abstracts of my endless cares,
With my life's sorrow interlinéd so,
Smoked with my sighs, and blotted with my tears.
The sad memorials of my miseries,
Penned in the grief of mine afflicted ghost.
My life's complaint in doleful elegies,
With so pure love as Time could never boast.
Receive the incense which I offer here,
By my strong faith ascending to thy fame ;
My zeal, my hope, my vows, my praise, my prayer,
My soul's oblations to thy sacred Name !
Which Name my Muse to highest heavens shall raise,
By chaste desire, true love, and virtuous praise.

9 (*Daniel*).

If this be love, to draw a weary breath,
To paint on floods till the shore cry to the air ;
With prone aspect still treading on the earth.
Sad horrors : pale grief : prostrate despair !
If this be love, to war against my soul,
Rise up to wail, lie down to sigh, to grieve me,
With ceaseless toil Care's restless stones to roll,
Still to complain and moan, whilst none relieve me.
If this be love, to languish in such care
Loathing the light, the world, myself and all,
With interrupted sleeps, fresh griefs repair,
And breathe out horror in perplexed thrall.
If this be love, to live a living death,
Lo, then love I, and draw this weary breath.

10 (*Constable*).

To live in hell, and heaven to behold ;
To welcome life, and die a living death ;
To sweat with heat, and yet be freezing cold ;
To grasp at stars, and lie the earth beneath ;
To tread the maze that never shall have end ;
To burn in sighs, and starve in daily tears ;
To climb a hill, and never to descend ;
Giants to kill, and quake at childish fears ;
To pine for food, and watch th' Hesperian tree ;
To thirst for drink, and nectar still to draw ;
To live accurs'd, whom men hold blest to be ;
And weep those wrongs which never creature saw ;
If this be love, if love in these bounded,
My heart is love, for these in it are grounded.

11 (*Daniel*).

Fair is my love, and cruel as she's fair :
Her brow shades frowns, although her eyes are sunny ;
Her smiles are lightning, though her pride despair ;
And her disdains are gall, her favours honey.
A modest maid, decked with a blush of honour,
Whose feet do tread green paths of youth and love ;
The wonder of all eyes that look upon her ;
Sacred on earth, designed a saint above.
Chastity and Beauty, which were deadly foes,
Live reconciléd friends within her brow ;
And had she Pity, to conjoin with those,
Then who had heard the plaints I utter now ?
O, had she not been fair, and thus unkind,
My Muse had slept, and none had known my mind !

12 (*Constable*).

When tedious much, and over weary long,
Cruel disdain, reflecting from her brow,
Hath been the cause that I endured such wrong,
And rest thus discontent and weary now.
Yet when posterity, in time to come,
Shall find th' uncancelled tenour of her vow ;
And her disdain be then confest of some,
How much unkind and long, I find it now.
O, yet even then (though then, will be too late
To comfort me—dead, many a day, ere then)—
They shall confess—I did not force her heart,
And time shall make it known to other men—
That ne'er had her disdain made me despair,
Had she not been so excellently fair.

13 (*Daniel*).

Care-charmer Sleep, son of the sable Night,
Brother to Death, in silent darkness born,
Relieve my anguish, and restore the light
With dark forgetting of my cares, return !
And let the day be time enough to mourn
The shipwreck of my ill-adventured youth ;
Let waking eyes suffice to wail their scorn,
Without the torment of the night's untruth.
Cease, Dreams, th' imag'ry of our day desires,
To model forth the passions of the morrow,
Never let rising sun approve you liars,
To add more grief to aggravate my sorrow.
Still let me sleep, embracing clouds in vain,
And never wake to feel the day's disdain.

14 (*Griffin*).

Care-charmer Sleep, sweet ease in restless misery,
The captive's liberty, and his freedom's song,
Balm of the bruised heart, Man's chief felicity,
Brother of quiet Death, when life is too two long.
A Comedy it is, and now an History.
What is not sleep unto the feeble mind ?
It easeth him that toils, and him that's sorry,
It makes the deaf to hear, to see, the blind,
Ungentle Sleep ! thou helpest all but me,
For when I sleep, my soul is vexéd most.
It is Fidessa that doth master thee,
If she approach, alas, thy power is lost.
But here she is ! See, how he runs amain !
I fear, at night, he will not come again.

15 (*Constable*).

My Heart mine Eye accuseth of his death,
Saying his wanton sight bred his unrest :
Mine Eye affirms my Heart's unconstant faith
Hath been his bane, and all his joys represt.
My Heart avows, mine Eye let in the fire,
Which burns him with an everliving light ;
Mine Eye replies my greedy Heart's desire
Let in those floods, which drown him day and night.
Thus wars my Heart, which Reason doth maintain,
And calls my Eye to combat if he dare ;
The whilst my Soul, impatient of disdain,
Wrings from his bondage unto death more near ;
Save that my love still holdeth him in hand,
' A kingdom thus divided, cannot stand ! "

16 (*Drayton*).

Whilst yet mine Eyes do surfeit with delight,
My woful Heart imprisoned in my breast
Wisheth to be transformed to my sight,
That it, like those, by looking, might be blest.
But whilst mine Eyes thus greedily do gaze,
Finding their objects over-soon depart ;
These now the other's happiness do praise,
Wishing themselves that they had been my Heart.
That Eyes were Heart, or that the Heart were Eyes,
As covetous the other's use to have.
But finding Nature their request denies,
This to each other mutually they crave,
That since the one cannot the other be,
That Eyes could think of that my Heart could see.

17 (*Sidney*).

Come Sleep ! O Sleep ! the certain knot of peace,
The baiting place of wit, the balm of woe,
The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,
Th' indifferent judge between the high and low,
With shield of proof, shield me from out the press
Of those fierce darts, Despair at me doth throw ;
O, make in me those civil wars to cease ;
I will good tribute pay if thou do so.
Take thou of me smooth pillows, sweetest bed,
A chamber deaf to noise and blind to light,
A rosy garland, and a weary head :
And if these things as being thine by right,
Move not thy heavy grace, thou shalt in me,
Livelier than elsewhere, Stella's image see.

18 (*Sidney*).

Leave me, O love, which reachest but to dust,
And thou, my mind, aspire to higher things,
Grow rich in that which never taketh rust ;
Whatever fades but fading pleasure brings.
Draw in thy beams, and humble all thy might
To that sweet yoke where lasting freedoms be ;
Which breaks the clouds, and opens forth the light
That doth both shine and give us sight to see.
O take fast hold ! Let that light be thy guide,
In this small course which birth draws out to death :
And think how evil becometh him to slide,
Who seeketh heaven, and comes of heavenly breath ;
Then farewell, world ! Thy uttermost I see !
Eternal Love, maintain Thy love in me !

19 (*Spenser*).

Daily when I do seek and sue for peace,
And hostages do offer for my truth ;
She, cruel warrior, doth herself address
To battle, and the weary war renew'th ;
He will be moved with reason, or with ruth,
To grant small respite to my restless toil ;
But greedily her fell intent pursu'th,
Of my poor life to make unpitied spoil.
Yet my poor life, all sorrows to assoil,
I would her yield, her wrath to pacify :
But when she seeks with torment and tormoil
To force me live, and will not let me die.
All pain hath end, and every war hath peace ;
But mine no price nor prayer may surcease.

20 (*Spenser*).

One day I wrote her name upon the strand ;
But came the waves, and washed it away :
Again, I wrote it with a second hand ;
But came the tide, and made my pains his prey.
Vain man, said she, that dost in vain assay
A mortal thing so to immortalize :
For I myself shall like to this decay,
And eke my name be wiped out likewise.
Not so, quoth I, let baser things devise
To die in dust, but you shall live by fame ;
My verse your virtues rare shall eternize,
And in the heavens write your glorious name.
Where, when as death shall all the world subdue,
Our love shall live, and later life renew.

21 (*Barnes*).

What can these wrinkles and vain tears portend,
But thine hard favour and indurate heart ?
What shew these sighs, which from my soul I send,
But endless smoke, raised from a fiery smart ?
Canst thou not pity my deep-wounded breast ?
Canst thou not frame those eyes to cast a smile ?
Wilt thou with no sweet sentence make me blest ?
To make amends wilt thou not sport a while ?
Shall we not once with our opposed eyne
In interchange send golden darts rebated
With short reflexion 'twixt thy brows and mine,
Whilst love with thee of my griefs hath debated ?
Those eyes of love were made for love to see,
And cast regards on others, not on me !

22 (*Barnes*).

Ah, Sweet Content ! where is thy mild abode ?
Is it with shepherds, and light-hearted swains,
Which sing upon the downs, and pipe abroad,
Tending their flocks and cattle on the plains ?
Ah, Sweet Content ! where dost thou safely rest ?
In heaven, with angels ? which the praises sing
Of Him that made, and rules at His behest,
The minds and hearts of every living thing.
Ah, sweet Content ! where doth thine harbour hold?
Is it in churches, with religious men,
Which please the gods with prayers manifold,
And in their studies meditate it then ?
Whether thou dost in heaven or earth appear,
Be where thou wilt ! Thou wilt not harbour here !

23 (*Peele*). [1]

His golden locks time hath to silver turned ;
O, time too swift, O swiftness never ceasing !
His youth 'gainst time and age hath ever spurned,
But spurned in vain ; youth waneth by increasing :
Beauty, strength, youth, are flowers but fading seen;
Duty, faith, love, are roots, and ever green.
His helmet now shall make a hive for bees,
And lovers' songs be turned to holy psalms ;
A man-at-arms must now serve on his knees,
And feed on prayers, which are old age's alms :
But though from court to cottage he depart,
His saint is sure of his unspotted heart.
Goddess, allow this aged man his right
To be your beadsman now that was your knight.

24 (*Drayton*).

Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part !
Nay, I have done ; you get no more of me,
And I am glad, yea, glad with all my heart
That thus so cleanly I my self can free.
Shake hands for ever ! Cancel all our vows !
And when we meet at any time again,
Be it not seen in either of our brows,
That we one jot of former love retain.
Now at the last gasp of Love's latest breath,
When, his pulse failing, Passion speechless lies,
When Faith is kneeling by his bed of death,
And Innocence is closing up his eyes :
Now, if thou wouldst, when all have given him over,
From death to life thou might'st him yet recover !

[1] Four lines have been omitted from this piece to reduce it to the regular fourteen line sonnet form.

Another peculiar difficulty is that, except in the cases of two of the competitors (Barnes and Donne), one can expect very little assistance from the *biographical* line of approach. In Shakespeare's day a poet, *qua* poet, was a very insignificant member of the commonwealth, and the public was not interested in his private life. Even in the case of Donne, the comparatively large mass of biographical detail available is due to the fact that he rose to eminence in the Church ; we know a great deal more about Dr. Donne, Dean of St. Paul's, and *the* fashionable preacher of the day, than we do about " Jack Donne," author of *The Flea* and *The Indifferent.*

However, though the lives and private characters of three out of the five rival poets are more or less obscure, the life and private character of their noble patron are fully exhibited in contemporary records. Southampton's worldly career up to the end of 1598 (the latest date allowed by The Theory) might be summarized as that of a young man who, starting life with every conceivable circumstance in his favour, had done his best to alienate the sympathies of a host of friends and well-wishers from the Sovereign downwards by a series of displays of more than usually offensive youthful ὕβρις, and had finally wrecked his prospects as an Elizabethan courtier and statesman by seducing a Maid of Honour and then marrying her secretly and without the Queen's consent. But there was another side to his character. From his earliest days he took a lively and genuine interest in literature and literary men ; and the generosity he showed to writers of every class was not the mere ' official ' bounty of a great noble, but patronage of the more discriminating and intimate type, of which Sir Philip Sidney was the chief contemporary exemplar. In fact, Sidney's famous ' Areopagus ' would seem to have suggested to Southampton the idea of forming a select literary coterie, with himself as the central figure, and that notorious literary character, " Resolute John Florio," as a kind of literary major-domo. Of our five poets, two—Shakespeare and Barnes—had already publicly acknowledged him as their patron ; as regards each of the three others, the probability or otherwise of his having stood in a similar relation to that " sweete flower of matchless poetry " (as Nashe called Southampton), is a point which will have to be considered when his case comes up for examination.

The Minor Poet.=Barnabe Barnes (1569 ?-1609).

Proposition VI. defines The Minor Poet's ' Characteristics ' as follows :—

> Though his work is full of glaring faults, The Minor Poet *is* a poet. He has imagination and a feeling for natural beauty, and his versification is smooth and melodious. But he thinks confusedly ; he often writes in a very slovenly fashion, and as long as he gets his musical effect (usually by alliteration, of which he is inordinately fond), or his rhyme, he does not bother much about the sense. He is lacking in judgment, and his many *gaffes* argue a defective sense of humour. He is given to exaggeration and ' forcing the note,' and his compliments to The Patron are often unnecessarily servile.

Those of my readers who have studied the ' Barnabe Barnes ' note at the end of Chapter III. will not need to be told of the strong case that can be made out for this identification on *biographical* grounds. The many allusions to his dedicatory sonnet to Southampton in *Parthenophil,* his fondness for the word ' worth ' and its derivatives, and his reputation for cowardice, present a mass of circumstantial evidence the cumulative effect of which is so great as to be practically conclusive. Further, the unresisting butt of the Contest exactly fits Barnes' personality as described by Nashe and others, as *The Flunkey* characteristic does the author of the fulsome sonnets addressed to various notables at the end of *Parthenophil.* A minor point is Florio's connection with the

Barnes family; he was tutor to Barnabe's brother Emanuel at Cambridge, and would seem to have been for some time a member of Bishop Barnes' household at Durham.

Passing now to the *literary* side of the identification, one finds a good many of M.P.'s 'characteristics' exemplified in the *Parthenophil* collection. Take, for instance, No. 66 (printed as No. 22 in the list given above). As an M.P. sonnet it might be annotated as follows :—

No. 22

This very harmonious sonnet exhibits M.P.'s *Smooth Versification* characteristic at its best. *Slovenly Phrasing* (7-8). *Confused Thinking* (11). *Sound not Sense* (7.12).

7-8. Rhyme-hunting; 'behest' is not the word required.
8. Faulty grammar: 'mind' and 'heart' should be in the singular.
11. Christian and pagan theologies hopelessly mixed—*v.* 7-8 above.
12. Rhyme-hunting: 'then' is meaningless.

Barnes is a 'discovery' of the latter part of the nineteenth century. His works were practically unknown to the modern reader until Dr. Grosart published *Parthenophil* in 1875. Modern critics have apparently not yet made up their minds about him. Sir Sidney Lee writes as follows :—

> Barnabe Barnes, who made his reputation as a sonnetteer in the same year as Lodge (1593), was more voluminous than any of his English contemporaries. The utmost differences of opinion have been expressed by modern critics as to the value of his work. One denounces him as 'a fool'; another eulogises him as 'a born singer.' He clearly had a native love of literature, and gave promise of lyric power which was never quite fulfilled. His Sonnet LXVI on 'Content' reaches a very high level of artistic beauty, and many single stanzas and lines ring with true harmony. But as a whole his work is crude, and lacks restraint. He frequently sinks to meaningless doggerel, and many of his grotesque conceits are offensive.

The most detailed (and perhaps the most appreciative) estimate of Barnes's poetry is to be found in Professor Dowden's review of Dr. Grosart's edition in the *Academy* of September 2nd, 1875. I will quote an extract :—

> Among these singers [sc. Elizabethan lyrists] it is strange that one of the most exquisite should have passed out of sight. The unique copy at Chatsworth of Barnabe Barnes's *Parthenophil* and *Parthenophe* has now for the first time been reprinted by Mr. Grosart on behalf of thirty subscribers. . . . But it is not only the Renaissance with its rehabilitation of the senses which we find in this poem; there is in them also the Renaissance with its ingenuity, its fantasticality, its passion for conceits, and wit, and clever caprice, and playing upon words. . . . The volume being still almost unknown and quite unprocurable, it may be permitted to give some specimens of what is beautiful and characteristic in the poetry of Barnes. The following Madrigal embodies no strong passion, but possesses much of the elegance and graceful animation of Ronsard :

Once in an arbour was my Mistress sleeping,
With rose and woodbine woven,
Whose person thousand graces had in keeping,
Where for mine heart her heart's hard flint was cloven
To keep him safe. Behind stood, pertly peeping,
Poor Cupid, softly creeping.
And drove small birds out of the myrtle bushes,
Scared with his arrows, who sate cheeping
On every sprig; whom Cupid calls and hushes
From branch to branch: whiles I, poor soul, sate weeping
To see her breathe (not knowing)
Incense into the clouds, and bless with breath
The winds and air; whiles Cupid, underneath,
With birds, with songs, nor any posies throwing.
Could her awake.
Each noise sweet lullaby was for her sake.
Phœbus, rich father of eternal light!
And in his hand a wreath of Heliochrise
He brought, to beautify those tresses,
Whose train, whose softness, and whose gloss more bright
Apollo's locks did overprize.
Thus, with this garland whiles her brows he blesses,
The golden shadow, with his tincture,
Coloured her locks I gilded with the cincture.

Parthenophe composed of flowers.

Blest is that shepherd, nine times nine,
Which shall, in bosom, these flowers keep
Bound in one posy; whose sweet smell
In Paradise may make him dwell,
And sleep a ten times happy sleep.

Unjust exchanges.

Thine eyes, mine heaven, which harbour lovely rest,
And with their beams all creatures cheer,
Stole from mine eyes their clear;
And made mine eyes dim mirrors of unrest.

And from her lily forehead, smooth and plain,
My front his withered furrows took;
And through her grace his grace forsook.
From soft cheeks, rosy red,
My cheeks their leanness, and this pallid stain.

The editor may be congratulated on having brought into notice a volume of Renaissance poetry far more a work of genius than the Ἑκατομπαθία of Watson, or Constable's sonnets. In the series of occasional issues for subscribers, which includes the poems of Barnes, have appeared also Humphrey Gifford's *Posie of Gilloflowers*, and Griffin's *Fidessa*. But Barnes has made the companion volumes look pale.

After such a panegyric, to read through the *Parthenophil* collection itself is a most disappointing experience. The "meaningless doggerel" and "grotesque conceits" mentioned by Sir Sidney Lee are there in abundance, but the beauties discerned by Professor Dowden seem to be very few and far between. There is no getting away from the fact that, defective as many of The Minor Poet's sonnets are, their general standard is far higher than that of *Parthenophil*. One can only suppose two things, first, that Barnes was one of those people who do much better with a 'copy' in front of them, and secondly, that he received a great deal of 'outside' assistance, especially in the direction of "pruning and lopping away" crudities and extravagances. And I would lay much more stress on the second supposition than on the first. In the Personal series one finds a good deal of evidence that 'outside' assistance was a more or less recognised factor in the Contest. Shakespeare takes the very earliest opportunity (in his first sonnet in the P.E. series) of hinting that M.P. was being helped by Southampton himself [1]; and M.P. in his turn (in the first three sonnets in the same series) takes the earliest opportunity of asserting in the plainest language that Shakespeare himself was being "taught" and "aided" by certain mysterious collaborators.[2] Later on we find The Lawyer boasting that though his poetry may not be as fine as that of S. and M.P., it is at any rate *his own*, and owes nothing to "seconds."[3] That Barnes should have been assisted and advised by a capable literary friend—or a syndicate of literary friends—*at least* to the extent to which his chief fellow-competitor was assisted and advised by his "compeers" in general, and one "affable familiar ghost," in particular, seems to be very likely indeed. In a competitive affair like this popular sympathy is usually on the side of 'the under-dog,' and Barnes, 'on previous form,' was undoubtedly the weakest member of the quartet. And, certainly, every thing we know about him justifies one in supposing that he would have accepted any such advice and assistance with perfect complaisance.

The Lawyer=William Warner (1558 ?-1609).

Proposition VI. defines The Lawyer's 'Characteristics' as follows:—

The Lawyer's literary qualities are more those of a prose-writer than a poet. He thinks logically, and as a rule expresses himself clearly. But though the technique of his versification is good, he has little imagination, and displays a constant tendency to drop into prose. His most prominent characteristic is a pronounced fondness for dragging in on every possible occasion words, phrases and metaphors drawn from the special vocabularies of the Law and Accountancy. He has humour of a rough and primitive sort, and is given to making bad puns. He cultivates two poses, (1) That of The Patron's candid friend, who will not stoop to flattery, and tells him the exact truth about himself, and (2) The veteran poet of the old school, contemptuous of the new-fangled fashions of the younger generation—the old dog who cannot be taught new tricks.

Although Warner's enormously long poem, *Albion's England*, was exceedingly popular in its day, of its author, as Professor Saintsbury remarks, "the now stereotyped phrase has to be repeated, that next to nothing is known of him. He was an Oxfordshire

[1] *v.* p. 64 *supra*. [2] *v.* p. 65 *supra*. [3] *v.* p. 106 *supra*.

man by birth, and an Oxford man by education ; he had something to do with Carey, Lord Hunsdon, became an attorney of the Common Pleas, and died at Amwell suddenly in his bed in 1609, being, as it is guessed rather than known, fifty years old or thereabouts. Besides his *magnum opus*, he published a collection of seven prose tales in 1585, and in 1595 a translation of the *Menaechmi*. However, even these few details, scanty material for a biography as they are, are in complete harmony with the biographical and semi-biographical 'characteristics' of The Lawyer. They account satisfactorily for his own and his fellow-competitors' references to his age, his profession, and his learning ; and they explain his peculiarly intimate acquaintance with law and accountancy. I have not been able to find any direct evidence of his having been a poetical client of Southampton ; but there is no reason why he should not have been—his connection with Lord Hunsdon does not appear to have been so close as to preclude him from seeking patronage elsewhere.

On the literary side, too, the evidence, as far as it goes, is equally favourable. *The Dictionary of English Literature* speaks of "the plain-spoken, jolly humour, homely, lively, direct tales, vigorous patriotic feeling, and rough-and-tumble metre of Warner's muse." Professor Saintsbury says, "Meres calls him [Warner] 'a refiner of the English tongue,' and attributes to him 'rare ornaments and resplendent habiliments of the pen' ; the truth being that he is (as Philips so far correctly says) a singularly plain, straightforward, and homely writer," and again, "The main interest of Warner is his insensibility to the new influences which Spenser and Sidney directed, and which are found producing their full effect on Daniel and Drayton." And Dr. Craik says :—

> For fluency, combined with precision and economy of diction, Warner is probably unrivalled among the writers of English verse. We do not know whether his professional studies and habits may have contributed to give this character to his style ; but if the poetry of attorneys be apt to take this curt, direct, lucid, and at the same time flowing shape, it is a pity that we have not a little more of it. His command of the vulgar tongue, in particular, is wonderful. . . . With all its force and vivacity and even no want of fancy, at times, and graphic descriptive power, it is poetry with as little of high imagination in it as any that was ever written. Warner's is only at the most a capital poetical business style.

In his own day he was highly esteemed. Meres' rather surprising encomium has already been quoted. Drayton wrote of him as follows :—

> Then Warner, tho' his lines were not so trim,
> Nor yet his poem so exactly limned
> And neatly jointed, but the critic may
> Easily reprove him, yet thus let me say :
> For my old friend, some passages there be
> In him, which I protest have taken me
> With almost wonder, so fine, clear, and new,
> As yet they have been equalléd by few.

Antony à Wood says that in his youth his "name was cried up among the minor poets" ; but unfortunately none of his lyrics or occasional pieces have survived. All his extant work is written in the old-fashioned, lumbering 'fourteeners' of *Albion's England*, of which the following lines from the story of Queen Eleanor and Fair Rosamund may serve as a specimen :—

> Fair Rosamund, surprised thus, ere thus she did expect,
> Fell on her humble knees, and did her fearful hands erect,
> She blushed out beauty, whilst the tears did wash her pleasing face
> And beggéd pardon, meriting no less of common grace.
> "So far forth as it lay in me, I did," quoth she, "withstand,
> But what may not so great a king by means or force command ?"
> "And darest thou, minion," quoth the Queen, "thus article to me' ?
> That then wert non-plus when the King commenced lust to thee ?"
> . . . . . .

With that she dashed her on the lips, so dyed double-red,
Hard was the heart that gave the blow, soft were the lips that bled.

But he *must* have tried his hand at sonnet-writing—every Englishman with any pretension to ' culture ' did so in the last decade of the sixteenth century. And if the objection is made that some of the fine sonnets assigned to The Lawyer are beyond the compass of the author of *Albion's England*, I would ask the objector to consider whether Browning would have been thought capable of writing *Evelyn Hope*, let us say, or *Caliban on Setebos*, if he had elected (horrid thought!) to give his message to the world *entirely* in the metre of—

Which (the burgesses voted by common consent)
Was no more than his due who brought good news from Ghent.

The Humorist=John Donne (1573-1631).

Proposition VI. defines The Humorist's ' Characteristics ' as follows :—

The outstanding feature of The Humorist's contributions is a subtle and sardonic humour, manifesting itself in parody, irony, and personal allusion. He writes in a spirit of mockery throughout. His thought is vigorous and logical, but very often appears obscure owing to excessive compression. He is fond of ' conceits ' —especially the Neoplatonic kind—and pushes them as far as they will go, and farther. He goes out of his way to write unrhythmically, several of his lines being as harsh and cacophonous as any in the language. He preserves his self-respect as successfully as Shakespeare, and in particular displays very great ingenuity in shirking his duty of praising The Patron in the fulsome fashion demanded by sonnetteering etiquette.

The history of Donne's life is so well known, and his poetry has been the subject of so much discussion and speculation—especially in the last fifty years or so—that it would be mere impertinence on my part to attempt to collate and pronounce judgment on the evidence in favour of this ' identification,' either on the biographical or the literary side. I shall venture to direct the kind reader's attention to two points, and two points only.

The first point is a biographical one. I would ask him to note how well all we know of Donne's early life as a famous ' University wit ' ; and rich young-man-about-town, harmonizes with The Humorist's general attitude towards the Contest, his fellow-competitors, and The Patron himself. This general attitude may, perhaps, be best described as one of half-contemptuous superiority—the attitude of a brilliant young amateur condescending to compete with three professionals at their own game, which he treats as a game, and not as a means of livelihood.

The second point is a literary one. I would ask him to note again how very well The Humorist's ' keynote ' Burlesque and his ' Characteristics ' of Personal Allusion and The Polite Shirker harmonize with the peculiar quality of Donne's humour as displayed in his poems. The many interesting aesthetical, prosodical, and historical questions arising from Donne's poetry would seem to have led to his claims as a humorist being rather neglected by the critics. Every student of English literature is familiar with Ben Jonson's curt dictum, " that Donne for not keeping of accent deserved hanging," and with Dryden's just criticism, that " he affects the metaphysics, not only in his satires, but in his amorous verses, where nature only should reign ; and perplexes the minds of the fair sex with the speculations of philosophy, where he should engage their hearts, and entertain them with the softness of love," and has learnt to recognize Donne as the man who finally broke up the Petrarchan tradition, and as the real founder of the ' metaphysical ' school of seventeenth-century poetry. But few of his editors before Mr. Grierson have drawn attention to the importance of Donne's peculiar sense of

humour as an ingredient in his poetical ' make-up,' or have attempted to analyse it. Mr. Grierson remarks, " But if fanciful, and at times even boyish, Donne's wit is still amusing, the quickest and most fertile wit of the century till we come to the author of *Hudibras*. . . . The verses upon *Coryat's Crudities* are in their way a masterpiece of insult veiled as a compliment, but it is in a rather boyish and barbarous way." An extract from these ' commendatory ' verses may be quoted :—

Infinite work ! which doth so far extend,
That none can study it to any end.
'Tis no one thing ; it is not fruit nor root,
Nor poorly limited with head or foot.
If man be therefore man, because he can
Reason and laugh, thy book doth half make man.
One-half being made, thy modesty was such,
That thou on th' other half wouldst never touch.

Go, bashful man, lest here thou blush to look
Upon the progress of thy glorious book,
To which both Indies sacrifices send,
The West sent gold, which thou didst freely spend,
Meaning to see't no more, upon the press.
The East sends hither her deliciousness,
And thy leaves must embrace what comes from thence,
The myrrh, the pepper, and the frankincense.
This magnifies thy leaves ; but if they stoop
To neighbour wares, when merchants do unhoop
Voluminous barrels ; if thy leaves do then
Convey these wares in parcels unto men.

If omni-pregnant there upon warm stalls
They hatch all wares for which the buyer calls ;
Then thus thy leaves we justly may commend,
That they all kind of matter comprehend.
Thus thou, by means which th' ancients never took,
A Pandect makest, and universal book.

