



WHOEVER possesses or  
does to possess more than he  
needs . . . more than a house, a  
garden, a room full of books . . .  
is doomed to keeping static the  
order in which he lives.

—Ludwig Lewisohn



Philip Durham

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**THE SHAKESPEARE TITLE**





AN IMPARTIAL STUDY

OF THE

SHAKESPEARE TITLE

WITH FACSIMILES

BY

JOHN H. STOTSENBURG



LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

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### DEDICATION.

I dedicate this book to the author of the "Promus." I know her through her works, and they show indubitably that she has earnestly, learnedly, and enthusiastically labored to expose the Shaksper fraud, and that to her more than to any other person is due the continuance of a literary controversy which will, sooner or later, bring out all the principal facts as to the authorship of the Shakespeare plays.

JOHN H. STOTSENBERG.

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## P R E F A C E .

I have undertaken to present facts to show, first, that William Shaksper, of Stratford-on-Avon, did not write the plays and poems heretofore attributed to him; secondly, that the plays, or at least a great part of them, were originally composed by collaborators; and thirdly, that they in part or in whole were corrected, revised, and added to by a person or persons other than William Shaksper.

But some one may say, "What is all this worth, even if proved? If you displace Shaksper, of what importance really is it to the world, if you discover or aid in discovering the man or men who should be rightfully set up in his place?" If it were merely a matter of fact as between a false and a true claimant, it would make little difference to the world at large; but the true author or authors of the magnificent poems and plays, now going under Shaksper's name, are apparently unknown to the reading public.

There is therefore a grand field of investigation open to the student of English literature.

While I strive to give facts only, and not conjectures, for the benefit of the reader so that he can form his own opinion, based upon those facts, as to the authorship, I have taken the liberty to give my own opinion also, especially upon collateral matters, such for instance as letters, poetical allusions, and written communications

which have been misinterpreted for the purpose of bolstering up the false Shaksper claim. I refer especially to Greene's "Groat's-worth of Wit," and Daniel's letter to Egerton, so much quoted and relied upon by Shaksperites and, as I remember, not generally controverted by the Baconians. As to the "Groat's-worth of Wit," an able writer, Edwin Reed, in his book entitled "Bacon vs. Shaksper," issued in 1897, takes the correct position, and he is supported by Edward James Castle in his "Shakespeare, Bacon, Jonson, and Greene," published in the same year. I must give credit also to Fleay, a believer in the Shaksper theory, who rejects the Malone guess as to the Shake-scene reference. I take the position that the author or authors of the plays can be found without the aid of ciphers, and that no author can go beyond his stock of words and phrases. Every man's words and phrases are limited in number—no more, no less.

I have maintained in this book that the key to the authorship, or at least to the discovery of one of the principal authors, will be found in the elucidation of the authorship of the two poems respectively called Venus and Adonis and Tarquin and Lucrece. The authorities which I rely upon are such as can not be disputed by Shaksperites; and with the Shaksper fiction out of the way, the truth as to the real authorship will sooner or later reach and convince the popular mind. Investigation in this field marked the closing years of the last century, and it is going on impartially and carefully in the early years of the present century. Men and women do not now cling as they did in the past to ancient superstitions and false opinions because they are ancient and hoary with age. *Veritas est magna et prevalebit.*

“Though all the winds of doctrine were let loose to play upon the earth, so truth be in the field, we do injuriously to misdoubt her strength; let her and falsehood grapple; whoever knew truth put to scorn in a free and open encounter?” So spake John Milton in his essay on the liberty of the press.

Somebody recently reproached Prof. Max Muller for wasting his time on mythology. He replied: “All I can say is that this study gives me intense pleasure, and has been a real joy to me, all my life. I have toiled enough for others; may I not in the evening of my life follow my own taste?”

What I have written in intervals of leisure I trust has not been a waste of time.

JOHN H. STOTSENBURG.





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AN IMPARTIAL STUDY  
OF THE  
SHAKESPEARE TITLE.

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CHAPTER I.

DOUBTS RAISED AS TO SHAKSPER'S ABILITY AND LEARNING.

*"Come, go along and see the truth hereof."*

—Taming of the Shrew, iv, 5.

THE reading public will probably agree with me that if any one should show to the world by convincing proof, and beyond doubt or cavil, that some one, other than William Shaksper, the son of John and Mary Shaksper, was the author of the plays and poems now attributed to him, they would nevertheless be always called and known, while the world lasts, as the Shakespeare plays and poems. Like the "No-Name Series" or the "Waverley Novels," they would be classified in literature as the original publishers classified them.

How then would the literary world be advantaged, if it could be clearly shown that the real authorship of the Shakespeare plays and poems should be rightfully ascribed to one man or to several collaborators, other than Shaksper, who have been hitherto unhonored and unsung?

I answer that the world is helped when a wrong, literary or otherwise, is righted. Honor to whom honor is due. Whenever the scales of error fall from the eyes of the

literati, the beauties of the great writers, dramatic and poetical, of the Elizabethan and Jacobean eras, who have been hitherto neglected and lost sight of, will be sought out and appreciated. "*Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona multi; sed omnes illacrimabiles urguentur*"; and many good writers flourished in the days of the Eighth Henry, Elizabeth and James, who are now scarcely known, or if known at all, are not properly appreciated by the student of English literature. The Elizabethan era, particularly, was prolific of good poets and dramatists, and if the real facts as to the authorship of the Shakespeare plays could be elicited, the student of English literature would revel in fresh literary fields and pastures new. Let us take for an illustration the jolly, jail-environed Thomas Dekker, of whom Whipple, in his "Literature of the Age of Elizabeth" (alluding to a scene in the Virgin Martyr), says that "it is difficult to understand how a writer capable of such refinements as these should have left no drama which is a part of the classical literature of his country." This great poet is scarcely known by the readers of English poetry.

And there, too, for illustration, is Anthony Monday, whom Meres, in his "Palladis Tamia," eulogizes as "our best plotter" in comedy and tragedy, and who was a great writer of good plays; and yet his name is almost unknown in the history of English literature.

Not long ago I wrote to a distinguished official of Lincoln Cathedral to learn some facts as to the poet, Thomas Heywood, who was born in Lincolnshire—a man whom I regard as a great writer and prolific dramatist of the Elizabethan age, and whose comedies are avowedly intended to be pictures of contemporary English life, and,

to my surprise, this Lincolnshire scholar and dignitary of the church replied that he had never heard of him.

If I shall write very radically about a man whose memory we have mistakenly revered from childhood, it is because I believe as Phillips Brooks did as to the statements of the early fathers, when he said that he revered them because they said so many good things that were true; his contention was not that what they said was true, because they were the fathers of the Church, but that they were the fathers of the Church because what they said was true. He revered authority, as expressed to him in an official statement, but he always asked, "Is this statement true, and if true, can it be verified? If it can be verified, then it is its own authority and we want no other. Is this alleged fact, a fact? If so, then it can bid the world defiance. Any number of bishops may fulminate against it, but it can challenge the whole world."

It is no argument against Shaksper's authorship of the poems and plays that he was poor or that he was the son of poor and illiterate parents, or that his occupation in early life was humble, or that while young he was a poacher or deer-stealer, or that he married a woman eight years older than himself, or that he was unkind to her, or that he engaged in occasional sprees, or that he was litigious or licentious. A poor man, a bad man, a drunkard or a debauchee may write good poetry. If Shaksper wrote the plays and poems ascribed to him with all these encumbering faults and disadvantages, he is entitled to the very highest meed of praise. But if he did not write them, why should not this idol be pulled down and broken to pieces, even though it is covered with the gilding of

centuries of undeserved praise? Why indeed, unless, as Dr. Holmes says, we like to worship false gods. In the following lines he tells us the exact truth about the mass of mankind:

“An idol? Man was born to worship such.  
 An idol is the image of his thoughts;  
 Sometimes he carves it out of gleaming stone,  
 And sometimes moulds it out of glittering gold,  
 Or rounds it in a mighty frescoed dome,  
 Or lifts it heavenward in a lofty spire,  
 Or shapes it in a cunning frame of words,  
 Or pays his priest to make it, day by day.  
 For sense must have its god as well as soul.  
 The time is racked with birthpangs. Every hour  
 Brings forth some gasping truth; and truth new born  
 Looks a misshapen and untimely growth;  
 The terror of the household and its shame,  
 A monster coiling in its nurse's lap  
 That some would strangle, some would only starve;  
 But still it breathes, and passed from hand to hand,  
 And suckled at a hundred half clad breasts,  
 Comes slowly to its stature and its form;  
 Welcomed by all that curst its hour of birth,  
 And folded in the same encircling arms  
 That cast it like a serpent from their hold.”

Mortals are credulous; and legends and traditions, particularly those which fabricate miracles which never took place, or which create heavenly agents who never existed, take hold of men's minds with great power, to the exclusion of the truth, and especially so when the person who is to be exalted is of very humble origin.

I have no harsh words for the great mass of the Shaksper idolaters. Having neither the time nor the desire perhaps

to investigate for themselves, they rely on the honesty of the Jaggard, Blount, Smithweeke, and Ashley syndicate of publishers, supplemented by the statements of Heminge and Condell and the superserviceable encomiums of Ben Jonson, supported also as they likewise are by the conjectures and guesses of Malone and his blind followers. As to these idolaters, I apply the language of a great writer belonging to the century just closed, who said, with reference to this idol worship, "The negroes in the service of Mumbo Jumbo tattoo and drill themselves with burning skewers with great fortitude; and we read that the priests in the service of Baal gashed themselves and bled freely. You, who can smash the idols, do so with a good courage; but do not be too fierce with the idolaters,—they worship the best thing they know."

And so I say to the searchers after the truth, whether they are known as anti-Shaksperites, Baconians, or by any other name, "Be sure and smash the idol, Shaksper, if you can, with the powerful weapons of fact, before you attempt to set up any poetical divinity in his place."

The first writer who, without intending to do so, actually cast a doubt about the Shaksper claim, was Richard Farmer, who, in 1767, wrote an essay on the learning of Shakespeare. He said in his preface: "It is indeed strange that any real friends of our immortal poet should be still willing to force him into a situation which is not tenable; treat him as a learned man, and what shall excuse the most gross violations of history, chronology and geography?" Thereupon he undertakes to prove that Shaksper, although not a learned man nor skilled in languages, was able to borrow from translations of Greek and Latin authors.

If Dr. Farmer had been an expert in chirography, and if his attention had been called to the wretched handwriting of Shaksper, as displayed in his signature to his mortgage, his deed and last will, he never would have attempted to show that a man with little or rather no learning could have ever used books containing translations into English from the dead or foreign languages. It may be said in this connection that it is remarkable that no notice whatever had been taken by the literary world of the illiteracy clearly manifested in the autographs of Shaksper until William Henry Smith of London, England, and William H. Burr of Washington, D. C., invited public attention to it.

The next writer who brought in plain and lucid language before the world the question of the right of William Shaksper to the authorship of the Shakespeare plays and poems, was Joseph C. Hart. He was the first public disputer and denier of the Shaksper title.

In the year 1848, Harper and Brothers published a book called "The Romance of Yachting," written, as stated therein, by Joseph C. Hart, the author of "Miriam Coffin," in which he maintained that William Shaksper of Stratford-on-Avon did not write the plays, and that he was merely the owner of all the properties of the theatre which included the plays possessed by the establishment, and that the plays were written by poorly paid collaborators. I have not been able to find a copy of Hart's book, but I give an extract from it, transcribed from a pamphlet issued in 1888 and written by General J. Watts de Peyster, entitled, "Was the Shakespeare after all a Myth?":

"Of Shaksper's youth, we know nothing, says one commentator. Of Shaksper's last years, we know abso-



lutely nothing, says another commentator. The whole, however, says Chalmers, commenting upon the labored attempts of Rowe, Malone and Steevens to follow Shaksper in his career, is unsatisfactory. Shaksper, in his private character, in his friendship, in his amusements, in his closet, in his family, is nowhere before us.

“Yet, notwithstanding all this mystery and the absence of any positive information, learned and voluminous commentators and biographers, in great numbers, have been led to suppose and assert a thousand things in regard to Shaksper's history, pursuits and attainments, which can not be substantiated by a particle of proof. Among these is the authorship of the plays grouped under his name which they assume as his for a certainty and beyond dispute. This egregious folly is beginning to re-act upon those who have been engaged in it, and some of them are placed in a very ridiculous position.

“A writer in Lardner's Cabinet Cyclopeda undertakes to give us the history of his family, from which I gather that John Shaksper, the father of William, was very poor and very illiterate, notwithstanding what the ambitious commentators may say to the contrary. So says Lardner, and he proves it beyond dispute. The coat of arms and the heraldry obtained for the family afterwards, was procured by fraud, and was pronounced discreditable to the so-called bard, who had a hand in it. But the poverty of the family is nothing in this case except to show that William Shaksper must necessarily have been an uneducated boy. He grew up in ignorance and viciousness and became a common poacher. And the latter title, in literary matters, he carried to his grave. He was not the mate of the literary characters of the day, and no one knew

it better than himself. It is a fraud upon the world to thrust his surreptitious fame upon us. He had none that was worthy of being transmitted. The inquiry will be, Who were the able literary men who wrote the dramas imputed to him?"

In commenting on Hart's statement, de Peyster aptly says: "Conceding that Shaksper was a miracle of intuitive force, such a gift would not have conferred knowledge or science, the inevitable result of studies and opportunities, which latter did not then exist. It almost seems ridiculous to talk about the writings of any man, when not a line of his has come down to us, and not a word, except his own signature. Is it a matter of possibility or probability that if Shaksper wrote so well in every sense of the word and such a vast amount, that no manuscript of his, good, bad or indifferent, has been preserved, when the writings of so many men of far lesser note, conceding any greatness to Shaksper, should not only exist but abound?"

"In the works reputed to Shaksper are thoughts almost actually, textually taken from Chaucer, Sidney, Lord Vere (notably the gravedigger's song in Hamlet), Beaumont and Fletcher (the witches' incantation in Macbeth), Montaigne, Bacon, Marlowe and others."

If any writer, devoid of bias and free from prejudice, possessed of sufficient means and pleasant manners, with proper introductions, leisure and power of investigation and analysis, the master of a clear and agreeable style, would go to England and examine every source of information and authority, and then communicate nothing else but facts to the world, then indeed those interested in the subject might have something worthy of the title of a biography of the real Shakespeare. As it is, the actuality

of the Shakespearean story holds the same proportion to legend or tradition, sentiment, gush, probability or possibility, that Falstaff's half penny worth of bread did to the two gallons of sack, the capon sauce and anchovies after a supper costing 10 s 10 d, which led Prince Henry to exclaim, "O monstrous! but one half penny worth of bread to this intolerable deal of sack."

Following Hart, two writers entered the field of discussion, each claiming that Francis Bacon was the author of the plays.

One of them, William Henry Smith, in his book entitled "Bacon and Shakespeare," says that "prior to the year 1611, a number of plays, tragedies, comedies, and histories, of various degrees of merit, were produced of which William Shakespeare was reported to be the author, and which undoubtedly were, in some way, the property of the company of actors of which he was an active member. Not one single manuscript has ever been found to identify Shaksper as the author of these productions: nor is there, among all the records and traditions handed down to us, any statement that he was ever seen writing or producing a manuscript; nor that he ever claimed as his own any of the excellent, or repudiated (as unworthy of him) any of the worthless productions presented to the public in his name. He seems at no time to have had any personal or peculiar interest in them; both during and after his life they seem to have been the property of the stage and published by the players, doubtless according to their notions of acceptability with the visitants of the theatre."

The other writer, Delia Bacon, claimed that the plays were imbued with the letter and spirit of the Baconian philosophy.

After these came Appleton Morgan, a gifted and careful writer, who, in his "Shakespearean Myth," has sent out a pressing summons to scholars and students of literature to examine disinterestedly and judicially the Shaksper claim. His work is an attempt (and a very learned and powerful attempt) to examine from purely external evidence a question which, dating only within the last twenty-five years, is constantly recurring to confront investigation and which, like Banquo's shade, seems altogether indisposed to down.

One of the most learned doubters, who if he had confined himself to the discussion of the single issue of the validity or invalidity of the Shaksper claim, would have excited an immense influence upon public opinion in favor of his theory, was the late Ignatius Donnelly. His argument against the ability of William Shaksper to write the plays, contained in the first part of his work, called the Cryptogram, is very powerful, clear, and convincing.

I must also include Richard Grant White in the list of doubters, for although he was an advocate for Shaksper, yet he was uncertain and unsettled in his opinion. Who but a doubter could have written the following:

"Unlike Dante, unlike Milton, unlike Goethe, unlike the great poets and tragedians of Greece and Rome, Shakespeare left no trace upon the political or even the social life of his era. Of his eminent countrymen, Raleigh, Sidney, Spenser, Bacon, Cecil, Walsingham, Coke, Camden, Drake, Hobbes, Inigo Jones, Herbert of Cherbury, Laud, Pym, Hampden, Selden, Walton, Wotton, and Donne may be properly reckoned as his contemporaries; and yet there is no proof whatever that he was personally known to either of these men or to any others of less

note among the statesmen, scholars, soldiers and artists of his day."

Such a statement justifies me in classing White among the doubters.

When I began at short intervals of leisure to examine the subject, it seemed to me that the inquiry logically divided itself into two heads; the first being, "Did William Shaksper write the plays and poems attributed to him?" and the second being, "If he did not, who did?" While working from time to time on these two propositions, I discovered that William H. Edwards of Coalburgh, West Virginia, had prepared a book called "Shaksper not Shakespeare," on that part of the same subject which is embraced in the first proposition and which relates to the plays only, and therefore the only excuse which I can give to the public for any attempt to throw light upon the question of the authorship of the plays and poems is that I have broadened the scope of the inquiry so as to embrace the poems and have treated the subject in a different manner from that followed by Mr. Edwards in his learned and able contribution.

## CHAPTER II.

HOW TO REACH THE TRUTH ABOUT THE PLAYS AND POEMS.

*“Nay, it is ten times true; for truth is truth  
To the end of reckoning.”*

—Measure for Measure, v, 1.