Thou shalt not ease the critics of next age
So much, as once their hunger to assuage ;
Nor shall wit-pirates hope to find thee lie
All in one bottom, in one library.
Some leaves may paste strings there in other books,
And so one may, which on another looks,
Pilfer, alas, a little wit from you ;
But hardly much ; and yet I think this true ;
As Sibyl's was, your book is mystical,
For every piece is as much worth as all.

This, of course, is the frankest burlesque—Coryat was everybody's butt. But the same spirit of ' ragging ' and burlesque, more discreetly concealed, is to be recognised in a good many of Donne's most 'serious' pieces. Consider, for instance, the following extracts from what is generally regarded as his finest poem, *The Second Anniversarie*. In reading them one must bear in mind that the subject of these hyperbolical rhapsodies was a girl of fifteen whom Donne had never even *seen* :—

Immortal maid, who though thou wouldst refuse
The name of mother, be unto my Muse
A father, since her chaste ambition is
Yearly to bring forth such a child as this.
These hymns may work on future wits, and so
May great-grandchildren of thy praises grow ;
And so, though not revive, embalm and spice
The world, which else would putrify with vice.

She, to whom all this world was but a stage,
Where all sat hearkening how her youthful age
Should be employ'd, because in all she did
Some figure of the golden times was hid.
Who could not lack, whate'er this world could give,
Because she was the form that made it live ;
Nor could complain that this world was unfit
To be stay'd in, then when she was in it ;
She, that first tried indifferent desires
By virtue, and virtue by religious fires ;
She, to whose person paradise adhered,
As courts to princes ; she, whose eyes ensphered
Star-light enough to have made the South control
—Had she been there—the star-full Northern Pole;
She, she is gone; she's gone; when thou know'st this,
What fragmentary rubbish this world is
Thou know'st, and that it is not worth a thought ;
He honours it too much that thinks it nought.
She, in whose body—if we dare prefer
This low world to so high a mark as she—
The western treasure, eastern spicery,
Europe, and Afric, and the unknown rest
Were easily found, or what in them was best ;
And when we have made this large discovery
Of all, in her some one part then will be
Twenty such parts, whose plenty and riches is
Enough to make twenty such worlds as this—

She, who all libraries had thoroughly read
At home in her own thoughts, and practiséd
So much good as would make as many more ;
She, whose example they must all implore,
Who would, or do, or think well, and confess
That all the virtuous actions they express
Are but a new and worse edition
Of her some one thought or one action ;
She, who in th' art of knowing heaven, was grown
Here upon earth to such perfection,
That she hath, ever since to heaven she came
—In a far fairer print—but read the same ;
She, she not satisfied with all this weight—
For so much knowledge as would over-freight
Another, did but ballast her—is gone,
As well to enjoy, as get perfection ;
And calls us after her, in that she took
(Taking herself) our best and worthiest book.

Here, I submit, Donne is burlesquing the methods of the professional elegists, and pulling Sir Robert Drury's leg, very much in the same way as The Humorist burlesques the methods of the professional sonnetteers, and pulls Southampton's leg in the eight Personal Series. In my humble judgment, Donne stands out as one of the best and subtlest of our English poetical humorists—a *pince-sans-rire* of the very first order.

The Newcomer=Samuel Daniel (1562-1619).

Proposition VI. defines The Newcomer's ' Characteristics ' as follows :—

In the matter of sheer technique, The Newcomer is the best of Shakespeare's fellow-competitors. His versification is smooth, and his thoughts are clear and clearly expressed. But his verse lacks character, and gives one an impression of shallowness.

Daniel was, after Sidney, the earliest of the Elizabethan sonnetteers, and his *Delia* sonnets were much admired and extensively imitated by his successors. He " attached himself to the Court as a kind of voluntary laureate, and in the reign of James I was appointed ' Inspector of the Queen's Revels ' and a groom of the Queen's chamber."[1] His literary relations with Southampton are not very clear, but that they did exist is proved by the poem he addressed to him congratulating him on his release from the Tower in 1603. He was on terms of intimacy with John Florio, who refers to him as his " brother." This has led to the (apparently erroneous) belief that that long-suffering wife, Rose Florio, was Daniel's sister.

On the literary side, the evidence of style and manner is quite favourable—as a comparison of The Newcomer's ten sonnets in the Dramatic Series with the six sonnets of Daniel printed above will show. Of the numerous literary criticisms of Daniel's poetry by modern authorities I will quote only two, the first from Professor Saintsbury on its general characteristics, the second from the latest editor of the *Sonnets* (Mr. Pooler) on the *Delia* sonnets.

Professor Saintsbury writes :—

Whatever unfavourable things have been said of him, [Daniel] from time to time have been chiefly based on the fact that his chaste and correct style lacks the fiery quaintness, the irregular and audacious attraction of his contemporaries. Nor was he less a master of versification than of vocabulary. His *Defence of Rhyme* shows that he possessed the theory : all his poetical works show that he was a master of the practice. He rarely attempted, and probably would not have excelled in the lighter lyrical measures. But in the grave music of the various elaborate stanzas in which the Elizabethan poets delighted, and of which the Spenserian, though the crown and flower, is only the most perfect, he was a great proficient, and his couplets and blank verse are not inferior. Some of his single lines have already been quoted, and many more might be excerpted from his work of the best Elizabethan brand in the quieter kind. Quiet, indeed, is the overmastering characteristic of Daniel.

Mr. Pooler writes :—

But though Shakespeare may have borrowed subjects and imagery or conceits from Constable and others, as he did from Sidney, the chief influence of his work would seem to have been Daniel's.

We know that Shakespeare drew part of the materials of his earlier sonnets from *The Arcadia*, and the unauthorised quarto of this romance, published in 1591, contained in an appendix twenty-eight of Daniel's sonnets (afterwards reprinted by himself in 1592 and 1594). Moreover, there is in Daniel a similar beauty of occasional lines, though, of course, in a much lower degree, and somewhat of the same ease and grace of movement. But his poems have not the unity of rhythm without which there can be no completeness or perfection, nor is the rhythm so instantly responsive to the thought. Above all, they have no background ; the great things of the Universe which are the common inheritance of mankind, the sky and the stars, earth and the flowers of April, forebodings and memories, and love and beauty and decay and death do not seem to have impressed him as the conditions and surroundings of human life, and therefore as compared with Shakespeare's, his sonnets are empty and bare.

. . . . . .

I can imagine a hostile critic remarking on this chapter, " This series of so-called ' identifications ' is merely special pleading of a flagrant type. The plain fact remains

[1] Biographical Dictionary of English Literature.

that many of the sonnets assigned to the second-rate writers who are supposed to have been Shakespeare's fellow-competitors are much too good to have been written by them —too good, in fact, to have been written by anyone but Shakespeare himself." Now, whether or not a particular Elizabethan sonnet bears Shakespeare's hall-mark so plainly stamped as to preclude the possibility of its being the work of any other practitioner is a particular question which every one must answer in accordance with, what Bentley calls his own particular "Nicety of Tast." I can only suggest to the kind reader, in all humility, that he should examine the 'challenged' sonnets in the light of the annotations thereon which he will find in this book, and should then compare them with half-a-dozen of the best specimens in the list of twenty-four sonnets given above, bearing in mind the fact that three at least of Shakespeare's four fellow-competitors—namely, Warner, Daniel, and Donne—were, in the estimation of their contemporaries (and possibly in modern estimation also) the poetical equals of any of the poets represented in that list—Spenser excepted.

But as regards the *general* question of the disparity between the Shakespearean and the non-Shakespearean portions of "*Shake-speare's Sonnets*," The Theory stands on firmer ground. It will be conceded, I take it, that in the case of a collection of a hundred-and-fifty-odd more or less disconnected sonnets by an Elizabethan author, a slice of (say) two dozen *consecutive* sonnets cut out of the middle, should give one a very fair sample of their average quality. Well, now, it happens, by a rather curious chance, that in the *Sonnets* there is a block of no less than twenty-three consecutive sonnets, namely, Nos. 41 to 63 inclusive, none of which, according to The Theory, were written by Shakespeare. I would propose to the reader, therefore, that he should, for his own satisfaction, perform the following experiment:—First, let him read these twenty-three sonnets *critically*, *i.e.*, divesting them of their "Shakespearean" glamour, and noting merits and defects as dispassionately as though he were dealing with the work of Drayton or Constable. Then let him *immediately* treat in the same way the twenty-four examples from the Elizabethan sonnetteers given in the list above. And then let him ask himself the question whether in respect of all the 'points' of a sixteenth-century sonnet—'life,' clearness of thought, felicity of phrase, justness of metaphor, rhythm, balance, restraint, and epigrammatic effect—the average standard of the second lot is not a good deal higher than the average standard of the first lot. And then let him proceed to treat in the same way the twenty-one 'Personal' sonnets assigned to Shakespeare by The Theory, taking them in their chronological order—first a batch of nine in which the author is addressing a more or less conventional compliment to a young patron, Nos. 1, 2, 11, 3, 64, 19, 18, 29, 26,[1]; next a batch of four written (after an interval) in response to a complaint by The Patron that the author is neglecting him, and expressing the author's half-serious resentment at his first batch having been treated as a 'copy' for three other sonnetteers to imitate, Nos. 78, 79, 102, 106[2]; next a batch of two (written after another interval) in which the author mildly reproaches The Patron for neglecting him in favour of unworthy associates, Nos. 33, 34[3]; next The Patron's indignant repudiation of these charges, No. 121;[4] and finally a batch of six in which the author, after tactfully pleading guilty to The Patron's counter-charges of neglect, uses the conventional sonnetteering fiction of the sonnetteer's own imminent death to indicate the conclusion of his sonnetteering effort, and his conviction that it will be appreciated by posterity, Nos. 109, 110, 120, 116, 73, 74.[5] And then let him ask himself the question whether in respect of all the aforesaid 'points,' the average standard of the third lot is not, in its turn, not *a good deal*, but a *great deal* higher than the average standard of the second.

[1] *v.* p. 24, 38, 48, 52 *supra*. [2] *v.* p. 58 *supra*. [3] *v.* p. 86 *supra*. [4] *v.* p. 92 *supra*. [5] *v.* p. 96, 114 *supra*.

CHAPTER IX.—THE NEW THEORY AND TWO OLD PROBLEMS.

The Theory throws sidelights on a good many Shakespearean problems unconnected with the *Sonnets*, and when I started sketching out the plan of this chapter, a series of controversial little monographs suggested itself to my imagination. For instance, I very nearly committed myself to the rash enterprise of attacking the literary historians on their own ground by using the evidence of the 'Shakespearizing' sonnets to impugn the accepted chronology of the early plays. Again, I was sorely tempted to rush in where K.C.'s might fear to tread by shewing how the case for the popular theory that Shakespeare worked in an attorney's office in his youth had been affected by the discovery of *The Lawyer*. But in the end wiser counsels prevailed; I decided to take no risks, and to confine myself strictly to the business of supplying answers to the two questions which no expositor of a new theory about the *Sonnets* can hope to evade, namely, Who were the people in the *Sonnets*? Who was "Mr. W. H."?

I.—The People of the Sonnets.

The current view about the 'drama of the *Sonnets*' is, I take it, something like this: "*Shake-speares Sonnets* is a more or less idealized record of Shakespeare's *vie intime* during a period in his London career when he enjoyed the friendship and patronage of a young man of rank, and was engaged in an amour with a disreputable brunette. The sonnets were written at various times, and express widely varying moods—exaltation alternates with despair, ecstatic admiration with bitter disillusionment, fervent love with cool contempt—but, taken as a whole, they show clearly enough that Shakespeare's friend robbed him of his mistress and neglected him for a literary rival, and was magnanimously forgiven for both offences." Who the other three personages of the drama really were is a question on which modern critical opinion is hopelessly divided. There are two main 'schools.' One, the 'Early' school, identifies The False Friend with the Earl of Southampton (*before* his marriage), and The Dark Lady with Anne Davenant or Penelope Rich. The other, the 'Late' school (which finds in the *Sonnets* a series of allusions to the Essex Rebellion), identifies them with the Earl of Pembroke and Mary Fitton. For the post of The Rival Poet there are numerous claimants, the most favoured being Spenser, Marlowe, and Chapman.

With these or any other *autobiographical* interpretation of the *Sonnets* my theory has practically nothing in common. It asserts that Shakespeare wrote rather less than a quarter of them, and divides the collection into three separate and distinct sections as follows: *First Section—Personal.* Eighty-eight 'adulatory' sonnets addressed to a youthful patron, and composed by Shakespeare and three other poets writing in competition with each other, Shakespeare contributing twenty-one sonnets, and each of the three others twenty-two apiece. *No* sonnet in this section deals with sexual love. *Second Section—Dramatic.* Fifty-two 'amatory' sonnets addressed to a woman

or complaining about her conduct with another man, and composed by the same four poets plus one new one competing with each other as in the first section, but with this great difference, that they write not in their own persons, but in that of their employer (or employers). Shakespeare is responsible for ten—or possibly only six—of these fifty-two sonnets, the rest being contributed by the four other poets in varying proportions. *Every* sonnet in this section deals with sexual love. *Third Section—Non-Serial.* Fourteen ' occasional ' unrelated sonnets by various unidentifiable authors, two or three of them probably being the work of Shakespeare.

Thus instead of a single tragedy of disappointed love and literary ambition with four characters—The Poet, The Patron-cum-False-Friend, The Mistress, and The Rival Poet—playing their parts right through, The Theory presents two entirely separate comedy ' shows,' in the first of which there is no ' love-interest ' at all, and in the second an overwhelming love-interest which has nothing to do with Shakespeare.

The first piece is a plain straightforward slice of ' real life,' and exhibits a lively picture of Shakespeare and three other poets (two professional and one amateur) competing more or less obsequiously for the favour of a vain, wilful, and capricious young patron. This young man can be identified positively with Lord Southampton, and the three other poets more or less certainly with Barnabe Barnes, William Warner, and John Donne. One pleasing result of this demonstration that there is not one rival poet but three rival poets, is the discovery that *the* Rival Poet—the great artist " by spirits taught to write, Above a mortal pitch," the " full proud sail " of whose " great verse " is the theme of the three famous ' Rival Poet ' sonnets, Nos. 80, 85, and 86—is the only contemporary poet (save Spenser) to whom such compliments could be paid with any show of justice, namely, The Swan of Avon himself !

The second piece is a confusing *mélange* of ' real life ' and convention about which The Theory can tell us little except that the fifth poet is probably Samuel Daniel. The identification of the other characters is a conjectural business, depending mainly on one's interpretation of the various themes ' set ' to the five competing poets by the person responsible for arranging the competition. Although these themes cannot be considered as of vital importance, it may be as well, for the sake of completeness, to set down here the four main inferences which can be drawn from the various ' treatments ' they receive in the five series which make up the Dramatic Section.

(1). In two at least of the series The Employer is a wealthy young aristocrat.

(2). In these two series the addressee is a white-handed blonde—a more or less virtuous person whose social position is at least equal to The Employer's.

(3). In one of the other series the addressee is a brunette—a married woman of bad character whose social position is distinctly below The Employer's.

(4). In the two remaining series the addressee *may* be the addressee of (3), and *cannot* be the addressee of (2).

Southampton may be The Employer (or one of them), or he may be The False Friend who cut him out, or again possibly he may be neither. But if one takes the simplest course and casts him for The Lover throughout the piece (as he undoubtedly *is* The Patron throughout the first piece), one may, if one pleases, identify The Fair Lady with Queen Elizabeth [1] (who was vain of her pretty hands and feet, and wore an auburn wig), and The Dark Lady with that fascinating barmaid Avisa [2]—" conjux cauponis, filia

[1] At one time in his early career, Southampton was a much-fancied candidate for the unambiguous position of Chief Favourite. Rowland White, writing in October, 1595, notes, " My Lord of Essex kept his bed all yesterday ; his Favour continues quam diu se bene gesserit. Yet my Lord of Southampton is a careful waiter here, and *sede vacante* doth receive favours at her Majesty's hands ; all this without breach of amity between them " (*Sydney Memoirs*).

[2] The heroine of that puzzling little poem, *Willobie his Avisa* (pub. 1594).

pandochei." But, in any case, it would be unsafe to assume for these stories of love, jealousy, and intrigue a more substantial substratum of fact than would be sufficient to give a flavour of actuality to a highly-conventionalized poetical contest arranged by (or for) a wealthy amateur who took an interest in literature.

" Mr. W. H."

[For a full discussion of the subject the reader is referred to the two Chapters entitled, " *The True History of Thomas Thorpe and Mr. W. H.*" and " *Mr. William Herbert* " in SIR SIDNEY LEE'S *Life* (pp. 672-90).]

The dedication prefixed to the original edition of the Sonnets (1609)—the most famous dedication in the world—reads as follows.

TO . THE . ONLY . BEGETTER . OF .
THESE . INSVING . SONNETS .
Mr W. H. ALL . HAPPINESSE .
AND . THAT . ETERNITIE .
PROMISED
BY
OVR . EVER-LIVING . POET .
WISHETH
THE . WELL-WISHING
ADVENTVRER . IN .
SETTING .
FORTH . T.T.

The writer of this dedication, Thomas Thorpe, was a humble member of the Stationers' Company, " a kind of literary jackal, who, in the absence of any regular copyright protection for authors, hung about scriveners' shops, and from time to time, collusively ' picked up ' a manuscript in which he could ' deal.' " [1] Apparently anybody who ' picked up ' a manuscript in this way could ' deal ' with it as he thought fit ; " the modern conception of copyright had not yet been evolved. Whoever in the sixteenth or early seventeenth century was in actual possession of a manuscript was for practical purposes its full and responsible owner." [2] How Thorpe obtained possession of a manuscript of the *Sonnets* is a point on which opinions differ, but that he did not get it from Shakespeare is quite certain from the dedication itself, a dedication signed by *the publisher* being, as LEE points out, " an accepted sign that the author had no part in the publication." Thorpe's first appearance as a snapper-up of unconsidered literary trifles was in 1600 when, having got hold of a manuscript of Marlowe's translation of the First Book of Lucan, he had it printed by the well-known printer, P. Short, through the good offices of one Edward Blount (a stationer's assistant like himself), who two years previously had ' picked up ' and published the same poet's *Hero and Leander*. The success of this first adventure apparently led Thorpe to take up pirate-publishing as a regular ' side-line ' to his stationery business, and in the course of the next twenty years he had made himself responsible for the issue of some two dozen volumes—mostly plays or poems. A few of these were legitimate enterprises, *i.e.*, publications sanctioned by the author, but the rest were shady jobs like the *Sonnets*. When he died in 1635 he held the record (according to LEE) of having " pursued . . . the well-defined profession of procurer of manuscript for a longer period than any other known member of the Stationers Company." He never attained to the dignity of a press of his own, and most of his publications were (like the *Sonnets*) printed for him by George Eld.

[1] Lee. [2] Lee.

There are three preliminary points about the dedication which deserve the reader's attention.

The first point—the most important of the three for The Theory—is that it does not, directly or by implication, assert Shakespeare's sole responsibility for " these insuing sonnets." In line 7, for instance, one finds " *Our* everliving poet " instead of " *The* (or *their*) everliving author," as one would expect. Again, a *publisher's* dedication which omits to mention the author either by name or by reference to his previous writings must, one imagines, have been a rare phenomenon.

The second point is that in form it imitates a dedication prefixed by Ben Jonson to a play which Thorpe had published for him two years before. To quote LEE again : " Thorpe's dedicatory formula and the type in which it was set were clearly influenced by Ben Jonson's form of dedication before the first edition of his *Volpone* (1607), which, like Shakespeare's *Sonnets*, was published by Thorpe and printed for him by George Eld. The preliminary leaf in *Volpone* was in short lines, and in the same fount of capitals as was employed in Thorpe's dedication to Mr. W. H. On the opening leaf of *Volpone* stands a greeting of ' The Two Famous Universities,' to which ' Ben Jonson (The Grateful Acknowledger) dedicates both it (the play) and Himselfe.' " One may note in passing that " The Grateful Acknowledger " is obviously responsible for " The Well-wishing Adventurer."

The third point is that it is written in the same vein as the two specimens of Thorpe's ' familiar ' dedications—*i.e.*, dedications addressed to his personal friends—which have come down to us, namely, the 1603 dedication of Marlowe's above-mentioned translation of Lucan to his fellow-tradesman, Edward Blount, and the 1610 dedication of Headley's translation of Epictetus to John Florio. The dedications are too long to quote entire, but a few lines from each will give the reader an idea of the clumsy punning and the contorted and pseudo-epigrammatic phraseology which are their two principal characteristics.

(1) Blount : I propose to be blunt with you, and out of my dulness to encounter you with a Dedication in the memory of that pure element all wit, Chr. Marlow : whose ghost or Genius is to be seen walk the Churchyard in (at least) three or four sheets. . . . These things if you can mould yourself to them, Ned, I make no question but they will not become you. . . . Farewell, I affect not the world should measure my thoughts to thee by a scale of this nature ; leave to think good of me when I fall from thee. Thine in all rights of perfect friendship, Thom. Thorpe.

(2) [Of Epictetus' work]. In all languages, ages, by all persons high prized, imbraced, yea, inbosomed. It filles not the hand with leaues, but fills ye head with lessons : nor would be held in hand but had by harte to boote. He is more senceless than a stocke that hath no good sence of this stoick."

The tone and language are those of a half-educated vulgarian posing as a wit and fashionable phrase-monger.

To come now to the vexed question which has been responsible for the shedding of an enormous amount of ink—the meaning of " the onlie begetter." Does " begetter " mean " inspirer " ? Or " author " ? Or " procurer of the M.S. " ? There is good contemporary authority for each of these three interpretations, and each is supported by a number of qualified critics.

(a) *Inspirer.*

This interpretation is supported by (amongst others) BOADEN, BRIGHT, CHASLES, FURNIVALL, GERVINUS, HALLAM, VICTOR HUGO, NEIL, and TYRWHITT.[1] They identify

[1] These names, as well as the names (given below) of the supporters of the other two interpretations, are cited on the authority of Messrs. Pooler and Lee. I cannot claim a first-hand acquaintance with more than four or five of them.

" Mr. W. H." variously with (1) Henry Wriothesely Earl of Southampton (initials transposed to make it more difficult !), (2) Sir William Harvey (afterwards Lord Harvey) Southampton's step-father, (3) William Herbert third Earl of Pembroke, and (4) Mr. William Hughes.

There are two obvious objections to this interpretation. The first is that it fails to explain " onlie." Speaking roughly, a third of the *Sonnets* are plainly addressed to a man, and a third plainly addressed to a woman, the sex in the remainder being doubtful. The second is that none of the identifications bear the stamp of probability. As regards the three first names, it is quite certain that not one of these illustrious personages could have been addressed as *Mr.* W. H. even by his intimates, and it seems equally certain that if a tradesman like Thorpe had presumed to do so, especially in print, he would have received a sound cudgelling forthwith, and probably have been prosecuted by the Star Chamber into the bargain. Again, why Thorpe should have *wanted* to address a nobleman in this extraordinary fashion—what he could have possibly hoped to gain by it—nobody has been able to explain. As for the fourth claimant, William Hughes—that lovely youth evolved by Tyrwhitt out of his own inner consciousness in order to account for the *Wills* and *Hews* of sonnets Nos. 20, 104, 135, 136, and 143, it appears that though contemporary records have been thoroughly ransacked, no gentleman of that name who comes within measurable distance of filling the bill has been discovered ; " there never was no sech a person."

The only ' Inspirer ' identification which (in my humble judgment) deserves the reader's consideration is the Pembroke one. And this, not because of its intrinsic value —it is at least as improbable as any of the other three—but because it is the main, or indeed one may truly say the only, foundation for what is known as the ' Herbertist ' theory of the *Sonnets*. This theory (much in fashion at the present day) makes Pembroke the ' hero ' of the *Sonnets*, and superadds an elaborate story of W.S.'s close personal friendship with Pembroke, his habit of week-ending at Wilton, his unfortunate love-affair with Pembroke's mistress, Mary Fitton,[1] and all the rest of the romantic legend which has appealed so strongly to the imagination of novelists, playwrights and ' intuitional ' biographers. The story is pure fantasy from beginning to end. Tested by any of the ordinary tests one applies to ' historical ' statements of the kind, it shrivels up to nothing. I will state the Herbertist case as impartially as I can, and leave the reader to judge for himself.

The historical facts on which the Herbertists rely are two, and two only. The first fact is that the theatrical company to which W.S. belonged gave a dramatic performance at Wilton in 1603. In the late autumn of that year owing to the plague then raging in London, the Court moved to Pembroke's house at Wilton, and remained there for two months. The King commanded a dramatic performance for December the 2nd, and " The King's Players " [2] journeyed down to Wiltshire to give it. We do not know the

[1] A Maid-of-Honour to Queen Elizabeth and a particularly bright star in the Court firmament. She was an immoral young woman, and had immoral relations with Pembroke and at least one other courtier. But that she should have deliberately invited social ostracism by engaging in a regular intrigue with a Court servant is, to say the least of it, extremely unlikely. But really, what is gravely called " The Fitton Theory " scarcely deserves the compliment of serious discussion. Mistress Fitton, no doubt, saw W.S. act in dramatic performances at Court and elsewhere (though there is no evidence that she actually did so), but that she distinguished him in any way from other members of his company, that she ever spoke or wrote to him—or even *of* him—there is not the tiniest scrap of evidence, no hint on which one can base even a conjecture.

[2] Every professional actor who desired to avoid being periodically whipped and put in the stocks as " a rogue and vagabond," *had* to take service with one of the four or five great personages who kept up a company of players as a part of his household establishment. He was treated as a kind of upper servant, and wore his master's livery—Royal or otherwise. So when James I in 1603 took over Lord Hunsdon's company (to which W.S. belonged) it became ' the King's Company," and all the members thereof " the King's Players." A

names either of the play (or plays) they performed, or of the performers themselves. W.S. was probably among them, but the fact is not on record. This is the sum-total of the evidence regarding " Shakespeare's visits to Wilton." The second fact is that the ostensible editors of the First Folio, Heminges and Condell, prefixed thereto a dedication (now usually held to be the work of Ben Jonson) to Pembroke and his brother, Lord Montgomery, which runs as follows (I quote only such parts as can be held to be in any way relevant) :—

" To the most noble and incomparable paire of brethren, William Earle of Pembroke, etc., Lord Chamberlaine to the King's most Excellent Majesty and Philip, Earl of Montgomery, etc., gentlemen of His Majesties Bed chamber. . . . But since your L.L. have beene pleas'd to thinke these trifles something, heretofore ; and have prosequuted both them, and their Authour living, with so much favour : we hope, that (they outliving him, and he not having the fate, common with some, to be exequutor to his owne writings) you will use the like indulgence toward them, you have done unto their parent. There is a great difference, whether any Booke choose his Patrons, or finde them : This hath done both. For, so much were acted, as before they were published, the Volume ask'd to be yours. We have but collected them, and done an office to the dead, to procure his Orphanes, Guardians without ambition either of selfe-profit, or fame ; onely to keepe the memory of so worthy a Friend, & Fellow alive, as was our Shakespeare, by humble offer of his playes, to your most noble patronage. . . . In that name therefore, we most humbly consecrate to your H.H. these remaines of your servant [1] Shakespeare ; that what delight is in them, may be ever your L.L. the reputation his, & the faults ours, if any be committed, by a payre so carefull to shew their gratitude both to the living, and the dead, as is Your Lordshippes most bounden, John Heminge, Henry Condell."

I leave the reader to judge whether anything more can be twisted out of this than that Pembroke and his brother admired Shakespeare's plays, and encouraged their author with praise and pudding in the same way as other literary-minded noblemen of that day encouraged other deserving authors who sought their patronage. In any case, he has before him in the passage quoted the sum-total of the historical evidence regarding " Shakespeare's intimacy with Lord Pembroke."

But the Herbertists have another string to their bow in the shape of " the internal evidence of the *Sonnets* themselves."

This internal evidence is concerned with two points only. The first is the portrayal of the ' hero of the *Sonnets* '—the " sweet boy " to whom so many of them are addressed. The Herbertists say that he is depicted as a good-looking, licentious young aristocrat, the head of his family, who is disappointing his friends by declining to marry and beget a lawful heir. This is correct. They go on to say that this description fits the Lord Herbert of *circa* 1598 better than any other of Shakespeare's contemporaries. This is quite wrong. As a general description it would fit equally well half-a-dozen other young men about Elizabeth's court, including, of course, the real Simon Pure, *videlicet*, the Lord Southampton of *circa* 1595. But quite apart from this general description, there are, as the reader has seen, numerous passages and lines scattered through the *Sonnets* which point quite clearly to Southampton and Southampton alone. I challenge the Herbertists—and here I am glad to come at last to a point on which I can speak with some personal authority—to quote a single line which can be interpreted as a similar

good deal of nonsense has been written about W.S.'s " promotion " to this " Court appointment " (!) by people who choose to ignore contemporary evidence—such, for example, as the following note written in 1604 by Sir William Cope (an official in the Lord Chamberlain's department) to Lord Cranborne :—

" Sir, I have sent and bene all thys morning huntying for players Juglers & Such kinde of Creaturs, but fynde them harde to finde, wherefore Leavinge notes for them to seeke me, burbage ys come, & Sayes ther ys no new playe that the quene hath not seene, but they have Revyved an olde one, Cawled *Loves Labore lost*, which for wytt & mirthe he sayes will please her exceedingly. And Thys ys apointed to be playd to Morowe night at my Lord of Sowthamptons, unless yow send a wrytt to Remove the Corpus Cum Causa to your howse in strande. Burbage ys my messenger Ready attendyng your pleasure, Yours most humbly, Walter Cope."

The " Creatur " who delivered Cope's note was " King Richard " Burbage, principal tragedian and business head of the King's Company—the Henry Irving of his day.

[1] The King's Company of players was under the control of the Lord Chamberlain, and they were officially styled his ' servants.'

particular allusion to Herbert. The second point is the mysterious " Mr. W. H." itself. The Herbertists say that Thorpe is " playfully " addressing Pembroke by his " former appellation of Mr. William Herbert." This statement makes one rub one's eyes. Pembroke was the eldest son of the second Earl, and from the day of his birth in 1580 to the day he succeeded to the earldom in 1601, he was known by his father's second title of *Lord* Herbert—Baron Herbert of Cardiff. His intimates would, of course, know him as Herbert, or Will Herbert, but that *anybody*—his family, his servants, his friends, or any section of the public—could at *any* time in his career have addressed him in private or in public as " Mr." William Herbert is almost inconceivable. Whether a hand-to-mouth publisher anxious (presumably) to ingratiate himself with a new patron would have been likely to do so, " playfully " or otherwise, when the Earl was thirty years of age, a Knight of the Garter, and one of the leading men in the kingdom, I leave the kind reader to judge. Besides, we actually know that Thorpe knew better: " Proof is at hand to establish that Thorpe was under no misapprehension as to the proper appellation of the Earl of Pembroke," as LEE puts it. Lee is referring to the dedications to Pembroke prefixed by Thorpe to two of his publishing ventures, one in 1610 and the other in 1616. Extracts from the two specimens of T.T.'s ' familiar ' dedications, *i.e.*, dedications of the brand he used for people belonging more or less to the same station of life as himself, have been quoted above. But for his *noble* patrons he kept on tap an entirely different and superior dedicatory style. Long involved sentences replace the staccato jocosities of the Blount and Florio dedications; and instead of a rather offensive familiarity, we find a servility which, judged even by the standard of that tuft-hunting age, is nothing short of disgusting. I will quote a few lines from each of the two Pembroke dedications. The 1610 one begins and ends as follows:—

" To the honorablest patron of the Muses and good mindes, Lord William, Earle of Pembroke, Knight of the Honourable Order (of the Garter) . . . Wherefore, his legacie, laide at your Honour's feete, is rather here delivered to your Honour's humbly thrise-kissed hands by his poore delegate, your Lordship's true devoted, Th. Th."

The 1616 one begins as follows:—

" To the Right Honourable, William Earle of Pembroke, Lord Chamberlaine to His Majestie, one of his most honorable Privie Counsell, and Knight of the most noble order of the Garter, &c. Right Honorable.—It may worthily seeme strange unto your Lordship, out of what frenzy one of my meanenesse hath presumed to commit this Sacrilege, in the straightnesse of your Lordship's leisure, to present a peece, for matter and model so unworthy, and in this scribbling age, wherein great persons are so pestered dayly with Dedications."

and so on to the end.

That so many eminent critics should have defended the Pembroke identification seems to me to be quite one of the strangest facts in the history of Shakespearean criticism. When one asks why Thorpe should in 1609 have addressed to Pembroke under the undignified pseudonym of " Mr. W. H." a smug, semi-facetious, thirty-word dedication written in his ' familiar ' style, and in the following year have addressed to him under his full title of " Lord William, Earle of Pembroke, Knight of the Honourable Order of the Garter," a long whining dedicatory epistle written in his most fulsomely ' servile ' style,' and receives the reply that the reason is that the author whose work Thorpe was pirating in 1609 was on peculiarly intimate terms with the Earl and the 1610 author wasn't, one is conscious of being wafted to a region of thought where the claims of common-sense carry something less than their proper weight. But when, on enquiring where the evidence of this peculiar intimacy is to be found, one is referred back to the *W.H. dedication itself*, one can only hastily acknowledge that the argument is altogether too wonderful for the ordinary person to attain unto, and drop it forthwith.

(b) *Author.*

This interpretation is supported by (among others) BARNSTOFF, BRAE, GODWIN, and INGLEBY. The three last-named critics explain W.H. as a misprint for W.S., *i.e.*, William Shakespeare, but HERR BARNSTOFF sticks to the text, explaining that Mr. W. H. stands for *Mr. W*illiam *H*imself! One learns by sad experience that a *Sonnets* theory-monger at bay is *capable de tout*, but this typically German effort must surely be somewhere about the limit.

I might enumerate here the many intrinsic improbabilities and difficulties of the " Author " interpretation, *e.g.*, the difficulty of reconciling it with the seventh line of the dedication, but the kind reader will probably agree with me that this would be a waste of time. Let us pass on.

(c) *Procurer of the MS.*

This interpretation is supported by (among others) BOSWELL, CHALMERS, DELIUS, DRAKE, KNIGHT, LEE, and MASSEY. The original meaning of ' beget ' (A.-S. begettan), as the dictionaries and glossaries show, was simply to ' procure ' or ' obtain,' but seventeenth-century examples of its use in this sense are decidedly rare. The example usually quoted is in Dekker's *Satiromastix* (1602), " I have some cousin-germans at court shall *beget* you the reversion of the Master of the King's revels." But rarity of contemporary usage is, of course, no argument against accepting an interpretation of a phrase written by Thorpe, who, as we have seen, affected quaintness and singularity, and loved " to catch an ink-horn term by the tail." Besides it would give him an opportunity of making a characteristically vile pun on the " only-begotten " of the Prayer-book.

This interpretation undoubtedly does what the two others have signally failed to do, namely, offer an explanation of the " promised " and " well-wishing " of Thorpe's cryptically-worded sentence. If Mr. W. H. was the inspirer or addressee of the *Sonnets* —if, in short, the part he played in their production had been one of which the *author* was cognizant, why do we have merely " promised," and " not promised *him* " ? If he was the author himself, why " by *our* ever-living poet," and not " by *their* ever-living author," or " in *his* ever-living verse " ? Again, are we to suppose that " well-wishing " is merely a tautologous repetition of the " wisheth " in the previous line ? The answer is that lines 4-7 obviously refer (probably with satiric intention) to Shakespeare's vain-glorious sonnets in the B.I. series, more especially to the last four lines of his magnificent No. 18 :—

> Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
> When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st :
> So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
> So long lives this and this gives life to thee,

and that the fulfilment of this confident anticipation of perennial popularity was naturally a consummation devoutly to be ' wished ' by T.T. " Eternity " for the dedicatee would mean a regular income for the owner of the copyright—one for W.H. and two for himself![1] So plausible an explanation ought to give the ' procurer ' interpretation a strong prima facie claim to our suffrages. And its negative virtues are equally admirable ; it has come out of a heavy critical cross-fire practically unscathed. The general tone of this

[1] Thorpe's little joke appears to have been appreciated by the trade. George Wither prefixed to his *Abuses Stript and Whipt* (pub. 1613 by Thorpe's publisher, George Eld), the dedicatory sentence " To himselfe G.W. wisheth all happinesse."

criticism has been one of strong distaste for a distressingly humdrum solution of a problem which offers so many romantic possibilities; but nothing in the shape of a reasonably valid counter-argument has been advanced except the objection that it fails to account for "onlie." BEECHING, in voicing this objection, observes: "Allowing it to be conceivable that a piratical publisher should inscribe a book of sonnets to the thief who brought him the manuscript, why should he lay stress on the fact that 'alone he did it'? Was it an enterprise of such great peril?" But this objection is not as strong as it looks. In the first place, it does not allow for Thorpe's penchant for bad puns. In the second place, though it is true that on the orthodox single-author hypothesis, the *difficulty* (I do not understand why Canon Beeching should have assumed it to be the *peril*) of obtaining a complete manuscript of the *Sonnets* is not very apparent, *my* theory puts the matter on a different footing altogether. To collect single-handed the *disjecta membra* of a series of poetical tournaments fought out by five celebrated poets a dozen or so years ago and kept a secret from all but a small circle of initiates ever since, was a feat of which the most expert professional 'picker-up' of manuscripts might reasonably be proud.

The reader will note that this is the first time that The Theory has been brought into the discussion; it has been kept out on purpose, in order to avoid complicating the argument. Now that it *has* been mentioned, however, it will be convenient to set down here its verdict on the main issues involved. This verdict may be summarized as follows: "The Theory leaves the arguments for and against the various 'inspirer' interpretations very much as they were; it gives the *coup de grâce* to the far-fetched explanation that W.H.=W.S.; and it knocks the bottom out of the only serious objection to the interpretation of "begetter" as the person from whom, or through whom, Thorpe, directly or indirectly, obtained the MS. from which he printed the *Sonnets*." This 'procurer' interpretation is so reasonable in itself, and so well supported by what little evidence there is, that, speaking on behalf of The Theory, I unhesitatingly accept it as the only possible answer to the puzzle.

In searching among Thorpe's contemporaries for the man who did the deed, one has to bear in mind the 'familiar' tone of the dedication, and also the designation of the dedicatee by his initials only. As LEE observes, "The employment of initials in a dedication was a recognized mark of close friendship or intimacy between patron and dedicator. It was a sign that the patron's fame was limited to a small circle, and that the revelation of his full name was not a matter of interest to a wide public." W.H. was obviously one of Thorpe's personal friends (probably a fellow-professional like Edward Blount) who had 'picked up' a MS. of the *Sonnets* and made it over to him—for a consideration or otherwise. There are several more or less shadowy claimants to the honour, but the only person discovered hitherto who can make any pretence to filling the bill is a London stationer named William Hall. Hall's business career is on record, and may be summarized as follows: apprenticed to a master stationer, 1577 to 1584; stationer's assistant from 1584 to 1606; licensed as a master stationer and press-owner, 1606; printed his first book in 1608, and during the next six years "printed some twenty volumes, most of them sermons and almost all devotional in tone"; sold his business and retired in 1614. The 'historical' evidence on which Sir Sidney Lee and Hall's other supporters rely is *first*, that as a press-owner he would (from 1606) be entitled to the honorific 'Mr.'; *secondly*, that in one of his books (published 1608) he describes himself by his initials—"printed by W H."; and *thirdly*, that he may be identified almost certainly with the W.H. who in 1608 'picked up' and published a collection of religious poems written by the well-known Jesuit Robert Southwell. This W.H. (who informs his readers

that these poems " haply had never seene the light, had not a meere accident conveyed them to my hands,") prefixes a dedication which runs as follows: " To the Right Worshipfull and Vertuous Gentleman, Mathew Saunders, Esquire. W.H. wisheth with long life, a prosperous achievement of his good desires," and also a dedicatory epistle signed: " Your Worships unfained affectionate, W.H." (The book, by the way, was printed for him by George Eld—the printer of the *Sonnets* and most of Thorpe's other publishing ventures.) But what, to my mind, is by far the weightiest argument in Hall's favour is supplied by the third line of the dedication itself. Here, as it seems to me, Thorpe is making one of the miserable puns on proper names which distinguish his ' familiar ' style; and it was in order to get in this pun without shifting his own name from its proper place at the end of his dedicatory sentence that he contorted it into the fantastic (fantastic even for *him*) and ambiguous shape which has so perplexed the critics. " Mr. W. H. (all) happinesse " [1] is a pun of exactly the same calibre—and, curiously enough, on exactly the same syllable—as " that pure element (all) wit Chr. Marlowe " of his dedication to Blount of Marlowe's Lucan in 1600. In my humble opinion the supporters of William Hall have proved their case as satisfactorily as one could reasonably expect them to prove such a case, at such a distance of time, by circumstantial evidence alone.

Accepting therefore on behalf of The Theory both the " procurer of the MS." interpretation of " begetter," and his identification with William Hall, I offer the following paraphrase of the famous dedication :—

" The merchant-venturer, T.T., on the point of setting sail with a cargo of sonnets supplied by Mr. William Hall, wishes him (h) all happiness, and trusts that by marking the consignment " Sole Supplier—Mr. W. H." he (T.T.) has secured for him (W.H.) a share in the " eternity " which (according to their " ever-living " author) awaits the Shakespearean portions thereof. Amen."

1 In the dedication there is a full-stop (.) after every word and initial. A reference to the original text shows that the space between the full-stop placed after the H. of Mr. W. H. and the A of ALL is perceptibly greater than that between any other full-stop and the letter immediately following it. Anybody who has had practical experience of the work of discovering cipher-keys will appreciate the significance of this fact.

CHAPTER X.—THE THEORY DEFENDED.

I approach the task of writing this chapter with great misgiving, not only because I have never engaged in literary controversy and do not know the rules and etiquette of the game, but also because the whole of the last nine chapters constitute one long progressive (and, as it seems to me, conclusive) argument in favour of The Theory, and I do not see how I am to condense it into a satisfactory summary. I find myself, in fact, in the embarrassing position of an architect under formal notice to 'defend' his completed work before a Building Committee which had inspected his plans before the work was started and had had full opportunity of watching the progress of construction from day to day. Those of my readers who have paid me the compliment of reading steadily through the foregoing chapters will know that the unseen foundation on which my building rests is the division on aesthetic grounds of the sonnets into Shakespearean and non-Shakespearean, that the four main pillars thereof are Similar Treatment of The Theme, Verbal Parallelism, Characteristics of Thought and Style, and Personal Allusion, and that it is reinforced from the outside by the two solid-looking buttresses, Catchword Order and Identification of the Poets. They will also, I feel sure, have realised the importance of the simple fact that it *is* a building, that is to say, not a mere congeries of more or less unrelated erections, any of which may be modified or even removed altogether without doing much damage to the rest, but a real structural whole, every part of which supports and is supported by every other part.

. . . . . .

In the first place then, let me make clear the vital distinction between The Theory and all the various other theories about the *Sonnets* which have been put forward from time to time. Put as broadly as possible, the current 'orthodox' view is, I take it, that expressed by Professor Dowden in his Introduction to his edition of the *Sonnets*, where he says:—"With Wordsworth, Sir Henry Taylor, and Mr. Swinburne, with Francois-Victor Hugo, with Kreyssig, Ulrici, Gervinus, and Hermann Isaac, with Boaden, Armitage Brown, and Hallam, with Furnivall, Spalding, Rosetti, and Palgrave, I believe that Shakespeare's Sonnets express his own feelings in his own person."

But there are other equally well-qualified critics who reject this personal interpretation altogether, and have convinced themselves that the *Sonnets* are, variously (I quote only the most popular of the many explanations): a literary exercise; a satire on the sonnetteering craze of the day; an allegory on the difference between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism, and the doctrine of a Celibate Church; a study of the 'materialised' Human Soul; and an appeal to William Shakespeare's sublimated spiritual self. But one and all, orthodox and unorthodox, realists and idealists, fictionist and allegorists, satirists and sentimentalists, agree in one point, namely, in regarding the *Sonnets* (or all but a very few of them) as the genuine work of the Bard of Avon.

Now, as the reader knows, my Theory asserts positively that he was responsible for not more than thirty-two or thirty-three of them at the most, and that the other

hundred and twenty odd are the work of four or five other poets writing in competition with him and with each other. There can obviously be no compromise between such a theory and *any* current theory, orthodox or unorthodox, and the useful ' much-to-be-said-on-both-sides ' formula is for once ruled out altogether. If even one of the ' essential ' first seven of the ten propositions in which The Theory has been set forth can be proved to be unsound, then the whole thing is rotten right through, and the sooner it is carted away to limbo along with The Biliteral Cipher and *honorificabilitudinitatibus* the better. But if, on the other hand, my fundamental hypothesis of ' Competitive Sonnetteering ' is accepted as, broadly speaking, correct, then the basis on which all the current theories are founded dissolves into nothingness, and a very large percentage of the enormous mass of *Sonnets* literature goes into the waste-paper basket.

I would like to ask the supporters of *any* one of the current theories the following five questions, none of which, to the best of my knowledge, have been asked before—or if they have, they have certainly never been answered.

Question No. I. Why did Shakespeare write such un-Shakespearean stuff as this ? [I give only a few of the more striking examples.]

No. 22.

O therefore, love, be of thyself so wary
As I, not for myself but for thee, will ;
Bearing thy heart, which I will keep so chary
As tender nurse her babe from faring ill.

No. 28.

And each though enemies to either's reign,
Do in consent shake hands to torture me ;
The one by toil, the other to complain
How far I toil, still farther off from thee.

No. 38.

Be thou the tenth Muse, ten times more in worth
Than those old nine which rimers invocate ;
And he that calls on thee, let him bring forth
Eternal numbers to outlive long date.
If my slight Muse do please these curious days
The pain be mine, but thine shall be the praise.

No. 46.

To 'cide this title is impanneled
A quest of thoughts, all tenants to the heart ;
And by their verdict is determined
The clear eye's moiety and the dear heart's part :
As thus, mine eye's due is thy outward part,
And my heart's right thy inward love of heart.

No. 51.

Then can no horse with my desire keep pace ;
Therefore desire, of perfect'st love being made,
Shall neigh no dull flesh in his fiery race ;
But love, for love, thus shall excuse my jade ;
Since from thee going he went wilful-slow,
Towards thee I'll run and give him leave to go.

No. 56.

Let this sad interim like the ocean be
Which parts the shore, where two contracted new
Come daily to the banks, that, when they see
Return of love, more blest may be the view ;
Or call it winter, which being full of care
Makes summer's welcome thrice more wish'd, more rare.

No. 67.

Why should he live, now Nature bankrupt is,
Beggar'd of blood to blush through lively veins ?
For she hath no exchequer now but his,
And, proud of many, lives upon his gains.
O, him she stores, to show what wealth she had
In days long since, before these last so bad.

No. 81.

You still shall live—such virtue hath my pen—
Where breath most breathes, even in the mouths of men.

No. 97.

And, thou away, the very birds are mute ;
Or, if they sing, 'tis with so dull a cheer
That leaves look pale, dreading the winter's near.

No. 100.

Give my love fame faster than Time wastes life ;
So thou prevent'st his scythe and crooked knife.

No. 103.

And more, much more, than in my verse can sit
Your own glass shows you when you look in it.

Can anything like the variegated vileness of these samples be found in any other genuine work of Shakespeare early or late ?

Question No. II. Why did Shakespeare, when dealing with certain conventional sonnetteering topics, repeat himself, contradict himself, or parody himself (sometimes all three together) as in the following example ? [Again I give a single handful from a full sack ; there are dozens more.]

Topic.—The Patron is the *worth*iest *subject* for the Poet's *Muse* to exercise her *invention* (imagination) upon, and furnishes an all-sufficient *argument* for his *verse.*

38. How can *my Muse* want *subject* to *invent*,
    When thou dost live who pour'st into *my verse*
    Thine own sweet *argument*, too excellent
    When thou thyself dost give *invention* light?
    Be thou the tenth *Muse*, ten times more *in worth*.
76. Why is *my verse* so barren of new pride
    So far from *variation* or quick *change?*
    And keep *invention* in a noted weed
    O know, *sweet love*, I always write of you
    And you and love are still my *argument;*
    So all my best is *dressing old words new*,
    Spending again what is already *spent:*
78. So oft have I invoked thee for *my Muse*
    And found such fair assistance in *my verse*,
79. *I grant, sweet love*, thy lovely *argument*
    Deserves the travail of a *worthier pen*
    Yet what of thee thy poet doth *invent*
82. *I grant* thou wert not married to *my Muse*
    Of their fair *subject*, blessing every book
84. Lean *pen*ury within that *pen* doth dwell
    That to his *subject lends* not some small glory
100. Where art thou, *Muse*, that thou forget'st so long
    To speak of that which gives thee all thy might
    Spend'st thou thy fury on some *worthless* song
    Darkening thy power, to *lend* base *subjects* light?
    And gives thy *pen* both skill and *argument*.
103. The *argument*, all bare, is of more *worth*
    That over-goes my blunt *invention* quite
    To mar the *subject* that before was well
    For to no other pass *my verses* tend.
105. Fair, kind, and true is all my *argument*
    Fair, kind, and true *varying to other words*
    And in this *change* is my *invention spent*.

Can anything *in the least* like this damnable iteration be found in the work of any other sonnetteer English or foreign?

Question No. III. Why did Shakespeare in the twelve Sonnets, Nos. 127, 130, 131, 132, 137, 139, 140, 141, 147, 148, 150 and 152, in which he refers to his love for a dark woman, imitate or parody over and over again the thoughts and language of a particular passage in his own Love's Labour's Lost? [I have not attempted to mark the 'parallelisms,' as this would mean the italicising of about three-quarters of the matter quoted.]

L.L.L. Act IV. Sc. III.

229. B. My eyes are then no eyes, nor I Berowne
    That I may swear beauty doth beauty lack,
    If that she learn not of her eye to look;
    No face is fair that is not full so black.
    K. O paradox! Black is the badge of hell,
    The hue of dungeons and the school of night;
    And beauty's crest becomes the heavens well.
    B. Devils soonest tempt, resembling spirits of light.
    O! if in black my lady's brows be deck'd,
    It mourns that painting and usurping hair
    Should ravish doters with a false aspect;
    And therefore is she born to make black fair.

Sonnets.

127. In the old age black was not counted fair,
    But now is black beauty's successive heir,
    Fairing the foul with art's false borrow'd face;
    Therefore my mistress' eyes are raven black,
    Her eyes so suited, and they mourners seem
    At such who, not born fair, no beauty lack,
    Yet so they mourn, becoming of their woe,
131. For well thou know'st to my dear doting heart
    Thy face hath not the power to make love groan,
    And to be sure that it is not false I swear
    Thy black is fairest in my judgment's place.
    In nothing art thou black save in thy deeds.
132. Thine eyes I love, and they, as pitying me,
    Have put on black and loving mourners be
    And truly not the morning sun of heaven
    Better becomes the grey cheeks of the east
    Than those two mourning eyes become thy face
    To mourn for me, since mourning doth thee grace,
    And suit thy pity like in every part;
    Then will I swear beauty itself is black
    And all they foul that thy complexion lack
137. Thou blind fool, Love what dost thou to mine eyes
    That they behold, and see not what they see?
    Or mine eyes seeing this, say this is not,
    To put fair truth upon so foul a face
141. I' faith, I do not love thee with mine eyes
    Who in despite of view, is pleased to dote
147. For I have sworn thee fair, and thought thee bright
    Who art as black as hell, as dark as night
148. O me, what eyes hath Love put in my head,
    Which have no correspondence with true sight!
    Or, if they have, where is my judgment fled,
    That censures falsely what they see aright?
    If that be fair whereon my false eyes dote,
    No marvel then, though I mistake my view;

O cunning Love! with tears thou keep'st me blind
Lest eyes well-seeing thy foul faults should find.
150. To make me give the lie to my true sight
And swear that brightness doth not grace the day,
152. And, to enlighten thee, gave eyes to blindness,
For I have sworn thee fair; more perjured I,
To swear against the truth so foul a lie.

Question No. IV. Why did Shakespeare construct the following five sonnets almost entirely out of 'scraps' taken from his own plays and narrative poems? [I note only a few of the more striking of the many examples of the 'Shakespearizing' or 'patchwork' sonnet to be found in the collection.]

Nos. 33+34. *Henry IV, Venus and Adonis, Romeo and Juliet, Midsummer's Night's Dream, King John, Love's Labour's Lost.*

No. 51. *Venus and Adonis, Lucrece, Henry V, Henry IV, Midsummer's Night's Dream.*

Nos. 97+98. *Midsummer's Night's Dream, Love's Labour's Lost, Lucrece, Romeo and Juliet, Henry IV.*

Question No. V. There are twenty-one sonnets on the topic of The Poet's absence from his mistress, viz., Nos. 24, 27, 28, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 50, 51, 52, 57, 58, 61, 75, 97, 98, 99, 113, 114. Why did Shakespeare work into these twenty-one sonnets *alone* a greater amount of this 'patchwork,' *i.e.*, a larger number of scraps taken from his own plays and poems, than in all the remaining one hundred and thirty-three sonnets put together? [I note only the absolutely unmistakable borrowings—there are many others more recondite which have been duly explained above in the Notes on the *Absence* series.]

Venus and Adonis	Nos. 56, 99
Lucrece	Nos. 24, 45, 51, 52, 75, 97, 99
Romeo and Juliet	Nos. 98, 99
Love's Labour's Lost	No. 97
2 Gent. of Verona	Nos. 43, 45
Richard II	Nos. 43, 99
Richard III	Nos. 113, 114
King John	Nos. 44, 113, 114
Midsummer's Night's Dream ..	Nos. 51, 97, 98, 113
Henry IV	Nos. 51, 52, 98
Henry V	Nos. 44, 45, 51

Can anything even remotely approaching the wholesale self-plagiarizing of the examples quoted under these last three questions be found in the work of any other author ancient or modern?

But a *questionnaire* of this kind would, of course, have no effect on the true Bardolater—the Shakespearean 'stalwart' determined to "lose no Drop of that immortal Man," and conscious only of yet another inexcusable outrage on the memory of the illustrious dead. His faith is founded on the rock of "The Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare," and he is bound to regard my Theory as a pestilent heresy to be abjured by every decent-minded Shakespearean. But he must abjure it *as a whole;* he cannot pick and choose; he *must* assert and make good every one of the six statements given in the list below—to fail in one would be as fatal to his case as to fail in all.

List of Objections.

1. That there is no *aesthetic* reason why all the so-called ' Serial ' Sonnets should not have been written by the author of *Venus and Adonis* and *Romeo and Juliet.*
2. That the arrangement of these sonnets into thirteen groups each purporting to deal with the same ' Theme ' or set of subjects is a superficial and indefensible one.
3. That the so-called ' similar treatments of the Theme ' are due to the poet recurring to the same topic after an interval or intervals.
4. That the so-called ' Verbal Parallelisms ' are due to the same cause.
5. That the attempt to trace four different poets by their so-called ' characteristics ' has completely failed, such trifling differences in thought, feeling, expression and style as exist between sonnet and sonnet being no more than one might expect to find in the work of a single poet singing " to one clear harp in divers tones."
6. That the so-called ' Personal Allusions ' and references to the alleged ' Contest ' are explainable otherwise, and as a matter of fact most of them *have* been so explained, quite satisfactorily, by previous writers.

Now the issues between these six statements and those propositions of The Theory which they directly challenge cannot be tried at the bar of *fact ;* all six belong to the class of which instructed opinion can be the only arbiter—the opinion of the literary expert based on his " Nicety of Tast." This being so, it would be obviously futile to argue about them, and I propose, therefore, to place them all on a ' Non Disputanda ' list, and will content myself by suggesting to the kind reader that he should apply them systematically to four or five of my thirteen series chosen at random and judge for himself how far they are justified. If he finds that even one of them is unsustainable, then, as I have said above, I submit that he must hold that the Shakespeare ' whole-hogger ' has lost his case.

But there are many ' minor ' objections, *i.e.,* objections of a less fundamental and more particular character, which might appear as stumbling-blocks even in the eyes of a convert. I will set down all I have been able to think of, but it is not easy to act as advocatus diaboli in one's own cause, and there may, of course, be many more. Here is my list.

List of ' Minor ' Objections.

First. Five based more or less on *facts.*

1. The Sonnets were published as Shakespeare's.
2. Shakespeare never disclaimed sole authorship.
3. None of the four other alleged authors claimed a share in them.
4. There is no reference in contemporary literature to this alleged ' contest ' between four well-known poets.
5. There is no precedent for such a ' contest.'

Secondly. Two based more or less on aesthetic considerations.