That the plays were called the Shakespeare plays raises a slight presumption in Shaksper's favor. It is, however, very slight indeed, because, first, as will hereafter be discussed and shown, the name used was not Shaksper's name; and because, secondly, everybody of literary taste knows that authors and poets very often conceal their names. Some of the best pieces of prose and poetry, which, if the authors were known, would have immortalized them, are anonymous gems. We do not know, so far as the real author's statements or admissions are concerned, who Junius was. When Waverley entranced the men and women of England, Sir Walter Scott was hiding behind the novel, and although book after book of war and love and knightly prowess came to the thirsty people as refreshing showers come to the parched earth, the glory of the authorship was not revealed; and the real writer was not the one whom the multitudes or the knowing critics and commentators honored; neither would Scott have been found out at all, had not the bankruptcy of his publishers compelled him to step before the curtain. Scott's reasons may seem peculiar to some, and yet they were rational enough. He says in his general preface: “Great anxiety was expressed to know the name of the author, but on this no authentic information could be

obtained. My original motive for publishing the work anonymously was the consciousness that it was an experiment on the public taste which might very probably fail," and again he says, "I am sorry I can give little satisfaction to the queries on this subject. I have already stated elsewhere that I can render little better reason for choosing to remain anonymous than by saying, with Shylock, that such was my humor. Another advantage was connected with the secrecy which I observed. I could appear or retreat from the stage at pleasure. In my own person also as a successful author in another department of literature I might have been charged with too frequent intrusions on the public patience; but the author of *Waverley* was in this respect as impassable to the critic as the ghost of Hamlet to the partisan of Marcellus."

I have said that a poor man, a bad man, a drunkard, or a debauchee may write good poetry, and a man who has not very much learning may likewise do so. Robert Burns, one of Britain's greatest poets, was not a scholar versed in the classics, and he could write of pretty maids, banks and braes, fireside scenes and simple, homely, heart-touching things, but he could not write of the great men and women, states and cities of antiquity, nor of the heroes and gods of mythology. They were strangers to him. John Bunyan was no great scholar, yet he produced a book which, without any trace of great learning therein, contains a display of the imaginative faculty so bewitching as to draw all scholarly men and women to the "*Pilgrim's Progress*" as a model of simplicity and clearness. Learning may be piled on genius and it will make the recipient a king, aye every inch a king; but learning can not be extracted out of genius by any human process;

and as for the supernatural in aid of a poet or historian or novelist, nothing very reliable can be expected from the ghosts of the departed.

The learned author of a book lately issued from the London press, entitled "Is it Shakespeare?" very aptly says as to genius, at page 126: "Genius can do much, but it is far from being able to make a man *omnibus numeris absolutus* or 'complete' in the sense that Shakespeare was. Genius alone can undoubtedly lift a man to a purer and a larger æther than ordinary mortals can breathe in. Instances are numerous enough in the annals of many a cottage home and lowly birthplace, but these self-same favored mortals, even if, as with Milton, they could hope to soar

'Above the flight of Pegasean wing,'

still would find that their wings of genius are sadly clipped, confined, and weakened unless they are taught to rise and fly by the knowledge that is in books and by the varied wisdom that has descended from the ages of the past. Without these helps they may indeed rise somewhat from the brute earth of ordinary humanity, but they will never be able to make those glorious circling swoops in the lofty circumambient air which are ever the wonder of the earth-bound crowd below, the marvel of an admiring world."

The writers whose works will show a knowledge, grammatically set forth, of theology, history, medicine, geology, botany, philosophy, finance, or the languages, or all of them, must have been students. Spenser, Sidney, Marlowe, Milton, Dryden, Pope, Cowper, Byron, Wordsworth, Southey, Campbell, Scott, and Tennyson were all trained and educated men.



King Henry describes the complete man when, in Henry VIII, Act 1, Scene 2, he says of Buckingham:

“The gentleman is learned, and a most rare speaker;  
To nature none more bound; his training such,  
That he may furnish and instruct great teachers,  
And never seek for aid out of himself.”

One of the best definitions of a poet is given by Thomas Dekker in his “Satiro-mastix”: “True poets are with art and nature crowned.” No one, I take it, but a scholar or coterie of scholars could have written the Shakespeare poems and plays.

Did William Shaksper write them? If not, who did? I think that every student and admirer of the plays and poems will agree with me that the proper way to arrive at the truth is, first of all, to discuss and settle the question of Shaksper’s right to the authorship, without reference to the claims set up for any one else; and when it has been fairly shown to the world beyond a reasonable doubt that William Shaksper could not have written the works for which he has so long received credit, the other question as to who wrote them can be better and more easily solved.

I do not expect to please, persuade, or convince the prejudiced reader by my attempt to remove the idol, Shaksper, from his unmerited throne. As Hawthorne beautifully expressed it, the first feeling of every reader must be one of absolute repugnance toward the person who seeks to tear out of the Anglo-Saxon heart the name which for ages it has held dearest, and to substitute another name or names to which the settled belief of the world has long assigned a very different position. The

Bible, the Book of Common Prayer, and the plays of Shakespeare so called, hold the first place in the affections of the English-speaking people; and although it is one thing to love a book and quite another to question its authorship, the multitude will not appreciate the distinction.

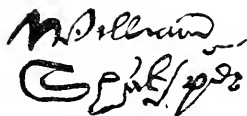
Another learned writer, who has thoroughly exposed the Shaksper fraud, expressed the common feeling when he wrote that "if an archangel from the Empyrean should write a book doubting the complete Shakespearean production of the Shakespeare plays, the book reviewers (and they are the best that money will secure) would say to a man that that archangel was a dolt and an idiot or at least ignorant, misguided, and beyond his depth."

When Paul stood in the midst of Mars Hill before the Epicureans and Stoics, and boldly proclaimed the God who was unknown to the Athenians, and the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked and all disbelieved, except the woman Damaris and a few others. Paul, in his bold and resolute way, ran counter to the received and fashionable belief. But Damaris has many sympathizers with her now, and the Christian minister can say with Hamlet, of those learned philosophers, "Where be your gibes now?" Reformers and iconoclasts are cranks and maniacs in the eyes of conservatives and aristocrats. Much learning has made them mad. Men and women must not run counter to cherished dogmas. Nevertheless, the truth is not made by majorities. If that were so, Mohammed or Buddha might be the true Savior and Jesus an impostor. Universality of belief even does not consecrate a lie. If it did, our writers, teachers, and parents would restore to his lost place in history that

other adored William—the archer patriot, so sweet to our boyhood days—that brave William Tell, who seemed once to be as firmly fixed in history as the snow-clad Alps and as immortal as the spirit of liberty that dwells among them. But alas! William Tell was a fraud and a lie. If it did, Pope Joan would be restored to the list of Roman pontiffs, and the Protestant Reformation would not have wiped out a lie once so generally believed. Yes, if it did, the reader and I, if then living, would have been educated to fraternize with the Inquisition and would have thought it no crime to force Galileo on his knees to renounce the sublime truths of his scientific creed.

Many persons, without special examination, accept William Shaksper as the author of the plays and poems upon the belief that he was different from all other men in that he possessed supernatural powers; that, without education, application to study and training, he, William Shaksper, was gifted with the faculty of knowing intuitively everything worth knowing in literature, history, science, and art, through the intervention of some super-human or divine authority. There is an instance recorded in Holy Writ of the very natural surprise of the Jews, when the Carpenter's Son went into the temple and taught the people, causing them to exclaim, "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" On that occasion the Jews, not recognizing the God-man, expressed the true view as to a mere man; but there is no instance in the history of the world where a man, without learning and barely able to write his name, was proficient in the arts and sciences and in the knowledge of those governing principles in nature and man's relation to his fellow man which can only be acquired by careful and persistent study.

If to-day in any of our Courts of Justice the question should arise as to the ability of a man named William Shaksper to write thousands upon thousands of pages of manuscript such as only a learned man can write, and a sample of his handwriting, made at the age of forty years, was produced for examination, the facsimile thereof, taken from Malone's "Inquiry," a Shaksperite authority, being as set out at the end of this sentence, any unprejudiced judge or jury of experts would pronounce the signature that of a very illiterate man.



An experienced and well-read lawyer would put on his spectacles, and after carefully examining the writing would address the court as follows: "Your Honor, this facsimile at first reminded me of what the Scottish advocate, Paulus Pleydell, said to Guy Mannering when the note from Meg Merrilies was put into his hands for examination, 'A vile, miserable scrawl indeed, and the letters are uncial or semiuncial, as somebody calls your large text hand, and in size and perpendicularity resemble the ribs of a roasted pig'; but upon consideration I am inclined to the opinion that I can more truthfully apply to this wretched writing what Dickens said of the note received by Mrs. Tibbs from Mrs. Bloss, 'The writing looks like a skein of thread in a tangle.' It surely shows that Shaksper was an illiterate fellow."

The doctor of divinity or of medicine, examining that signature, would say, "I must admit that this specimen

of handwriting strongly militates against the claim for Shaksper. The letters of the surname are so far apart and so badly formed that they show that the writer was very illiterate and unaccustomed to writing. If what you have shown me is a facsimile of Shaksper's handwriting, he was not scholar enough to write a play of any kind and the world has been imposed upon."

A school teacher or college professor would say, "That is the signature of a man whose education has been grossly neglected. The person whose handwriting is now shown to me can barely write his name."

A business man would say, "I do not want that man as my clerk or bookkeeper or sales agent. His signature shows clearly to me that he lacks education and learning."

An editor and newspaper reporter would say, "The fellow who made that signature is not fit for article writing or reporting. He is evidently an ignoramus, though he may be smart enough in driving bargains and money making. The man who can not write his name at all, or who can write it with difficulty, may be able to gather in the shekels, but he is not fit for newspaper reporting, essay writing, or editorials."

A county clerk, if called upon to give his opinion, would say, "As the clerk of the courts of my county, I have for several years, both in open court and in my office, witnessed the operation of affixing their signatures to documents by litigants or witnesses, both men and women. When they are putting their names to affidavits, deeds, mortgages, or other papers or instruments required to be signed, I have noticed that those who can hardly write their names take a great deal of time about the transaction, working at the formation of the letters as if it were

a painful and laborious task. Speaking from the standpoint of my experience as clerk, I would say that the man who wrote the original of the facsimile now shown to me labored very much over the making of the signature, and it was all that he could do to write his name. He did not even know how to form the letters of his surname. I should regard him as having been an unlearned man."

Indeed, I would be willing to submit the whole question of authorship to a jury composed of all the living leading writers in behalf of the Shaksper of Stratford-on-Avon, not omitting Mr. Sidney Lee, Mr. Hamilton Mabie, and Mr. James Walter, on condition that all other questions are to be eliminated and that they are to give their verdict upon the single issue of the ability of the man who wrote the signatures to the deed, mortgage, and will to write the thirty-seven plays, called the Shakespeare plays, containing over twenty-one thousand words. I feel sure that, divesting themselves of prejudice, after inspecting the signatures and listening to the testimony of disinterested experts in handwriting, and after hearing the arguments of learned advocates who have studied the handwriting, such for instance as William H. Burr and William H. Edwards, their unanimous verdict would be against the title of the man who made those signatures. This important matter of Shaksper's handwriting will be considered more at length in a subsequent chapter.

I will cite here some unassailable and unimpeachable authorities in support of my position that learning is acquired by study and not by inspiration, and I guarantee that the unprejudiced reader will agree with me that the following authorities are more reliable than the dicta of

all the guessing Shakespearean commentators from Malone to Mabie:

“O thou monster Ignorance, how deformed dost thou  
look!  
Sir, he hath never fed of the dainties that are bred in  
a book.”

—*Love's Labor's Lost*, iv, 2, 24.

“Ignorance is the curse of God,  
Knowledge the wing wherewith we fly to heaven.”

—*Second Henry VI*, iv, 7, 78.

“The common curse of mankind, folly and ignorance.”

—*Tro. and Cressida*, ii, 3, 31.

“My years are young,  
And fitter is my study and my books.”

—*First Henry VI*, v, 1, 22.

“Study is like the heaven's glorious sun,  
That will not be deep-searched with saucy looks.”

—*Love's Labor's Lost*, i, 1, 84.

“He was a scholar, and a ripe and good one.”

—*Henry VIII*, iv, 2, 58.

“My father charged you in his will to give me good  
education;

You have trained me like a peasant.”

—*As You Like It*, i, 1, 71.

“To you I am bound for life and education.”

—*Othello*, i, 3, 182.

“She in beauty, education, blood,  
Holds hand with any princess of the world.”

—*King John*, ii, 1, 493.

“I have those hopes of her good that her education  
promises.”

—*All's Well*, i, 1, 46.

“My library was dukedom large enough.”

—*Tempest*, i, 2, 109.

“Schoolmasters will I keep within my house,  
Fit to instruct her youth.”

—*Taming of the Shrew*, i, 1, 95.

“His training such,  
That he may furnish and instruct great teachers.”

—*Henry VIII*, i, 2, 112.

“Well, God give them wisdom that have it; and those  
that are fools,  
Let them use their talents.”

—*Twelfth Night*, i, 5, 14.

“Even so our houses and ourselves and children  
Have lost, or do not learn for want of time,  
The sciences that should become our country.”

—*Henry V*, v, 2, 56.

“I will be very kind, and liberal  
To mine own children in good bringing up.”

—*Taming of the Shrew*, i, 1, 96.

“My brother Jaques he keeps at school, and report  
speaks goldenly of his profit: for my part, he keeps me  
rustically at home.”

—*As You Like It*, i, 1, 6.

“Thou hast most traitorously corrupted the youth of  
the realm in erecting a grammar school.”

—*Second Henry VI*, iv, 7, 37.

Passing from the authority of the writers of the plays, which no one of the Shakespearean commentators can successfully impeach, I cite the opinions of the most celebrated writers:



“The mind is the man and the knowledge of the mind.  
A man is but what he knoweth.”

—Bacon, vol. ii, p. 123.

“The mind of man is this world’s true dimension,  
And knowledge is the measure of the mind.”

—Lord Brooke.

“By knowledge, we do learn ourselves to know,  
And what to man, and what to God we owe.”

—Spenser.

“Arts and sciences are not cast in a mould, but are  
formed and perfected by degrees, by often handling and  
polishing.”

—Montaigne.

“Aristotle was asked how much educated men were  
superior to those uneducated. ‘As much,’ said he, ‘as the  
living are to the dead.’”

—Laertius.

“It was a saying of his that education was an orna-  
ment in prosperity and a refuge in adversity.”

—Ibid.

“By labor and intent study (my position in this life),  
joined with the strong propensity of nature, I might per-  
haps leave something so written to after times, as they  
should not willingly let it die.”

—Milton.

“The heights by great men reached and kept,  
Were not attained by sudden flight,  
But they, while their companions slept,  
Were toiling upward in the night.”

—Longfellow.

“Whoso neglects learning in his youth loses the past  
and is dead for the future.”

—Euripides.

“It is only the ignorant who despise education.”

—Publius Syrus.

“Man is the only one that knows nothing, that can learn nothing without being taught.”

—Pliny.

“That place that does  
Contain my books, the best companions, is  
To me a glorious court, where hourly I  
Converse with the old sages and philosophers.”

—Fletcher.

“A wise man will hear and increase learning.”

—Proverbs, i, 5.

The necessity of education is illustrated in the first chapter of the Book of Daniel, verses 3 to 6.

The only adverse authority which I can find, and which comes directly in point in favor of those who believe that William Shaksper was a natural-born poet, is in *Much Ado About Nothing*, in Dogberry's charge to Neighbor Sea-Coale (iii, 3, 9):

“Come hither, neighbor Sea-Coale. God hath blest you with a good name: to be a well-favored man is the gift of fortune; but to write and read comes by nature.”

Of course, if it can be shown by facts outside of the Shakespeare plays and poems themselves that William Shaksper, of Stratford-on-Avon, obtained by training such an education as would enable him to write any or all of the plays and poems now credited to him, his title thereto would not be questioned; but where the facts and presumptions are all the other way, it is but proper and right that these facts and presumptions should be stated and considered. Sooner or later, mankind will arrive at the truth as to the authorship.

It is unfortunate that Thomas Heywood never completed and published his lives of the poets of his time. The editor of his plays, in his memoir of Thomas Heywood, says at page 41: "We have evidence that Heywood was for many years engaged upon a collection of the lives of poets of his own day and country, as well as of other times and nations." It would, of course, have included Shakespeare and his dramatic predecessors and contemporaries; and it is possible that the manuscript or part of it may yet lurk in some unexplored receptacle. Richard Braithwaite, in his "Scholars' Medley," 1614, gave the earliest information of Heywood's intention to make "a description of all poets' lives"; and ten years afterward, in his nine books of various history concerning women, Heywood himself tells us that his title of the projected work would be, "The Lives of all the Poets, modern and foreign." It was still in progress in 1635, when the "Hierarchie of the Blessed Angells" appeared; on page 245 of which work we meet with the following passage: "In proceeding further, I might have forestalled a work which hereafter (I hope) by God's assistance, to commit to the public view, namely, the Lives of all the Poets, fooreine and moderne, from the first before Homer to the Novissimi and last, of what nation or language soever."

It would be a valuable contribution to the history of English literature if, in some old chest or in some closet in some old English home, that manuscript could be found. It might explain beyond possibility of denial or contradiction who the "Mellifluous Shake-speare," as Heywood puts the name, really was. While Heywood's manuscript may never be found, it may be that there exists somewhere in England written evidence which will yet con-

vince the world of the utter foolishness of the Shaksper claim. Possibly, too, there may yet be found in some desk or drawer or unused receptacle in some one or more of England's homes, some paper or document that may throw light on the authorship of one or more of the poems and plays now to be examined.

In such investigations and examinations the diligent searcher for the truth as to the Shakespeare plays may yet be rewarded. The play of John a Kent and John a Comber was found among the papers of the ancient family of the Mostyns and fell under the notice of Sir Frederic Madden, the principal keeper of the manuscripts in the British Museum. The play of first Henry the Fourth was found in 1841 by the Rev. Lambert B. Larking, Vicar of Ryash, in the muniment room of the ancient seat of the Derings at Surrenden. There is no reason why careful searches may not yet bring their reward to the seeker after the truth in the important matter of the Shakespeare authorship.

### CHAPTER III.

#### HOW PLAYS WERE WRITTEN IN SHAKSPER'S TIME.

*"A truth's a truth; the rogues are marvelous poor."*

—All's Well, iv, 3.

Very few persons either in Great Britain or America know either how or by whom plays were generally written between the years 1590 and 1610, the interval during which the poems and plays appeared. It is taken for granted that writers of plays wrote then as they do now, each for himself, and that rights in the play and its publication were reserved to them. But by whom and how they were written between the above dates is not a matter of conjecture or supposition at all; and hence if we understand the custom of the times in that regard, we shall get some light at least on the authorship of the Shakespeare plays. The principal writers of plays in and near Shaksper's time were Francis Beaumont, Richard Brome, George Chapman, Henry Chettle, Samuel Daniel, John Day, Thomas Dekker, Michael Drayton, John Fletcher, Richard Hathaway, William Haughton, Thomas Heywood, Ben Jonson, Christopher Marlowe, John Marston, Thomas Middleton, Anthony Monday, Thomas Nash, Henry Porter, William Rankins, Samuel Rowley, Martin Slater, Wentworth Smyth, Anthony Wadeson, John Webster, and Robert Wilson. These dramatists generally wrote, not individually, but by a system of collaboration. Some of them were actors as well as dramatists, and they were all poor in pocket and very often bound by contract or in a manner enslaved to the proprietor of the theatre.

Henslowe's Diary shows not only the number of times that different plays were represented and generally the day when they were first acted, but it shows sometimes also who wrote the plays, the dates of their composition, and it often gives the names of all of those who had a hand in their authorship. This Philip Henslowe was a joint proprietor with Edmund Alleyn in the Rose Theatre, the Hope Theatre, the Fortune Theatre, and one in Newington Butts and Paris Garden. It is true that Henslowe's writing was not very good and that of his clerk not much better, and that neither of them could spell correctly; but nevertheless Henslowe has removed the dust which blinded the eyes of some of the most learned commentators and compelled them to be a little more conservative and careful in their guesses as to authorship.

August Wilhelm von Schlegel delivered a course of lectures on dramatic poetry in 1808 and obtained high celebrity for them on the continent. Madame de Staël said of them that "every opinion formed by the author, every epithet given to the writers of whom he speaks, is beautiful and just, concise and animated."

Speaking of *Sir John Oldcastle*, a play printed in 1600 with the name of William Shakespeare as the author on the title page, in connection with the plays of Thomas Lord Cromwell and *A Yorkshire Tragedy*, Schlegel said, "The three last pieces are not only unquestionably Shakespeare's but, in my opinion, they deserve to be classed among his best and maturest works. Thomas Lord Cromwell and *Sir John Oldcastle* are biographical dramas and in this species they are models. The first, by its subject, attaches itself to Henry the Eighth, and the second to Henry the Fifth. Still farther there has been ascribed

to him the *Merry Devil of Edmonton*, a comedy in one act, printed in Dodsley's *Collection of Old Plays*. This has certainly some appearance in its favor. It contains a merry landlord, who bears great similarity to the one in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*." All of this was written without knowledge of the discovery of Henslowe's Diary in the library of Dulwich College. The Diary was printed in 1841 by the Shakespeare Society, and on page 158 thereof occurs the following entry:

"This 16 of October 99 [meaning 1599] Received by me of Philip Henslow to pay Mr. Monday, Mr. Drayton and Mr. Wilson and Hathway for the first prte of the lyfe of Sir John Oldcastell and in earnest of the second prte, for the use of the company ten pounds. I say received." Farther along, on page 236 of the Diary, is the following entry:

"Lent unto the companye, the 17 of Auguste 1602 to pay unto Thomas Deckers, for new adicyons in Ouldcaselle the some of xxxx s."

The learned commentator, Schlegel, was therefore decidedly mistaken in saying that the play of Sir John Oldcastle was "unquestionably Shakespeare's and among his best and maturest works." Four dramatists composed it, viz: Anthony Monday, Michael Drayton, Robert Wilson, and Richard Hathaway. Thomas Dekker made additions to it. Schlegel was also mistaken as to the *Merry Devil of Edmonton*. That play was written by Michael Drayton.

In this connection it is amusing to read the satirical comment of Symonds in his "*Shakespeare's Predecessors*," page 390: "The names at least of Lord Cromwell and Sir John Oldcastle" he says, "must remain as danger signals

upon the quicksands of oracular criticism. Schlegel fathered Oldcastle on Shakespeare."

This blunder of Schlegel is not, however, without its compensatory aids to the discovery of the truth. He has connected the names of Drayton and Dekker with the Shakespeare mystery in such a way as to deserve careful examination and investigation of the literary ability of these two poets by scholars and commentators. It will be here noted, as above stated, that there are copies of the play of Sir John Oldcastle printed in 1600 with the name of William Shakespeare on the title page as author. Whether William Shaksper knew this or not is not very important, but it is clear that the playwrights, Monday, Drayton, Wilson, and Hathaway, and the play reviser and dresser, Thomas Dekker, knew that their play went abroad under a name similar to that of William Shaksper and that Shaksper had no more to do with its composition than the reader has.

The Diary also discloses another fact in illustration, not merely of the practice of collaboration, but also in settlement of the question of authorship of another play wrongly attributed to Shaksper. I give the entries just as they appear. On page 147 occurs the following: "Lent unto Thomas Dounton, to lende unto Mr. Dickers and Harey Cheattell, in earneste of ther boocke called Troyeles and Creassedaye the some of 3 pounds Aprell 7 day 1599." Following that entry is another confirmatory one, "Lent unto Harey Cheattell and Mr. Dickers, in prte of payment of ther boocke called Troyelles and Cresseda the 16 of Aprell 1599, xxs."

These remarkable entries not only refute the Shakespearean claim to the authorship of *Troilus and Cressida*,



but the collaboration of two men in its composition tallies exactly with the opinion of the leading commentators that one part of the play of *Troilus and Cressida* is altogether different in style and method from the other part. Even the careless reader of the play of *Troilus and Cressida* will notice the difference in the style and composition of parts of the play, naturally evidencing that it was the work of more than one writer. These remarkable entries as to *Troilus and Cressida* will be further considered in a subsequent chapter, when the play is examined.

But a much stronger instance of collaboration, and one which has a bearing on the question of the authorship of the Shakespeare plays, is recorded on page 221 of the *Diary*. I copy it verbatim: "Lent unto the companye, the 22 of May 1602 to give unto Antoney Monday and Mikell Drayton, Webester Mydelton and the Rest, in earnest of a booeke called *Sesers Falle* the some of five pounds." Collier, the editor of the *Diary*, adds the following note: "Malone passed over this important entry without notice; it shows that in May 1602, four poets, who are named, viz: Monday, Drayton, Webster, and Middleton, and some others not named, were engaged in writing a play upon the subject of the fall of Cæsar."

This entry will be considered and discussed hereafter in connection with the play of *Julius Cæsar* as published in the *Folio* of 1623.

When Thomas Heywood wrote the play of the *English Traveler*, he stated, in the address to the reader, that the play was one "among two hundred and twenty, in which I have had either an entire hand or at the least a main finger." He further states as to these plays of his "that many of them by shifting and change of companies have

been negligently lost. Others of them are still retained in the hands of some actors, who think it against their peculiar profit to have them come into print."

Even the surly and captious Ben Jonson, who insisted on sticking closely to the unities, was a collaborator with Chapman and Marston in the composition of the comedy of *Eastward Hoe*, and he states in an introduction to the play of *Sejanus* that as it appeared upon the stage "a second pen had a good hand in it." In the appendix to the *Hamlet* of the *Variorum Shakespeare* of Furness, at page 7 of the second volume, there is a complete corroboration of my assertion of fact as to how plays were written in Shaksper's time. The editor says:

"Just as Malone's edition of 1790 was issuing from the press, there was found at Dulwich College a large folio manuscript volume, containing valuable information respecting theatrical affairs from the year 1591 to 1609. The volume is in the handwriting of Philip Henslowe, a proprietor or joint lessee of more than one theatre during that period, and contains, among others, his account of receipts and expenditures in connection with his theatrical management. Malone reprinted copious extracts from this manuscript in the first volume of his edition; but it was reprinted entire by the Shakespeare Society in 1845, with a valuable preface by Collier. 'Henslowe,' says Collier, 'was an ignorant man, even for the time in which he lived, and for the station he occupied; he wrote a bad hand, adopted any orthography that suited his notion of the sound of words, especially of proper names (necessarily of most frequent occurrence), and he kept his book, as respects dates in particular, in the most disorderly, negligent, and confused manner. Sometimes, indeed, he observes a sort of system in his entries; but often when

he wished to make a note, he seems to have opened his book at random and to have written what he wanted in any space he found vacant. He generally used his own pen, but, as we have stated, in some places the hand of a scribe or clerk is visible; and here and there the dramatists and actors themselves wrote the item in which they were concerned, for the sake perhaps of saving the old manager trouble; thus in various parts of the manuscript, we meet with the handwriting, not merely the signatures, of Drayton, Chapman, Dekker, Chettle, Porter, Wilson, Hathaway, Day, S. Rowley, Haughton, Rankins, and Wadeson.' Where the names of nearly all the dramatic poets of the age are to be frequently found, we might certainly count on finding that of Shakespeare, but the shadow in which Shakespeare's early life was spent envelops him here too and his name, as Collier says, is not met with in any part of the manuscript. The rapidity with which plays must have been written at that time is most remarkable and is testified beyond dispute by later portions of Henslowe's manuscript where, among other charges, he registers the sums paid, the dates of payment, and the authors who received the money. Nothing was more common than for dramatists to unite their abilities and resources, and when a piece on any account was to be brought out with peculiar despatch, three, four, five, and perhaps even six poets engaged themselves on different portions of it. Evidence of this dramatic combination will be found of such frequent occurrence that it is vain here to point out particular pages where it is to be met with." If the reader will bear in mind the facts shown relative to the ignorance of William Shaksper, he will have no trouble in understanding why Shaksper's name does not appear anywhere in Henslowe's Diary. If

Shaksper had been a composer of plays, Henslowe would certainly have employed him for that purpose.

These collaborating playwrights were careless, easy-going fellows who sold the product of their brains for a mere pittance. Two or three or four, five, and sometimes six would agree with the manager to write a play for his theatre; and when finished, it would be sold outright to him for a paltry sum. The play, when sold, no longer belonged to the author or group of authors. It became the property of the manager, whose money had purchased it. To illustrate the fact of such proprietorship and to show the ownership of the proprietor of the theatre in thirty-two plays, one of which was very probably "Love's Labor's Lost," I quote in full from page 276 of the Diary. Henslowe, it will be remembered, was manager of the business, and as his spelling of the titles of the plays is abominably bad, I have given them correctly.

"A note of all such books as belong to the stock, and such as I have bought since the 3d of March, 1598.

Alexander and Lodovick	King Arthur's Life and
Alice Pierce	Death
Biron	Madman's Morris
Black Batman of the North	Mother Redcap
Parts 1 and 2	Phaeton
Black Joan	Phocus
Brennoralt	Pierce of Winchester
Cobbler of Queen Hithe	Pythagoras
Every Man in his Humor	Robin Hood, Parts 1 and 2
Friar Pendleton	Triangle of Cuckolds
Goodwin, Parts 1 and 2	Vayvode
Hardicanute	Welshman's Prize
Hercules, Parts 1 and 2	Woman Will Have her Will.

If the diary of this ignoramus, Henslowe, had never been found, and nothing had ever been known of him except the date of his birth and death, and if the publisher had printed these plays as the works of Philip Henslowe, they would have passed current as Henslowe's plays, for they belonged to him absolutely.

Let us next see how plays were bought. An extract from the Diary, at page 106, will show how Henslowe became the owner of the play called "Mother Redcap" above named; and the quotation is given verbatim to make clear his illiteracy.

"Layde out, the 22 of desembr 1597 for a booeke called Mother Redcape, to Antony Monday and Mr. Drayton 11i."

Another extract, at page 222, will inform us as to the joint distillation of the learning and theatrical skill of five dramatists bought by him.

"Lent unto Thomas Downton, the 29 of May 1602, to paye Thomas Dickers, Drayton, Mydellton, and Webster and Mondaye in fulle payment for the play called too harpes the some of three pounds."

The Two Harpies or Harps therefore contained the embodied labor of five authors at twelve shillings each.

Beside the purchase of plays outright, Henslowe bought in a very cheap way the services of some of these dramatists as revisers or dressers of plays or as makers of additions to them. If a play did not suit the audience or tickle the ears of the groundlings, it had to be added to, revised, dressed, or pruned; and for this purpose Thomas Dekker was principally employed, though at intervals the names of Benjamin Jonson, Henry Chettle, and others appear in the Diary. Thus on September 25, 1601, "Ben-

gemen Johnson upon his writings of his adicions in Geronymus" got forty shillings, and on June 24, 1602, "for new Adicyons for Jeronymo" he received ten pounds. Henry Chettle "for mendinge of Robert Hoode for the Corte" got ten shillings. "For mendinge of the boocke called the prowde Woman," he got ten shillings on January 21, 1601, and "for mendynge of the fyrst prte of Cardonlle Wollsey," he got twenty shillings. On page 71 of the Diary is the following entry as to Dekker, who was afterward reviled by Jonson in his *Poetaster* as a dresser of plays: "Pd unto Thomas Dickens, the 20 of Desembr 1579 for adycyons to Fostus twentie shellinges and fyve shellenges for a prolog to Marlowes Tamberlen, so in all I saye payde twentye fyve shellinges."

Buller asserts upon the authority of Warner that this entry is a forgery. But there could be no motive for such a forgery; and Warner's own comment shows that it is merely a crude opinion without any reason whatever to support it.

Sidney Lee, an ardent believer in the ability of Shaksper to write the plays, confirms my statement of how plays were written in Shaksper's time. At page 45 of his life of the myriad-minded William, he says:

"The professional playwrights sold their plays outright to one or the other of the acting companies and they retained no legal interest in them after the manuscript passed into the hands of the theatrical manager. It was not unusual for the manager to invite extensive revision of a play at the hands of others than the author before it was produced on the stage, and again whenever it was revived."

A remarkable entry also in confirmation of the system of collaboration is the entry on page 222, in which Hen-

slowe states that he paid to John Day on May 28, 1602, the sum of forty shillings in full payment for the Bristol Tragedy, "written by himself." Collier, the editor of the Diary, adds the following explanatory note: "The meaning of the words 'written by himself' is most likely that Day was the author of it, without any coadjutors."

As a matter of fact then, not to be gainsaid, it appears that during the period from 1590 to 1610, plays, for the most part, were written by collaboration, and the illustrious men whose joint labors enriched the theatrical manager were poverty-stricken fellows who sold their poetry and wit for paltry sums. As Collier, in his introduction to the Diary, says, "Nothing was more common than for dramatists to unite their abilities and resources; and when a piece on any account was to be brought out with peculiar despatch, three, four, five, and perhaps even six poets engaged themselves upon different portions of it."

Robert Burton, who probably knew some of these scholarly poets, describes them and their condition very accurately in his "Anatomy of Melancholy." "To say truth, 'tis the common fortune of most scholars to be servile and poor, to complain pitifully, and lay open their wants to their respectless patrons; and which is too common in those dedicatory epistles, for hope of gain to lie, flatter, and with hyperbolical eulogiums and commendations, to magnify and extol an illiterate unworthy idiot whom they should rather, as Machiavel observes, vilify and rail at downright for his most notorious villainies and vices. They are like Indians—they have stores of gold, but know not the worth of it; for I am of Synesius' opinion that King Hiero got more by Simonides' acquaintance than Simonides did by his. They have their best education,

good institution, sole qualification from us, and when they have done well, their honor and immortality from us. We are the living tombs, registers and as so many trumpeters of their fames. What was Achilles without Homer? Alexander without Arrian and Curtius? Who had known the Cæsars, but for Suetonius and Dion?

‘Before great Agamemnon reigned  
 Reign’d kings as great as he and brave  
 Whose huge ambitions now contain’d  
 In the small compass of a grave;  
 In endless night they sleep unwept, unknown,  
 No bard they had to make all time their own.’

“Poverty is the Muses’ patrimony, and as that poetical divinity teacheth us, when Jupiter’s daughters were each of them married, the Muses alone were left solitary, forsaken of all suitors, and I believe it was because they had no portion. Ever since, all their followers are poor, forsaken, and left unto themselves. Insomuch that as Petronius argues, you shall likely know them by their clothes. ‘There came,’ said he, ‘by chance unto my company a fellow not very spruce to look on. I asked him what he was; he answered, a poet. I demanded again why he was so ragged? He told me that this kind of learning never made any man rich.’”



## CHAPTER IV.

WILLIAM SHAKSPER HAS NO PLACE IN HENSLOWE'S DIARY.

*"To my knowledge,  
I never in my life did look on him."*

—King Richard II, ii, 3.

The fact that William Shaksper's name nowhere appears in any part of Henslowe's Diary, while having some weight as against his authorship of the plays, would not of itself have much significance were it not for the fact, not much known and heretofore not dwelt upon, that the company of which Henslowe was the manager and chief proprietor, owned and purchased some of the Shakespeare plays, and if Shaksper had written them or any part of them, or had disposed of his right and title to them as author, his name would certainly have appeared in the Diary. Titus Andronicus appeared as a new play and was acted at Henslowe's theatre for the first time on the twenty-third day of January, 1593. That it appeared as an entirely new play is conclusively proved by Henslowe's entry to that effect on the outer margin to designate it as such; and that it appeared on that day is clear from the following entry:

"R'd at titus and Ondronicus the 23 of Jenewary 1593 3 pounds 8 shillings." This entry meant that this sum represented the theatre receipts for the first presentation of the tragedy.

In commenting on this entry, Collier, the editor employed by the Shakespeare Society, says, in a note at page 33 of the Diary:

“Elsewhere sometimes spelt ‘Tittus and Ondronicus’ Malone had no doubt that this was the original Titus Andronicus before Shakespeare touched it (Shaksper by Bosw. 3, 300). It may be so or it may have been a distinct play on the same subject. Whatever it was, it is a novel and material fact that it was a new play on the 23 Jan. 1593. Henslowe placed *ne* in the outer margin to denote it.”

Here, then, is, as Collier says, a potent fact very clear and apparent that a play called Titus Andronicus was written prior to January 23, 1593, and put on the boards at that date, running through that season and the succeeding year also as the Diary shows. Now, while it was all right for Malone to say that this was the original Titus Andronicus, because the presumption, unless contradicted and overcome, would warrant that assertion in the guise of an opinion and a very decided opinion, yet he had no warrant of fact or presumption to assert that William Shaksper had touched it. Where does it appear in all the history of the times that the play of Titus Andronicus was ever amended, revised, or dressed by William Shaksper? It was a mere guess by Malone; and Collier, confounded by “the novel and material entry,” hazards the guess that it might have been “a distinct play on the same subject.” I put it to the unprejudiced reader that the natural hypothesis, founded on the unimpeachable statement in the Diary, is that the Titus Andronicus of the Diary *was* the Titus Andronicus of the plays, unless that hypothesis is destroyed by satisfactory evidence to the contrary.