6. Many of the Sonnets are written with a depth of tone and feeling quite incompatible with the supposition that they are merely exercises in ' Competitive Sonnetteering.'
7. Many of the sonnets attributed to Shakespeare's alleged rivals are too good to have been written by them. And

Lastly. One based on common-sense.

8. The hypothesis of ' Competitive Sonnetteering ' has never suggested itself to any of the numerous competent critics who have made a special study of the *Sonnets.*

I will now attempt to deal with these eight objections one by one and as briefly as possible.

1. *The Sonnets were published as Shakespeare's.*

This objection is of very little weight. In the first place it is quite clear that the publication was not authorized by Shakespeare. Sir Sidney Lee says :—" He [Shakespeare] cannot be credited with any responsibility for the publication of Thorpe's collection of his sonnets in 1609. . . . The book was issued in June, and the owner of the ' copy ' left the public under no misapprehension as to his share in the production by printing above his initials a dedicatory preface from his own pen. The appearance in a book of a dedication from the publisher's (instead of from the author's) hand was, unless the substitution was specifically accounted for on other grounds, an accepted sign that the author had no part in the publication " (*Life*, pp. 159-60). In the second place there have been many previous fraudulent ascriptions of literary works to Shakespeare. Disregarding several pieces published as by " W.S." (obviously intended to be taken as W. Shakespeare) we find that three non-Shakespearean plays had been published with Shakespeare's *full name* on the title page, viz. :—

(1.) *The First Part of The Life of Sir John Oldcastle*, 1600, printed for T.(homas) P.(avier).

(2.) *The London Prodigall*, 1605, printed by T.(homas) C.(reede) for Nathaniel Butler.

(3.) *A Yorkshire Tragedy*, 1608, printed by K. B. for Thomas Pavier.

But perhaps the most flagrant example of all is " The Passionate Pilgrim by William Shakespeare," published by William Jaggard in 1599. Of the twenty poems included in this collection only five are the work of Shakespeare. The rest were written by Barnfield, Griffin, Deloney and others unidentified. Jaggard issued a second edition in 1606, of which no copy is extant. In 1612 he issued a third edition with the following title page : " The Passionate Pilgrim, or Certaine Amorous Sonnets betweene Venus and Adonis, newly corrected and augmented. By W. Shakespeare. The third edition. Whereunto is newly added two Loue-Epistles, the first from Paris to Hellen, and Hellen's answere back againe to Paris. Printed by W. Jaggard, 1612." Of this edition Sir Sidney Lee writes as follows : " The old text reappeared without change ; the words ' certain amorous sonnets between Venus and Adonis ' appropriately describe four non-Shakespearean poems in the original edition, and the fresh emphasis laid on them in the new title-page had the intention of suggesting a connection with Shakespeare's first narrative poem. But the unabashed Jaggard added to the third edition of his pretended Shakespearean anthology two new non-Shakespearean poems which he silently filched from Thomas Heywood's ' Troia Britannica.' That work was a collection of poetry which Jaggard had published for Heywood in 1609." Compared with this abandoned sinner the " well-wishing adventurer " Thomas Thorpe, shows up as a model of virtue. Hyphened surnames were very rare in Shakespeare's day—they were entirely unknown in the class to which he himself belonged—and the casual poetry-lover who paid his fivepence for a copy of a new book of poems entitled " Shake-speare's Sonnets " would probably have been a good deal surprised to hear that " Shake-speare " was *not* a *nom-de-plume*, and would certainly *not* have been surprised to hear that the volume contained the work of others besides the author of *Venus and Adonis*. In fact, all things considered, this " tradesman-like form of title "[1] was about as honest and suitable a one as T. T. could have selected.

[1] See Lee.

2. *Shakespeare never disclaimed sole authorship.*

The answer to this is that Shakespeare never disclaimed authorship of *any* of the many spurious plays and poems published under his name, just as he never claimed authorship of *any* of the sixteen genuine plays published during his lifetime. As Sir S. Lee says : " only two of Shakespeare's works—his narrative poems, *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece*—were published with his sanction and co-operation." Shakespeare never at any time displayed any care for his literary reputation, and he appears to have been singularly indifferent—even for that casual age—to the fate of his literary offspring. Poets and the art of poetry are rarely mentioned in his works, and always in terms of more or less good-humoured contempt : even in the case of his own two acknowledged narrative poems the dedications are plainly ironical, and parody the style and language of the patron-hunting versifiers of the day. In fact, all the evidence, external and internal, goes to show that our leading " decorator and colourman in words " did not take his trade very seriously.

3. *None of the four other alleged authors claimed a share of them.*

The answer to this objection is threefold. (*a*) *The Sonnets* failed to attract the attention of the reading public ; (*b*) in those days authors did not make such claims even in the case of popular *successes ;* and (*c*) there were special *personal* reasons why such claims should not have been made in the case of the *Sonnets*.

(*a*). *The Sonnets a failure.* It is difficult to understand why Thomas Thorpe should have expected to make anything out of the publication of his amorphous medley so many days ' after the fair.' There is nothing so dead as a dead craze, and by 1609 *pléiadiste* sonnetteering was as dead as a doornail—even in France. And that T. T.'s venture did actually ' fall dead from the Press ' is proved as certainly as anything can be proved by circumstantial evidence alone. Quotations from, and allusions to, *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece* and their author positively swarm in contemporary literature ; the *Sonnets* are not quoted from or alluded to even once. The two narrative poems went through what was for those days a really extraordinary number of editions—*Venus and Adonis*, 1593, 1594, 1596, 1599, 1600, 1602, 1617, 1620, 1627, 1630 (2), 1636, and *Lucrece*, 1594, 1598, 1600, 1607, 1616, 1624 ; the *Sonnets* were published only once. Further—most significant fact of all—when at length they were republished in 1640 along with other Shakespearean and pseudo-Shakespearean poems, they were (to quote from the beginning of Chapter I) " referred to in the preface in terms which clearly show that the editor, John Benson, regarded them as an entirely new ' discovery.' " Benson's preface—a masterpiece of mendacity—is an illuminating document, and is worth quoting in full :—

To the Reader.

I Here presume (under favour) to present to your view some excellent and sweetely composed Poems, of Master WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, Which in themselves appeare of the same purity, [*Lie Number One*] the Author himselfe then living avouched ; [*Lie Number Two*] they had not the fortune by reason of their Infancie in his death, [*Lie Number Three*] to have the due accomodatiõ of proportionable glory, with the rest of his everliving Workes, yet the lines of themselves will afford you a more authentick approbation than my assurance any way can, to invite your allowance, in your perusall you shall finde them SEREN, cleere and eligantly plaine, such gentle straines as shall recreate and not perplex your braine, no intricat or cloudy stuffe to puzzell intellect [*Lie Number Four*], but perfect eloquence ; such as will raise your admiration to his praise : this assurance I know will not differ from your acknowledgement. And certain I am, my opinion will be seconded by the sufficiency of these ensuing Lines ; I have beene somewhat solicitus to bring this forth to the perfect view of all men ; and in so doing, glad to be serviceable for the continuance of glory to the deserved Author in these his Poems.

I.B. [i.e. *John Benson*].

Lie Number One. As Sir S. Lee says: "the order in which Thorpe printed the Sonnets is disregarded. Benson prints his poems in a wholly different sequence, and denies them unity in meaning. He offers them to his readers as a series of detached compositions. At times he runs more than one together without break. But on each detachment he bestows a descriptive heading." As Mr. Pooler says: "poems from *The Passionate Pilgrim* are interspersed singly or in groups among the Sonnets . . . in some cases, but not all, pronouns indicating that a man is addressed are changed to feminine forms." Also he omits (apparently by inadvertence) eight sonnets, and suppresses the W.H. dedication.

Lie Number Two. Shakespeare never "avouched" *anything* about either *The Passionate Pilgrim* or the *Sonnets*.

Lie Number Three. Seven years elapsed between the publication of the *Sonnets* and Shakespeare's death.

Lie Number Four. The collection includes many sonnets (mostly the work of The Humorist) which for sheer obscurity beat anything in English poetry before Browning. The kind reader is invited to find in the numerous contemporary sonnet-collections parallels to any of the following sonnets—24, 114, 124, 125.

Here is a collection of poems by a very popular author published only thirty years previously. Would any editor venture to herald a republication of them in these terms—to say nothing of taking the most unwarrantable liberties with the text—unless he felt certain that his public knew nothing of the original edition? Conceive of anyone treating *Venus and Adonis* or *Lucrece* in this fashion!

(*b*). *Indifference to piracy.* Very occasionally a professional poet might protest at being credited with inferior compositions by other pens, but in the case of the smaller fry, to have one's best efforts selected for publication under a popular author's name appears to have been regarded as a compliment rather than otherwise. For instance, none of the versifiers laid under contribution for *The Passionate Pilgrim*—Barnfield, Griffin, Deloney, and others—seem to have objected to Shakespeare being described on the title-page as sole author.

(*c*). *Special personal reasons.* Consider the position of the four 'rival poets' at the time of the publication of the *Sonnets* in June, 1609. Barnes had long ago disappeared from London society, and was ruralizing in Durham. He died there in December of the same year, and may possibly have been in failing health for some time before. Besides, in any case, he was not likely to take action which would reveal him as a boastful coward, and the butt of his fellow-competitors. Warner had died two months before. Donne was no longer the "Jack Donne" of *Songs and Sonnets*, but a serious, much-married man who had renounced his youthful follies and was preparing to take holy orders.[1] And as for The Newcomer, whether he was Daniel or another, he was not likely to trouble about his insignificant contribution of ten sonnets of no particular merit or originality. And finally, it must be remembered that the secret of the *Sonnets* could not have been divulged by *anybody* without 'giving away' the Earl of Southampton,[2] who under James I had become a very great man indeed—a Knight of the Garter, Governor of the Isle of Wight, and *persona gratissima* at Court.

[1] Ben Jonson told Drummond that Donne "since he was made a Doctor repenteth highly and seeketh to destroy all his poems." And Donne himself wrote to a friend: "Of my *Anniversaries* the fault that I acknowledge in myself is to have descended to print anything in verse, which, though it had excuse even in our times, by men who profess and practise much gravity; yet I confess I wonder how I declined to it and do not pardon myself."

[2] In those days a statesman could not afford to be known as a poet. Selden observes in his *Table-Talk*: "'Tis ridiculous for a lord to print verses; 'tis well enough to make them to please himself, but to make them public is foolish." So in Puttenham's *Arte of Poesie* (1589) we read: "Now also of such among the

4. *There is no reference in contemporary literature to this alleged "Contest" between four well-known poets.*

Obviously the only authority competent to pronounce judgment on this point is a specialist in Elizabethan literature familiar not only with the printed and MS. works produced in the last decade of the sixteenth century, but also with the great mass of correspondence, memoirs, diaries, etc., belonging to that period which have survived to our day. Until this evidence is re-examined and a negative result authoritatively established, I am not prepared to allow this objection—especially as I have come across (in Sir S. Lee's *Life*) certain passages in Nashe and Gervase Markham which seem to me to indicate that these two men at any rate knew that some sort of contest *was* going on in 1594 and 1595.

The first passage occurs in Nashe's dedication to Southampton of his novel, *Life of Jack Wilton* (1594):

"How wel or ill I haue done in it, I am ignorant: (the eye that sees round about it selfe sees not into it selfe): only your Honours *applauding encouragement* hath power to make mee arrogant. Incomprehensible is the *heigth of your spirit* both in heroical resolution and matters of conceit. Vnreprieueably perisheth that booke whatsoeuer to wast paper, *which on the diamond rocke of your judgement disasterly chanceth to be ship-wrackt.* A dere louer and cherisher you are, as well of the louers of Poets, as of Poets them selues. Amongst their *sacred* number I dare not ascribe my selfe, though now and then I speak English: that smal braine I haue, to no further vse I conuert saue to be kinde to my frends, and fatall to my enemies. A new brain, a new wit, a new stile, a new soule will I get mee to canonize your name to posteritie, if in this my first attempt I be not taxed of presumption. Of your gracious fauor I despaire not, for I am not altogether Fames out-cast. . . . Your Lordship is the large spreading branch of renown, from whence *these my idle leaues* seeke to deriue their whole *nourishing.*"

The words *italicized* recall the language of two of Barnes' sonnets in *Parthenophil and Parthenophe* (1593), viz.: (1) The ridiculous dedicatory sonnet to Southampton quoted above in Chapter II, and (2), No. 91.

The dedicatory sonnet may be quoted again:

Receive, sweet *Lord*, with thy thrice *sacred* hand
(Which *sacred* Muses make their instrument)
These worthless leaves, which I to thee present,
(*Sprung from* a rude and unmanured land)
That with your countenance graced, they may withstand
Hundred-eyed Envy's rough encounterment,
Whose patronage can *give encouragement*,
To scorn back-wounding Zoilus his band.
Vouchsafe, right virtuous Lord, with gracious eyes—
Those heavenly lamps which give the Muses light,
Which give and take in course that holy fire—
To view my Muse with your judicial sight:
Whom, when time shall have taught, by flight, to rise,
Shall to *thy virtues, of much worth aspire.*

Nobilitie or gentrie as be very well seene in many laudable sciences, and especially in making of poesie, it has so come to passe that they have no courage to write, and if they have, yet are they loath to be a knowen of their skill. So as I know very many notable gentlemen in the Court that have written commendably and suppressed it agayne or els suffored to be publisht without their own names to it: as if it were a discredit for a gentleman to seeme learned and to show himself amorous of any good Art." And in the anonymous play *Sir Thomas More* (1590) the Earl of Surrey is made to say:

". . . Oh my lord, you tax me
In that word poet of much idleness
It is a studie that makes poor the fate
Poets were ever thought unfit for state."

From No. 91 three lines may be quoted :

> My fancy's ship, tost here and there by these
> Still floats in danger, ranging to and fro.
> How fears *my thoughts' swift pinnace thine hard rocks*

The words I have *underlined* (in Nashe's dedication) would seem to indicate a certain amount of soreness on Nashe's part at some recent slight on his pretensions as a poet—such, for instance, as passing him over as a candidate for a poetical " contest " in favour of the versifier whose metaphor and language he is imitating.

The second passage appears in Markham's dedicatory sonnet to Southampton prefixed to his patriotic poem on Sir Richard Grenville's fight off the Azores (1595) :

> Thou glorious laurel of the Muses' hill,
> *Whose eyes* doth crown the most victorious pen,
> *Bright lamp of virtue*, in whose *sacred* skill
> Lives all the bliss of ear-enchanting men,
> From graver subjects of thy grave assays,
> Bend thy *courageous* thoughts unto these lines—
> The grave from whence *my humble Muse doth raise*
> True honour's spirit in her *rough* designs—

Note *first* the close resemblance (marked by italics) in tone and phraseology to Barnes' just-quoted dedicatory sonnet, and *secondly*, the personal allusions (marked by underlining) in lines 2 and 4—" the most victorious pen " in particular.

The third and last passage occurs in Nashe's poetical dedication to Southampton of his *Choise of Valentines* (1595 or 1596) :

> ' Pardon, sweete *flower* of matchles poetrye,
> And *fairest bud* the red *rose* euer bare,
> Although my muse, devorst from deeper care,
> Presents thee with a wanton Elegie.
> . . . . . .
> Complaints and praises, every one can write,
> And passion out their pangs in statlie rimes :
> . . . . . .
> Accept it, deare Lord, in gentle gree,
> And better lines, ere long, shall honor thee.

These lines contain several *possible* allusions to the " Contest " and the Personal series of sonnets. To save the tedious repetition of qualifying words and phrases, I will treat these possibilities as certainties.

1-2. An echo of the opening lines of the *Sonnets* (Shakespeare's first sonnet to Southampton) :

> From *fairest* creatures we desire increase
> That thereby beauty's *rose* might never die.
> . . . . . .
> Within thine own *bud* buriest thy Content.

The " matchles poetrye " = the Personal Sonnets.

3-4. Again the note of soreness. The " deeper care " is the " Contest," and the author's " devorst " muse is a reference to the mysterious union between the various competitors' muses and the object of their praises, which forms the basis of one of the leading *motifs* in the Personal sonnets—" The Obstetrics " conceit. *Cf.* especially Shakespeare—

> Let me not to the marriage of true minds

and The Lawyer—

> I grant thou wert not married to my muse.

9-10. The "complaints" are the six sonnets of the "Patron's Peccadilloes" series, and the "praises" are the rest of the Personal section. Note the "their" in line 10: it is, strictly speaking, ungrammatical, but it is interesting as shewing that Nashe had more than one poet in mind: these are, of course, the four competitors in "The Contest"—the "ear-enchanting men" of Markham's sonnet.

13-14. An echo from the dedication to *Venus and Adonis*. It is a significant fact that in all the other three dedicatory passages quoted above (counting Barnes' as one) similar echoes occur. The reader is invited to trace them for himself.

"I know not how I shall offend in dedicating my unpolisht lines to your Lordship . . . and vowe to take advantage of all idle houres till I have honoured you with some graver labour . . . and never after eare so barren a land for fear it shall yield me still so bad a harvest."

All these numerous allusions and similarities may, of course, be explainable otherwise; but it cannot be denied that the dates, viz., 1593-1596, and the persons, viz., Southampton, Shakespeare, and Barnes, fit into The Theory *exactly*.

5. *The history of sonnetteering furnishes no other example of such a contest.*

One need not go very far to find an answer to *this* objection—two excellent examples of competitive sonnetteering of exactly the same type as the five "Dramatic" series set forth in Chapter V. above are to be found in the *Plays and Poems* themselves! *Love's Labour's Lost* supplies one in the shape of the four love-sonnets written by Navarre, Berowne, Longueville, and Dumain, respectively; and *The Passionate Pilgrim* the other, in the shape of the four "Venus and Adonis" sonnets, Nos. IV., VI., IX. and XI. Further, the four authors of the latter set "Shakespearize" just as M.P., L., and H. do in the Absence Series, with this difference, that they draw their echoes of Shakespeare's thought and language from *one* source exclusively, namely, *Venus and Adonis*.

The two sets of sonnets are set forth below arranged in the form with which the reader has become familiar, but the order in which the sonnets in each set have been placed is an arbitrary one, there being nothing to shew in either case which (if any) was the 'copy' sonnet. 'Verbal Parallelisms' are indicated by *italics*, and the echoes from *Venus and Adonis* (P. P. set only) are indicated by underlining in the usual way.

The L. L. L. Love Sonnets.

The Theme.—The Lover praises his mistress.

THE L. L. L.

Theme—The Lover

King

So sweet a kiss the *golden sun* gives not
To those fresh morning drops upon the rose
As *thy eye*-beams when their fresh rays *have smote*
The night of dew that on my cheeks down flows :
Nor shines the silver moon one half so bright
Through the transparent bosom of the deep,
As doth thy face through tears of mine give light ;
Thou *shin'st* in every tear that I do weep :
No drop but as a coach doth carry thee ;
So ridest thou *triumphing* in my woe,
Do but behold the tears that swell in me,
And they thy glory through my grief will show ;
But do not love thyself ; then thou wilt keep
My tears for glasses, and still make me weep.
O *queen of queens* ! how far dost thou excel,
No thought can think, nor *tongue of mortal* tell.

Longaville

Did not the heavenly rhetoric of *thine eye*,
'Gainst whom the world cannot hold argument,
Persuade my heart to this false perjury ?
Vows for thee broke deserve not punishment.
A woman *I forswore* ; but I will *prove*,
Thou being a goddess, I *forswore* not thee ;
My *vow* was *earthly*, thou a *heavenly love* ;
Thy grace being gain'd cures all disgrace in me.
Vows are not breath, and breath a vapour is :
Then thou, *fair sun*, which on my earth *dost shine*.
Exhalest this vapour-vow ; in thee it is :
If broken, then it is no fault of mine :
If by me broke, what fool is not so wise
To lose an oath to win a paradise ?

THE PASSIONATE

Theme—Adonis rejects Venus'

IV.

Sweet Cytherea, *sitting by a brook*
With young Adonis, lovely, fresh, and green,
Did *court the lad* with many a lovely look,
Such looks as none could look but *beauty's queen*.
She told him stories to delight his ear,
She show'd him favours to allure *his eye* ;
To win his heart, she touch'd him here and there ;
Touches so soft still conquer chastity.
But whether unripe years did want conceit,
Or he *refused to take her figured proffer*,
The tender nibbler would not touch the bait,
But smile and jest at every gentle *offer* :
Then *fell she* on her back, fair queen, *and toward* :
He rose *and ran away* ; ah, *fool* too froward.

VI.

Scarce had the sun dried up *the dewy morn*,
And scarce the herd gone to the hedge for shade,
When Cytherea, all in love forlorn,
A longing tarriance for Adonis made
Under an osier growing *by a brook*,
A brook where Adon used to cool his spleen :
Hot was the day ; she hotter that did look
For his approach, that often there had been.
Anon he comes, and throws his mantle by,
And stood stark naked on the brook's green brim :
The sun look'd on the world with glorious eye,
Yet not so wistly as *this queen* on him.
He, spying her, bounced in, whereas he stood :
' O Jove,' *quoth she*, ' why was not I a flood ! '

Bid me discourse, I will enchant thine ear
Measure my strangeness with my unripe years
No fisher but the ungrown fry forbears
He on her belly falls, she on her back.

VENUS AND

Even as the sun with purple colour'd face
Had ta'en his last leave of the weeping morn
Poor queen of love, in thine own law forlorn
And Titan, tired in the mid-day heat
With burning eye did hotly overlook them
Who doth the world so gloriously behold
' O Jove ! ' quoth she, ' how much a fool was I.

LOVE SONNETS

praises his Mistress.

Berowne

If love make me forsworn, how shall I *swear* to *love*?
Ah! never faith could hold, if not to beauty *vow'd*;
Though *to myself forsworn*, to thee I'll faithful *prove*;
Those thoughts to me were oaks, to thee like osiers bow'd
Study his bias leaves and makes his book thine eyes,
Where all those pleasures live that art would comprehend.
If knowledge be the mark, to know thee shall suffice;
Well learned is that tongue that well can thee commend;
All ignorant that soul that sees thee without wonder;
Which is to me some praise that I thy parts admire.
Thine eye Jove's lightning bears, thy voice his dreadful thunder
Which, not to anger bent, is music and sweet fire.
Celestial as thou art, O! pardon love this wrong,
That sings *heaven's* praise with such an *earthly tongue*.

Dumain

On a day, alack the day!
Love, whose month is ever May,
Spied a blossom passing fair
Playing in the wanton air;
Through the velvet leaves the wind,
All unseen can passage find;
That the lover, sick to death,
Wish'd himself the heaven's breath.
Air, quoth he, thy cheeks may blow;
Air, would I might *triumph so!*
But alack! my hand is *sworn*
Ne'er to pluck thee from thy thorn:
Vow, alack! for youth unmeet,
Youth so apt to pluck a sweet.
Do not call it sin in me,
That *I am forsworn* for thee;
Thou for whom Jove would swear
Juno but an Ethiop were;
And deny himself for *Jove*,
Turning *mortal* for thy love.

PILGRIM SONNETS

improper advances and runs away.

IX.

Fair was *the morn* when the *fair queen* of love,
. . . . .
Paler for sorrow than her milk-white dove,
For Adon's sake, a *youngster* proud and wild;
Her stand she takes upon a steep-up hill:
Anon Adonis comes with horn and hounds;
She, silly queen, with more than love's good will,
Forbade the boy he should not pass those grounds:
'Once,' *quoth she*, 'did I see a fair sweet youth
Here in these brakes deep-wounded with a boar,
Deep in the thigh, a spectacle of ruth!
See in my thigh,' quoth she, 'here was the sore.'
She showed hers: *he saw* more wounds than one,
And blushing *fled*, and left her all alone.

XI.

Venus, *with young Adonis sitting by her*
Under a myrtle shade, began to *woo* him:
She told the *youngling* how god Mars did try her,
And as he fell to her, so *fell she to him*.
'Even thus,' *quoth she*, 'the warlike god embraced me,'
And then she clipp'd Adonis in her arms;
'Even thus,' *quoth she*, 'the warlike god unlaced me,'
As if the boy should use like loving charms;
'Even thus,' *quoth she*, 'he seized on my lips,'
And with her lips on his did act the seizure:
And as she fetched breath, away he skips,
And would not take her meaning nor her pleasure.
[But he, a wayward boy, *refused the offer*
And ran away, the beauteous Queen neglecting
Showing both *folly* to abuse her *proffer*
And all his sex of cowardice detecting.
(*Variant from* '*Fidessa*.')]
Ah, that I had my lady at this bay,
To kiss and clip me till I *run away!*

ADONIS

She hearkens for his hounds and for his horn
. . . she by her good will
. . . brakes obscure and rough
. . . deep-sore wounding
That her sight dazzling makes the wound seem three.

. . . she hasteth to a myrtle grove
And like a bold fac'd suitor 'gan to woo him
I have been woo'd as I entreat thee now
Even by the stern and direful god of war
Making my arms his field . . .
Away he springs . . .

TREATMENT OF THE L. L. L. THEME.

There are four main thoughts :

(a) You have caused me to break my vow to keep myself heart-whole. L. 1-5 ; B. 1-3 ; D. 11-16.

(b) But this was not my fault. L. 4-7, 12 ; D. 15-20.

(c) Because you are a celestial being. L. 6-7 ; B. 13 ; D. 17-18.

(d) And your beauty is beyond the power of a mortal to describe. K. 14 ; B. 13-14.

VERBAL PARALLELISMS.

1.

K. So sweet a kiss the *golden sun* gives not
As the eye-beams when their fresh rays *have smote*
The night of dew that on my cheeks down flows
Thou *shin'st* in every tear that I do weep
L. Then thou, *fair sun*, which on my earth dost *shine*
Exhal'st this vapour-vow ; . . .

2.

K. As *thy eye*-beams when their fresh rays have smote
L. Did not the heavenly rhetoric of *thine eye*
B. *Thine eye* Jove's lightning bears . . .

3.

K. O *queen of queens !* how far dost thou excel
No thought can think, nor *tongue of mortal* tell.
L. *Thou being a goddess* I forswore not thee
My vow was *earthly*, thou a *heavenly* love
B. *Celestial as thou art*, O ! pardon love this wrong
That sings *heaven's* praise with such an *earthly tongue*
D. *Thou for whom* Jove would swear
Juno but an Ethiop were
Turning *mortal* for thy love

4.

L. *Vows* for thee broke deserve not punishment
A woman *I forswore ;* but I will *prove* }
Thou being a goddess *I forswore* not thee }
My *vow* was earthly, thou a heavenly *love* }
B. If *love* make *me forsworn*, how shall I swear to *love ?* }
Ah ! never faith could hold, if not to beauty *vow'd* }
Though *to myself forsworn*, to thee I'll faithful *prove* }
D. *Vow*, alack ! for youth unmeet,
That *I am forsworn* for thee.

Minor Parallelisms—*Catchwords:* (1) triumph . . . so. K. 10, D. 10 ; (2) Jove. B. 11 ; D. 9, 13.

NOTE.

In the play as we have it there is, of course, no sonnetteering competition—each of the four lovers writes his sonnet without suspecting that the others are doing the same. We know, however, that the play was " corrected and augmented " by Shakespeare just before its performance before Queen Elizabeth in 1597. The theory that suggests itself, therefore, is that this revision was a very drastic affair indeed, and that one of the changes made in the interest of dramatic effect was the excision of a scene in which the four sonnets designedly written on a common theme were produced for comparison, and the substitution therefor of the very effective Sc. III., Act IV., in which Berowne plays the eavesdropper while his three fellow-perjurers come forward one

after the other to soliloquize on their love and declaim their respective love-sonnets, each, as he imagines, unseen and unheard by anybody else.