On page 34 of the Diary it is shown that the tragedy of King Lear was acted on the sixth day of April, 1593.

The entry is as follows: "R'd at King Leare the 6 of Aprell 1593 XXXVIII s." The name of William Shaksper is not mentioned at all in connection with this play, and we are treated, in a foot note, to the following positive opinion of the editor that "this King Lear was certainly a much older play than Shakespeare's King Lear, and at this date our great dramatist was not one of the Queen's men." The dictum of Collier is utterly worthless, because it is not substantiated by any fact in support of it. The Diary does not mention Shaksper either as author, mender or reviser. The play could not have been a popular one, since it does not appear to have been repeated, and it would not be popular now if put upon the stage.

Henry the Fifth was acted for the first time on May 14, 1592, as is clearly shown on page 26 of the Diary. "Malone," says the editor in a note, "takes no notice of this play, which at least was the same in subject as Shakespeare's work. Possibly he read it 'Harey the VI,' but it is clearly 'Harey the 5th.' This is the piece to which Nash alluded in his 'Pierce Penniless' published in 1592; and the famous victories of Henry 5 was entered at Stationer's Hall to be printed in 1594. Malone was not aware that any such historical drama was mentioned by Henslowe." It was a very popular piece, for it was acted nine times in the winter of 1595 and in 1596, and brought good receipts to the company. The inventory of the goods of My Lord Admiral's men, set out at page 271 of the Diary, recites that in the year 1598 the doublet and velvet gown of Harry the fifth were "gone and lost," while at page 276 it is shown that the company, on the 13th of March, 1598, was supplied with a velvet gown for Harry and a satin doublet laid with golden lace, indicating that

the play had kept its hold upon the theatre-goers from year to year.

In all these entries there is no mention of Shaksper as the author or part author of the play or of any right, title, or interest of his therein.

The play of Henry the Sixth was acted for the first time in the theatre on the third day of March, 1591, as the Diary shows. The comments of Collier below this entry, at page 22, are significant:

“This play, whether by Shakespeare or not, was extremely popular. It produced Henslowe £1 11s 0d for his share on its fourteenth representation. On its performance in 1591, we here see that it brought him £3 16s 5d. Malone was of the opinion that it was the first part of Henry the Sixth, included among Shakespeare’s works; and it is certain that this entry of 3 of March, 1591, relates to its original production, as Henslowe has put his mark ‘ne’ in the margin.”

Popular as Henry the Sixth was, there is no recognition in the Diary of Shaksper’s connection with its authorship; and no entry appears anywhere therein indicating that he was paid or to be paid any sum of money for the sale of the play to the company.

The Taming of a Shrew was acted on the 11th of June, 1594, as shown by the following entry:

“11 of June 1594 R’d at the tamyng of a Shrewe IX s.”

Collier appends to this entry the following note: “No doubt the old Taming of a Shrew, printed in 1594, and recently reprinted by the Shakespeare Society under the care of Mr. Amyot from the sole existing copy in the library of the Duke of Devonshire.”

But who wrote *The Taming of a Shrew* printed in 1594, and who wrote the *Titus Andronicus*, *Henry the Fifth*, *Henry the Sixth*, or *King Lear* referred to in the Diary? Neither Collier nor any of the Shaksper commentators make any claim to their authorship in behalf of William Shaksper. Since these plays have the same names as those included in the Folio of 1623, the presumption is that they are the same plays until the contrary is shown. Of course, it may be shown either that those in the Folio are entirely different, except in name, or that these plays were revised, improved, and dressed by some one whom they called Shakespeare.

I think that the Henslowe Diary shows also on pages 91, 210, 240, 241, and 276 that the comedy of *Love's Labor's Lost* was acted at Henslowe's theatre, most probably the Rose Theatre, by the Lord Admiral and Lord Pembroke's men, on the second day of November, 1597. The name of the play is spelled in various ways in the Diary, as *Burone*, *Beroune*, *Burbon*, and *Borbonne*.

The entry on page 240 is as follows: "Lent unto John Ducke the 25 of Septembr 1602 to buy a blacke sewt of satten for the play of *Burone* the some of VII." As to this entry, the editor makes the following note: "In the *History of English Dramatic Poetry and the Stage* iii, 95, it is suggested that this entry and others may refer to Chapman's *Byron's Conspiracy and Tragedy* printed in 1608, but this is questionable on a comparison of dates. See Collier's *Shakespeare* 1, p. 209, where it is shown that Chapman's two plays have not reached us as they were originally written, in consequence of the remonstrance of the French Ambassador against certain incidents in them."

The next entry in the Diary, at page 241, helps to identify the play. "Layd owt at the apoyntmente of the companye, to macke a scafowld and bare for the play of Berowne and Carpenters' wages 14 s."

This indicates that there was a play or performance within the play which Henslowe calls Berowne, as there actually is in *Love's Labor's Lost*, namely, in the presentation of the side show by Armado, Costard, Nathaniel, and the rest of the Nine Worthies. A scaffold and bar are meant by the terms "scafowld and bare," and by the word "Berowne" Henslowe, this rich murderer of the King's English, probably meant to name the chief character "Biron," in *Love's Labor's Lost*. This opinion of mine seems to be confirmed by the second note which the learned Verplanck, who edited an excellent edition of the plays, appends to the first scene of act one. "Biron," he says, "is in all the old editions printed 'Berowne,' which Rowe altered to 'Biron,' as the traditional pronunciation of that noble name had in his time still remained as in Shakespeare's. The verse shows that it is not a misprint, but the pronunciation of the poet himself and his times. It is to be pronounced with the accent on the last syllable." Upon examination of the old editions it will be found that Verplanck was right. "Biron" in all of them is printed "Berowne," which Rowe took it upon himself in after years to change to Biron. Henslowe, therefore, did not get very far out of the way in his spelling of the word.

If I am right in my opinion as to the identification of the play by the term used by Henslowe, the play was acted in 1597, and it is certainly known that it was published in 1598. That Henslowe's company owned this

play as late as March 3, 1598, is shown on page 276 of the Diary.

Richard the Third was probably brought out on December 31, 1593, although Henslowe spells it "Richard the Confesser" and on the next day he calls it "Buckingham." In the mention of Berowne or of this play in the Diary there is no reference whatever to William Shaksper.

If Shaksper had been a writer of plays, and if he had written any of the plays above named, his talents and ability would have been appreciated by Henslowe, and he would undoubtedly have been employed by him to write and revise plays, so that his name would have appeared in the Diary. That Henslowe was quick to recognize talent is evident from the fact that Drayton, Wilson, Monday, and Hathaway received from him a monetary gift after the first presentation of Sir John Oldecastle, in addition to their pay; and John Day and Thomas Dekker received similar presents; while suppers were given by him to them from time to time. But William Shaksper was wholly ignored by Henslowe. Collier, on page 14 of the introduction to the Diary, utters the following lamentation: "Recollecting that the names of nearly all the other play-poets of the time occur, we can not but wonder that that of Shaksper is not met with in any part of the manuscript. The notices of Ben Jonson, Dekker, Chettle, Marston, Wilson, Drayton, Monday, Heywood, Middleton, Porter, Hathaway, Rankins, Webster, Day, Rowley, Haughton, &c., are frequent, because they were all writers for Henslowe's theatre; but we must wait at all events for the discovery of some other similar record, before we can produce corresponding memoranda regarding Shaksper and his productions."

It is quite clear to any unprejudiced seeker after the truth that Henslowe could not have obtained from the author or authors of *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, *Titus Andronicus*, or the *Taming of the Shrew*, the title to and ownership of such plays or of any of them without paying for them, and more especially he could not without a good consideration have got them from Shaksper, whose business transactions all show that in money matters he was a tight-fisted fellow. Yet during the interval of time during which the Shakespeare plays appeared, namely, from 1590 to 1609, William Shaksper had no place in the *Diary of Philip Henslowe*—a book which contains minute and valuable information respecting the history and condition of the early drama and stage between the years above named, during the whole of which period Collier, without the slightest foundation of fact for his statement, guesses that “Shaksper was exercising his unequalled powers for the public instruction and amusement.”

While Collier was compelled to admit that there is no mention whatever of William Shaksper in the *Diary*, yet he felt it to be his duty to get his idol's name into the copy published by the Shakespeare Society. He accomplished this by means of notes in which he contrived to insert a reference to Shakespeare.

The insertion of these notes editorially enabled him to incorporate the name of William Shakespeare in the index to the *Diary*; so that while William Shaksper has no place in Henslowe's *Diary*, he has been well provided for by Collier in his index to the printed copy of the manuscript.

Not only is it true that William Shaksper has no place in Henslowe's *Diary*, but it is also a fact well worthy of consideration that he has no place in Edward Alleyn's



memoirs or accounts. The reader will remember that Alleyn was not only an actor but a theatrical proprietor, and that he was the founder of Dulwich College. His papers and memoirs, which were published in 1841 and 1843, contain the names of all the notable actors and play-poets of Shaksper's time, as well as of every person who helped directly or indirectly or who paid out money or received money in connection with the production of the many plays at the Blackfriars Theatre, the Fortune, and other theatres. His accounts were very minutely stated, and a careful perusal of the two volumes shows that there is not one mention of such a poet as William Shaksper in his list of actors, poets, and theatrical comrades.

## CHAPTER V.

SHAKSPER COMMENDED NO CONTEMPORARY.

*"Our praises are our wages."*

—The Winter's Tale, i, 2.

It was the universal custom in England during the period when Shaksper lived for poets and prose writers to praise the writings of contemporary authors, either in verse or prose. If the reader will turn to the works of Thomas Heywood, Ben Jonson, George Chapman, Thomas Middleton, Michael Drayton, John Marston, Thomas Dekker, or any of the distinguished writers of that era, he will discover that such commendatory verses invariably accompany the preface or dedication when the book issued from the press.

I will give a brief illustration from the works of Heywood. His works are prefaced by the commendation of three contemporaries. One of them begins thus:

*"To his worthy friend, the author Thomas Heywood.*

Heywood, when men weigh truly what thou art,  
How the whole frame of learning claims a part  
In thy deep apprehension; and then see,  
To knowledge added so much industry;  
Who will deny thee the best palm and bays?  
And that to name thee to himself is praise."

In further illustration of this custom, the poet Drayton wrote commendatory verses for Chapman's "Hesiod," Tuke's "Discourse against the painting and tincturing of

Women," Monday's "Primalcon of Greece," and his own compositions were in a like manner commended by Browne, Sir William Alexander, Drummond, and other contemporaries and friends. Beaumont and Fletcher received for their plays poetical commendation and gave such commendation in courteous exchange to their associates in the art of poesy. Marston and Dekker did the same, and Ben Jonson, who was regarded as morose, surly, and envious, took delight in praising the works of others and in being praised for his own. The celebrated poem ascribed to Charles Best was commended in verse by Ben Jonson, George Chapman, William Browne, Robert Daborne, and George Wither. I need not multiply illustrations. It was the common custom of the poets of that era.

Let us consider for a moment how the learned commentators picture Shaksper. He is called by them "Our pleasant Willy," and "the gentle Shepherd," and they describe him as the intimate friend and companion of Ben Jonson in his revelries and of Burbage in his amours. They picture him as a man of amiable and generous disposition and one who would naturally interest himself in the advancement of his friends, and especially of the young men who were aspiring to be poets or dramatists. Collier says that "he must have been of a lively and companionable disposition; that we can readily believe that when any of his old associates of the stage, whether authors or actors, came to Stratford, they found a hearty welcome and free entertainment at his house." If Shaksper was such a companionable and amiable fellow, and if he was the writer of plays and poems, he would naturally have followed the universal custom of obliging and gratifying

his writer friends with commendatory verses to accompany their works. But we look in vain for even one such act of courtesy and commendation. The great writers and poets of that era wrote and published books, and their plays were printed from time to time while Shaksper lived, but Shaksper's name is not found among the commenders. Whether a poet in those days was an ill-natured churl or a gentleman, he could not very well refuse the request, if asked by a brother poet, for a short commendatory stanza or two to give standing to the issue of his brain. And if Shaksper had been a poet at all, if he had been on such familiar terms with Beaumont, Fletcher, Jonson, Chapman, Dekker, and the other poetical frequenters of the Mermaid tavern as his admirers assert that he was, these poets or some of them would naturally have solicited a few lines from Shaksper if he was the honey-tongued, heaven-inspired king of poets. The plea of Shaksper's indifference is the only refuge and defense of the Shaksperites against these assaults. He was indifferent, they assert, to praise or dispraise. That is the very ground of the charge the seekers after the truth make against him. He was unquestionably indifferent, and naturally so, for the reason that he was not a poet and he was too ignorant to compose a decent and readable commendation, either in verse or prose. He may have had, and probably did have, all the business capacity of Philip Henslowe, who associated with and gave suppers to the poets who sold the coinage of their brains to him, but no poet would have ever asked Henslowe for commendatory verses; and if Shaksper's indifference was founded upon ignorance, he could not give and certainly would not receive commendatory verses.

There is one thing which the Shaksper worshipers do not consider and are unable to answer, and that is the potent argument against their indifference theory which the real writer or writers of the plays advances against them. The real Shakespeare says:

“Canst thou the conscience lack,  
To think I shall lack friends?”

—Timon of Athens, ii, 2.

“The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,  
Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel.”

—Hamlet, i, 3.

“Is all forgot?  
All school-days’ friendship, childhood, innocence?”

—Midsummer Night’s Dream, iii, 2.

“What friendship may I do thee?”

—Timon of Athens, iv, 3.

“A friend should bear his friend’s infirmities.”

—Julius Cæsar, iv, 3.

“I have heard you say  
That we shall see and know our friends in heaven.”

—King John, iii, 4.

And many other instances might be cited from the plays of the value given to friendship and courtesy by the writer or writers of the plays.

Whether the custom of the poets of that era as to commendation was followed for the purpose of helping the sale of the book or as a mere matter of courtesy and gratulation, it was the prevailing custom among the poets and writers of the time; and if William Shaksper was a poet and dramatist, and if he was imbued with the spirit

of courtesy and gentleness which the Shaksper idolaters audaciously and without warrant lavish upon him, he would certainly have honored his contemporaries with a stanza or two at least of heaven-bred poesy or a few lines of complimentary prose in praise of their occasional efforts to please the public. His admirers claim that he was cheek by jowl with Ben Jonson, Drayton, Beaumont and Fletcher, and all the great writers of that epoch, and yet no man has ever produced one line or one word even from William Shaksper in praise or commendation of the works of any man who was a contemporary. During Shaksper's life, prose and poetical commendations circulated freely among the real poets and dramatists, but William Shaksper praised no one, criticised no one, extended courtesy to no one, and the readers of the works of the great men of that day will look in vain for any written or printed word to show that Shaksper ever wrote a sentence either in commendation or disparagement of anybody. One can understand that if a learned man is saturnine, selfish, and sullen, although he can not escape from them, he may nevertheless despise the courtesies and conventionalities of society or of those in his own profession or occupation; but if he is truthfully credited with gentleness, affability, and the power to appreciate the efforts of his associates, he certainly would have been, in such a case, the very last man to abstain from commending their literary efforts.

If one man wrote the Shakespeare plays and poems, that man, whoever he was, must have had literary associates and friends; he must have been more or less acquainted with the noble and learned men and women of that period; he must have been at least in touch with

such of his accomplished fellow men as were engaged in the same pursuits in life, or with those whom he looked up to as the encouragers and patrons of his literary efforts. Such a brilliant and learned writer could not shut himself up from society and avoid all communion with his fellow men.

Hence it is a circumstance measurably tending to weaken the Shaksper claim to authorship that nowhere in all the history or the literature of the time in which he lived can be found any commendatory epistle either in prose or verse addressed by him to any poet or prose writer of the period. If such a written or printed commendation could be found, and if Shaksper had been a man of letters competent to write a play, the fact of such a commendatory letter written by him would be an irresistible argument in his favor. On the other hand, the fact that no such commendatory letter exists in manuscript or book form is a very strong argument against the ability of Shaksper to write a play at all.

It is, of course, clear to the student of English literature, and especially to those who have waded through the guesses and hypotheses of Shaksper's idolaters that during his lifetime no writer addressed any commendatory verses or prose writings to accompany any book or publication authorized by him. If any comedy, tragedy, history, or book on any special or miscellaneous subject can be found issued in Shaksper's lifetime by his authorization, with any words therein of commendation of Shaksper from any poet or prose writer of the time, it would be hailed with delight by the reading public as confirmatory of the disputed Shaksper claim, and it would be the very best evidence of Shaksper's ability to write

a play or poem. That none such can be found after the exhaustive search of several centuries is a presumption at least against that ability.

In this connection what Emerson said about the failure of the great men of that era to find out such a person as Shaksper is worthy of consideration.

“If it need wit to know wit, according to the proverb, Shakespeare’s time should be capable of recognizing it. Sir Henry Wotton was born four years after Shakespeare, and died twenty-three years after him, and I find among his correspondents and acquaintances the following persons: Theodore Beza, Isaac Casaubon, Sir Philip Sidney, the Earl of Essex, Lord Bacon, Sir Walter Raleigh, John Milton, Sir Henry Vane, Isaac Walton, Dr. Donne, Abraham Cowley, Bellarmine, Charles Cotton, John Pym, John Hales, Kepler, Vieta, Albericus Gentilis, Paul Sarpi, Arminius—with all of whom exists some token of his having communicated, without enumerating many others whom doubtless he (Wotton) saw—Shakespeare, Spenser, Jonson, Beaumont, Massinger, two Herberts, Marlowe, Chapman, and the rest. Since the constellation of great men who appeared in Greece in the time of Pericles, there was never any such society; yet their genius failed them to find out the best head in the universe. Our poet’s mask was impenetrable.”



## CHAPTER VI.

SHAKSPER LEFT NO LETTERS AND HAD NO LIBRARY.

*“Knowing I loved my books, he furnished me  
From my own library with volumes that  
I prize above my dukedom.”*

—The Tempest, i, 2.

A literary man, and especially one who is credited by the admiring public with the authorship of the histories, comedies, and tragedies which the literary world so much esteems, could not transact business, either literary or otherwise, without writing letters to his friends, gentle or simple, admirers, kinsmen, tradesmen, patrons, fellows of his craft or publishers. In Shaksper's time, Ben Jonson, Thomas Dekker, Thomas Heywood, Michael Drayton, John Webster, John Marston, Francis Beaumont, John Fletcher, and others wrote to one another and to friends, acquaintances, and patrons, and their epistles and writings have been found; even Dekker's letters from the debtors' prison have been preserved. But in the case of Shaksper, the most persistent and careful search for any writing, epistolary or otherwise, from his pen or pencil, has been unavailing. Letters have been manufactured in order to minister to the cravings of hungry admirers and devotees, but a genuine letter from William Shaksper has never been discovered; and as will be shown hereafter, none can be discovered, for the evidence based on his signatures shows that he could not write a letter.

Diligent search has evolved one letter, and only one, to him, an exact copy of which is as follows:

“Loveinge contreyman, I am bolde of yow, as of a ffrende, craveinge your helpe with xxx.ii. vppon Mr. Bushells and my securitytee, or Mr. Myttons with me. Mr. Rosswell is nott come to London as yeate, and I have especiall cawse. Yow shall ffrende me muche in helping me out of all the debettes I owe in London, I thancke God, and muche wuiet my Mynde, which wolde nott be indebted. I am nowe towards the Cowrte, in hope of answer for the dispatche of my buysenes. Yow shall nether loase creddytt nor monney by me, the Lorde wyllinge; and now butt perswade yowrselſe soe, as I hope, and yow shall nott need to feare, butt, with all heartie thanckfullness, I wyll holde my tyme, and content your ffrende, and yf we bargaine farther, yow shall be the pai-master yowrselſe. My tyme biddes me hastene to an ende, and soe I committ this (to) your care and hope of your helpe. I fear I shall nott be backe thys night ffrom the Cowrte. Haste. The Lorde be with yow and with vs all, Amen! ffrom the Bell in Carter Lane, the 25 October, 1598.

Yours in all kyndenes,

Rye. Quyne.

*To my loveinge good ffrend and contreymann Mr. Wm. Shackespere deliver thees.”*

This letter tends to show that Shaksper, like the ignorant Henslowe, was a money-lender, and it throws no light whatever upon his literary ability. No man can be a great writer without having friends to correspond with. He can not escape from letter-writing. Some of his correspondence, however trivial, will be found in some

one's possession. Not a scrap, not a word from Shaksper has ever been found.

Pope gives in the following lines expression to the universal idea as to the usefulness and pleasure imparted by letters:

“They live, they speak, they breathe what love inspires;  
Warm from the soul, and faithful to its fires:  
The virgin's wish without her fears impart,  
Excuse the blush, and pour out all the heart,  
Speed the soft intercourse from soul to soul,  
And waft a sigh from Indus to the pole.”

But why go to Pope, when the real Shakespeare says:

“Let me hear from thee by letters  
Of thy success in love, and what news else  
Betideth here in absence of thy friend.”

—Two Gentlemen of Verona, i, 1.

“For often have you writ to her, and she, in modesty,  
Or else for want of idle time, could not again reply.”

—Two Gentlemen of Verona, ii, 1.

“We shall have a rare letter from him.”

—Twelfth Night, iii, 2.

“Here is a letter will say somewhat.”

—Merry Wives of Windsor, iv, 5.

The plays are full of incidents connected with letters and with reference to correspondence by letters. The literary public have craved and sought everywhere for a corroboratory line by way of letter or merest fragment of note from the real Shakespeare. Ireland invented some to please the popular taste, and the people generally and even the critics were gulled by his forgeries for a little while. If there could only be found, for example, a letter from the divine William to his beloved wife explaining

satisfactorily why he bequeathed to her his second-best bed, what a treasure it would be to the literary world! The letter might for instance say, to borrow Collier's language, that this "second-best bed" was that in which the husband and wife had slept when he was in Stratford earlier in life and every night since his retirement from the metropolis; and that as the best bed was reserved for visitors he thought that she would be better pleased with the old bed; or he might have said, as one devotee explains it, that he gave and bequeathed it to her because it was the bed which they bought and used when they were married; and that when left a widow she could preserve it as a memorial.

Skottowe, in his *Life of Shakespeare*, Note P, aptly says as to this magnificent bequest, "When Shaksper made his will, his wife was at first forgotten altogether, and only became entitled to her legacy under the benefit of an interlineation. To those in search of subjects for controversy the temptation was irresistible. Malone acknowledges the bard's contempt for his wife, and thinking it derogatory to his penetration not to be able to account for it, makes him jealous of her. Steevens, rightly enough, defends the lady, but, forgetting for once the knowledge of his life, appears quite unconscious that husbands as well as wives are occasionally false. The conversion of the bequest of an inferior piece of furniture into a mark of peculiar tenderness—

‘The very bed that on his bridal night  
Received him to the arms of Belvidera’

is not much in the usual style of this very knowing commentator." He takes it for granted, without any proof,

that this famous second-best bed was in reality the nuptial couch.

Old John Hayward, a contemporary of Shaksper, and the same John whose body Queen Elizabeth felt inclined to rack, furnishes a better and more practical key to the discovery of the true intent and meaning of Shaksper's will in this respect than either Collier or Steevens, for in his will, dated March 30, 1626, he uses this language, "I give to my wife the bed wherein she lieth with all things pertaining thereto, and two other of the meanest beds held for servants," and then he adds, "in regard of her unquiet life and small respect towards me, a great deal too much."

Or if there could only be found a letter from Shaksper to his dearly beloved daughter Judith after her marriage, regretting her inability to write and explaining to her how he sought to send her to school when she was at the proper age, but that she was then very willful and wayward, refusing either to stay at school or to study, and that therefore neither she nor her husband Thomas Quiney could blame him for her inability to write her own name.

Or if there could be found a letter from his wife to him explaining, for the world's benefit, why the marriage license was taken out in the name of Anne Whatley of Temple Grafton and the marriage bond in the name of Anne Hathaway of Stratford-on-Avon.

Or if there could only be found a letter from him to any one of his dear friends, describing his library and specifying the books which he most delighted in reading and studying.

As to being the possessor of a library, the facts tend to negative the ownership in him of any books or manu-

scripts whatever. And what are the facts? The reader must go to his will for them. The will was prepared in January, 1616, and written by Francis Collins, a solicitor of Warwick, but it was not signed by Shaksper until March 25, 1616. He gave among other things to Judith Quiney, his younger daughter, his broad silver gilt bowl, and to his wife his second-best bed with the furniture, but he makes no mention whatever of books or manuscripts, and no directions whatever are given as to the publication of any writings.

From the absence of all reference to books in Shaksper's will, it may safely be inferred that he was not the owner of any. This presumption is aided also by the further fact that the Halls, who were his residuary legatees, made no reference on the sale of Hall's books to any books of Shaksper; and Halliwell-Phillips, who was a believer in Shaksper's authorship of the plays, says about the library "that Shaksper ever owned one at any time of his life is exceedingly improbable."

Naturally a man takes a pride and very special interest in his own literary offspring; and particularly so if he is rich enough to provide in his last will for its proper preservation. But Shaksper, although rich enough, took no interest in any literary production attributed to him, and made no provision either by will or otherwise for the care of any manuscript and the circulation thereof by publication. Indeed Shaksper never claimed, directly or indirectly, that he ever wrote a single play.

Here again it seems proper to produce evidence in support of my theory, from irrefragable sources. The author of *The Tempest*, in addition to the words which I have placed at the beginning of this chapter, said also,

“My library  
Was dukedom large enough.”  
—*The Tempest*, i, 2.

“Ah boy! Cornelia never with more care  
Read to her sons, than she hath read to thee  
Sweet poetry and Tully’s Orator.  
Some book there is that she desires to see;  
Which is it, girl, of these? Open them, boy—  
But thou art deeper read, and better skill’d,  
Come and take choice of all my library.”  
—*Titus Andronicus*, iv, 1.

“We turned o’er many books together.”  
—*Letter in Merchant of Venice*, iv, 1.

“Sir, he hath never fed of the dainties that are bred  
in a book.”  
—*Love’s Labor’s Lost*, 4, 1.

Old Chaucer knew what a scholar craved when he wrote:

“For he would rather have at his bed head  
A twenty books, clothed in black or red  
Of Aristotle or his philosophy  
Than robes rich, rebeck or saltery.”

Taking, now, the sad admission of Halliwell-Phillips that it is probable that Shaksper never owned a library at any time in his life, and couple that admission with the fact that he is admitted to have been a rich man, and it follows that there is a very strong presumption from these facts that, however shrewd in business affairs he may have been, he was an illiterate fellow. Who can believe that an ignoramus could be divinely inspired?

Appleton Morgan takes very positive ground against Shaksper's literary knowledge on the basis of his lack of books. On page 266 of his "Shakespearean Myth" he says:

"But even if Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth, and Julius Cæsar could have been produced by machinery, and engrossed *currente calamo* (so that the author's first draft should be the acting copy for the players), they could hardly have been composed, nowadays, without a library. And even had William Shaksper possessed an encyclopedia (such as were first invented two hundred years or so after his funeral), he would not have found it inclusive of all the references he needed for these five plays alone. They can not be studied as they were capable of being studied by Coleridge and Gervinus—without a library. And yet are we to be asked to believe that they were composed without one, in the days when such a thing as a dictionary even was unknown? Who ever heard of William Shaksper in his library pulling down volumes, dipping into folios, peering into manuscripts, his brain in throe and his pen in labor, weaving the warp and woof of his poetry and his philosophy, at the expense of Greece and Rome and Egypt; pillaging alike from tomes of Norsemen lore and Southern romance—for the pastime of the rabble that sang bawdy songs and swallowed beer amid the straw of his pit, and burned juniper and tossed his journey-actors in blankets?

"It is always interesting to read of the habitudes of authors—of paper-saving Pope scribbling his Iliad on the backs of old correspondence, of Spenser by his fireside in his library at Kilcolman Castle, of Scott among his dogs, of Gibbon biting at the peaches that hung on the trees



in his garden at Lausanne, of Schiller declaiming by mountain brooksides and in forest paths, of Goldsmith in his garrets and his jails. Even of Chaucer, dead and buried before Shaksper saw the light, we read of his studies at Cambridge, his call to the bar and his chambers in the Middle Temple. But of William Shaksper—after ransacking tradition, gossip, and the record, save and except the statement of Ben Jonson how he had heard the actor's anecdote about his never blotting his lines,—not a word, not a breath can be found to connect him with or surprise him in any agency or employment as to the composition of the plays we insist upon calling his—much less to the possession of a single book. Had we found this massive draught upon antiquity in the remains of an immortal Milton or a mortal Tupper, or in all the range of letters between, we should not have failed to presume a library. Why should we believe that William Shaksper needed none?—that as his pen ran, he never paused to lift a volume from the shelf to refresh or verify his marvelously retentive recollection? There was no Astor or Mercantile Library around the corner from the Globe or the Blackfriars in those days. And as for his possessions, he leaves in his will no hint of book or library, much less of the literature the booksellers had taken the liberty of christening with his name! Where is the scholar who glories not in his scholarship? By universal testimony, the highest pleasure which an author draws from his own completed work, the pride of the poet in his own poems is their chiefest payment. The simple fact which stands out so prominently in the life of this man that nobody can gainsay it—that William Shaksper took neither pride nor pleasure in any of the works which

passed current with the rest of the world as his, might well make the most casual student of these days suspicious of a claim that, among his other accomplishments, William Shaksper was an author at all."

While Morgan's reasoning is correct, I am content to claim only that the facts shown as to Shaksper's lack of a library form a strong presumptive link in the chain of presumptions against his ability to compose a poem or a play.

A man without a library, who is learned, studious, and persistent, may borrow from his friends and patrons, and he may cull from all the literary products of his time or former times, but such a course of persevering study could not escape the observation and mention of the man's contemporaries and, as in the case of Drayton and Dekker, the fact would be often and publicly noted and commented upon.

The case against Shaksper does not rest upon one presumption. It is a case of admitted fact supported by many strong presumptions.

Donnelly makes a very strong argument against Shaksper, based on this presumption. He asks the question, "Where are his books?" and then he says at page 76 of his *Cryptogram* "The author of the plays was a man of large learning; he had read and studied Homer, Plato, Heliodorus, Sophocles, Euripides, Dares Phrygius, Horace, Virgil, Lucretius, Statius, Catullus, Seneca, Ovid, Plautus, Plutarch, Boccaccio, Berni, and an innumerable array of French novelists and Spanish and Danish writers. The books which have left their traces in the plays would of themselves have constituted a large library. What became of them? Did William Shaksper of Stratford possess

such a library? If he did, there is not the slightest reference to it in his will."

If Shaksper had left any books, the Halls, as his residuary legatees, would have received and owned them. But none were ever received, owned, claimed, or sold by them.

One sarcastic commentator and Baconian advocate, alluding to Shaksper's lack of a library, said that "the books which have left their traces in the plays would of themselves have constituted a large library. What became of them? There were no public libraries in that day to which the student could resort. The man who wrote the plays must have loved his library; he would have remembered it in his last hours. He could not have forgotten Montaigne, Holinshed, Plutarch, Ovid, Plato, Horace, the French and Italian romances, to remember his 'brod silver and gilt bole,' his 'sword', his 'wearing apparel' and 'his second-best bed with the furniture.' There is no evidence that Shaksper possessed a single book."

## CHAPTER VII.

SHAKSPER GAVE HIS CHILDREN NO EDUCATION.

*“Ignorance is the curse of God,  
Knowledge the wing wherewith we fly to heaven.”*

—Second Part of Henry VI, iv, 7.

If the writer of the seventh scene of the fourth act of second Henry the Sixth believed that ignorance was the curse of God, and if he had children, he certainly would either by himself or with the aid of a teacher have taught them to read and write. If William Shaksper was that writer, then he permitted his own children to be afflicted with that curse of God, for his two daughters were ignorant and uneducated. One fact is worth a thousand guesses, and it is an undeniable fact that Shaksper's children were grossly ignorant. Judith Shaksper, his daughter, could not even write her name. The proof as to her ignorance is clear and convincing and the most prejudiced Shaksper admirer can not truthfully deny this statement. Halliwell-Phillips says: “When Judith Shakespeare was invited in December, 1611, to be a subscribing witness to two instruments respecting a house at the southeast corner of Wood Street, then being sold by Mrs. Quiney to one William Mountford for the large sum of 131 pounds, in both instances her attestations were executed with marks.” Susanna, the elder sister, who married John Hall, was also uneducated and her own conduct with relation to her deceased husband's effects goes to show that she was an ignorant woman. Phillips says of her,

“During the civil wars, about the year 1642, a surgeon named James Cooke, attending in his professional capacity on a detachment stationed at Stratford-bridge, was invited to New Place to examine the books which the doctor had left behind him. ‘After a view of them,’ as he observes, ‘Mrs. Hall told me she had some books left by one that professed physic with her husband for some money; I told her if I liked them, I would give her the money again; she brought them forth, amongst which there was this, with another of the authors, both intended for the press; I, being acquainted with Mr. Hall’s hand, told her that one or two of them were her husband’s, and showed them to her; she denied; I affirmed, till I perceived she began to be offended; at last I returned her the money.’ By the word ‘*this*,’ Cooke refers to the manuscript Latin medical case-book which he translated into English, and published in 1657. The conversation here recorded would appear to show that Mrs. Hall’s education had not been of an enlarged character; that books and manuscripts, even when they were the productions of her own husband, were not of much interest to her.”

If Shaksper had heartlessly deserted his wife and children and had left them for years in penury and want to take care of themselves as best they could, never contributing to their support, the children might have grown up in poverty and ignorance. But so far as the facts show, there was at least no abandonment by him of his daughters, and he suffered them to grow up to womanhood without even the advantage of a cheap rudimental education. He was with them presumably from day to day, from month to month, and from year to year, and

had personal knowledge of their want of learning, and yet he took no such steps as a father should take, to impart or have imparted to them that "knowledge which is the wing whereby we fly to heaven." Blind Milton's daughter, it is said, read to him and transcribed his poems for him. All the heroines of the Shakespeare plays are pictured by the real writer as educated and accomplished persons.

Take the Portia of the Merchant of Venice, for example. The real Shakespeare, esteeming her learning and legal talent, makes her a presiding judge and eloquent arbiter in the case of life and death affecting Antonio, and she modestly describes herself as

"An unlessoned girl, unschooled, unpractis'd,  
Happy in this, she is not yet so old  
But she may learn; happier than this,  
She is not bred so dull, but she can learn."

And the lovely but ill-fated Desdemona, to justify her marriage to Othello, respectfully but courageously declared to Brabantio:

"My noble father,  
I do perceive here a divided duty;  
To you I am bound for life and education;  
My life and education both do learn me  
How to respect you."

Here the real Shakespeare explicitly recognizes the duty of the parent to educate his children. No one but an ignorant and churlish parent would neglect such a duty. No decent man would fail in his educational duties. But the daughters of William Shaksper—the daughters of a man who is believed by the multitude to

have been the foremost man of all the world in learning and ability, were suffered by their father to be as ignorant as the Southern negro was in the days of slavery. It is a fact not to be disputed that William Shaksper did not obey the scriptural injunction to train up his children.

The reader will notice that I am asserting as an undisputed and indisputable fact, that the two daughters of William Shaksper were unable to write their own names. No one can contradict the statement of Morgan in his "Myth," at page 40, that "although William Shaksper enjoyed an income of \$25,000 (present value of money) at his death, he never had his own children taught to read and write, and his daughter Judith signed her mark to her marriage bond." This startling statement is repeated more emphatically and boldly at page 172 of the same work:

"It is not William Shaksper's fault that he sprang from an illiterate family, but that after growing so rich as to be able to enjoy an income of \$25,000 a year, he should never send his children—especially his daughter Judith—to school, so that the poor girl on being married, on the 11th day of February, 1616, should be obliged to sign her marriage bond with a mark, shows, we think, that he was not that immortal he would have been had he written the topmost literature of the world—the Shakespearean Drama!"

One can readily understand that the illiterate son of illiterate parents, continuing illiterate through life, might naturally bring up his own children in ignorance, but the son of an illiterate father who had made for himself an education and who had discovered what blessings an education had conferred upon him, would be not only

willing but resolute and zealous to confer the blessings and pleasures attendant upon education on his own children. The parent emancipated from the slavery of ignorance is always anxious to give to his own offspring the light of knowledge.