The remarkable "life-history" of Berowne's own sonnet lends support to this theory. To secure the maximum of stage-effect it was necessary that just as Berowne had worked up to the climax of his hypocritical tirade against his companions for their breach of the common vow, his own apostasy should suddenly be brought to light—if possible by the Comic Man. And so in order that (*a*) his sonnet to Rosaline might be disclosed to the audience before the scene opened, and (*b*) it might be produced precisely at the right moment by that "whoreson loggerhead" Costard, it was made to go through the following series of manœuvres:—Berowne writes it and hands it over to Costard for delivery to Rosaline. Armado at the same time writes a love-letter to Jaquenetta, and also hands it over to Costard for delivery. Costard mixes up the two missives and by mistake hands over Armado's to the Princess [why?] to deliver to Rosaline. The Princess, although she is told by Boyet that it is addressed to Jaquenetta, opens it and reads it [why?]; she then tells Costard of his mistake, and he departs and hands over Berowne's sonnet to Jaquenetta, telling her that it is from *Armado* [although he knows it isn't] and goes with her to Nathaniel the parson to have it read. Jaquenetta tells him that "It was given me by Costard and sent me from Don Armado." Nathaniel thereupon opens it and reads it aloud[1] for the benefit of his friend Holofernes, who says to Jaquenetta, "But damosella virgin was this directed to you?" She replies, "Ay, Sir; from one Monsieur Berowne *one of the strange Queen's lords*" [! !][2] Holofernes then (rather late in the day) "over-glances the superscript," and finding that it is addressed to Rosaline hands it back to the pair to deliver to the King [why?]. They accordingly appear before the King and deliver it to him. He gives it to Berowne to read [why?], and while Berowne is reading it, asks Jaquenetta where she got it. She says, from Costard: and Costard, on being asked where he got it, again says from *Armado* [!]. Meanwhile Berowne has torn it up, but Dumain picks up the pieces and recognises Berowne's handwriting, whereupon Berowne confesses that it is a love- sonnet to Rosaline.

This hopelessly confused and most improbable story could not have formed part of the original plot.

Treatment of the P. P. Theme.

The action is much the same in all four sonnets, but the scene varies—in IV. and VI. it is "by a brook," in IX. on a "steep-up hill," and in XI. "under a myrtle shade."

Verbal Parallelisms.

IV. Sweet *Cytherea, sitting by a brook*
With young Adonis, lovely, fresh and green
Did *court the lad* with many a lovely look
VI. When *Cytherea*, all in love forlorn
A longing tarriance for *Adonis* made
Under an osier growing *by a brook*

[1] It is obviously a 'rag' sonnet—meant probably to burlesque Thomas Lodge's wooden-jointed Alexandrines. Holofernes criticizes it as follows: "let me supervise the canzonet. Here are only numbers ratified; but, for the elegancy, facility, and golden cadence of poesy, *caret*. Ovidius Naso was the man: and why, indeed, *Naso*, but for smelling out the odoriferous flowers of fancy, the jerks of invention? *Imitari* is nothing; so doth the hound his master, the ape his keeper, the tired horse his rider."

The kind reader will appreciate the significance of *Imitari*; there is certainly nothing in the context to suggest it.

[2] From Furness' *Variorum* edition of the play it would appear that Jaquenetta's inexplicable blunder in making Berowne a member of the Princess' suite has not been noticed by any of the commentators.

IX. Fair was the morn when the fair *queen of love*
For *Adon's* sake, a *youngster* proud and wild
XI. *Venus with young Adonis sitting by* her
Under a myrtle shade, began to *woo* him
She told the *youngling* how god Mars did try her.

IV. Such looks as none could look but *beauty's queen*
VI. Yet not so wistly as *this queen* on him
IX. Fair was the morn when the *fair queen* of love
XI. And ran away, the *beauteous queen* neglecting.

IV. *She show'd him favours* to allure *his eye*
IX. *She showed hers; he saw* more wounds than one.

IV. Or he *refused to take her figured proffer*
But smile and jest at every gentle *offer*
XI. But he, a wayward boy, *refused the offer*
Showing both folly to abuse her *proffer.*

IV. He rose *and ran away;* ah, fool too froward
IX. *And* blushing *fled,* and left her all alone
XI. *And ran away,* the beauteous queen neglecting.

Minor Parallelisms—*Catchwords:* (1) fell she. IV. 13, XI. 4; (2) anon he comes, VI. 9, IX. 6; (3) quoth she, VI. 14, IX. 9, XI. *passim.*

NOTE.

It seems very odd that the competitive—or at any rate the *imitative*—character of these four sonnets should not have been recognised before. No. XI. is by Bartholemew Griffin, but it is not known who wrote the others. The Shakespeare "whole-hoggers," of course, claim all three as the genuine work of The Bard. Prof. Dowden, for instance, writes as follows:—

"I think there can be little doubt that IV., VI. and (I add more doubtfully) IX. come from the same hand. Nothing in any one of the three sonnets forbids the idea of Shakespere's authorship; rather, it seems to me they have a Shakesperian air about them . . . If IV., VI. and IX. belong to one and the same group of sonnets, the order, it seems, must be—VI. Noon of the first day: Cytherea waiting beside the brook for the arrival of Adonis; and the escape of Adonis by plunging into the water. IV. Cytherea caressing Adonis beside the brook. IX. The following morning, Cytherea meeting Adonis as he goes to the boar-hunt. Thus the treatment of time corresponds precisely with that of *Venus and Adonis*, which includes two days, from noon of the first day until the death of Adonis on the following morning."—The only difference being that that shy (?) bird Adonis allows himself to be flushed *three times* in the twenty-four hours instead of once as in the narrative poem.

6. *Many of the Sonnets are written with a depth of tone and feeling quite incompatible with the supposition that they are merely exercises in 'Competitive Sonnetteering.'*

This objection is based on the "heart-unlocking" view of the *Sonnets*, which was the one in favour up to the end of the last century. Professor Dowden was perhaps its best-known exponent. Writing in 1895, he said:—"In the Sonnets we recognize three things: that Shakspere was capable of measureless personal devotion; that he was tenderly sensitive, sensitive above all to every diminution or alteration of that love his heart so eagerly craved; and that, when wronged, although he suffered anguish, he transcended his private injury, and learnt to forgive. . . . The errors of his heart originated in his sensitiveness, in his imagination (not at first inured to the hardness of fidelity to the fact), in his quick consciousness of existence, and in the self-abandoning devotion of his heart."

But one would be surprised to find a responsible critic writing in this strain to-day, in the face of the series of exhaustive researches into the sonnetteering literatures of Europe which have been carried on during the last quarter of a century. These researches have shown with ever-increasing clearness how essentially 'make-believe' the productions of the Elizabethan sonnetteers really were. As we have seen, an eminent and strictly orthodox Shakespearean, Sir J. M. Robertson, contemptuously refers to the sonnetteers as "a cage of parrots," and Sir Sidney Lee, an equally eminent and equally orthodox critic, remarks that "the typical collection of Elizabethan sonnets was a mosaic of plagiarisms, a medley of imitative or assimilative studies," and adds that "autobiographical confessions were not the stuff of which the Elizabethan sonnet was made."

The plain fact is that the Elizabethan sonnetteers, like the mediæval troubadours, wrote *in character*—a character moving within very narrow limits and bound by very strict and elaborate conventions. When Shakespeare, the tragedy-maker, puts into the mouth of one of his great 'psychological' characters the lines:—

> I have lived long enough; my way of life
> Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf,
> And that which should accompany old age
> As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,
> I must not look to have;

we do not conclude that he himself at the time of writing was a gloomy and unpopular old curmudgeon brooding over the errors of an ill-spent life—or anything like it. Why then when Shakespeare, the maker of 'adulatory' sonnets, in two of the most 'psychological' of them puts into his own mouth the lines:—

> (73) That time of year thou mayest in me behold
> When yellow leaves or none or few do hang
> Upon those boughs which shake against the cold
> (29) When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes
> I all alone beweep my outcast state
> Wishing me like to one more rich in hope
> Featured like him, like him which friends possessed
> . . . . . .
> Haply I think on thee and then my state
> Like to the lark at break of day arising
> From sullen earth sings hymns at heaven's gate
> For thy sweet love remember'd such wealth brings
> That then I scorn to change my state with kings

need we conclude that he himself at the time of writing was an out-at-elbows social pariah with one foot in the grave and the other kept out of it only by his overwhelming affection for a literary patron—or anything like it? It would indeed be a strange theory that would allow a dramatic genius the ability to sustain the dramatic illusion of a character throughout a five-act play, and deny him the ability to do so throughout a fourteen-line sonnet. Besides, the evidence is all the other way. One finds several contemporary poets who in the 'solid' part of their work display little or no imagination or dramatic instinct, attaining a more than respectable standard of realism when they try their hands at the fashionable game of sonnetteering. Take Drayton for example, whose *Polyolbion*—his thirty-book *magnum opus*—is written in so dull and heavy-handed style as to be quite unreadable. Yet as an 'adulatory' sonnetteer he can rise to such heights as this:—

> Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part,—
> Nay, I have done, you get no more of me;
> And I am glad, yea, glad with all my heart,
> That thus so cleanly I myself can free;

Shake hands for ever, cancel all our vows
And when we meet at any time again,
Be it not seen in either of our brows
That we one jot of former love retain.
Now at the last gasp of love's latest breath,
When his pulse failing, passion speechless lies,
When faith is kneeling by his bed of death,
And innocence is closing up his eyes,
—Now if thou would'st, when all have given him over
From death to life thou might'st him yet recover!

This sonnet, as Mr. Courthope euphemistically explains, "symbolizes a rupture" between Drayton and the Countess of Bedford. To speak plainly, it was an extremely businesslike ultimatum from a hard-up poet to a rather stingy patroness, to the effect that unless she could see her way to assessing on a more liberal scale the pecuniary rewards paid to him for singing her praises, he would be reluctantly compelled to seek a better market elsewhere.[1] Now, Southampton was one of the most generous of sixteenth-century Macaenases; and it is, surely, not unreasonable to suppose that a motive which could inspire the author of *Polyolbion* to write this wonderful piece of 'sob-stuff' could have stimulated the author of *Romeo and Juliet* to an equally life-like display of pathos and passion.

7. *Many of the Sonnets attributed to Shakespeare's alleged rivals are too good to have been written by them.*

I have already dealt with this objection at the end of Chapter VIII., to which the kind reader is requested to refer.[2]

8. *The idea of competitive sonnetteering has never suggested itself to any of the numerous competent critics who have made a special study of the Sonnets.*

This is a good, solid, common-sense, man-in-the-street argument of a brand which my experience of controversy in other fields has taught me to regard with peculiar respect. I *do* think it a *most* remarkable thing that no previous investigator of the *Sonnets* has seen the label 'Composite Authorship' staring him in the face. And I can only account for it by supposing that the vast majority of those who have rendered lip-homage to the 'supremeness' of the *Sonnets* have never read for themselves *in bulk*, and that those few who have *had* to do so professionally as editors or commentators have allowed themselves to be hypnotized by The Great Shakespeare Taboo into playing a

[1] The ultimatum, sad to say, was rejected by the hard-hearted Countess, and Drayton forthwith put his threat into execution. He had assiduously love-sonnetted her for ten years or more (both before and after her marriage) under the name of *Idea*, and had apostrophised her under her own name in the well-known sonnet beginning:

Great lady, essence of my chiefest good

in which he assured her that—

Unto thy fame my Muse herself shall task
Which rain'st upon me thy sweet golden showers
And, but thyself, no subject will I ask
Upon whose praise my soul shall spend her powers.

Nevertheless in his very next batch of poems we find that "the sweet nymph" Idea has become *Lady Rainsford*, her consequent change of address from Warwickshire to Gloucestershire being duly notified in poetical but unmistakable terms. His contemporaries, apparently, saw nothing unusual in this abrupt metempsychosis.

[2] *v.* p. 214 *supra.*

game of follow-my-leader, started by Coleridge and his school in the early years of the nineteenth century.[1]

But a flimsy explanation of this sort would certainly not satisfy the Man-in-the-street. With him 'direct action' would be my only chance; he would have to be induced, somehow or other, to look at the facts for himself. I should begin, I think by reminding him that all the best discoveries had been made by accident, and then, after mumbling something modest about babes and sucklings, I should entreat him to devote a couple of hours of his valuable time to the perusal of *the text only* of the hundred and forty serial sonnets as arranged in Chapters II. to V. of this book. When he had done this I should ask him whether he still thought that all of them had been written by one man—*and that man Shakespeare.* If he said that he saw no reason why they shouldn't have been, I should make him my best bow, and assure him that he could shut up the book with a clear conscience—nothing that it or I had to say to him could disturb so robust a faith. If, on the other hand, he admitted that some of them might perhaps have been written by somebody else, I should congratulate him warmly on his discernment, and exhort him to set his doubts at rest by reading (at his leisure), first the last few pages of my Chapter I., which contains the ten Propositions of my theory, and then the hundred and forty sonnets over again, accompanied *this* time by the mass of notes and other explanatory matter in which they lie embedded. "Remember," I would say to him, "our grand old national proverb about the proof of the pudding: here is *my* pudding, served up plain, without any disguising sauce of scholarship or fine writing; there is no need to bother you with an account of the discovery of its new ingredients, or directions for mixing and cooking, or an analysis of food-values, or things of that sort—the only question that concerns you (and me, too, for that matter) is—'How does it taste *as a pudding?*' And I should await his verdict without much anxiety.

. . . . .

Here then, reader, I close my speech for the defence and bring my book to an end, a little depressed by the thought that owing to my lack of expert knowledge of Elizabethan literature in general, and *pléiadiste* sonnetteering in particular, I have failed to do anything like justice to the cause of my unfortunate client. And I find myself sadly repeating the opening lines of Sonnet 103, where "Shake-speare," lamenting a somewhat similar insufficiency, sings so lucidly and so grammatically:—

> Alack! What poverty my Muse brings forth,
> That having such a scope to show her pride,
> The argument, all bare, is of more worth
> Than when it hath my added praise beside!

[1] Foreign critics are disposed to be mildly facetious about this *esprit de suite*, which has been the distinguishing characteristic of Shakespearean criticism in this country for the last three generations. For instance, M. Demblon, the ingenious author of *Lord Rutland est Shakespeare*, refers to it as "la curieuse faculté qu'ont une foule d'écrivains de suggestionner l'opinion après s'être suggestionnés euxmêmes," and goes on to observe: "Ceci tient presque du prodige. Les moutons de Panurge sont plus nombreux encoré qu'on ne croit—ce qui ne les empêche point (avant de faire le plongeon) de s'attribuer le monopole du bon sens!" (p. 81).

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I.—SCHEME OF THE *SONNETS*.

PERSONAL SECTION (88)

		S.	*M.P.*	*L.*	*H.*
FIRST BATCH	Series 1 (M.A.)	1	12	4	15
		2	9	5	16
		11	8	6	13
		3	7	10	17
		..	20	14	126
	Series 2 (B.I.)	64	60	65	62
		19	54	21	53
		18	55	63	81
	Series 3 (D.D.)	29	37	30	31
	Series 4 (E.D.)	26	38	105	23
SECOND BATCH	Series 5 (P.E.)	78	85	82	100
		79	80	83	101
		102	86	84	59
		106	104	108	103
THIRD BATCH	Series 6 (P.P.)	33	94	69	95
		34	70	35	96
	The Link	..	121	(*South.*)	
	Series 7 (P.R.)	109	115	111	112
		110	118	117	123
		120	119	125	124
		116	36	56	25
	Series 8 (M.P.)	73	71	32	22
		74	72	76	39

DRAMATIC SECTION (52)

	S.	*M.P.*	*L.*	*H.*	*N.*
Series 9 (A.)	..	98	97	113	..
	..	99	75	114	..
	..	47	46	24	..
	..	48	50	52	..
	..	27	51	43	..
	..	28	61	44	..
	..	57	58	45	..
Series 10 (E.A.)	88	..	49	..	91
	89	..	149	..	92
	90	..	87	..	93
Series 11 (I.)	144	..	133	..	41
	40	..	134	..	42
Series 12 (D.L.)	132	..	130	..	127
	148	..	137	..	141
	150	..	131	..	139
	140	..	152	..	147
Series 13 (W.)	143	..	136	135	142

NON-SERIAL OR OCCASIONAL SECTION (14)

Adulatory, 77, 122, 107, 66, 67, 68.

Philosophical, 129, 146.

Amatory, 128, 138, 145, 151, 153, 154.

APPENDIX II.—CLASSIFICATION OF THE SONNETS.

Number	*First Line*	*Series*	*Author*	*Page*
1	From fairest creatures we desire increase	M.A.	S.	24
2	When forty winters shall besiege thy brow	M.A.	S.	24
3	Look in thy glass, and tell the face thou viewest	M.A.	S.	24
4	Unthrifty loveliness, why dost thou spend	M.A.	L.	25
5	Those hours, that with gentle work did frame	M.A.	L.	25
6	Then let not winter's ragged hand deface	M.A.	L.	25
7	Lo, in the orient when the gracious light	M.A.	M.P.	24
8	Music to hear, why hear'st thou music sadly	M.A.	M.P.	24
9	Is it for fear to wet a widow's eye	M.A.	M.P.	24
10	For shame ! deny that thou bear'st love to any	M.A.	L.	25
11	As fast as thou shalt wane, so fast thou grow'st	M.A.	S.	24
12	When I do count the clock that tells the time	M.A.	M.P.	24
13	O, that you were yourself ! but, love, you are	M.A.	H.	25
14	Not from the stars do I my judgement pluck	M.A.	L.	27
15	When I consider every thing that grows	M.A.	H.	25
16	But wherefore do not you a mightier way	M.A.	H.	25
17	Who will believe my verse in time to come	M.A.	H.	25
18	Shall I compare thee to a summer's day	B.I.	S.	38
19	Devouring Time, blunt thou the lion's paws	B.I.	S.	38
20	A woman's face, with Nature's own hand painted	M.A.	M.P.	26
21	So is it not with me as with that Muse	B.I.	L.	39
22	My glass shall not persuade me I am old	M.P.	H.	115
23	As an unperfect actor on the stage	E.D.	H.	53
24	Mine eye hath play'd the painter, and hath stell'd	A.	H.	125
25	Let those who are in favour with their stars	P.R.	H.	97
26	Lord of my love, to whom in vassalage	E.D.	S.	52
27	Weary with toil, I haste me to my bed	A.	M.P.	126
28	How can I then return in happy plight	A.	M.P.	126
29	When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes	D.D.	S.	48
30	When to the sessions of sweet silent thought	D.D.	L.	49
31	Thy bosom is endeared with all hearts	D.D.	H.	49
32	If thou survive my well-contended day	M.P.	L.	115
33	Full many a glorious morning have I seen	P.P.	S.	86
34	Why didst thou promise such a beauteous day	P.P.	S.	86
35	No more be grieved at that which thou hast done	P.P.	L.	87
36	Let me confess that we two must be twain	P.R.	M.P.	96
37	As a decrepit father takes delight	D.D.	M.P.	48
38	How can my Muse want subject to invent	E.D.	M.P.	52
39	O, how thy worth with manners may I sing	M.P.	H.	115
40	Take all my loves, my love, yea, take them all	I.	S.	156
41	Those pretty wrongs that liberty commits	I.	N.	156
42	That thou hast her, it is not all my grief	I.	N.	156
43	When most I wink, then do mine eyes best see	A.	H.	127
44	If the dull substance of my flesh were thought	A.	H.	127
45	The other two, slight air and purging fire	A.	H.	127
46	Mine eye and heart are at a mortal war	A.	L.	124
47	Betwixt mine eye and heart a league is took	A.	M.P.	124
48	How careful was I, when I took my way	A.	M.P.	124
49	Against that time, if ever that time comes	E.A.	L.	150
50	How heavy do I journey on the way	A.	L.	124
51	Thus can my love excuse the slow offence	A.	L.	126
52	So am I as the rich, whose blessed key	A.	H.	125
53	What is your substance, whereof are you made	B.I.	H.	39
54	O, how much more doth beauty beauteous seem	B.I.	M.P.	38
55	Not marble, nor the gilded monuments	B.I.	M.P.	38
56	Sweet love, renew thy force ; be it not said	P.R.	L.	97
57	Being your slave, what should I do but tend	A.	M.P.	126

Number	First Line	Series	Author	Page
58	What god forbid that made me first your slave	A.	L.	126
59	If there be nothing new, but that which is	P.E.	H.	59
60	Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore	B.I.	M.P.	38
61	Is it thy will thy image should keep open	A.	L.	126
62	Sin of self-love possesseth all mine eye	B.I.	H.	39
63	Against my love shall be, as I am now	B.I.	L.	39
64	When I have seen by Time's fell hand defaced	B.I.	S.	38
65	Since brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundless sea	B.I.	L.	39
66	Tir'd with all these, for restful death I cry	O.		174
67	Ah, wherefore with infection should he live	O.		174
68	Thus is his cheek the map of days outworn	O.		175
69	Those parts of thee that the world's eye doth view	P.P.	L.	87
70	That thou art blamed shall not be thy defect	P.P.	M.P.	86
71	No longer mourn for me when I am dead	M.P.	M.P.	114
72	O, lest the world should task you to recite	M.P.	M.P.	114
73	That time of year thou mayst in me behold	M.P.	S.	114
74	But be contented : when that fell arrest	M.P.	S.	114
75	So are you to my thoughts as food to life	A.	L.	124
76	Why is my verse so barren of new pride	M.P.	L.	115
77	Thy glass will show thee how thy beauties wear	O.		174
78	So oft have I invoked thee for my Muse	P.E.	S.	58
79	Whilst I alone did call upon thy aid	P.E.	S.	58
80	O, how I faint when I of you do write	P.E.	M.P.	58
81	Or I shall live your epitaph to make	B.I.	H.	39
82	I grant thou wert not married to my Muse	P.E.	L.	59
83	I never saw that you did painting need	P.E.	L.	59
84	Who is it that says most ? which can say more	P.E.	L.	59
85	My tongue-tied Muse in manners holds her still	P.E.	M.P.	58
86	Was it the proud full sail of his great verse	P.E.	M.P.	58
87	Farewell ! thou art too dear for my possessing	E.A.	L.	150
88	When thou shalt be disposed to set me light	E.A.	S.	150
89	Say that thou didst forsake me for some fault	E.A.	S.	150
90	Then hate me when thou wilt ; if ever, now	E.A.	S.	150
91	Some glory in their birth, some in their skill	E.A.	N.	151
92	But do thy worst to steal thyself away	E.A.	N.	151
93	So shall I live, supposing thou art true	E.A.	N.	151
94	They that have power to hurt and will do none	P.P.	M.P.	86
95	How sweet and lovely dost thou make the shame	P.P.	H.	87
96	Some say, thy fault is youth, some wantonness	P.P.	H.	87
97	How like a winter hath my absence been	A.	L.	124
98	From you have I been absent in the spring	A.	M.P.	124
99	The forward violet thus did I chide	A.	M.P.	124
100	Where art thou, Muse, that thou forget'st so long	P.E.	H.	59
101	O truant Muse, what shall be thy amends	P.E.	H.	59
102	My love is strengthen'd, though more weak in seeming	P.E.	S.	58
103	Alack, what poverty my Muse brings forth	P.E.	H.	59
104	To me, fair friend, you never can be old	P.E.	M.P.	58
105	Let not my love be call'd idolatry	E.D.	L.	53
106	When in the chronicle of wasted time	P.E.	S.	58
107	Not mine own fears, nor the prophetic soul	O.		175
108	What's in the brain that ink may character	P.E.	L.	59
109	O, never say that I was false of heart	P.R.	S.	96
110	Alas, 'tis true, I have gone here and there	P.R.	S.	96
111	O, for my sake do you with Fortune chide	P.R.	L.	97
112	Your love and pity doth the impression fill	P.R.	H.	97
113	Since I left you mine eye is in my mind	A.	H.	125
114	Or whether doth my mind, being crown'd with you	A.	H.	125
115	Those lines that I before have writ do lie	P.R.	M.P.	96
116	Let me not to the marriage of true minds	P.R.	S.	96
117	Accuse me thus : that I have scanted all	P.R.	L.	97
118	Like as, to make our appetites more keen	P.R.	M.P.	96
119	What potions have I drunk of Siren tears	P.R	M.P.	96
120	That you were once unkind befriends me now	P.R.	S.	96
121	'Tis better to be vile than vile esteem'd	Link	South.	92
122	Thy gift, thy tables, are within my brain	O.		175
123	No, Time, thou shalt not boast that I do change	P.R.	H.	97
124	If my dear love were but the child of state	P.R.	H.	97

APPENDIX III.

FACSIMILE OF THE TITLE-PAGE OF THE 1609 QUARTO.

SHAKE-SPEARES

SONNETS.

Neuer before Imprinted.

AT LONDON
By *G. Eld* for *T. T.* and are
to be solde by *william Aspley.*
1609.

APPENDIX IV.

FACSIMILE OF THE DEDICATION OF THE 1609 QUARTO.

TO.THE.ONLIE.BEGETTER.OF.
THESE.INSVING.SONNETS.
Mr.W.H. ALL.HAPPINESSE.
AND.THAT.ETERNITIE.
PROMISED.

BY.

OVR.EVER-LIVING.POET.

WISHETH.

THE.WELL-WISHING.
ADVENTVRER.IN.
SETTING.
FORTH.

T.T.

APPENDIX V.—SHAKE-SPEARES SONNETS

(Reprinted by the courtesy of the Clarendon Press, from the Tudor and Stuart Library text, which with the exception of the correction of obvious misprints, is an exact reprint of the first edition.)

1

From fairest creatures we desire increase,
That thereby beauties *Rose* might neuer die,
But as the riper should by time decease,
His tender heire might beare his memory:
But thou contracted to thine owne bright eyes,
Feed'st thy lights flame with selfe substantiall fewell
Making a famine where aboundance lies,
Thy selfe thy foe, to thy sweet selfe too cruell:
Thou that art now the worlds fresh ornament,
And only herauld to the gaudy spring,
Within thine owne bud buriest thy content,
And tender chorle makest wast in niggarding:
Pitty the world, or else this glutton be,
To eate the worlds due, by the graue and thee.

2

When fortie Winters shall beseige thy brow,
And digge deep trenches in thy beauties field,
Thy youthes proud liuery so gaz'd on now,
Wil be a totter'd weed of smal worth held:
Then being askt, where all thy beautie lies,
Where all the treasure of thy lusty daies;
To say within thine owne deepe sunken eyes,
Were an all-eating shame, and thriftlesse praise.
How much more praise deseru'd thy beauties vse,
If thou couldst answere this faire child of mine
Shall sum my count, and make my old excuse:
Proouing his beautie by succession thine.
This were to be new made when thou art ould,
And see thy blood warme when thou feel'st it could.

3

Looke in thy glasse and tell the face thou viewest,
Now is the time that face should forme an other,
Whose fresh repaire if now thou not renewest,
Thou doo'st beguile the world, vnblesse some mother
For where is she so faire whose vn-eard wombe
Disdaines the tillage of thy husbandry?
Or who is he so fond will be the tombe,
Of his selfe loue, to stop posterity?
Thou art thy mothers glasse and she in thee
Calls backe the louely Aprill of her prime,
So thou through windowes of thine age shalt see,
Dispight of wrinkles this thy goulden time.
But if thou liue remembred not to be,
Die single and thine Image dies with thee.

4

Vnthrifty louelinesse why dost thou spend,
Vpon thy selfe thy beauties legacy?
Natures bequest giues nothing but doth lend,
And being franck she lends to those are free:
Then beautious nigard who doost thou abuse,
The bountious largesse giuen thee to giue?
Profitles vserer why doost thou vse
So great a summe of summes yet can'st not liue?
For hauing traffike with thy selfe alone,
Thou of thy selfe thy sweet selfe dost deceaue,
Then how when nature calls thee to be gone,
What acceptable *Audit* can'st thou leaue?
Thy vnus'd beauty must be tomb'd with thee,
Which vsed liues th'executor to be.

5

Those howers that with gentle worke did frame,
The louely gaze where euery eye doth dwell
Will play the tirants to the very same,
And that vnfaire which fairely doth excell:
For neuer resting time leads Summer on.
To hidious winter and confounds him there,
Sap checkt with frost and lustie leau's quite gon,
Beauty ore-snow'd and barenes euerywhere.
Then were not summers distillation left
A liquid prisoner pent in walls of glasse,
Beauties effect with beauty were bereft,
Nor it nor noe remembrance what it was.
But flowers distill'd though they with winter meete,
Leese but their show, their substance still liues sweet

6

Then let not winters wragged hand deface,
In thee thy summer ere thou be distil'd:
Make some sweet viall; treasure thou some place,
With beauties treasure ere it be selfe kil'd:
That vse is not forbidden vsery,
Which happies those that pay the willing lone;
That's for thy selfe to breed an other thee,
Or ten times happier be it ten for one,
Ten times thy selfe were happier then thou art,
If ten of thine ten times refigur'd thee,
Then what could death doe if thou should'st depart,
Leauing thee liuing in posterity?
Be not selfe-wild for thou art much too faire,
To be deaths conquest and make wormes thine heire.

7

Loe in the Orient when the gracious light,
Lifts vp his burning head, each vnder eye
Doth homage to his new appearing sight,
Seruing with lookes his sacred maiesty,
And hauing climb'd the steepe-vp heauenly hill,
Resembling strong youth in his middle age,
Yet mortall lookes adore his beauty still,
Attending on his goulden pilgrimage:
But when from high-most pich with wery car,
Like feeble age he reeleth from the day,
The eyes (fore dutious) now conuerted are
From his low tract and looke an other way:
So thou, thy selfe out-going in thy noon,
Vnlok'd on diest vnlesse thou get a sonne.

8

Mvsick to heare, why hear'st thou musick sadly,
Sweets with sweets warre not, ioy delights in ioy:
Why lou'st thou that which thou receaust not gladly
Or else receau'st with pleasure thine annoy?
If the true concord of well tuned sounds,
By vnions married, do offend thine eare,
They do but sweetly chide thee, who confounds
In singlenesse the parts that thou should'st beare:
Marke how one string sweet husband to an other,
Strikes each in each by mutuall ordering;
Resembling sier, and child, and happy mother,
Who all in one, one pleasing note do sing:
Whose speechlesse song being many, seeming one,
Sings this to thee thou single wilt proue none.

9

Is it for feare to wet a widdowes eye,
That thou consum'st thy selfe in single life ?
Ah ; if thou issulesse shalt hap to die,
The world will waile thee like a makelesse wife,
The world will be thy widdow and still weepe,
That thou no forme of thee hast left behind,
When euery private widdow well may keepe,
By childrens eyes, her husbands shape in minde :
Looke what an vnthrift in the world doth spend
Shifts but his place, for still the world inioyes it,
But beauties waste hath in the world an end,
And kept vnvsed the vser so destroys it :
No loue toward others in that bosome sits
That on himself such murdrous shame commits.

10

For shame deny that thou bear'st loue to any
Who for thy selfe art so vnprouident,
Graunt if thou wilt, thou art belou'd of many,
But that thou none lou'st is most euident ;
For thou art so possest with murdrous hate,
That gainst thy selfe thou stickst not to conspire,
Seeking that beautious roofe to ruinate
Which to repaire should be thy chiefe desire :
O change thy thought, that I may change my minde,
Shall hate be fairer lodg'd then gentle loue ?
Be as thy presence is gracious and kind,
Or to thy selfe at least kind harted proue,
Make thee an other selfe for loue of me,
That beauty still may liue in thine or thee.

11

As fast as thou shalt wane so fast thou grow'st,
In one of thine, from that which thou departest,
And that fresh bloud which yongly thou bestow'st,
Thou maist call thine, when thou from youth
conuertest,
Herein liues wisdome, beauty, and increase,
Without this follie, age, and could decay,
If all were minded so, the times should cease,
And threescoore yeare would make the world away :
Let those whom nature hath not made for store,
Harsh, featurelesse, and rude, barrenly perrish ;
Looke whom she best indow'd, she gaue the more ;
Which bountious guift thou shouldst in bounty
cherrish.
She caru'd thee for her seale, and ment therby,
Thou shouldst print more, not let that coppy die.

12

When I doe count the clock that tels the time,
And see the braue day sunck in hidious night,
When I behold the violet past prime,
And sable curls all siluer'd ore with white :
When lofty trees I see barren of leaues,
Which erst from heat did canopie the herd
And Sommers greene all girded vp in sheaues
Borne on the beare with white and bristly beard :
Then of thy beauty do I question make
That thou among the wastes of time must goe,
Since sweets and beauties do them-selues forsake,
And die as fast as they see others grow,
And nothing gainst Times sieth can make defence
Saue breed to braue him, when he takes thee hence.

13

O that you were your selfe, but loue you are
No longer yours, then you your selfe here liue,
Against this cumming end you should prepare,
And your sweet semblance to some other giue.
So should that beauty which you hold in lease
Find no determination, then you were
Your selfe again after your selfes decease,
When your sweet issue your sweet forme should
beare.
Who lets so faire a house fall to decay,
Which husbandry in honour might vphold,
Against the stormy gusts of winters day
And barren rage of deaths eternall cold ?
O none but vnthrifts, deare my loue you know,
You had a Father, let your Son say so.

14

Not from the stars do I my iudgement plucke,
And yet me thinkes I haue Astronomy,
But not to tell of good, or euil lucke,
Of plagues, of dearths, or seasons quallity ;
Nor can I fortune to breefe mynuits tell,
Pointing to each his thunder, raine and winde,
Or say with Princes if it shal go wel
By oft predict that I in heuen finde.
But from thine eies my knowledge I deriue,
And constant stars in them I read such art
As truth and beautie shall together thriue
If from thy selfe, to store thou wouldst conuert :
Or else of thee this I prognosticate,
Thy end is Truthes and Beauties doome and date.

15

When I consider euery thing that growes
Holds in perfection but a little moment :
That this huge stage presenteth nought but showes
Whereon the Stars in secret influence comment.
When I perceiue that men as plants increase,
Cheared and checkt euen by the selfe-same skie :
Vaunt in their youthfull sap, at height decrease,
And were their braue state out of memory.
Then the conceit of this inconstant stay,
Sets you most rich in youth before my sight,
Where wastfull time debateth with decay
To change your day of youth to sullied night,
And all in war with Time for loue of you
As he takes from you, I ingraft you new.

16

Bvt wherefore do not you a mightier waie
Make warre vppon this bloudie tirant time ?
And fortifie your selfe in your decay
With meanes more blessed then my barren rime ?
Now stand you on the top of happie houres,
And many maiden gardens yet vnset,
With vertuous wish would beare your liuing flowers,
Much liker then your painted counterfeit :
So should the lines of life that life repaire
Which this (Times pensel or my pupill pen)
Neither in inward worth nor outward faire
Can make you liue your selfe in eies of men,
To giue away your selfe, keeps your selfe still,
And you must liue drawne by your owne sweet skill.

17

Who will beleeue my verse in time to come
If it were fild with your most high deserts ?
Though yet heauen knowes it is but as a tombe
Which hides your life, and shewes not halfe your parts :
If I could write the beauty of your eyes,
And in fresh numbers number all your graces,
The age to come would say this Poet lies,
Such heauenly touches nere toucht earthly faces.
So should my papers (yellowed with their age)
Be scorn'd, like old men of lesse truth then tongue,
And your true rights be termd a Poets rage,
And stretched miter of an Antique song.
But were some childe of yours aliue that time,
You should liue twise, in it and in my rime.

18

Shall I compare thee to a Summers day ?
Thou art more louely and more temperate :
Rough windes do shake the darling buds of Maie,
And Sommers lease hath all too short a date :
Sometime too hot the eye of heauen shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd,
And euery faire from faire some-time declines,
By chance, or natures changing course vntrim'd :
But thy eternall Sommer shall not fade,
Nor loose possession of that faire thou ow'st,
Nor shall death brag thou wandr'st in his shade,
When in eternall lines to time thou grow'st,
So long as men can breath or eyes can see,
So long liues this, and this giues life to thee.

19

Devouring time blunt thou the Lyons pawes,
And make the earth deuoure her owne sweet brood,
Plucke the keene teeth from the fierce Tygers yawes
And burne the long liu'd Phænix in her blood,
Make glad and sorry seasons as thou fleet'st,
And do what ere thou wilt swift-footed time
To the wide world and all her fading sweets :
But I forbid thee one most hainous crime,
O carue not with thy howers my loues faire brow,
Nor draw noe lines there with thine antique pen,
Him in thy course vntainted doe allow,
For beauties patterne to succeding men.
Yet doe thy worst ould Time, dispight thy wrong,
My loue shall in my verse euer liue young.

20

A womans face with natures owne hand painted,
Haste thou the Master Mistris of my passion,
A womans gentle hart but not acquainted
With shifting change as is false womens fashion,
An eye more bright then theirs, lesse false in rowling,
Gilding the obiect where-vpon it gazeth :
A man in hew all *Hews* in his controwling,
Which steales mens eyes and womens soules amaseth
And for a woman wert thou first created,
Till nature as she wrought thee fell a dotinge,
And by addition me of thee defeated,
By adding one thing to my purpose nothing.
But since she prickt thee out for womens pleasure,
Mine be thy loue and thy loues vse their treasure.

21

So it is not with me as with that Muse,
Stird by a painted beauty to his verse,
Who heauen it selfe for ornament doth vse,
And euery faire with his faire doth reherse,
Making a coopelment of proud compare
With Sunne and Moone, with earth and seas rich gems,
With Aprills first borne flowers and all things rare,
That heauens ayre in this huge rondure hems.
O let me true in loue but truly write,
And then beleeue me, my loue is as faire,
As any mothers childe, though not so bright
As those gould candells fixt in heauens ayer :
Let them say more that like of heare-say well,
I will not prayse that purpose not to sell.

22

My glasse shall not perswade me I am ould,
So long as youth and thou are of one date,
But when in thee times forrwes I behould,
Then look I death my daies should expiate.
For all that beauty that doth couer thee,
Is but the seemely rayment of my heart,
Which in thy brest doth liue, as thine in me,
How can I then be elder then thou art ?
O therefore loue be of thy selfe so wary,
As I not for my selfe, but for thee will,
Bearing thy heart which I will keepe so chary
As tender nurse her babe from faring ill,
Presume not on thy heart when mine is slaine,
Thou gau'st me thine not to giue backe againe.

23

As an vnperfect actor on the stage,
Who with his feare is put besides his part,
Or some fierce thing repleat with too much rage,
Whose strengths abondance weakens his owne heart:
So I for feare of trust, forget to say,
The perfect ceremony of loues right,
And in mine owne loues strength seeme to decay,
Ore-charg'd with burthen of mine owne loues might
O let my books be then the eloquence,
And domb presagers of my speaking brest,
Who pleade for loue, and look for recompence,
More then that tonge that more hath more exprest.
O learne to read what silent loue hath writ,
To heare with eies belongs to loues fine wit.

24

Mine eye hath play'd the painter and hath steeld,
Thy beauties forme in table of my heart,
My body is the frame wherein 'tis held,
And perspectiue it is best Painters art
For through the Painter must you see his skill,
To finde where your true Image pictur'd lies,
Which in my bosomes shop is hanging stil,
That hath his windowes glazed with thine eyes :
Now see what good-turnes eyes for eies haue done,
Mine eyes haue drawne thy shape, and thine for me
Are windowes to my brest, where-through the Sun
Delights to peepe, to gaze therein on thee.
Yet eyes this cunning want to grace their art,
They draw but what they see, know not the hart.

25

Let those who are in fauor with their stars,
Of publike honour and proud titles bost,
Whilst I whome fortune of such tryumph bars
Vnlookt for ioy in that I honour most ;
Great Princes fauorites their faire leaues spread,
But as the Marygold at the suns eye,
And in them-selues their pride lies buried,
For at a frowne they in their glory die.
The painefull warrier famosed for worth,
After a thousand victories once foild,
Is from the booke of honour rased quite,
And all the rest forgot for which he toild ;
Then happy I that loue and am beloued
Where I may not remoue, nor be remoued.

26

Lord of my loue, to whome in vassalage
Thy merrit hath my dutie strongly knit ;
To thee I send this written ambassage
To witnesse duty, not to shew my wit.
Duty so great, which wit so poore as mine
May make seeme bare, in wanting words to shew it ;
But that I hope some good conceipt of thine
In thy soules thought (all naked) will bestow it :
Til whatsoeuer star that guides my mouing,
Points on me gratiously with faire aspect,
And puts apparrell on my tottered louing,
To show me worthy of thy sweet respect,
Then may I dare to boast how I doe loue thee,
Til then, not show my head where thou maist proue me.

27

Weary with toyle, I hast me to my bed,
The deare repose for lims with trauaill tired,
But then begins a iourney in my head
To worke my mind, when boddies work's expired.
For them my thoughts (from far where I abide)
Intend a zelous pilgrimage to thee,
And keepe my drooping eye-lids open wide,
Looking on darknes which the blind doe see.
Saue that my soules imaginary sight
Presents thy shaddoe to my sightles view,
Which like a iewell (hunge in gastly night)
Makes blacke night beautious, and her old face new.
Loe thus by day my lims, by night my mind,
For thee, and for my selfe, noe quiet finde.

28

How can I then returne in happy plight
That am debard the benefit of rest ?
When daies oppression is not eazd by night,
But day by night and night by day oprest.
And each (though enimes to ethers raigne)
Doe in consent shake hands to torture me,
The one by toyle, the other to complaine
How far I toyle, still farther off from thee.
I tell the Day to please him thou art bright,
And do'st him grace when clouds doe blot the heauen :
So flatter I the swart complexioned night,
When sparkling stars twire not thou guild'st the eauen.
But day doth daily draw my sorrowes longer,
And night doth nightly make greefes length seeme stronger.

29

When in disgrace with Fortune and mens eyes,
I all alone beweepe my out-cast state,
And trouble deafe heauen with my bootlesse cries,
And looke vpon my selfe and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featur'd like him, like him with friends possest,
Desiring this mans art, and that mans skope,
With what I most inioy contented least,
Yet in these thoughts my selfe almost despising,
Haplye I thinke on thee, and then my state,
(Like to the Larke at breake of daye arising)
From sullen earth sings himns at Heauens gate,
For thy sweet loue remembered such welth brings,
That then I skorne to change my state with Kings.

30

When to the Sessions of sweet silent thought,
I sommon vp remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lacke of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new waile my deare times waste :
Then can I drowne an eye (vn-vs'd to flow)
For precious friends hid in deaths dateles night,
And weepe a fresh loues long since canceld woe,
And mone th' expence of many a vannisht sight.
Then can I greeue at greeuances fore-gon,
And heauily from woe to woe tell ore
The sad account of fore-bemoned mone,
Which I new pay as if not payd before.
But if the while I thinke on thee (deare friend)
All losses are restord, and sorrowes end.

31

Thy bosome is endeared with all hearts,
Which I by lacking haue supposed dead,
And there raignes Loue and all Loues louing parts,
And all those friends which I thought buried.
How many a holy and obsequious teare
Hath deare religious loue stolne from mine eye,
As interest of the dead, which now appeare,
But things remou'd that hidden in there lie.
Thou art the graue where buried loue doth liue,
Hung with the trophies of my louers gon,
Who all their parts of me to thee did giue,
That due of many, now is thine alone.
Their images I lou'd, I view in thee,
And thou (all they) hast all the all of me.

32

If thou suruiue my well contented daie
When that churle death my bones with dust shall couer :
And shalt by fortune once more re-suruay
These poore rude lines of thy deceased Louer :
Compare them with the bett'ring of the time,
And though they be out-stript by euery pen,
Reserue them for my loue, not for their rime,
Exceeded by the hight of happier men.
Oh then voutsafe me but this louing thought,
Had my friends Muse growne with this growing age,
A dearer birth then this his loue had brought
To march in ranckes of better equipage :
But since he died and Poets better proue,
Theirs for their stile ile read, his for his loue.

33

Fvll many a glorious morning haue I seene,
Flatter the mountaine tops with soueraine eie,
Kissing with golden face the meddowes greene,
Guilding pale streames with heauenly alcumy:
Anon permit the basest cloudes to ride,
With ougly rack on his celestiall face,
And from the for-lorne world his visage hide
Stealing vnseene to west with this disgrace:
Euen so my Sunne one early morne did shine,
With all triumphant splendor on my brow,
But out alack, he was but one houre mine,
The region cloude hath mask'd him from me now.
Yet him for this, my loue no whit disdaineth,
Suns of the world may staine, when heauens sun staineth.

34

Why didst thou promise such a beautious day,
And make me trauaile forth without my cloake,
To let bace cloudes ore-take me in my way,
Hiding thy brau'ry in their rotten smoke.
Tis not enough that through the cloude thou breake,
To dry the raine on my storme-beaten face,
For no man well of such a salue can speake,
That heales the wound, and cures not the disgrace:
Nor can thy shame giue phisicke to my griefe,
Though thou repent, yet I haue still the losse,
Th' offenders sorrow lends but weake reliefe
To him that beares the strong offenses crosse.
Ah but those teares are pearls which thy loue sheeds,
And they are ritch, and ransome all ill deeds.

35

No more bee greeu'd at that which thou hast done,
Roses haue thornes, and siluer fountaines mud,
Cloudes and eclipses staine both Moone and Sunne,
And loathsome canker liues in sweetest bud.
All men make faults, and euen I in this,
Authorizing thy trespas with compare,
My selfe corrupting saluing thy amisse,
Excusing their sins more then their sins are:
For to thy sensuall fault I bring in sence,
Thy aduerse party is thy Aduocate,
And gainst my selfe a lawfull plea commence:
Such ciuill war is in my loue and hate,
That I an accessary needs must be,
To that sweet theefe which sourely robs from me.

36

Let me confesse that we two must be twaine,
Although our vndeuided loues are one:
So shall those blots that do with me remaine,
Without thy helpe, by me be borne alone.
In our two loues there is but one respect,
Though in our liues a seperable spight,
Which though it alter not loues sole effect,
Yet doth it steale sweet houres from loues delight.
I may not euer-more acknowledge thee,
Least my bewailed guilt should do thee shame,
Nor thou with publike kindnesse honour me,
Vnlesse thou take that honour from thy name:
But doe not so, I loue thee in such sort,
As thou being mine, mine is thy good report.

37

As a decrepit father takes delight,
To see his actiue childe do deeds of youth,
So I, made lame by Fortunes dearest spight
Take all my comfort of thy worth and truth.
For whether beauty, birth, or wealth, or wit,
Or any of these all, or all, or more
Intitled in their parts, do crowned sit,
I make my loue ingrafted to this store:
So then I am not lame, poore, nor dispis'd,
Whilst that this shadow doth such substance giue,
That I in thy abundance am suffic'd,
And by a part of all thy glory liue:
Looke what is best, that best I wish in thee,
This wish I haue, then ten times happy me.

38

How can my Muse want subiect to inuent
While thou dost breath that poor'st into my verse,
Thine owne sweet argument, to excellent,
For euery vulgar paper to rehearse:
Oh giue thy selfe the thankes if ought in me,
Worthy perusal stand against thy sight,
For who's so dumbe that cannot write to thee,
When thou thy selfe dost giue inuention light?
Be thou the tenth Muse, ten times more in worth
Then those old nine which rimers inuocate,
And he that calls on thee, let him bring forth
Eternal numbers to out-liue long date.
If my slight Muse doe please these curious daies,
The paine be mine, but thine shal be the praise.

39

Oh how thy worth with manners may I singe,
When thou art all the better part of me?
What can mine owne praise to mine owne selfe bring?
And what is't but mine owne when I praise thee?
Euen for this, let vs deuided liue,
And our deare loue loose name of single one,
That by this seperation I may giue
That due to thee which thou deseru'st alone:
Oh absence what a torment wouldst thou proue,
Were it not thy soure leisure gaue sweet leaue,
To entertaine the time with thoughts of loue,
Which time and thoughts so sweetly dost deceiue.
And that thou teachest how to make one twaine,
By praising him here who doth hence remaine.

40

Take all my loues, my loue, yea take them all,
What hast thou then more then thou hadst before?
No loue, my loue, that thou maist true loue call,
All mine was thine, before thou hadst this more:
Then if for my loue, thou my loue receiuest,
I cannot blame thee, for my loue thou vsest,
But yet be blam'd, if thou this selfe deceauest
By wilfull taste of what thy selfe refusest.
I doe forgiue thy robb'rie gentle theefe
Although thou steale thee all my pouerty:
And yet loue knowes it is a greater griefe
To beare loues wrong, then hates knowne iniury.
Lasciuious grace, in whom all il wel showes,
Kill me with spights, yet we must not be foes.

41

Those pretty wrongs that liberty commits,
When I am some-time absent from thy heart,
Thy beautie, and thy yeares full well befits,
For still temptation followes where thou art.
Gentle thou art, and therefore to be wonne,
Beautious thou art, therefore to be assailed.
And when a woman woos, what womans sonne,
Will sourely leaue her till he haue preuailed ?
Aye me, but yet thou might'st my seate forbeare,
And chide thy beauty, and thy straying youth,
Who lead thee in their ryot euen there
Where thou art forst to breake a two-fold truth :
Hers by thy beauty tempting her to thee,
Thine by thy beautie beeing false to me.

42

That thou hast her it is not all my griefe,
And yet it may be said I lou'd her deerely,
That she hath thee is of my wayling cheefe,
A losse in loue that touches me more neerely.
Louing offendors thus I will excuse yee,
Thou doost loue her, because thou knowst I loue her,
And for my sake euen so doth she abuse me,
Suffring my friend for my sake to aprooue her.
If I loose thee, my losse is my loues gaine,
And loosing her, my friend hath found that losse,
Both finde each other, and I loose both twaine,
And both for my sake lay on me this crosse,
But here's the ioy, my friend and I are one,
Sweete flattery, then she loues but me alone.

43

When most I winke then doe mine eyes best see,
For all the day they view things vnrespected,
But when I sleepe, in dreames they looke on thee,
And darkely bright, are bright in darke directed.
Then thou whose shaddow shaddowes doth make
bright
How would thy shadowes forme, forme happy show,
To the cleere day with thy much cleerer light,
When to vn-seeing eyes thy shade shines so ?
How would (I say) mine eyes be blessed made,
By looking on thee in the liuing day ?
When in dead night thy faire imperfect shade,
Through heauy sleepe on sightlesse eyes doth stay ?
All dayes are nights to see till I see thee,
And nights bright daies when dreams do shew thee
me.

44

If the dull substance of my flesh were thought,
Iniurious distance should not stop my way,
For then dispight of space I would be brought,
From limits farre remote, where thou doost stay.
No matter then although my foote did stand
Vpon the farthest earth remoou'd from thee,
For nimble thought can iumpe both sea and land,
As soone as thinke the place where he should be.
But ah, thought kills me that I am not thought
To leape large lengths of miles when thou art gone,
But that so much of earth and water wrought,
I must attend times leasure with my mone.
Receiuing naught by elements so sloe,
But heauie teares, badges of eithers woe.

45

The other two, slight ayre, and purging fire,
Are both with thee, where euer I abide,
The first my thought, the other my desire,
These present absent with swift motion slide.
For when these quicker Elements are gone
In tender Embassie of loue to thee,
My life being made of foure, with two alone,
Sinkes downe to death, opprest with melancholie.
Vntil liues composition be recured,
By those swift messengers return'd from thee,
Who euen but now come back againe assured,
Of thy faire health, recounting it to me.
This told, I ioy, but then no longer glad,
I send them back againe and straight grow sad.

46

Mine eye and heart are at a mortall warre,
How to deuide the conquest of thy sight,
Mine eye, my heart thy pictures sight would barre,
My heart, mine eye the freedome of that right,
My heart doth plead that thou in him doost lye,
(A closet neuer pearst with christall eyes)
But the defendant doth that plea deny,
And sayes in him thy faire appearance lyes.
To side this title is impannelled
A quest of thoughts, all tennants to the heart,
And by their verdict is determined
The cleere eyes moyitie, and the deare hearts part.
As thus, mine eyes due is thy outward part,
And my hearts right, thy inward loue of heart.

47

Betwixt mine eye and heart a league is tooke,
And each doth good turnes now vnto the other
When that mine eye is famisht for a looke,
Or heart in loue with sighes himselfe doth smother
With my loues picture then my eye doth feast,
And to the painted banquet bids my heart :
An other time mine eye is my hearts guest,
And in his thoughts of loue doth share a part.
So either by thy picture or my loue,
Thy selfe away, are present still with me,
For thou nor farther then my thoughts canst moue,
And I am still with them, and they with thee.
Or if they sleepe, thy picture in my sight
Awakes my heart, to hearts and eyes delight.

48

How carefull was I when I tooke my way,
Each trifle vnder truest barres to thrust,
That to my vse it might vn-vsed stay
From hands of falsehood, in sure wards of trust ?
But thou, to whom my iewels trifles are,
Most worthy comfort, now my greatest griefe,
Thou best of deerest, and mine onely care,
Art left the prey of euery vulgar theefe.
Thee haue I not lockt vp in any chest,
Saue where thou art not though I feele thou art,
Within the gentle closure of my breast,
From whence at pleasure thou maist come and part,
And euen thence thou wilt be stolne I feare,
For truth prooues theeuish for a prize so deare.

49

Against that time (if euer that time come)
When I shall see thee frowne on my defects,
When as thy loue hath cast his vtmost summe,
Cauld to that audite by aduis'd respects,
Against that time when thou shalt strangely passe,
And scarcely greete me with that sunne thine eye,
When loue conuerted from the thing it was
Shall reasons finde of setled grauitie.
Against that time do I insconce me here
Within the knowledge of mine owne desart,
And this my hand, against my selfe vpreare,
To guard the lawfull reasons on thy part.
To leaue poore me, thou hast the strength of lawes,
Since why to loue, I can alledge no cause.

50

How heauie doe I iourney on the way,
When what I seeke (my wearie trauels end)
Doth teach that ease and that repose to say
Thus farre the miles are measured from thy friend.
The beast that beares me, tired with my woe,
Plods duly on, to beare that waight in me,
As if by some instinct the wretch did know
His rider lou'd not speed being made from thee:
The bloody spurre cannot prouoke him on,
That some-times anger thrusts into his hide,
Which heauily he answers with a grone,
More sharpe to me then spurring to his side,
For that same grone doth put this in my mind,
My greefe lies onward and my ioy behind.

51

Thvs can my loue excuse the slow offence,
Of my dull bearer, when from thee I speed,
From where thou art, why should I hast me thence
Till I returne of posting is noe need.
O what excuse will my poore beast then find,
When swift extremity can seeme but slow?
Then should I spurre though mounted on the wind,
In winged speed no motion shall I know,
Then can no horse with my desire keepe pace,
Therefore desire (of perfect loue being made)
Shall naigh noe dull flesh in his fiery race,
But loue, for loue, thus shall excuse my iade,
Since from thee going, he went wilfull slow,
Towards thee ile run, and giue him leaue to goe.

52

So am I as the rich whose blessed key,
Can bring him to his sweet vp-locked treasure,
The which he will not eu'ry hower suruay,
For blunting the fine point of seldome pleasure.
Therefore are feasts so sollemne and so rare,
Since sildom comming in the long yeare set,
Like stones of worth they thinly placed are,
Or captaine Iewells in the carconet.
So is the time that keepes you as my chest,
Or as the ward-robe which the robe doth hide,
To make some speciall instant speciall blest,
By new vnfoulding his imprison'd pride.
Blessed are you whose worthinesse giues skope,
Being had to tryumph, being lackt to hope.

53

What is your substance, whereof are you made,
That millions of strange shaddowes on you tend?
Since euery one, hath euery one, one shade,
And you but one, can euery shaddow lend:
Describe *Adonis* and the counterfet,
Is poorely immitated after you,
On *Hellens* cheeke all art of beautie set,
And you in *Grecian* tires are painted new:
Speake of the spring, and foyzon of the yeare,
The one doth shaddow of your beautie show,
The other as your bountie doth appeare,
And you in euery blessed shape we know.
In all externall grace you haue some part,
But you like none, none you for constant heart.

54

Oh how much more doth beautie beautious seeme,
By that sweet ornament which truth doth giue,
The Rose lookes faire, but fairer we it deeme
For that sweet odor, which doth in it liue:
The Canker bloomes haue full as deepe a die,
As the perfumed tincture of the Roses,
Hang on such thornes, and play as wantonly,
When sommers breath their masked buds discloses:
But, for their virtue only is their show,
They liue vnwoo'd, and vnrespected fade,
Die to themselues. Sweet Roses doe not so,
Of their sweet deathes, are sweetest odors made:
And so of you, beautious and louely youth,
When that shall vade, by verse distils your truth.

55

Not marble, nor the guilded monuments,
Of Princes shall out-liue this powrefull rime,
But you shall shine more bright in these contents
Then vnswept stone, besmeer'd with sluttish time.
When wastefull warre shall *Statues* ouer-turne,
And broiles roote out the worke of masonry,
Nor *Mars* his sword, nor warres quick fire shall burne
The liuing record of your memory.
Gainst death, and all-obliuious enmity
Shall you pace forth, your praise shall stil finde roome,
Euen in the eyes of all posterity
That weare this world out to the ending doome.
So til the judgment that your selfe arise,
You liue in this, and dwell in louers eies.

56

Sweet loue renew thy force, be it not said
Thy edge should blunter be then apetite,
Which but too daie by feeding is alaied,
To morrow sharpned in his former might.
So loue be thou, although too daie thou fill
Thy hungrie eies, euen till they winck with fulnesse,
Too morrow see againe, and doe not kill
The spirit of Loue, with a perpetual dulnesse:
Let this sad *Intrim* like the Ocean be
Which parts the shore, where two contracted new,
Come daily to the banckes, that when they see
Returne of loue, more blest may be the view.
As cal it Winter, which being ful of care,
Makes Sommers welcome, thrice more wish'd, more rare.