The argument for Shaksper runs about in this wise: William Shaksper was born of poor but honest parents. Being themselves illiterate, they saw what the advantages of education were; so they sent their boy to the Stratford grammar school, where in a few months' time, less than six, he learned not merely to read, write, and cipher, but he also acquired a knowledge of Latin, Greek, Italian, French, German, and Spanish, as well as of his own mother tongue. He learned there also, or picked up at odd times, all that is worth knowing in geology, medicine, law, theology, botany, chemistry, geography, history, ancient and modern, mythology, and every science, not omitting divine philosophy. He also there and thus imbibed the doctrine of the cycles and discovered the law of gravitation, by the world falsely ascribed to Newton, and the law of the circulation of the blood as wrongly credited to Harvey.

It may be irreverent, but it certainly is not irrelevant to remark "What a great school that Stratford child's school must have been, and what a blessing it would be if we had such grammar schools now. It takes a long time, a very long time in our public schools, liberally supported as they are by general taxation, to acquire in this twentieth century even a moderate knowledge of English. They must have had a double-distilled high-pressure system in that Stratford school." It appears, according to the Shaksperite theory, that there was a



marked difference between the illiterate father and the learned son as to their educational views. According to that theory, the unlearned father, seeing the advantages of knowledge, gave his boy a grand education of several long months at a child's school; while the learned son, seeing the disadvantages of knowledge, gave his own children no education at all.

It is clear from a perusal of the plays that the author or authors of them was or were conversant with the Old and New Testaments. Wadsworth and Bishop Vincent clearly show this, and cite the biblical words and expressions which abound in and permeate the plays. The writer or writers of the plays must have been familiar with the prayer of the Psalmist "that our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth and that our daughters may be as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace." He must have read the first and second chapters of the Book of Proverbs, and he must have agreed with Solomon that "happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding, for the merchandise of it is better than silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold."

Is it either probable or possible that a learned and studious man, familiar with the Bible, such as the writer of the plays and poems must have been, could have treated his children as William Shaksper treated his by suffering them to grow up in ignorance and in such gross ignorance that they could not even write their own names? *Credat Judæus Apella, non ego.*

This established fact of Shaksper's failure to give his children any education when he had both the opportunity and the means to do so, is another link, and a very strong

one, in the chain of convincing facts which unite to negative the claim set up, not by him, but by his blinded worshipers, to the authorship of the Shakespeare plays.

Right here I desire the reader, in connection with the presumption raised by his failure to educate his own children, to notice the fact that no claim to the authorship of the Shakespeare plays or of any plays was ever made by William Shaksper. He never evinced any pride of authorship such as writers naturally have in their works; he never sought for or scolded a publisher or bookseller, as Heywood, Drayton, and other contemporaries did; he never dedicated a play to anybody; he never sold or transferred a manuscript to any one; he never indulged in any literary controversies, quarrels, or compliments with any writer of the time; he never did or said anything to show that he was an author. This fact in his life-history tends to aid the presumption that it was by reason of his own want of education that his children were suffered to grow up in ignorance. It will be further shown in a subsequent chapter, in support of this presumption, that he permitted the works of others to be circulated in a name like his without any disclaimer. Only a very ignorant or a very unscrupulous man would do that.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### SHAKSPER'S ILLITERACY MADE MANIFEST BY HIS CHIROGRAPHY.

*"You must not now deny it is your hand:  
Write from it, if you can, in hand or phrase;  
Or say 'tis not your seal, nor your invention."*

—Twelfth Night, v, 1.

The strongest and most convincing fact in Shaksper's true life-history against his ability to write either a play or poem, is the one which is the least urged and employed for the instruction of the people. I refer to the irrefragable proof of Shaksper's inability to write the king's English at all, or at least with such facility as would enable him to write a connected and grammatically arranged sentence.

William H. Smith of London, England, was the first writer who asserted that Shaksper could not write; but the man who has done the most to bring this powerful item of evidence against the Shaksper claim before the literary world is William H. Burr, heretofore mentioned, a noted writer and expert in handwriting, and formerly an official stenographer of the Senate of the United States. To him, more than to any other person, the credit should be given for exposing the ignorance of Shaksper, as clearly and conclusively manifested by his handwriting. This term, handwriting, or the manner in which a person

writes, includes the formation of the characters, the separation of the words, and other features distinguishing the written matter, as a mechanical result, from the writing of other persons. The most competent experts, recognized as such by the courts of law, are attorneys at law, bank officers, bookkeepers, business men, county officials, teachers of writing, and other persons who in their business have had large experience in the examination and study of handwriting.

If the reader of this chapter had never heard of Shaksper's name in connection with plays or poems or any literary work, and if the plays were either credited to some other person or to no one in particular, and if the signatures, facsimiles of which I am about to exhibit, were shown to the reader for the first time, with a request for his opinion as to the literacy or illiteracy of the maker of the signatures, I am quite sure that his opinion, after a careful and disinterested examination, would be that William Shaksper of Stratford-on-Avon was an ignoramus.

The only specimens of Shaksper's handwriting extant, assuredly authentic, are five in number.

In the spring of 1613, when Shaksper was nearly forty-nine years old, he purchased from one Henry Walker a house and lot near the Blackfriars Theatre, and the deed to which he affixed his name bears the date of March 10, 1613. On the following day he mortgaged the premises to Walker to secure a part of the purchase money and signed the mortgage. In the year 1768 the mortgage deed, which was dated on the eleventh of March, was found among the title deeds of the Rev. Mr. Fetherstonhaugh of Oxted in the County of Surrey, and was presented by him to David Garrick. From that deed Malone

made a facsimile, as set out in his "Inquiry" at page 136. The following is a reproduction of that signature:

Afterward, on March 25, 1616, a month before his death, his name was placed on each one of the three sheets of paper of which that last will consists, which has been rendered famous, or as some would say—infamous, by the bequest to his wife of his second-best bed. He did not write his own will, and it was drawn by one Francis Collins, a solicitor living at Warwick.

Here is a facsimile of the three will signatures:

Throughout the body of the will, as Sir Frederic Madden, who examined the original will, states, the scrivener has written the testator's name "Shakspeare," whereas on the outside, it is docketed twice by the Clerk of the Prerogative Court as the will of Mr. Shackspere. Here

was a learned scrivener, employed specially by "the myriad-minded man," sometimes called "our immortal dramatic poet," and this Warwick solicitor, who ought to have known his fellow countryman personally and at least by reputation, wrote the testator's name incorrectly, and the man who is pictured by commentators as a very industrious, careful, and learned man, suffered the solicitor to make and perpetuate such an egregious blunder as to his surname. Even the clerk of the Prerogative Court seems to have been ignorant of the proper name of the so-called greatest poet of the world, and at his death docketed his will as that of "*Mr. Shackspere.*" To show in this connection the various and contradictory opinions of the leading commentators as to how the Stratford man's name should be spelled, I quote from Madden's observations, premising that it seems to have never occurred to him or to these disputatious wiseacres whom he names that the man's handwriting was worthy of a close and careful examination as to whether he knew enough to write his own name correctly or to correct an erroneous spelling of his name by others.

Sir Francis says, at page ten of his communication, "I must beg leave, before I conclude, to make a few remarks on the orthography of Shakspere's name, as written by himself.

"There are five acknowledged genuine signatures of Shakspere in existence. Of these, three are attached to his will in the Prerogative Court, executed 25 March 1615-16; the fourth is written on a mortgage deed, dated 11th March 1612-13, of a small estate purchased by Shakspere of Henry Walker in Blackfriars; and the fifth, on the counterpart of the deed of bargain and sale, dated 10th March 1612-13.

“From a comparison of these with each other, and with the autograph now first brought forward, it is most certain, in my opinion, that the poet always wrote his name ‘Shakspere,’ and consequently that those who have inserted an *e* after the *k*, or an *a* in the second syllable, do not write the same (as far as we are able to judge) in the same manner as the poet himself uniformly would authorize us to do. This I state in opposition to Chalmers and Drake, who assert that ‘all the genuine signatures of Shakspeare are dissimilar.’

“Let me consider them separately, not according to the priority of dates, but in the order they were introduced to the notice of the public. In the year 1776, George Steevens traced from the will of Shakspere the three signatures attached to it (one to each sheet), and they were engraved for the first time in the second edition of Shakspere, by Johnson and Steevens, in 1788. They have since been engraved in nearly all the subsequent editions; in Malone’s Inquiry, 1796; in Chalmer’s Apology, 1797; in Harding’s Essence of Malone, 1801; in Ireland’s Confessions, 1805; in Drake’s Shakspeare and his Times, 1817; and in J. G. Nichols’ Autographs, 1829, in which work they are for the second time traced from the original document. The first of these signatures, subscribed on the first sheet, at the right-hand corner of the paper, is decidedly ‘William Shakspere,’ and no one has ventured a doubt respecting the last six letters. The second signature is also clearly ‘Will’m Shakspere,’ although from the tail of the letter *h* of the line above intervening between the *e* and *r*, Chalmers would fain raise an idle quibble as to the omission of a letter. The third signature has been the subject of greater controversy, and has usually been read, ‘By me, William Shakspeare.’

“The next document is the mortgage deed. From the label of this, the facsimile in Malone’s edition of Shakspeare, 1790, was executed, bearing this appearance, ‘Wm Shakspe.’”

The third document cited by Madden is the counterpart of the deed of bargain and sale, dated the day before the mortgage deed. “Here the signature,” he says, “is beyond all cavil or suspicion ‘William Shaksper.’”

The “sweet swan of Avon” seems, from the way he spelled his own name, to have been the antitype of that well-known and cheerful witness in the famous case of Bardell versus Pickwick who answered to the name of Samuel Weller. In that memorable trial, when Mr. Weller stepped into the witness box, the little Judge inquired, “What’s your name, sir?” “Sam Weller, my Lord,” replied that gentleman. “Do you spell it with a *V* or a *W*?” inquired the Judge. “That depends upon the taste and fancy of the speller, my Lord,” replied Sam, “I never had occasion to spell it more than once or twice in my life, but I spells it with a *V*.” Here a voice in the gallery exclaimed aloud, “Quite right, too, Samuel, quite right. Put it down a *We*, my Lord, put it down a *We*.”

Madden puts William’s name down as Shakspeare, Chalmers puts it down as Shakspeare, Malone puts it down both ways, and the Wallis document puts it down as Shaksper.

Shaksper appears to have been so careless or ignorant as to the way he should spell his own name that he, like the Sam whom Dickens has immortalized, never had occasion to spell his name more than once or twice in his life, and then in such a reckless way as to the vowels as



to let the spelling depend upon the taste and fancy of the speller.

The signatures above set out comprise all the authentic writings of William Shaksper, which relic hunters, antiquarians, commentators, historians, and pertinacious and enthusiastic searchers have been able to unearth after nearly three centuries of assiduous inquiry and labor not only in every probable receptacle in Great Britain, but in every part of the world.

Besides the five signatures, there are two signatures which may be his—one of them on a copy of the Montaigne of Florio and the other on a volume of the plays in the possession of Mr. Gunther, a candy-maker of Chicago. But the two, even if genuine, are no improvement on the other five. By examining the Montaigne signature, as found in Madden's "Communication to the Society of Antiquaries," the reader can judge for himself.

A few years ago, a volume of North's Plutarch of 1603 was sold to the Boston Public Library, which has the words "Wilm Shaksper" written in it. Commenting upon the question of the determination of its authenticity by comparison, the learned librarian very truly observes that "the field of comparison of the library signatures with the known originals is narrow, being limited to those written between 1613 and 1616, all of which show such a lack of facility in handwriting as would almost preclude the possibility of Shaksper's having written the dramas attributed to him, so great is the apparent illiteracy of his signatures."

If the reader will critically and dispassionately examine the facsimiles given in Verplanck's or Drake's or Malone's editions of the plays, he must inevitably conclude that a

man, who while in apparent good health wrote so slowly, so laboriously, so wretchedly and so incorrectly, could not before that time have written the magnificent plays which adorn our literature. If a man whose Christian name was William should enter the office of an attorney or scrivener to sign his name to a deed or mortgage or will prepared for him, and he should slowly and laboriously scrawl the letters "Willin" for William, and so write as to let each letter stand by itself, the draftsman of the instrument would know at once that the signer was a very ignorant man.

I often wonder why English experts in handwriting, who have access to the originals of four at least of the undoubted signatures of William Shaksper, made by him in the ripe maturity of his manhood, do not critically analyze these signatures for the benefit of the people who desire to know whether or not the affix "William Shakespeare" or "William Shake-speare" was a mask for the real author or authors of the plays or only a publisher's trick.

It does not, however, require an accomplished expert in chirography to determine by a careful examination that William Shaksper could not have written the plays and poems. Rapid writers, more especially editors and lawyers, may write illegible scrawls, but they either run their letters together or make them quickly when they are separated.

Horace Greeley and Rufus Choate wrote very fast and so illegibly that it was hard to decipher the words written by them. They were learned and intellectual giants, but no respectable judge of handwriting would say that their handwriting showed that they were ignorant men. He would pronounce them rapid and careless writers. But where a man, when asked to write his name, separates

each letter as Shaksper did, and so constructs them as to show slowness and great labor in forming them, besides misspelling his name in the attempt, he forms against himself that verdict or sentence which the writer of act four, scene two, of *Much Ado About Nothing* put into the mouth of Dogberry when he said, "O, that he were here to write me down an ass!"

In order that the reader may judge for himself as to the great difference between the handwriting of the ignorant Shaksper and that of the two illustrious men whom I have mentioned, one of whom was the great editor of the "New York Tribune" and the other the foremost lawyer of Massachusetts, I here insert the facsimile of a letter written by Horace Greeley and also of one written by Rufus Choate, for the purpose of comparison. I have purposely selected the handwriting of Horace Greeley and Rufus Choate for illustration because they were rapid writers, whose words, committed to paper, it was and is hard for the reader to interpret. In "Modern Eloquence," Vol. 10, at page 210, the following anecdote is related as to the difficulty of deciphering the handwriting of Greeley. Greeley once wrote a note to a brother editor in New York whose writing was, if possible, equally as illegible as his own. The recipient of the note, not being able to read it, sent it back by the same messenger to Mr. Greeley for elucidation. Supposing it to be the answer to his own note, Mr. Greeley looked over it, but was likewise unable to read it, and said to the boy, "Go—take it back. What does the fool mean?" "Yes, sir," said the boy, "that is just what *he* says."

The first is a facsimile of a letter from Horace Greeley, which reads as follows:

Daily Tribune,  
63 PER ANNUM.  
Semi-Weekly Tribune,  
33 PER ANNUM.  
Weekly Tribune,  
22 PER ANNUM.

Office of The Tribune,  
New-York, July 29, 1863.

Sir:

I have yours of the 19<sup>th</sup>.  
I know well that an able  
and thorough Capital Journal  
at Ferrisville would do ~~good~~  
but its immediate influence  
would be slight and the fate  
of the Republic is no longer  
a question of years but  
of months - perhaps of weeks.

There is beside an invaluable  
general rule - a newspaper  
that cannot support itself can  
support nothing else. If there  
be anti-slavery people in Ky.  
they will call forth or ob-  
tain anti-slavery columns;  
if not they would not take them  
they would not print them.  
Yours,  
E. A. Mearns, Esq. Horace Everts,

Reproduced in type, it reads thus:

Daily Tribune  
\$6 per annum.  
Semi-weekly Tribune  
\$3 per annum.  
Weekly Tribune  
\$2 per annum.

OFFICE OF THE TRIBUNE,

NEW YORK, Jan'y 20, 1863.

Sir: I have yours of the 15th. I know well that an able and thoroughly loyal journal at Louisville would do good, but its *immediate* influence would be slight, and the life of the Republic is no longer a question of years, but of months, perhaps of weeks.

There is beside, one sound general rule—*a newspaper that can not support itself can support nothing else*. If there be anti-slavery people in Ky. they will call forth or obtain anti-slavery journals; if not, they would not take them though printed next door. Yours,

E. A. MAGINNESS, Esq.

HORACE GREELEY.

An analysis of the Greeley letter will show the reader that the famous editor was a very rapid writer who cared very little for the proper and regular formation of the letters. With him, the chief thought in writing was that his hand in forming the letters should keep pace with the emanations from his mind. The shorter he could make a letter of the alphabet without destroying it altogether, the better it was for his editorial and epistolary purposes. He did not labor or worry over the formation of any word. The only respite he gave to the steady impulse of the pen was in the matter of italization when he desired to call the reader's attention to some particular fact or principle. When he wrote the letter above set out in the dark days of the war for the union, he italicized the word "*immediate*" to impress the reader with the fact that the establishment of a newspaper was of no importance when the

life of the republic was not a question of years, but of weeks. When he enunciated the principle that a newspaper that can not support itself can support nothing else, he paused in his rapid dashing down of words to italicize the declaration so that it should fasten itself on the attention of the recipient of the letter. Outside of the italicization of an important fact, or of what he believed to be a cardinal principle, he never paused in his rapid flight with the pen. When he wrote his name, he formed the letters so rapidly that all the letters, both of the Christian name and surname, were run together with no separating space. His epistle to Maginness indicates that he was so rapid a writer that he cared a little, but a very little, for the formation of the characters or the separation of the words.

I now append a facsimile of a letter of Rufus Choate, as follows:

To/ My: Will. Allen  
Dear Sir

I find it  
impossible to accommodate my three  
students & myself in one office & therefore  
am under the necessity of leaving that  
which I now occupy - will you be good  
enough to apprise you whether that  
I shall cease to occupy this office after  
the last day of the present month, the 31st  
when of course I shall pay rent -  
Yours. Sd. servt  
R. Choate

Dec. 10. 1830

Reproduced in type, Choate's letter reads thus:

To Maj. Will Stevens.

Dear Sir: I find it impossible to accommodate my three students and myself in one office; therefore am under the necessity of leaving that which I now occupy. Will you be good enough to apprise your mother that I shall cease to occupy this office after the last day of the present month; till then of course I shall pay rent.

Your obt. serv't,

R. CHOATE.

Dec. 18, 1830.

The first impression produced by an inspection of the crow-tracks of Rufus Choate, the renowned lawyer and statesman, is that he cared nothing about the reader's ability to decipher the words, whether proper or common. Thus he galloped over the proper name "Stevens" in the first line. Caring nothing for the formation of the letters, he shortened his letters as well as his words whenever he could, as for instance when he formed the letter *d* in "find", *y* in "necessity," and the figure 8 in "1830" and "18." He took no pains to keep his letters together, so that while he wrote very fast he did not write as fast as Greeley did, and much more illegibly.

Contrariwise, William Shaksper's handwriting shows that he labored over the formation of each letter, not for the purpose of making it fair, round, and regular, but in order to make it so that it would pass muster as a letter. This slowness indicates clearly that he did not wield the pen of a ready writer; but rather that when he was compelled to put down his name to a legal document, like a deed, mortgage, or will, it was a hard, very hard matter

for him to form the letters to make up his name. It is enough to disqualify Shaksper as a writer or author to rest the argument from the acknowledged signatures of the man on the apparent slowness and want of facility in writing displayed thereby, without suggesting that no two of the five signatures are at all alike, except the two which have the appearance of being traced. Whether traced or not, all the signatures are conspicuous for their wretchedness of execution. The fact that the name is not uniformly spelled also strongly supports the theory, not only of illiteracy but of hand guiding as to two of the signatures. Any intelligent person can readily detect the difference between the handwriting of a rapid, busy, careless writer who cares more for the matter than the manner, and the slow, hesitating, deformed, and separated strokes of an illiterate person.

An intelligent and scholarly but interested critic has maintained that the handwriting of such an eminent statesman as the late Senator Joseph E. McDonald of Indiana, was as bad as that of Shaksper. I, therefore, annex a facsimile and reproduction of one of McDonald's letters, to show how absurd the critic's statements are.

The reader will notice that Mr. McDonald did as lawyers and well-trained business men do when they write letters. They generally subordinate elegance and neatness in handwriting to speed. There is no careful following of copy, as in the case of a model phrase set by a teacher of writing for his pupils to imitate, but rather a mingling of haste with just enough care exercised in the formation of the letters to enable the client or the business correspondent to decipher the words of the letter.



Indianapolis, August 28 1853.

Dear John Stoughton  
Dear Sir

Your favor enclosing proof  
clips of your dialogue on prohibition has been  
recd I am very much pleased with the manner  
you treat the subject and think it will do good  
good especially if it ever have a good  
circulation among the farmers. I have given  
the clip to Mr. Sherman and he promised to  
make copies & extracts from it but thought it  
too long for a daily. What under the cover  
print it in Supplement for you? We are poor  
and want to make the best of what  
we have. I spoke to Sherman in regard to  
bottoms for printing their conclusions to make  
the expense. Every evidence is favorable to  
our success but we must work for it  
Yours in haste  
J. H. Sewall

INDIANAPOLIS, August 28, 1882.

HON. JOHN STOTZENBURG.

Dear Sir: Your favor enclosing proof slips of your dialogue on prohibition has been rec'd. I am very much pleased with the manner you treat the subject and think it will do great good especially if it could have a good circulation among the farmers. I have given the slip to Mr. Shoemaker and he promises to make copious extracts from it, but thought it too long for a daily. What would the Ledger print it in supplement for? We are poor indeed, but want to make the best of what we have. I spoke to Shoemaker in regard to Cottom, but find him disinclined to incur the expense. Every evidence is favorable to our success, but we must work for it.

Yrs in haste,

J. E. McDONALD.

No question can be raised as to lack of facility in writing by an inspection of the McDonald letter. It is evident that the Senator wrote fast and much more plainly and with more regard to the formation of the characters than either Greeley or Choate. An inspection of such letters as the three hereinbefore set out shows that the question raised is not the issue of legibility or illegibility, but of the ability to write at all or with the facility required of a writer of books. The question raised upon the trial of the McDonald will case, so far as the handwriting of Senator McDonald was concerned, was not as to whether he wrote well or ill or legibly or illegibly, but as to whether it was a peculiarity of the testator's signatures that the word "McDonald" was not connected all the way through. But to recur to the Shaksper signatures.

Reader, examine, if you please, the *S* in the Shaksper signature, and, if you choose, try with a pen or pencil to make such an *S*. I invite you now to look how correctly and elegantly this great scholar and master workman of the Muses spells "William." Put yourself, if you please, in his place and remember the solemn occasion. It is a very serious business transaction, you will bear in mind, no less than the execution of a last will; and you know that at such a time a man or woman is always anxious to do the proper and correct thing and make the signature as good as possible. If such a distinguished scholar, for instance, as Gladstone was, should, at the age of forty, in the very prime of life, have been required to sign his full name to a last will, we should expect him to know how to spell his Christian name correctly and to do it pretty quickly. But a great genius like Shaksper, who sprang like Minerva full-armed from his birth into the field of literature, contrived with much ado to write his Christian name "Willin." And just see how carefully he wrote that Willin. Look at the capital *W* and the distance between it and the *i*; then notice the distance between the *l*, the *i* and the *n*. These specimens may be called absurdly varied. Burr, commenting on the signatures, says, "The spelling of the five autographs of the 'Bard of Avon' is S-h-a-k-s-p-e-r, without a final *e*. This is plain enough in the earliest signature, subscribed to the deed of March 10, 1613.

"The signature to the mortgage, dated March 11, 1613, reads 'William Shakspe.' There was no space left for another letter on the sealed tag, so he wrote above the *e* what looks like an *a*, but was probably an attempt at an *r*.

“The next autograph was written three years later, being the first of the three signatures to as many sheets of his will. It has a final letter, which has been mistaken for an *e*, but is a German script *r*, much like our script *w* tilted up at the left. Woodbury’s ‘Method of Learning the German Language,’ Lesson III, has it.

“In the remaining autographs the terminal letters after *p* are illegible.”

In the address to the reader in the Folio of 1623, it was asserted by Heminge and Condell as to Shaksper that “we have scarce received from him a blot in his papers.” Of course, every person of common sense knows that it is utterly impossible for a ready writer to work in the composition of a book with pen and ink without many blots and erasures, and as to any author such a statement would be false. Corrections and emendations are necessary and inevitable. But the statement of Heminge and Condell may be very true as to Shaksper, for to judge from his handwriting he could not indite a single line to be blotted. It could not have been true of a ready writer, who was daily and very often hastily preparing, revising, and composing plays for theatrical use. It might possibly be true of a very slow and painstaking writer like John Webster, who in his *White Devil*, in the address to the reader, says:

“To those who report I was a long time in finishing this tragedy, I confess I do not write with a goose quill winged with two feathers, and if they will needs make it my fault, I must answer them with that of Euripides to Alcestides, a tragedy writer. Alcestides objecting that Euripides had only, in three days, composed three verses, whereas himself had written three hundred, ‘Thou tellest

truth,' quoth he, 'but here's the difference—thine shall only be read for three days, whereas mine shall continue three ages.'”

The same story as to entire freedom from paper-blotting is applied by the stationer Humphrey Moseley to John Fletcher. He says in the introduction to the Beaumont and Fletcher folio of 1647, “Whatever I have seen of Mr. Fletcher's own hand is free from interlining, and his friends affirm that he never writ any one thing twice.” The editor of the 1811 edition of the works of the two poets says, in a note appended to this remark of Moseley's, “May we not suppose this to have been a sort of commonplace compliment? but surely it is a very injudicious one. A similar assertion applied to Shakespeare has afforded much conversation in the literary world.”

As I have heretofore stated, it is no argument against Shaksper's ability to write plays that he was poor, or that his parents were poor, or that he had been a poacher or butcher in early life, or that he married a woman eight years older than himself, to whom he was unkind, or that he was bibulous or licentious. But if William Shaksper at the age of forty-nine, and after the poems and plays had been written, could scarcely write his own name and could only write it slowly, incorrectly, and laboriously in the manner that illiterate and uneducated men write their names, that fact is an unanswerable and irrefragable proof of his inability to write even one line of poetry, good or bad. He was absolutely unable to write at all, if the attempts at signatures are his own genuine acts. It can not be shown that Shaksper was drunk when he signed the deed and mortgage. Neither can it be said that he was *in articulo mortis* when he so slowly and painfully

scrawled the signatures to the will, for it was signed on March 25th, and he did not die for a month afterward. Edwards, in his "Shaksper not Shakespeare," page 401, commenting on the five acknowledged signatures after a very careful examination of them, says, "Of the five signatures, no one is Shakespeare; the two on the deeds are Shakspar and Shaksper; the first on the will is Shaksper, the second, Shaksper, and, dismissing Malone's superfluous stroke, the third is Shaksper. Nowhere is there any Shakespeare, the name under which the plays were published.

"Supposing for a moment that one hand could have written the five signatures, what does it prove? In the first—on the mortgage—he writes Wm for William; in the next, made at the same time, he writes William at length, but on top of the surname. Again, in the first of the will signatures, he writes William above the surname. The next time he attempts to get the names in line, but misses it considerably, the given name—now spelled Willin—being raised to the level of the top of the surname, and moreover it is separated from the latter by a tolerably wide space. The third time he writes William, he gets it at the proper distance from the surname, but the latter has tumbled, and is almost wholly below the level of the given name.

"These little things show that the writer was not in the habit of signing his own name, or accustomed to the use of a pen. Is it to be believed that a man who, for fully twenty years, had been in active business, *if he could write*, never attained a fixed and recognizable signature; that he never wrote his name in a straight line; that in the same hour, and on the same document, he would sign

his name William and Willin, and his surname in as many different styles of letters as he made signatures?

“Skottowe said in 1826, ‘In regard to the signatures to the will, a sort of doubt has been cast on the first and second by the suggestion that they might have been in the handwriting of the notary employed on the occasion.’

“Drake says, ‘The autographs present us with five signatures which, singular as it may appear, all vary either in the mode of writing or mode of spelling. The first appears *Wm Shakspea*, the second *William Shaksper*. The three will signatures, it is remarkable, differ considerably, especially in the surnames, for in the first we have Shackspere; in the second, Shakspere; in the third, Shakespeare.

“‘My own opinion is that William Shakspere never learned to write and that he at no time signed his name. Had William as a boy learned to write, as a man he would have employed but one alphabet, and not as many alphabets as he made signatures. Any business man will witness that a correspondent of his who sends a different signature with every communication is not doing his own writing, but Tom, Dick, and Harry are doing it for him. So it was with this Shaksper.’”

I might stop here and submit the whole question of Shaksper’s inability to write plays to the judgment of impartial critics, but there are other facts to be presented and several misrepresentations to be exposed and corrected, to which I desire to call the attention of the studious reader.

## CHAPTER IX.

### SHAKSPER'S UTTER INDIFFERENCE TO LITERARY PROPRIETIES.

*“ Learning is but an adjunct to ourself,  
And where we are our learning likewise is.”*

—Love's Labor's Lost, iv, 3.

Men generally take a very great pride in the poetical or prose offspring of their brains and especially if the play, the poem, or the prose story or history created or unfolded pleases the public. Moreover, all honorable and decent men of intelligence, when a name like or somewhat like their own is unlawfully or wrongly used by the publisher of a book, refuse to claim or receive credit for the published thoughts of other men.

The first proposition should be modified to this extent, that if a poor and needy author should sell the product of his brain outright to another, thereby surrendering all his rights therein, he might wholly forget or at least no longer care for the welfare of his abandoned offspring. If, therefore, the fact could be shown that Shaksper ever wrote a play or plays and sold it or them or any of them, as Michael Drayton, Henry Chettle, Thomas Dekker, and other writers of plays did for paltry sums to Henslowe or any other proprietor of a theatre, the man's indifference to the plays which went about in a name similar to his would be perhaps explainable. But it nowhere appears that Shaksper ever gave, sold, assigned, or transferred a play or poem or prose writing to anybody. That he was utterly indifferent to the plays which are now attributed to him is conceded by all the commentators. He never



mentioned them to friend or foe. He never claimed or pretended that he ever wrote or revised a play and he made no mention of any literary friends to anybody or in any way. Phillips, in his "Outlines," Vol. 2, page 262, referring to his will, says: "Not only is there no mention of Drayton, Ben Jonson, or any of his other literary friends, but an entire absence of reference to his own compositions. When these facts are considered adjunctively with his want of vigilance in not having previously secured authorized publications of any one of his dramas and with other episodes of his life, it is difficult to resist the conviction that he was indifferent to the posthumous fate of his own writings." I would put the matter a little more strongly than Phillips puts it, and far beyond the conviction of mere indifference: I would say that when the other episodes of Shaksper's life founded on fact are considered, as for instance his utter inability to write his own name with that facility which is absolutely required of a scholarly writer, such as the author or authors of the plays and poems must have been; and considering also the episode of suffering his children to grow up in ignorance, it is difficult to resist the conviction that some one else wrote the plays and poems with which he is credited.

As to the second proposition, if Shaksper was a man of intelligence, he was then a dishonorable and a very mean man, for his own deluded worshipers concede that he permitted books written by other men to be published under his name or a name similar to his—books of which he never wrote or composed a single line. The reader will notice the qualification of this proposition, by the use of the phrase "if Shaksper was a man of intelligence." If he was not, and if he was the ignoramus which his

handwriting plainly proves him to have been, he might have been utterly oblivious to the uses to which his name was put. Phillips has to admit the correctness of the second proposition, based on the hypothesis that Shaksper was a man of any intelligence, for he says that "it is extremely improbable that Shaksper in that age of small London and few publishers could have been ignorant of the use made of his name in the first edition of the *Passionate Pilgrim*." By the *Passionate Pilgrim*, Phillips means that in the year 1599, when Shaksper was thirty-five years old, W. Jaggard published a book of poems by the following title

THE PASSIONATE PILGRIM

BY W. SHAKESPEARE

a book containing poetry actually written by Richard Barnfield. Shaksper permitted this fraud to be practiced without objection or remonstrance; and in 1612, when Shaksper was forty-eight years old, Jaggard issued another edition of the same book, purporting to be by W. Shakespeare, in which he added a translation of two of Ovid's epistles which had been made by the poet Thomas Heywood and previously printed by him in 1609 with his name in the *Troja Britannica*. While Shaksper never troubled himself about the fraudulent use of the name of William Shakespeare as the author, Heywood, in 1612, exposed the wrong that had been done to him and compelled Jaggard to take the name "Shakespeare" from the title page.

A far more remarkable operation of the same kind, as Phillips puts it, was perpetrated in the year 1600 when Thomas Pavier, another bookseller, brought out the play

of the first part of Sir John Oldcastle with the name of William Shakespeare as the author on the title page. If William Shaksper was a resident of London at that time, and if he was at all familiar with actors, theatrical managers, and playwrights, he must have known that Michael Drayton, Anthony Monday, Robert Wilson, and Richard Hathaway were the makers of that play, and whether he did or did not so know, he knew, at any rate, that he, Shaksper, did not write a single line of it. And yet to-day if Henslowe's Diary had not been discovered, the Shaksper worshipers would have found the same Shakespearean beauties in Sir John Oldcastle that they do in the other plays found in the Folio of 1623, and they would have written books to show that he wrote it in his comic period, since they picture him as having separate mental grades at different periods of his life. They would have fallen into line under von Schlegel and followed his leadership.

It is amusing in connection with the history of this publication to read the comments of Collier upon it in Chapter 13 of his "Life of William Shaksper."

"We ought not to pass over without notice," he says, "a circumstance which happened in 1600, and is connected with the question of the authorized or unauthorized publication of the Shakespeare plays. In that year, a quarto impression of a play called 'The First part of the true and honorable history of the Life of Sir John Oldcastle, the Good Lord Cobham,' came out, on the title page of which the name of William Shakespeare appeared at length. We find by Henslowe's Diary that this drama was in fact the authorship of four poets, Anthony Monday, Michael Drayton, Robert Wilson, and Richard Hathaway, and to attribute it to Shakespeare was evidently a

mere trick by the bookseller, Thomas Pavier, in the hope that it would be bought as his work. Malone remarked upon this fraud, but he was not aware, when he wrote, that it had been detected and corrected at the time, for since his day more than one copy of 'the first part, etc., of Sir John Oldcastle' has come to light, upon the title page of which no name is to be found, the bookseller apparently having been compelled to cancel the leaf containing it. From the indifference Shakespeare seems to have displayed on matters of this kind, we may possibly conclude that the cancel was made at the instance of one of the four poets who were the real authors of the play; we have no means of speaking decisively upon the point, and the step may have been in some way connected with the objection taken by living members of the Oldcastle family to the name which had been assigned by Shakespeare in the first instance to Falstaff."

A more reasonable conjecture than Collier's first one would be that one or all of the four players who composed this play authorized it to be published in the name of Shakespeare and afterward had it canceled for the reason conjectured by Collier in connection with the Oldcastle family's objection to the use of the name "Oldcastle"; or a still more plausible conjecture would be that the man who bought the reversion of old plays, and who was abused by Jonson as the poet ape, might have purchased it from Henslowe and had it published in the name of William Shakespeare or Shake-speare. It appears that Thomas Dekker made additions to the play of Sir John Oldcastle. This is shown on pages 236 and 239 of Henslowe's Diary from entries of payments to him by Henslowe therefor.

Now while Shaksper, with all this knowledge, if an intelligent man, suffered Pavier to put the name of William Shakespeare as the author of this play on the title page, the real facts are, as indicated in the receipt given in the year 1599, here copied from Henslowe's Diary, that Shaksper had nothing to do with either part of this play.

"This 16th day of October 99 received by me, Thomas Downton, of Phillipp Henschlowe, to pay Mr. Monday, Mr. Drayton and Mr. Wilson and Hathaway for the first part of the Lyfe of Sir John Ouldecastell, and in earnest of the second parte, for the use of the company ten pounds."

This comedy was produced at the Rose Theatre in November, 1599, and it took so well that Henslowe gave Drayton and the other poets a gratuity in addition to the contract price. If Shaksper was a man of ordinary intelligence, with the ability to read and write, his conduct as above detailed was inexcusable. But his silence and sufferance as to this and all the other plays can be explained and excused, if he was as ignorant as his handwriting proclaims him to be. It can be also excused on another very reasonable hypothesis. If one of the writers of the play was known to the publishers as the William Shakespeare to whom the authorship of the book was credited by Pavier or if the writers of the play directed Pavier to credit it to Shaksper, then his silence would be excusable; or he could be excused on the following ground—his name was Shaksper and not Shakespeare or Shake-speare, and no book was printed in the name of William Shaksper—the name which was his true name.