57

Being your slaue what should I doe but tend.
Vpon the houres, and times of your desire ?
I haue no precious time at al to spend ;
Nor seruices to doe til you require.
Nor dare I chide the world without end houre,
Whilst I (my soueraine) watch the clock for you,
Nor thinke the bitternesse of absence sowre,
When you haue bid your seruant once adieue.
Nor dare I question with my iealous thought,
Where you may be, or your affaires suppose,
But like a sad slaue stay and thinke of nought
Saue, where you are, how happy you make those.
So true a foole is loue, that in your Will,
(Though you doe any thing) he thinkes no ill.

58

That God forbid, that made me first your slaue,
I should in thought controule your times of pleasure,
Or at your hand th' account of houres to craue,
Being your vassail bound to staie your leisure.
Oh let me suffer (being at your beck)
Th' imprison'd absence of your libertie,
And patience tame to sufferance bide each check,
Without accusing you of iniury.
Be where you list, your charter is so strong,
That you your selfe may priuiledge your time
To what you will, to you it doth belong,
Your selfe to pardon of selfe-doing crime.
I am to waite, though waiting so be hell.
Not blame your pleasure be it ill or well.

59

If their bee nothing new, but that which is,
Hath beene before, how are our braines beguild,
Which laboring for inuentiCn beare amisse
The second burthen of a former child ?
Oh that record could with a back-ward looke,
Euen of fiue hundreth courses of the Sunne,
Show me your image in some antique booke,
Since minde at first in carrecter was done.
That I might see what the old world could say,
To this composed wonder of your frame,
Whether we are mended, or where better they,
Or whether revolution be the same.
Oh sure I am the wits of former daies,
To subiects worse haue giuen admiring praise.

60

Like as the waues make towards the pibled shore,
So do our minutes hasten to their end,
Each changing place with that which goes before,
In sequent toile all forwards do contend,
Natiuity once in the maine of light,
Crawles to maturity, wherewith being crown'd,
Crooked eclipses gainst his glory fight,
And time that gaue, doth now his gift confound,
Time doth transfix the florish set on youth,
And delues the paralels in beauties brow,
Feedes on the rarities of natures truth,
And nothing stands but for his sieth to mow.
And yet to times in hope, my verse shall stand
Praising thy worth, dispight his cruell hand.

61

Is it thy wil, thy Image should keepe open
My heauy eielids to the weary night ?
Dost thou desire my slumbers should be broken,
While shadowes like to thee do mocke my sight ?
Is it thy spirit that thou send'st from thee
So farre from home into my deeds to prye,
To find out shames and idle hours in me,
The skope and tenure of thy Ielousie ?
O no, thy loue though much, is not so great,
It is my loue that keeps mine eie awake,
Mine owne true loue that doth my rest defeat,
To plaie the watch-man euer for thy sake.
For thee watch I, whilst thou dost wake elsewhere
From me farre of, with others all to neere.

62

Sinne of selfe-loue possesseth al mine eie,
And all my soule, and al my euery part ;
And for this sinne there is no remedie,
It is so grounded inward in my heart.
Me thinkes no face so gratious is as mine,
No shape so true, no truth of such account,
And for my selfe mine owne worth do define,
As I all other in all worths surmount.
But when my glass shewes me my selfe indeed
Beated and chopt with tand antiquitie,
Mine owne selfe loue quite contrary I read,
Selfe, so selfe louing, were iniquity.
'Tis thee (my selfe) that for my selfe I praise,
Painting my age with beauty of thy daies.

63

Against my loue shall be as I am now
With times iniurious hand chrusht and ore-worne,
When houres haue dreind his blood and fild his brow
With lines and wrincles, when his youthfull morne
Hath trauaild on to Ages steepie night,
And all those beauties whereof now he's King
Are vanishing, or vanisht out of sight,
Stealing away the treasure of his Spring.
For such a time do I now fortifie
Against confounding Ages cruell knife,
That he shall neuer cut from memory
My sweet loues beauty, though my louers life.
His beautie shall in these blacke lines be seene,
And they shall liue, and he in them still greene.

64

When I haue seene by times fell hand defaced
The rich proud cost of outworne buried age,
When sometime loftie towers I see downe rased,
And brass eternall slaue to mortall rage.
When I haue seene the hungry Ocean gaine
Aduantage on the Kingdome of the shoare,
And the firme soile win of the watry maine,
Increasing store with losse, and losse with store.
When I haue seene such interchange of state,
Or state it selfe confounded, to decay,
Ruine hath taught me thus to ruminate
That Time will come and take my loue away.
This thought is as a death which cannot choose
But weepe to haue, that which it feares to loose.

65

Since brasse, nor stone, nor earth nor boundlesse sea,
But sad mortallity ore-swaies their power,
How with this rage shall beautie hold a plea,
Whose action is no stronger then a flower ?
O how shall summers hunny breath hold out,
Against the wrackfull siedge of battring dayes,
When rocks impregnable are not so stoute,
Nor gates of steele so strong but time decayes ?
O fearefull meditation, where alack,
Shall times best Iewell from times chest lie hid ?
Or what strong hand can hold his swift foote back,
Or who his spoile of beautie can forbid ?
O none, vnlesse this miracle haue might,
That in black inck my loue may still shine bright.

66

Tyr'd with all these for restfull death I cry,
As to behold desert a begger borne,
And needie Nothing trimd in iollitie,
And purest faith vnhappily forsworne,
And gilded honor shamefully misplast,
And maiden vertue rudely strumpeted,
And right perfection wrongfully disgrac'd,
And strength by limping sway disabled,
And arte made tung-tide by authoritie,
And Folly (Doctor-like) controuling skill,
And simple Truth miscalde Simplicitie,
And captiue good attending Captaine ill.
Tyr'd with all these, from these would I be gone,
Saue that to dye, I leaue my loue alone.

67

Ah wherefore with infection should he liue,
And with his presence grace impietie,
That sinne by him aduantage should atchiue,
And lace it selfe with his societie ?
Why should false painting immitate his cheeke,
And steale dead seeing of his liuing hew ?
Why should poore beautie indirectly seeke,
Roses of shaddow, since his Rose is true ?
Why should he liue, now nature banckrout is,
Beggerd of blood to blush through liuely vaines,
For she hath no exchecker now but his,
And proud of many, liues vpon his gaines ?
O him she stores, to show what welth she had,
In daies long since, before these last so bad.

68

Thvs is his cheeke the map of daies out-worne,
When beauty liu'd and dy'ed as flowers do now,
Before these bastard signes of faire were borne,
Or durst inhabit on a liuing brow :
Before the goulden tresses of the dead,
The right of sepulchers, were shorne away,
To liue a second life on second head ;
Ere beauties dead fleece made another gay :
In him those holy antique howers are seene,
Without all ornament, it selfe and true,
Making no summer of an others greene,
Robbing no ould to dresse his beauty new,
And him as for a map doth Nature store,
To shew faulse Art what beauty was of yore.

69

Those parts of thee that the worlds eye doth view,
Want nothing that the thought of hearts can mend :
All toungs (the voice of soules) giue thee that due,
Vttring bare truth, euen so as foes commend.
Thy outward thus with outward praise is crowned,
But those same toungs that giue thee so thine owne,
In other accents doe this praise confound
By seeing farther then the eye hath showne.
They looke into the beauty of thy mind,
And that in guesse they measure by thy deeds,
Then churls their thoughts (although their eies were kind)
To thy faire flower ad the rancke smell of weeds.
But why thy odor matcheth not thy show,
The soyle is this, that thou doest common grow.

70

That thou are blam'd shall not be thy defect,
For slanders marke was euer yet the faire,
The ornament of beauty is suspect,
A Crow that flies in heauens sweetest ayre.
So thou be good, slander doth but approue,
Thy worth the greater being woo'd of time,
For Canker vice the sweetest buds doth loue,
And thou present'st a pure vnstayned prime.
Thou hast past by the ambush of young daies,
Either not assayld, or victor beeing charg'd,
Yet this thy praise cannot be soe thy praise,
To tye vp enuy, euermore inlarged.
If some suspect of ill maskt not thy show,
Then thou alone kingdomes of hearts shouldst owe.

71

Noe longer mourne for me when I am dead,
Then you shall heare the surly sullen bell
Giue warning to the world that I am fled
From this vile world with vilest wormes to dwell :
Nay if you read this line, remember not,
The hand that writ it, for I loue you so,
That I in your sweet thoughts would be forgot,
If thinking on me then should make you woe.
O if (I say) you looke vpon this verse,
When I (perhaps) compounded am with clay,
Do not so much as my poore name reherse ;
But let your loue euen with my life decay.
Least the wise world should looke into your mone
And mocke you with me after I am gon.

72

O least the world should taske you to recite,
What merit liu'd in me that you should loue,
After my death (deare loue) forget me quite,
For you in me can nothing worthy proue.
Vnlesse you would deuise some vertuous lye,
To doe more for me then mine owne desert,
And hang more praise vpon deceased I,
Then nigard truth would willingly impart :
O least your true loue may seeme falce in this,
That you for loue speake well of me vntrue,
My name be buried where my body is,
And liue no more to shame nor me, nor you.
For I am shamed by that which I bring forth,
And so should you, to loue things nothing worth.

73

That time of yeeare thou maist in me behold,
When yellow leaues, or none, or few doe hange
Vpon those boughs which shake against the could,
Bare ruin'd quiers, where late the sweet birds sang.
In me thou seest the twi-light of such day,
As after Sun-set fadeth in the West,
Which by and by blacke night doth take away,
Deaths second selfe that seals vp all in rest.
In me thou seest the glowing of such fire,
That on the ashes of his youth doth lye,
As the death bed, whereon it must expire,
Consum'd with that which it was nurrisht by.
This thou perceu'st, which makes thy loue more strong,
To loue that well, which thou must leaue ere long.

74

But be contented : when that fell arest,
Without all bayle shall carry me away,
My life hath in this line some interest,
Which for memoriall still with thee shall stay.
When thou reuewest this, thou doest reuew,
The very part was consecrate to thee,
The earth can haue but earth, which is his due,
My spirit is thine the better part of me,
So then thou hast but lost the dregs of life,
The pray of wormes, my body being dead,
The coward conquest of a wretches knife,
To base of thee to be remembred.
The worth of that, is that which it containes,
And that is this, and this with thee remaines.

75

So are you to my thoughts as food to life,
Or as sweet season'd shewers are to the ground :
And for the peace of you I hold such strife,
As twixt a miser and his wealth is found.
Now proud as an inioyer, and anon
Doubting the filching age will steale his treasure,
Now counting best to be with you alone,
Then betterd that the world may see my pleasure,
Some-time all ful with feasting on your sight,
And by and by cleane starued for a looke,
Possessing or pursuing no delight
Saue what is had, or must from you be tooke.
Thus do I pine and surfet day by day,
Or gluttoning on all, or all away.

76

Why is my verse so barren of new pride ?
So far from variation or quicke change ?
Why with the time do I not glance aside
To new found methods, and to compounds strange ?
Why write I still all one, euer the same,
And keepe inuention in a noted weed,
That euery word doth almost tel my name,
Shewing their birth, and where they did proceed ?
O know sweet loue I alwaies write of you,
And you and loue are still my argument :
So all my best is dressing old words new,
Spending againe what is already spent :
For as the Sun is daily new and old,
So is my loue still telling what is told.

77

Thy glasse will shew thee how thy beauties were,
Thy dyall how the pretious mynuits waste,
The vacant leaues thy mindes imprint will beare,
And of this booke, this learning maist thou taste.
The wrinckles which thy glass will truly show,
Of mouthed graues will giue thee memorie,
Thou by thy dyals shady stealth maist know,
Times theeuish progresse to eternitie.
Looke what thy memorie cannot containe,
Commit to these waste blancks, and thou shalt finde
Those children nurst, deliuerd from thy braine,
To take a new acquaintance of thy minde.
These offices, so oft as thou wilt looke,
Shall profit thee, and much inrich thy booke.

78

So oft haue I inuok'd thee for my Muse,
And found such faire assistance in my verse,
As euery *Alien* pen hath got my vse,
And vnder thee their poesie disperse.
Thine eyes, that taught the dumbe on high to sing,
And heauie ignorance aloft to flie,
Haue added fethers to the learneds wing,
And giuen grace a double Maiestie.
Yet be most proud of that which I compile,
Whose influence is thine, and borne of thee,
In other workes thou doost but mend the stile,
And Arts with thy sweete graces graced be.
But thou art all my art, and doost aduance
As high as learning, my rude ignorance.

79

Whilst I alone did call vpon thy ayde,
My verse alone had all thy gentle grace,
But now my gracious numbers are decayde,
And my sick Muse doth giue an other place.
I grant (sweet loue) thy louely argument
Deserues the trauaile of a worthier pen,
Yet what of thee thy Poet doth inuent,
He robs thee of, and payes it thee againe,
He lends thee vertue, and he stole that word,
From thy behauiour, beautie doth he giue
And found it in thy cheek : he can affoord
No praise to thee, but what in thee doth liue.
Then thanke him not for that which he doth say,
Since what he owes thee, thou thy selfe doost pay.

80

O how I faint when I of you do write,
Knowing a better spirit doth vse your name,
And in the praise thereof spends all his might,
To make me toung tide speaking of your fame.
But since your worth (wide as the Ocean is)
The humble as the proudest saile doth beare,
My sawsie barke (inferior farre to his)
On your broad maine doth wilfully appeare.
Your shallowest helpe will hold me vp a floate,
Whilst he vpon your soundlesse deepe doth rid,
Or (being wrackt) I am a worthlesse bote,
He of tall building, and of goodly pride.
Then if he thriue and I be cast away,
The worst was this, my loue was my decay.

81

Or I shall liue your Epitaph to make,
Or you suruiue when I in earth am rotten,
From hence your memory death cannot take,
Although in me each part will be forgotten.
Your name from hence immortall life shall haue,
Though I (once gone) to all the world must dye,
The earth can yeeld me but a common graue,
When you intombed in mens eyes shall lye.
Your monument shall be my gentle verse,
Which eyes not yet created shall ore-read,
And toungs to be, your beeing shall rehearse,
When all the breathers of this world are dead,
You still shall liue (such vertue hath my Pen)
Where breath most breaths, euen in the mouths of men.

82

I grant thou wert not married to my Muse,
And therefore maiest without attaint ore-looke
The dedicated words which writers vse
Of their faire subiect, blessing euery booke.
Thou art as faire in knowledge as in hew,
Finding thy worth a limmit past my praise,
And therefore art inforc'd to seeke anew,
Some fresher stampe of the time bettering dayes.
And do so loue, yet when they haue deuisde,
What strained touches Rhethorick can lend,
Thou truly faire, wert truly simpathizde,
In true plaine words, by thy true telling friend.
And their grosse painting might be better vs'd,
Where cheekes need blood ; in thee it is abus'd.

83

I never saw that you did painting need,
And therefore to your faire no painting set,
I found (or thought I found) you did exceed,
The barren tender of a Poets debt :
And therefore haue I slept in your report,
That you your selfe being extant well might show,
How farre a moderne quill doth come to short,
Speaking of worth, what worth in you doth grow.
This silence for my sinne you did impute,
Which shall be most my glory being dombe,
For I impaire not beautie being mute,
When others would giue life, and bring a tombe.
There liues more life in one of your faire eyes,
Then both your Poets can in praise deuise.

84

Who is it that sayes most, which can say more,
Then this rich praise, that you alone, are you ?
In whose confine immured is the store,
Which should example where your equall grew.
Leane penurie within that Pen doth dwell,
That to his subiect lends not some small glory,
But he that writes of you, if he can tell,
That you are you, so dignifies his story.
Let him but coppy what in you is writ,
Not making worse what nature made so cleere,
And such a counter-part shall fame his wit,
Making his stile admired euerywhere.
You to your beautious blessings adde a curse,
Being fond on praise, which makes your praises worse.

85

My toung-tide Muse in manners holds her still,
While comments of your praise richly compil'd,
Reserue their Character with goulden quill,
And precious phrase by all the Muses fil'd.
I thinke good thoughts, whilst other write good wordes,
And like vnlettered clarke still crie Amen,
To euery Himne that able spirit affords,
In polisht forme of well refined pen.
Hearing you praisd, I say 'tis so, 'tis true,
And to the most of praise adde some-thing more,
But that is in my thought, whose loue to you
(Though words come hind-most) holds his ranke before.
Then others, for the breath of words respect.
Me for my dombe thoughts, speaking in effect.

86

Was it the proud full saile of his great verse,
Bound for the prize of (all to precious) you,
That did my ripe thoughts in my braine inhearce,
Making their tombe the wombe wherein they grew ?
Was it his spirit, by spirits taught to write,
Aboue a mortall pitch, that struck me dead ?
No, neither he, nor his compiers by night
Giuing him ayde, my verse astonished.
He nor that affable familiar ghost
Which nightly gulls him with intelligence,
As victors of my silence cannot boast,
I was not sick of any feare from thence.
But when your countinance fild vp his line,
Then lackt I matter, that infeebled mine.

87

Farewell thou art too deare for my possessing,
And like enough thou knowst thy estimate,
The Charter of thy worth giues thee releasing :
My bonds in thee are all determinate.
For how do I hold thee but by thy granting,
And for that ritches where is my deseruing ?
The cause of this faire guift in me is wanting,
And so my pattent back againe is swerving.
Thy selfe thou gau'st, thy owne worth then not knowing,
Or mee to whom thou gau'st it, else mistaking,
So thy great guift vpon misprison growing,
Comes home againe. on better iudgement making.
Thus haue I had thee as a dreame doth flatter,
In sleepe a King, but waking no such matter.

88

When thou shalt be disposde to set me light,
And place my merrit in the eie of skorne,
Vpon thy side, against my selfe ile fight,
And proue thee virtuous, though thou art forsworne :
With mine owne weaknesse being best acquainted,
Vpon thy part I can set downe a story
Of faults conceald, wherein I am attainted :
That thou in loosing me, shall win much glory :
And I by this wil be a gainer too,
For bending all my louing thoughts on thee,
The iniuries that to my selfe I doe,
Doing thee vantage, duble vantage me.
Such is my loue, to thee I so belong,
That for thy right, my selfe will beare all wrong.

89

Say that thou didst forsake mee for some falt,
And I will comment vpon that offence,
Speake of my lamenesse, and I straight will halt :
Against thy reasons making no defence.
Thou canst not (loue) disgrace me halfe so ill,
To set a forme vpon desired change,
As ile my selfe disgrace ; knowing thy wil,
I will acquaintance strangle and looke strange :
Be absent from thy walkes ; and in my tongue,
Thy sweet beloued name no more shall dwell,
Least I (too much prophane) should do it wronge ;
And haplie of our old acquaintance tell.
For thee, against my selfe ile vow debate,
For I must nere loue him whom thou dost hate.

90

Then hate me when thou wilt, if euer, now,
Now while the world is bent my deeds to crosse,
Ioyne with the spight of fortune, make me bow,
And doe not drop in for an after losse :
Ah doe not, when my heart hath scapte this sorrow,
Come in the rereward of a conquerd woe,
Giue not a windy night a rainie morrow,
To linger out a purposd ouer-throw.
If thou wilt leaue me, do not leaue me last,
When other pettie griefes haue done their spight,
But in the onset come, so shall I taste
At first the very worst of fortunes might.
And other straines of woe, which now seeme woe,
Compar'd with losse of thee, will not seeme so.

91

Some glory in their birth, some in their skill,
Some in their wealth, some in their bodies force,
Some in their garments though new-fangled ill :
Some in their Hawkes and Hounds, some in their Horse.
And euery humor hath his adiunct pleasure,
Wherein it findes a ioy aboue the rest,
But these perticulers are not my measure,
All these I better in one generall best.
Thy loue is better then high birth to me,
Richer then wealth, prouder then garments cost,
Of more delight then Hawkes or Horses bee :
And hauing thee, of all mens pride I boast.
Wretched in this alone, that thou maist take
All this away, and me most wretched make.

92

Bvt doe thy worst to steale thy selfe away,
For tearme of life thou art assured mine,
And life no longer then thy loue will stay,
For it depends vpon that loue of thine.
Then need I not to feare the worst of wrongs,
When in the least of them my life hath end,
I see, a better state to me belongs
Then that, which on thy humor doth depend.
Thou canst not vex me with inconstant minde,
Since that my life on thy reuolt doth lie,
Oh what a happy title do I finde,
Happy to haue thy loue, happy to die !
But whats so blessed faire that feares no blot ?
Thou maist be falce, and yet I know it not.

93

So shall I liue, supposing thou art true,
Like a deceiued husband : so loues face,
May still seeme loue to me, though alter'd new :
Thy lookes with me, thy heart in other place.
For their can liue no hatred in thine eye,
Therefore in that I cannot know thy change,
In manies lookes, the falce hearts history
Is writ in moods and frounes and wrinckles strange.
But heauen in thy creation did decree,
That in thy face sweet loue should euer dwell,
What ere thy thoughts, or thy hearts workings be,
Thy lookes should nothing thence, but sweetnesse tell.
How like *Eaues* apple doth thy beauty grow,
If thy sweet vertue answere not thy show.

94

They that haue powre to hurt, and will doe none,
That doe not do the thing, they most do showe,
Who mouing others, are themselves as stone,
Vnmooued, could, and to temptation slow :
They rightly do inherit heauens graces,
And husband natures ritches from expence,
They are the Lords and owners of their faces,
Others, but stewards of their excellence :
The sommers flowre is to the sommer sweet,
Though to it selfe, it onely liue and die,
But if that flowre with base infection meete,
The basest weed out-braues his dignity :
For sweetest things turne sowrest by their deedes,
Lillies that fester, smell far worse than weeds.

95

How sweet and louely dost thou make the shame,
Which like a canker in the fragrant Rose.
Doth spot the beautie of thy budding name !
Oh in what sweets doest thou thy sinnes inclose !
That tongue that tells the story of thy daies,
(Making lasciuious comments on thy sport)
Cannot dispraise, but in a kinde of praise,
Naming thy name, blesses an ill report.
Oh what a mansion haue those vices got,
Which for their habitation chose out thee,
Where beauties vaile doth couer euery blot,
And all things turnes to faire that eies can see !
Take heed (deare heart) of this large priuiledge,
The hardest knife ill vs'd doth loose his edge.

96

Some say thy fault is youth, some wantonesse,
Some say thy grace is youth and gentle sport,
Both grace and faults are lou'd of more and lesse :
Thou makst faults graces, that to thee resort :
As on the finger of a throned Queene,
The basest Iewell wil be well esteemed :
So are those errors that in thee are seene,
To truths translated, and for true things deem'd.
How many Lambs might the sterne Wolfe betray,
If like a Lambe he could his lookes translate.
How many gazers mights thou lead away,
If thou wouldst vse the strength of all thy state !
But doe not so, I loue thee in such sort,
As thou being mine, mine is thy good report.

97

How like a Winter hath my absence beene
From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting yeare !
What freezings haue I felt, what darke daies seene !
What old Decembers barenesse euery where !
And yet this time remou'd was sommers time,
The teeming Autumne big with ritch increase,
Bearing the wanton burthen of the prime,
Like widdowed wombes after their Lords decease :
Yet this aboundant issue seem'd to me,
But hope of Orphans, and vn-fathered fruite,
For Sommer and his pleasure waite on thee,
And thou away, the very birds are mute.
Or if they sing, tis with so dull a cheere,
That leaues looke pale, dreading the Winters neere.

98

From you haue I beene absent in the spring,
When proud pide Aprill (drest in all his trim)
Hath put a spirit of youth in euery thing :
That heauie *Saturne* laught and leapt with him.
Yet nor the laies of birds, nor the sweet smell
Of different flowers in odor and in hew,
Could make me any summers story tell :
Or from their proud lap pluck them where they grew :
Nor did I wonder at the Lillies white,
Nor praise the deepe vermillion in the Rose,
They weare but sweet, but figures of delight :
Drawne after you, you patterne of all those.
Yet seem'd it Winter still, and you away,
As with your shaddow I with these did play.

99

The forward violet thus did I chide,
Sweet theefe whence didst thou steale thy sweet that smels
If not from my loues breath ? The purple pride,
Which on thy soft cheeke for complexion dwells,
In my loues veines thou hast too grosely died.
The Lillie I condemned for thy hand,
And buds of marierom had stolne thy haire,
The Roses fearefully on thornes did stand,
One blushing shame, an other white dispaire :
A third nor red, nor white, had stolne of both,
And to his robbry had annext thy breath,
But for his theft in pride of all his growth
A vengfull canker eate him vp to death.
More flowers I noted, yet I none could see,
But sweet, or culler it had stolne from thee.

100

Where art thou Muse that thou forgetst so long,
To speake of that which giues thee all thy might ?
Spendst thou thy furie on some worthlesse songe,
Darkning thy powre to lend base subiects light ?
Returne forgetfull Muse, and straight redeeme,
In gentle numbers time so idely spent,
Sing to the eare that doth thy laies esteeme,
And giues thy pen both skill and argument.
Rise resty Muse, my loues sweet face suruay,
If time haue any wrincle grauen there,
If any, be a *Satire* to decay,
And make times spoiles dispised euery where.
Giue my loue fame faster then time wasts life,
So thou preuenst his sieth, and crooked knife.

101

Oh truant Muse what shall be thy amends,
For thy neglect of truth in beauty di'd ?
Both truth and beauty on my loue depends :
So dost thou too, and therein dignifi'd :
Make answere Muse, wilt thou not haply saie,
Truth needs no collour with his collour fixt,
Beautie no pensell, beauties truth to lay ;
But best is best, if neuer intermixt.
Because he needs no praise, wilt thou be dumb ?
Excuse not silence so, for't lies in thee,
To make him much out-liue a gilded tombe ;
And to be praisd of ages yet to be.
Then do thy office Muse, I teach thee how,
To make him seeme long hence as he showes now.

102

My loue is strengthned though more weake in seeming,
I loue not lesse, though lesse the show appeare,
That loue is marchandiz'd, whose ritch esteeming,
The owners tongue doth publish euery where.
Our loue was new, and then but in the spring,
When I was wont to greet it with my laies,
As *Philomell* in summers front doth singe,
And stops his pipe in growth of riper daies :
Not that the summer is lesse pleasant now
Then when her mournefull himns did hush the night,
But that wild musick burthens euery bow,
And sweets growne common loose their deare delight
Therefore like her, I some-time hold my tongue :
Because I would not dull you with my songe.

103

Alack what pouerty my Muse brings forth,
That hauing such a skope to show her pride,
The argument all bare is of more worth
Then when it hath my added praise beside.
Oh blame me not if I no more can write !
Looke in your glasse and there appeares a face,
That ouer-goes my blunt inuention quite,
Dulling my lines, and doing me disgrace.
Were it not sinfull then striuing to mend,
To marre the subiect that before was well,
For to no other passe my verses tend,
Then of your graces and your gifts to tell.
And more, much more then in my verse can sit,
Your owne glasse showes you, when you looke in it.

104

To me faire friend you neuer can be old ;
For as you were when first your eye I eyde,
Such seemes your beautie still : Three Winters colde,
Haue from the forrests shooke three summers pride,
Three beautious springs to yellow *Autumne* turn'd,
In processe of the seasons haue I seene,
Three Aprill perfumes in three hot Iunes burn'd,
Since first I saw you fresh which yet are greene.
Ah yet doth beauty like a Dyall hand,
Steale from his figure, and no pace perceiu'd,
So your sweete hew, which me thinkes still doth stand
Hath notion, and mine eye may be deceaued.
For feare of which, heare this thou age vnbred,
Ere you were borne was beauties summer dead.

105

Let not my loue be cal'd Idolatrie,
Nor my beloued as an Idoll show,
Since all alike my songs and praises be
To one, of one, still such, and euer so.
Kinde is my loue to day, to morrow kinde,
Still constant in a wondrous excellence,
Therefore my verse to constancie confin'de,
One thing expressing, leaues out difference.
Faire, kinde, and true, is all my argument,
Faire, kinde and true, varrying to other words,
And in this change is my inuention spent,
Three theams in one, which wondrous scope affords.
Faire, kinde, and true, haue often liu'd alone.
Which three till now, neuer kept seate in one.

106

When in the Chronicle of wasted time,
I see discriptions of the fairest wights,
And beautie making beautifull old rime,
In praise of Ladies dead, and louely Knights,
Then in the blazon of sweet beauties best,
Of hand, of foote, of lip, of eye, of brow,
I see their antique Pen would haue exprest,
Euen such a beauty as you maister now.
So all their praises are but prophesies
Of this our time, all you prefiguring,
And for they look's but with deuining eyes,
They had not still enough your worth to sing:
For we which now behold these present dayes,
Haue eyes to wonder, but lack toungs to praise.

107

Not mine owne feares, nor the prophetick soule,
Of the wide world, dreaming on things to come,
Can yet the lease of my true loue controule,
Supposde as forfeit to a confin'd doome.
The mortall Moone hath her eclipse indur'de,
And the sad Augurs mock their owne presage,
Incertenties now crowne them-selues assur'de,
And peace proclaimes Oliues of endlesse age.
Now with the drops of this most balmie time,
My loue lookes fresh, and death to me subscribes;
Since spight of him Ile liue in this poore rime,
While he insults ore dull and speachlesse tribes.
And thou in this shalt finde thy monument,
When tyrants crests and tombs of brasse are spent.

108

What's in the braine that Inck may character,
Which hath not figur'd to thee my true spirit,
What's new to speake, what now to register,
That may expresse my loue, or thy deare merit?
Nothing sweet boy, but yet like prayers diuine,
I must each day say ore the very same,
Counting no old thing old, thou mine, I thine,
Euen as when first I hallowed thy faire name.
So that eternall loue in loues fresh case,
Waighes not the dust and iniury of age,
Nor giues to necessary wrinckles place
But makes antiquitie for aye his page,
Finding the first conceit of loue there bred,
Where time and outward forme would shew it dead

109

O never say that I was false of heart,
Though absence seem'd my flame to quallifie,
As easie might I from my selfe depart,
As from my soule which in thy brest doth lye:
That is my home of loue; if I haue rang'd,
Like him that trauels I returne againe,
Iust to the time, not with the time exchang'd,
So that my selfe bring water for my staine.
Neuer beleeue though in my nature raign'd,
All frailties that besiege all kindes of blood,
That it could so preposterouslie be stain'd,
To leaue for nothing all thy summe of good:
For nothing this wide Vniuerse I call,
Saue thou my Rose, in it thou art my all.

110

Alas 'tis true, I haue gone here and there,
And made my selfe a motley to the view,
Gor'd mine own thoughts, sold cheap what is most deare,
Made old offences of affections new.
Most true it is, that I haue lookt on truth
Asconce and strangely: But by all aboue,
These blenches gaue my heart an other youth,
And worse essaies prou'd thee my best of loue.
Now all is done, haue what shall haue no end,
Mine appetite I neuer more will grinde
On newer proofe, to trie an older friend,
A God in loue, to whom I am confin'd.
Then giue me welcome, next my heauen the best,
Euen to thy pure and most most louing brest.

111

O for my sake doe you with fortune chide,
The guiltie goddesse of my harmfull deeds.
That did not better for my life prouide,
Then publick meanes which publick manners breeds
Thence comes it that my name receiues a brand,
And almost thence my nature is subdu'd
To what it workes in, like the Dyers hand,
Pitty me then, and wish I were renu'de.
Whilst like a willing patient I will drinke,
Potions of Eysell gainst my strong infection,
No bitternesse that I will bitter thinke,
Nor double pennance to correct correction.
Pittie me then deare friend, and I assure yee,
Euen that your pittie is enough to cure mee.

112

Yovr loue and pittie doth th'impression fill,
Which vulgar scandall stampt vpon my brow,
For what care I who calles me well or ill,
So you ore-greene my bad, my good alow?
You are my All the world, and I must striue,
To know my shames and praises from your tounge
None else to me, nor I to none aliue,
That my steel'd sence or changes right or wrong.
In so profound *Abisme* I throw all care
Of others voyces, that my Adders sence,
To cryttick and to flatterer stopped are:
Marke how with my neglect I doe dispence.
You are so strongly in my purpose bred,
That all the world besides me thinkes y'are dead.

113

Since I left you, mine eye is in my minde,
And that which gouernes me to goe about,
Doth part his function, and is partly blind,
Seemes seeing, but effectually is out:
For it no forme deliuers to the heart
Of bird, of flowre, or shape which it doth latch,
Of his quick obiects hath the minde no part,
Nor his owne vision houlds what it doth catch:
For if it see the rud'st or gentlest sight,
The most sweet sauor or deformedst creature,
The mountaine, or the sea, the day, or night:
The Croe, or Doue, it shapes them to your feature.
Incapable of more, repleat with you.
My most true minde thus maketh mine vntrue.

114

Or whether doth my minde being crown'd with you
Drinke vp the monarks plague this flattery?
Or whether shall I say mine eie saith true,
And that your loue taught it this *Alcumie?*
To make of monsters, and things indigest,
Such cherubines as your sweet selfe resemble,
Creating euery bad a perfect best
As fast as obiects to his beames assemble:
Oh tis the first, tis flatry in my seeing,
And my great minde most kingly drinks it vp,
Mine eie well knowes what with his gust is greeing
And to his pallat doth prepare the cup,
If it be poison'd, tis the lesser sinne,
That mine eye loues it and doth first beginne.

115

Those lines that I before haue writ doe lie,
Euen those that said I could not loue you deerer,
Yet then my iudgement knew no reason why,
My most full flame should afterwards burne cleerer.
But reckening time, whose milliond accidents
Creepe in twixt vowes, and change decrees of Kings,
Tan sacred beautie, blunt the sharp'st intents,
Diuert strong mindes to th' course of altring things:
Alas why fearing of times tiranie,
Might I not then say now I loue you best,
When I was certaine ore in-certainty,
Crowning the present, doubting of the rest:
Loue is a Babe, then might I not say so
To giue full growth to that which still doth grow.

116

Let me not to the marriage of true mindes
Admit impediments, loue is not loue
Which alters when it alteration findes,
Or bends with the remouer to remoue
O no, it is an euer fixed marke
That lookes on tempests and is neuer shaken;
It is the star to euery wandring barke,
Whose worths vnknowne, although his higth be taken.
Loue's not Times foole, though rosie lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickles compasse come,
Loue alters not with his breefe houres and weekes,
But beares it out euen to the edge of doome:
If this be error and vpon me proued,
I neuer writ, nor no man euer loued.

117

Accvse me thus, that I haue scanted all,
Wherein I should your great deserts repay,
Forgot vpon your dearest loue to call,
Whereto al bonds do tie me day by day,
That I haue frequent binne with vnknown mindes,
And giuen to time your owne deare purchas'd right,
That I haue hoysted saile to al the windes
Which should transport me farthest from your sight.
Booke both my wilfulnesse and errors downe,
And on iust proofe surmise accumilate,
Bring me within the leuel of your frowne,
But shoote not at me in your wakened hate:
Since my appeale saies I did striue to prooue
The constancy and virtue of your loue.

118

Like as to make our appetites more keene
With eager compounds we our pallat vrge,
As to preuent our malladies vnseene,
We sicken to shun sicknesse when we purge:
Euen so being full of your nere cloying sweetnesse,
To bitter sawces did I frame my feeding;
And sicke of wel-fare found a kind of meetnesse,
To be diseas'd ere that there was true needing.
Thus pollicie in loue t'anticipate
The ills that were not, grew to faults assured,
And brought to medicine a healthfull state
Which rancke of goodnesse would by ill be cured.
But thence I learne and find the lesson true,
Drugs poyson him that so fell sicke of you.

119

What potions haue I drunke of *Syren* teares
Distil'd from Lymbecks foule as hell within,
Applying feares to hopes, and hopes to feares,
Still loosing when I saw my selfe to win?
What wretched errors hath my heart committed,
Whilst it hath thought it selfe so blessed neuer?
How haue mine eies out of their Spheares benefitted
In the distraction of this madding feuer?
O benefit of ill, now I find true
That better is by euil still made better,
And ruin'd loue when it is built anew
Growes fairer then at first, more strong, far greater.
So I returne rebukt to my content,
And gaine by ills thrise more then I haue spent.

120

That you were once vnkind be-friends mee now,
And for that sorrow, which I then didde feele,
Needes must I vnder my transgression bow,
Vnlesse my Nerues were brasse or hammered steele
For if you were by my vnkindnesse shaken
As I by yours, y'haue past a hell of Time,
And I a tyrant haue no leasure taken
To waigh how once I suffered in your crime.
O that our night of wo might haue remembred
My deepest sence, how hard true sorrow hits,
And soone to you, as you to me then tendred
The humble salue, which wounded bosomes fits!
But that your trespasse now becomes a fee,
Mine ransoms yours, and yours must ransome mee.

121

Tis better to be vile then vile esteemed,
When not to be, receiues reproach of being,
And the iust pleasure lost, which is so deemed,
Not by our feeling, but by others seeing.
For why should others false adulterat eyes
Giue salutation to my sportiue blood ?
Or on my frailties why are frailer spies ;
Which in their wils count bad what I think good ?
Noe, I am that I am, and they that leuell
At my abuses, reckon vp their owne
I may be straight though they them-selues be beuel,
By their rancke thoughtes, my deedes must not be
shown :
Vnlesse this generall euill they maintaine,
All men are bad and in their badnesse raigne.

122

Thy guift, thy tables, are within my braine
Full characterd with lasting memory,
Which shall aboue that idle rancke remaine
Beyond all date euen to eternity.
Or at the least, so long as braine and heart
Haue facultie by nature to subsist,
Til each to raz'd obliuion yeeld his part
Of thee, thy record neuer can be mist :
That poore retention could not so much hold,
Nor need I tallies thy deare loue to skore,
Therefore to giue them from me was I bold,
To trust those tables that receaue thee more,
To keepe an adiunckt to remember thee,
Were to import forgetfulnesse in mee.

123

No ! Time, thou shalt not bost that I doe change,
Thy pyramyds buylt vp with newer might
To me are nothing nouell, nothing strange ;
They are but dressings of a former sight :
Our dates are breefe, and therefor we admire,
What thou dost foyst vpon vs that is ould,
And rather make them borne to our desire,
Then thinke that we before haue heard them tould :
Thy registers and thee I both defie,
Not wondring at the present, nor the past,
For thy records, and what we see doth lye,
Made more or les by thy continuall hast :
This I doe vow and this shall euer be.
I will be true dispight thy syeth and thee.

124

Yf my deare loue were but the childe of state,
It might for fortunes basterd be vnfathered,
As subiect to times loue, or to times hate,
Weeds among weeds, or flowers with flowers gatherd.
No it was buylded far from accident,
It suffers not in smilinge pomp, nor falls
Vnder the blow of thralled discontent,
Whereto th'inuiting time our fashion calls :
It feares not policy that *Heritiche*,
Which workes on leases of short numbred howers,
But all alone stands hugely politick,
That it nor growes with heat, nor drownes with
showres.
To this I witnes call the foles of time,
Which die for goodnes, who haue liu'd for crime.

125

Wer't ought to me I bore the canopy,
With my extern the outward honoring,
Or layd great bases for eternity,
Which proues more short then wast or ruining ?
Haue I not seene dwellers on forme and fauor
Lose all, and more, by paying too much rent
For compound sweet ; Forgoing simple sauor
Pittifull thriuors in their gazing spent.
Noe, let me be obsequious in thy heart,
And take thou my oblacion, poore but free,
Which is not mixt with seconds, knows no art,
But mutuall render, onely me for thee.
Hence, thou subbornd *Informer*, a trew soule
When most impeacht, stands least in thy controule.

126

O thou my louely Boy who in thy power,
Doest hould times fickle glasse, his sickle, hower :
Who hast by wayning growne, and therein show'st
Thy louers withering, as thy sweet selfe grow'st.
If Nature (soueraine misteres ouer wrack)
As thou goest onwards still will plucke thee backe,
She keepes thee to this purpose, that her skill,
May time, disgrace, and wretched mynuits kill.
Yet feare her O thou minnion of her pleasure,
She may detaine, but not still keepe her tresure
Her *Audite* (though delayd) answer'd must be,
And her *Quietus* is to render thee.

127

In the ould age blacke was not counted faire,
Or if it weare it bore not beauties name :
But now is blacke beauties successiue heire,
And Beautie slandred with a bastard shame :
For since each hand hath put on Natures power,
Fairing the foule with Arts faulse borrow'd face,
Sweet beauty hath no name no holy boure,
But is prophan'd, if not liues in disgrace.
Therefore my Mistresse eyes are Rauen blacke,
Her eyes so suted, and they mourners seeme,
At such who not borne faire no beauty lack,
Slandring Creation with a false esteeme,
Yet so they mourne becomming of their woe,
That euery toung saies beauty should looke so.

128

How oft when thou my musike musike playst,
Vpon that blessed wood whose motion sounds
With thy sweet fingers when thou gently swayst,
The wiry concord that mine eare confounds,
Do I enuie those Iackes that nimble leape,
To kisse the tender inward of thy hand,
Whilst my poore lips which should that haruest
reape,
At the woods bouldnes by thee blushing stand.
To be so tikled they would change their state,
And situation with those dancing chips,
Ore whome thy fingers walke with gentle gate,
Making dead wood more blest then liuing lips.
Since sausie Iackes so happy are in this,
Giue them thy fingers, me thy lips to kisse.

129

Th' expence of Spirit in a waste of shame
Is lust in action, and till action, lust
Is periurd, murdrous, blouddy, full of blame,
Sauage, extreme, rude, cruell, not to trust,
Inioyd no sooner but dispised straight,
Past reason hunted, and no sooner had
Past reason hated as a swollowed bayt,
On purpose layd to make the taker mad.
Madde in pursuit and in possession so,
Had, hauing, and in quest to haue, extreame,
A blisse in proofe and proud a very wo,
Before a ioy proposed behind a dreame.
All this the world well knowes yet none knowes well,
To shun the heauen that leads men to this hell.

130

My Mistres eyes are nothing like the Sunne,
Currall is farre more red, then her lips red,
If snow be white, why then her brests are dun :
If haires be wiers, black wiers grow on her head :
I haue seene Roses damaskt, red and white,
But no such Roses see I in her cheekes,
And in some perfumes is there more delight,
Then in the breath that from my Mistres reekes.
I loue to heare her speake, yet well I know,
That Musicke hath a farre more pleasing sound :
I graunt I neuer saw a goddesse goe,
My Mistres when shee walkes treads on the ground,
And yet by heauen I thinke my loue as rare,
As any she beli'd with false compare.

131

Thou art as tiranous, so as thou art,
As those whose beauties proudly make them cruell ;
For well thou know'st to my deare doting hart
Thou art the fairest and most precious Iewell.
Yet in good faith some say that thee behold,
Thy face hath not the power to make loue grone ;
To say they erre, I dare not be so bold,
Although I sweare it to my selfe alone.
And to be sure that is not false I sweare
A thousand grones but thinking on thy face,
One on anothers necke do witnesse beare
Thy blacke is fairest in my iudgements place.
In nothing art thou black saue in thy deeds,
And thence this slaunder as I thinke proceeds.

132

Thine eies I loue, and they as pittying me,
Knowing thy heart torments me with disdaine,
Haue put on black, and louing mourners bee,
Looking with pretty ruth vpon my paine.
And truly not the morning Sun of Heauen
Better becomes the gray cheeks of the East,
Nor that full Starre that vshers in the Eauen
Doth halfe that glory to the sober West
As those two morning eyes become thy face :
O let it then as well beseeme thy heart
To mourne for me since mourning doth thee grace
And sute thy pitty like in euery part.
Then will I sweare beauty her selfe is blacke,
And all they foule that thy complexion lacke.

133

Beshrew that heart that makes my heart to groane
For that deepe wound it giues my friend and me ;
I'st not ynough to torture me alone,
But slaue to slauery my sweet'st friend must be.
Me from my selfe thy cruell eye hath taken,
And my next selfe thou harder hast ingrossed,
Of him, my selfe, and thee I am forsaken,
A torment thrice three-fold thus to be crossed :
Prison my heart in thy steele bosomes warde,
But then my friends heart let my poore heart bale
Who ere keepes me, let my heart be his garde,
Thou canst not then vse rigor in my Iaile.
And yet thou wilt, for I being pent in thee,
Perforce am thine and all that is in me.

134

So now I haue confest that he is thine,
And I my selfe am morgag'd to thy will,
My selfe Ile forfeit, so that other mine,
Thou wilt restore to be my comfort still :
But thou wilt not, nor he will not be free,
For thou art couetous, and he is kinde,
He learnd but suretie-like to write for me,
Vnder that bond that him as fast doth binde.
The statute of thy beauty thou wilt take,
Thou vsurer that put'st forth all to vse,
And sue a friend, came debter for my sake,
So him I loose through my vnkinde abuse.
Him haue I lost, thou hast both him and me,
He paies the whole, and yet am I not free.

135

Who euer hath her wish, thou hast thy *Will*,
And *Will* too boote, and *Will* in ouer-plus,
More then enough am I that vexe thee still,
To thy sweet will making addition thus.
Wilt thou whose will is large and spatious,
Not once vouchsafe to hide my will in thine,
Shall will in others seeme right gracious,
And in my will no faire acceptance shine :
The sea all water, yet receiues raine still,
And in aboundance addeth to his store,
So thou beeing rich in *Will* adde to thy *Will*,
One will of mine to make thy large *Will* more.
Let no vnkinde, no faire beseechers kill,
Thinke all but one, and me in that one *Will*.

136

If thy soule check thee that I come so neere,
Sweare to thy blind soule that I was thy *Will*,
And will thy soule knowes is admitted there.
Thus farre for loue, my loue-sute sweet fullfill.
Will, will fulfill the treasure of thy loue,
I fill it full with wils, and my will one,
In things of great receit with ease we prooue.
Among a number one is reckon'd none.
Then in the number let me passe vntold,
Though in thy stores account I one must be,
For nothing hold me, so it please thee hold,
That nothing me, a some-thing sweet to thee.
Make but my name thy loue, and loue that still,
And then thou louest me for my name is *Will*.

137

Thou blinde foole loue, what doost thou to mine eyes
That they behold and see not what they see :
They know what beautie is, see where it lyes,
Yet what the best is, take the worst to be.
If eyes corrupt by ouer-partiall lookes,
Be anchord in the baye where all men ride,
Why of eyes falsehood hast thou forged hookes,
Whereto the iudgement of my heart is tide ?
Why should my heart thinke that a seuerall plot,
Which my heart knowes the wide worlds common
place ?
Or mine eyes seeing this, say this is not,
To put faire truth vpon so foule a face ?
In things right true my heart and eyes haue erred,
And to this false plague are they now transferred.

138

When my loue sweares that she is made of truth,
I do beleeue her though I know she lyes,
That she might thinke me some vntuterd youth,
Vnlearned in the worlds false subtilties.
Thus vainely thinking that she thinkes me young,
Although she knowes my dayes are past the best,
Simply I credit her false speaking tongue,
On both sides thus is simple truth suppresst :
But wherefore sayes she not she is vniust ?
And wherefore say not I that I am old ?
O loues best habit is in seeming trust,
And age in loue, loues not to haue yeares told.
Therefore I lye with her, and she with me,
And in our faults by lyes we flattered be.

139

O call not me to iustifie the wrong,
That thy vnkindnesse layes vpon my heart,
Wound me not with thine eye but with thy toung,
Vse power with power, and slay me not by Art,
Tell me thou lou'st else-where ; but in my sight,
Deare heart forbeare to glance thine eye aside,
What needst thou wound with cunning when thy
might
Is more then my ore-prest defence can bide ?
Let me excuse thee ; ah my loue well knowes,
Her prettie lookes haue beene mine enemies,
And therefore from my face she turnes my foes,
That they else-where might dart their iniuries :
Yet do not so, but since I am neere slaine,
Kill me out-right with lookes, and rid my paine.

140

Be wise as thou art cruell, do not presse
My toung-tide patience with too much disdaine :
Least sorrow lend me words and words expresse,
The manner of my pittie-wanting paine.
If I might teach thee witte better it weare,
Though not to loue, yet loue to tell me so,
As testie sick-men when their deaths be neere,
No newes but health from their Phisitions know,
For if I should dispaire I should grow madde,
And in my madnesse might speake ill of thee,
Now this ill wresting world is growne so bad,
Madde slanderers by madde eares beleeued be.
That I may not be so, nor thou belyde,
Beare thine eyes straight, though thy proud heart
goe wide.

141

In faith I doe not loue thee with mine eyes,
For they in thee a thousand errors note,
But 'tis my heart that loues what they dispise,
Who in dispight of view is pleasd to dote.
Nor are mine eares with thy toungs tune delighted,
Nor tender feeling to base touches prone,
Nor taste, nor smell, desire to be inuited
To any sensuall feast with thee alone :
But my fiue wits, nor my fiue sences can
Diswade one foolish heart from seruing thee,
Who leaues vnswai'd the likenesse of a man,
Thy proud hearts slaue and vassall wretch to be :
Onely my plague thus farre I count my gaine,
That she that makes me sinne, awards me paine.

142

Love is my sinne, and thy deare vertue hate,
Hate of my sinne, grounded on sinfull louing,
O but with mine, compare thou thine owne state,
And thou shalt finde it merrits not reprooving,
Or if it do, not from those lips of thine,
That haue prophan'd their scarlet ornaments,
And seald false bonds of loue as oft as mine,
Robd others beds reuenues of their rents.
Be it lawfull I loue thee as thou lou'st those,
Whome thine eyes wooe as mine importune thee,
Roote pittie in thy heart that when it growes,
Thy pitty may deserve to pittied bee.
If thou doost seeke to haue what thou doost hide,
By selfe example mai'st thou be denide,

143

Loe as a carefull huswife runnes to catch,
One of her fethered creatures broake away,
Sets downe her babe and makes all swift dispatch
In pursuit of the thing she would haue stay :
Whilst her neglected child holds her in chace,
Cries to catch her whose busie care is bent,
To follow that which flies before her face :
Not prizing her poore infants discontent ;
So runst thou after that which flies from thee,
Whilst I thy babe chace thee a farre behind,
But if thou catch thy hope turne back to me :
And play the mothers part, kisse me, be kind.
So will I pray that thou maist haue thy *Will*,
If thou turne back and my loude crying still.

144

Two loues I haue of comfort and dispaire,
Which like two spirits do sugiest me still :
The better angell is a man right faire,
The worser spirit a woman colour'd ill.
To win me soone to hell my femall euill,
Tempteth my better angel from my side,
And would corrupt my saint to be a diuel :
Wooing his purity with her fowle pride.
And whether that my angel be turn'd finde,
Suspect I may, yet not directly tell,
But being both from me both to each friend,
I gesse one angel in an others hel.
Yet this shal I nere know but liue in doubt,
Till my bad angel fire my good one out.

145

Those lips that Loues owne hand did make,
Breath'd forth the sound that said I hate,
To me that languisht for her sake :
But when she saw my wofull state,
Straight in her heart did mercie come,
Chiding that tongue that euer sweet,
Was vsde in giuing gentle dome :
And tought it thus a new to greete :
I hate she alterd with an end,
That follow'd it as gentle day,
Doth follow night who like a fiend
From heauen to hell is flowne away.
I hate, from hate away she threw,
And sau'd my life saying not you.

146

Poore soule the center of my sinfull earth,
My sinfull earth these rebbell powres that thee array,
Why dost thou pine within and suffer dearth
Painting thy outward walls so costlie gay ?
Why so large cost hauing so short a lease,
Dost thou vpon thy fading mansion spend ?
Shall wormes inheritors of this excesse
Eate vp thy charge ? is this thy bodies end ?
Then soule liue thou vpon thy seruants losse,
And let that pine to aggrauat thy store ;
Buy tearmes diuine in selling houres of drosse :
Within be fed, without be rich no more,
So shalt thou feed on death, that feeds on men,
And death once dead, ther's no more dying then.

147

My loue is as a feauer longing still,
For that which longer nurseth the disease,
Feeding on that which doth preserue the ill,
Th'vncertaine sicklie appetite to please :
My reason the Phisition to my loue,
Angry that his prescriptions are not kept
Hath left me, and I desperate now approoue,
Desire is death, which Phisick did except.
Past cure I am, now Reason is past care,
And frantick madde with euer-more vnrest,
My thoughts and my discourses as mad mens are,
At random from the truth vainely exprest.
For I haue sworne thee faire, and thought thee bright,
Who art as black as hell, as darke as night.

148

O me ! what eyes hath loue put in my head,
Which haue no correspondence with true sight,
Or if they haue, where is my iudgment fled,
That censures falsely what they see aright ?
If that be faire whereon my false eyes dote,
What meanes the world to say it is not so ?
If it be not, then loue doth well denote,
Loues eye is not so true as all mens ; no,
How can it ? O how can loues eye be true,
That is so vext with watching and with teares ?
No maruaile then though I mistake my view,
The sunne it selfe sees not, till heauen cleeres.
O cunning loue, with teares thou keepst me blinde,
Least eyes well seeing thy foule faults should finde.

149

Canst thou O cruell, say I loue thee not,
When I against my selfe with thee partake :
Doe I not thinke on thee when I forgot
Am of my selfe, all tirant for thy sake ?
Who hateth thee that I doe call my friend,
On whom froun'st thou that I doe faune vpon
Nay if thou lowrst on me doe I not spend
Reuenge vpon my selfe with present mone ?
What merrit do I in my selfe respect,
That is so proude thy seruice to dispise,
When all my best doth worship thy defect,
Commanded by the motion of thine eyes ?
But loue hate on for now I know thy minde,
Those that can see thou lov'st, and I am blind.

150

Oh from what powre hast thou this powrefull might
With insufficiency my heart to sway,
To make me giue the lie to my true sight,
And swere that brightnesse doth not grace the day ?
Whence hast thou this becomming of things ill,
That in the very refuse of thy deeds,
There is such strength and warrantise of skill,
That in my minde thy worst all best exceeds ?
Who taught thee how to make me loue thee more,
The more I heare and see iust cause of hate ?
Oh though I loue what others doe abhor,
With others thou shouldst not abhor my state.
If thy vnworthinesse raisd loue in me,
More worthy I to be belou'd of thee.

151

Love is too young to know what conscience is,
Yet who knowes not conscience is borne of loue ?
Then gentle cheater vrge not my amisse,
Least guilty of my faults thy sweete selfe proue.
For thou betraying me, I doe betray
My nobler part to my grose bodies treason,
My soule doth tell my body that he may,
Triumph in loue, flesh staies no farther reason,
But rysing at thy name doth point out thee,
As his triumphant prize, proud of this pride,
He is contented thy poore drudge to be
To stand in thy affaires, fall by thy side.
No want of conscience hold it that I call,
Her loue, for whose deare loue I rise and fall.

152

In louing thee thou know'st I am forsworne,
But thou art twice forsworne to me loue swearing,
In act thy bed-vow broake and new faith torne,
In vowing new hate after new loue bearing :
But why of two othes breach doe I accuse thee,
When I breake twenty ; I am periur'd most,
For all my vowes are othes but to misuse thee :
And all my honest faith in thee is lost.
For I haue sworne deep othes of thy deepe kindnesse:
Othes of thy loue, thy truth, thy constancie,
And to inlighten thee gaue eyes to blindnesse,
Or made them swere against the thing they see.
For I haue sworne thee faire : more periurde eye,
To swere against the truth so foule a lie.

153

Cupid laid by his brand and fell a sleepe,
A maide of *Dyans* this aduantage found,
And his loue-kindling fire did quickly steepe
In a could vallie-fountaine of that ground :
Which borrowd from this holie fire of loue,
A datelesse liuely heat still to indure,
And grew a seething bath which yet men proue,
Against strang malladies a soueraigne cure :
But at my mistres eie loues brand new fired,
The boy for triall needes would touch my brest,
I sick withall the helpe of bath desired,
And thether hied a sad distemperd guest.
But found no cure, the bath for my helpe lies,
Where *Cupid* got new fire ; my mistres eyes.

154

The little Loue-God lying once a sleepe,
Laid by his side his heart inflaming brand,
Whilst many Nymphes that vou'd chast life to keep
Came tripping by ; but in her maiden hand,
The fayrest votary tooke vp that fire,
Which many Legions of true hearts had warm'd,
And so the Generall of hot desire,
Was sleeping by a Virgin hand disarm'd.
This brand she quenched in a coole Well by,
Which from loues fire tooke heat perpetuall,
Growing a bath and healthfull remedy,
For men diseasd ; but I my Mistrisse thrall,
Came there for cure and this by that I proue,
Loues fire heates water, water cooles not loue.

FINIS.