Again, in the year 1605, Nathaniel Butter printed a curious old play called the "London Prodigal" as a com-

position of William Shakespeare, when in truth and in fact Shaksper had nothing to do with its composition, and yet Shaksper suffered this falsehood to pass current with the reading public and quietly absorbed the honor which the play gave to his name.

Shortly after, in the year 1607, the play of *The Puritan*, or *The Widow of Watling Street*, appeared as composed by W. S., and in 1608 the play of *A Yorkshire Tragedy* was printed with the name of William Shakespeare as the author affixed to it. Yet although he wrote neither of these plays, he suffered them to pass current under his name. I think that the fair and proper deduction to make from these facts is that Shaksper, by reason of his illiteracy, knew nothing of what Phillips calls the knavery of these publishers. Nevertheless, Phillips himself admits that Shaksper was guilty of a fraud and deception in the latter part of the year 1599. On page 178 of the first volume of his "Outlines" he says, "Towards the close of this year, 1599, a renewed attempt was made by the poet to obtain a grant of coat-armour to his father. It was now proposed to impale the arms of Shakespeare with those of Arden, and on each occasion ridiculous statements were made respecting the claims of the two families. Both were really descended from obscure English country yeomen, but the heralds made out that the predecessors of John Shakespeare were rewarded by the Crown for distinguished services, and that his wife's ancestors were entitled to armorial bearings."

A man who would be guilty of such deception would not hesitate to impliedly claim by his silence the authorship of plays which he never wrote, and which he really did not have the ability to write.

The reader, of course, understands that Phillips was a believer in the ability of Shaksper to write the plays.

Let us briefly consider the excuse of indifference suggested by Phillips, Collier, and the other advocates for Shaksper, as applied to living writers of our day and generation. I say living writers, because in the case of dead poets, such for instance as Edgar Allen Poe, the public might be deceived by the publication after his death of a poem composed by a competent writer in imitation of his style, and falsely attributed to Poe. Such a poem, cleverly executed, might pass current as his for all time, because his voice could not be raised nor his words written to warn the public in contradiction of the imposition.

But if a poem should now be published by any respectable publishing house in the United States or Great Britain, purporting on the face of the publication to be the work of Rudyard Kipling, or if a novel should be issued in the name of Lewis Wallace, when in fact Kipling did not write the poem nor Wallace the novel, the distinguished writers whose names were thus fraudulently used would hasten to expose the deceit attempted to be practiced upon the literary world by the most public and emphatic denials of the authorship. This they would do whether the contents of the book or books, falsely attributed to them, were good or bad, interesting or stupid, or whether the surnames as printed in the book were altered a little from their own, as in the case of the plays and poems cited in this chapter which were issued from the London press in Shaksper's time in a name somewhat like that of Shaksper.

## CHAPTER X.

SPENSER'S "PLEASANT WILLY" WAS NOT SHAKSPER.

*"If imputation and strong circumstances,  
Which lead directly to the door of truth,  
Will give you satisfaction, you may have it."*  
—Othello, iii. 3.

False statements about Shaksper, after frequent repetition, pass current as truths with those who are not careful students, and this is particularly the case with the Shaksper worshipers as to Spenser's allusion to "Pleasant Willy." The passage referred to is from Spenser's "Tears of the Muses," printed in 1591, and reads as follows:

"And he the man, whom Nature's self has made  
To mock herself, and truth to imitate,  
With kindly counter under mimic shade,  
Our pleasant Willy, oh! is dead of late;  
With whom all joy and jolly merriment  
Is also deaded, and in dolor drent."

The best scholars among those who have never questioned Shaksper's authorship of the plays now admit that these lines have no reference whatever to William Shaksper. The notion that Spenser had Shaksper in mind would not merit consideration at all were it not for the fact that Knight and Collier started the unwarrantable suggestion. I am reminded here of A. Conan Doyle's warning to readers as to the difficulty experienced in detaching the framework of fact—of absolute, undeniable fact—from the embellishment and romance of theorists and essayists. In what I am now about to quote from Collier,



the reader will notice how this writer first assumes a mere hypothesis to be a fact and then adroitly attempts to bolster up his guess by the statement that although Shaksper's surname is not given, there can be no hesitation in applying the allusion to him. Collier, in the beginning of his Chapter 7 of his “Life of Shaksper,” says:

“We come now to the earliest known allusion to Shaksper as a dramatist; and although his surname is not given, we apprehend that there can be no hesitation in applying what is said to him. It is contained in Spenser's ‘Tears of the Muses,’ a poem printed in 1591. The application of the passage to Shaksper has been much contested, but the difficulty in our minds is how the lines are to be explained by reference to any other dramatist of the time, even supposing as we have supposed and believe, that our great poet was at this period only rising into notice as a writer for the stage. We will first quote the lines *literatim* as they stand in the edition of 1591 and afterwards say something of the claims of others to the distinction they confer.

‘And he the man, whom Nature's self had made  
To mock herself, and truth to imitate,  
With kindly counter under mimie shade,  
Our pleasant Willy, oh! is dead of late;  
With whom all joy and jolly merriment  
Is also deaded, and in dolour drent.

‘Instead thereof, scoffing seurrilitie,  
And scornful follie with contempt is erept,  
Rolling in rymes of shameless ribaudrie,  
Without regard or due decorum kept;  
Each idle wit at will presumes to make  
And doth the learned's taske upon him take.

‘But that same gentle spirit from whose pen  
Large streams of honnie and sweete nectar flowe,  
Scorning the boldness of such base born men  
Which dare their follies forth so rashlie throwe,  
Doth rather choose to sit in idle cell  
Than so himself to mockerie to sell.’

“The most striking of these lines with reference to our present inquiry is, ‘Our pleasant Willy, oh! is dead of late,’ and hence if it stood alone, we might infer that Willy, whoever he might be, was actually dead; but the latter part of the third stanza we have quoted shows us in what sense the word ‘dead’ is to be understood: Willy was dead as far as regarded the admirable dramatic talents he had already displayed which had enabled him even before 1591 to outstrip all living rivalry and to afford the most certain indications of the still greater things Spenser saw he would accomplish. He was dead because he ‘Doth rather choose to sit in idle cell, Than so himself to mockerie to sell.’ It is to be borne in mind that these stanzas and six others are put into the mouth of Thalia, whose lamentation on the degeneracy of the stage, especially in comedy, follows those of Calliope and Melpomene. Rowe, under the impression that the whole passage referred to Shakespeare, introduced it into his ‘Life’ in his first edition of 1709, but silently withdrew it in his second edition of 1714; his reason perhaps was that he did not see how before 1591 Shaksper could have shown that he merited the character given of him and his productions.”

Collier was in the habit (following Malone’s example) of conjecturing as to Shaksper’s acts and occupation. Thus in Chapter 4 of his padded biography of Shaksper

he says, “We decidedly concur with Malone in thinking that after Shaksper quitted the free school, he was employed in the office of an attorney.” This conjecture, which does not even have the benefit of tradition for a foundation, gave the cue to Walters, who does not hesitate to treat Collier’s guess as a biographical fact. So in his attempt (unwarranted by the facts) to identify Shaksper as “pleasant Willy,” he indulges in a wild conjecture that Shaksper manufactured great works which have not come down to us. In Chapter 7, referring to this “pleasant Willy” designation, he says:

“Although we feel assured that he had not composed any of his greatest works before 1591, he may have done much, besides what has come down to us, amply to warrant Spenser in applauding him beyond all his theatrical contemporaries.”

Not being sure that the foregoing guess would pass muster, he indulges in another, as follows: “There is some little ground for thinking that Spenser, if not a Warwickshire man, was at one time a resident in Warwickshire, and later in life he may have become acquainted with Shakespeare.”

Spenser clearly had reference to Sir Philip Sidney, who was known among his associates as “Willy.” The reader will find this fact distinctly stated in Morley’s *English Men of Letters*, in the volume on Spenser by Dean Church as cited by Appleton Morgan in his “*Shakespeare Myth*” on page 148. In an elogue on Sidney’s death printed in Davison’s “*Poetical Rhapsodies*” in 1602, Sir Philip Sidney is lamented in almost every stanza by the name of “Willy.” Sidney died in the year 1586, and the reference in the poem is to a person lately deceased.

The late Richard Grant White, who was a zealous anti-Baconian, promptly and justly repudiates the Knight and Collier statement. In his "Memoirs of Shakespeare" he says: "In Spenser's *Tears of the Muses*, printed in 1591, the following passage occurs,

'And he the man, whom Nature's self had made  
To mock herself, and truth to imitate,  
With kindly counter under mimic shade,  
Our pleasant Willy, oh! is dead of late;  
With whom all joy and jolly merriment  
Is also deaded, and in dolor drent.'

"This passage has been held to refer to Shakespeare, chiefly, it would seem, because of the name 'Willy.' But that, like Shepherd, was not uncommonly used, merely to name a poet, and was distinctly applied to Sir Philip Sidney in an eclogue preserved by Davison's *Poetical Rhapsodies*, published in 1602. And the *Tears of the Muses* had certainly been written before 1590, when Shakespeare could not have risen to the position assigned by the first poet of the age to the subject of this passage, and probably in 1580 when Shakspeare was a boy of sixteen."

The Shaksperites try also to make the public believe that Spenser refers to Shaksper in the following lines written in 1591 and found in Colin Clout's *Come Home Again*:

"And there though last not least is Aetion,  
A gentler shepherd may nowhere be found,  
Whose muse, full of high thought's invention,  
Doth—like himself—heroically sound."

The best answer to this guess of the commentators is that of Morgan, who says: "It is difficult to imagine how

this can possibly be more than mere speculation, since Spenser certainly left no annotation explanatory of the passage, and it does not identify itself as a reference to Shakespeare,” *vide* “Shakespearean Myth,” p. 147, note. Since the ancient Aetion was a physician, the verse might refer to Thomas Lodge, the well-known poet, or it would appropriately refer to Michael Drayton, whose muse was full of “high thought’s invention”; whose name, that of the archangel, like his muse, did sound heroically and who was known among all his contemporaries as the *gentle Shepherd Rowland*.

Robert Tofte, translator of Ariosto’s Satires, speaks of Drayton as “not unworthily bearing the name of the chief archangel (Michael) singing after his soul-ravishing “manner.” As early as 1593 Drayton had published “Idea,” the “Shepherd’s Garland,” fashioned in nine eclogues, and “Rowland’s Sacrifice to the Muses.”

It is because no men of his time corresponded with Shaksper that there has been a straining on the part of the Shaksper advocates to fit contemporary verses to their idol.

An analysis of Collier’s argument will plainly reveal its utter absurdity and ridiculousness.

He starts out by averring that the earliest known allusion to Shaksper as a dramatist is contained in Spenser’s “Tears of the Muses.” In the very next sentence he admits that Shaksper’s surname is not mentioned at all. He then declares that there can be no hesitation in applying what Spenser wrote to Shaksper, while in the very next sentence he admits not only that there has been hesitation but also that the application of the passage to Shaksper has been very much contested. A little farther

on, he declares that he supposes and believes that Shaksper was before 1591 only rising into notice as a writer for the stage, and then in order to fit Shaksper to the Willy of the poet, as one not actually dead but sleeping or quiescent in idle cell, and rejecting his belief just before expressed, he avers that Willy was only dead as far as regarded the admirable dramatic talents he had already displayed—"talents which had enabled him even before 1591 to outstrip all living rivalry." Summarized, the advocate says that Shaksper is known to have been alluded to, then that Shaksper is not named and therefore not known as the person alluded to. No one, he avers, hesitates to apply the passage to Shaksper. In the very next line he declares that very many deny its application to Shaksper. The advocate believes that when Spenser wrote the poem, Shaksper was only rising into notice as a writer for the stage. He also believes that Shaksper's talents, when Spenser wrote the poem, were so great that he outstripped all other dramatists and poets. In one sentence he makes an assertion. In the next he denies what he asserted, and this he does three times in succession.

The only mischief caused by such partisan recklessness is that when the biographer of the much-lauded Shaksper comes along who has no time or inclination to examine into the facts, he accepts the conjectures and assertions of such writers as Collier as facts, and palms them off as facts on the unsuspecting public.

## CHAPTER XI.

DANIEL'S LETTER TO EGERTON DOES NOT  
REFER TO SHAKSPER.

*"A snapper-up of unconsidered trifles."*

—The Winter's Tale, iv, 3.

Collier, in the first volume of his book entitled "Shakespeare's Complete Works," at page 70, undertakes to prove, first, that Shaksper is referred to in a letter from the poet and dramatist, Samuel Daniel, to Sir Thomas Egerton, the original of which is preserved at Bridgewater House, and, secondly, that the letter shows that Shaksper endeavored to procure, in 1603, the office of Master of the Queen's Revels. Collier goes so far as to say that one paragraph in it refers expressly to Shaksper, though not by name. Verplanck, in his edition of the plays, hesitates to follow and endorse Collier in his broad statement and candidly admits that the letter might be so construed as to apply to Michael Drayton. If now the letter or any paragraph of it refers expressly to William Shaksper, as Collier and the Shaksperites assert, then there is an end of controversy, for Daniel was a just and truthful man, and if the letter speaks of Shaksper as "the author of plays now daily presented on the public stages of London," the argument for Shaksper's ability to compose and write poems and plays is unanswerable. I will insert the letter here in its entirety, and I am confident that after a careful perusal of it, the unprejudiced reader will agree with me, first, that there is no reference whatever in the letter

to Shaksper or to any one else except Michael Drayton, and secondly, that at the very time when Daniel wrote the letter, Drayton was the author of the plays referred to in the letter as presented daily on the public stages of London, and also that he, Drayton, was then an actor in the King's Company of comedians and an applicant also for the position of Master of the Queen's Revels. Daniel's letter, which I give in full, reads as follows:

*"To the right honorable*

SIR THOMAS EGERTON, *Knight,*

*Lord-Keeper of the Great Seale of England.*

"I will not indeavour, Right honorable, to thanke you in words for this new great and unlookt for favor shown unto me, where by I am bound to you forever, and hope one day with true heart and simple skill to prove that I am not unmindful. Most earnestly do I wish I could praise as your Honor has known to deserve, for then should I, like my master Spenser, whose memory your Honor cherisheth, leave behind me some worthy work to be treasured by posterity. What my poor muse could perform in haste is here set down, and though it be far below what other poets and better pens have written, it cometh from a grateful heart and therefore may be accepted. I shall now be able to live free from those cares and troubles that hitherto have been my continual and wearisome companions.

"But a little time is past since I was called upon to thank your honor for my brother's advancement, and now I thank you for my own; which double kindness will always receive double gratefulness at both our hands. I can not but know that I am less deserving than some



that sued by other of the nobility unto her Majesty for this boon; if Mr. Drayton, my good friend had been chosen, I should not have murmured, for sure I am that he would have filled it most excellently; but it seemeth to mine humble judgment that one who is the author of plays now daily presented on the public stages of London, and the possessor of no small gains, and moreover himself an actor in the King's company of Comedians, could not with reason pretend to be Mr. of the Queenes Ma'ties revels, for as much as he would sometimes be asked to approve and allow of his own writings. Therefore he and more of like quality can not be justly disappointed because through your honor's gracious interposition, the chance was haply mine.

“I owe this and all else to your honor, and if ever I have time and ability to finish any noble undertaking, as God grant one day I shall, the work will rather be your honor's than mine. God maketh a poet, but his creation would be in vain, if patrons did not make him to live. Your Honor hath ever shown yourself the friend of desert, and pity it were if this should be the first exception to the rule. It shall not be while my poor wit and strength do remain to me, though the verses which I now send, be indeed no proof of mine ability. I only intreat your Honor to accept the same, the rather as an earnest of good will than as an example of my good deed. In all things I am your Honor's most bounden in duty and observance.

SAMUEL DANIEL.”

As I interpret the letter, Daniel intimates that others had applied for the place of Master of the Revels through advocates of the nobility class; and that if his friend

Michael Drayton had been chosen, he, Daniel, would not have murmured because he, Drayton, would have filled the position most excellently; but yet it seemed to him, Daniel, that one who was the author of plays then daily exhibited on the stage ought not to be a judge when his own plays had to be approved or rejected, since he might be biased, and besides his good friend Drayton was an actor in the King's company of comedians.

The letter clearly refers to Drayton and not to Shaksper.

Was Drayton the author of plays then daily acted on the London stage? Let him answer for himself. I quote from Drayton's "Idea," Sonnet 47:

"In pride of wit, when high desire of fame  
 Gave life and courage to my labouring 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."

As confirmatory of Drayton's ability as a poet and writer of plays, I quote here from Richard Barnfield's "Remembrances of some English Poets," published in 1598:

"And Drayton, whose well-written tragedies  
 And sweet epistles soar thy fame to skies,  
 Thy learned name is equal with the rest  
 Whose stately numbers are so well addressd."

In this poem, Barnfield puts Drayton in his eulogy next to Spenser. Here is a distinct reference to tragedies written by Michael Drayton, which had made him famous; and in confirmation thereof, Henslowe's Diary shows conclusively that he had written plays for the theatre before 1598. Who now of the nobility would have recommended Drayton?

The earliest helper of Drayton to an education was Sir Henry Goodere of Polesworth. He was a staunch friend of Drayton all his life. In his poetical epistle to Henry Reynolds, Drayton says that he had been a page attached to the household of Sir Henry, and in another dedicatory address he acknowledged his indebtedness to him for his education. Sir Walter Aston was also an earnest patron and energetic helper of Drayton. In 1603, Drayton was made an Esquire by Sir Walter at his investiture as a Knight of the Bath. Lucy, Countess of Bedford, Sir John Harrington, Drummond, and Sir William Alexander were admirers and devoted friends. On page 181 of Drummond's "Life," it appears that on July 14, 1631, Drayton wrote to Drummond that he visited a knight's house in Gloucestershire yearly for two or three months. As the letter was addressed from Clifford in Gloucestershire, it was probably there that he made these annual visits. There is a tradition that Drayton was employed by Queen Elizabeth on a diplomatic mission to Scotland. In an obscure passage in the Owl, 1604, he states that he went in preferment "unto the happy North; and there arrived, disgrace was all my gain."

If search were made for those applications for the position referred to by Daniel, and if they could be unearthed, I think that it would be found that no such

person as William Shaksper ever applied for the position of Master of the Queen's Revels.

Let us suppose that in aid of the truth some person having the leisure and the means to do so should undertake to find the list of names of the playwrights to whom Daniel refers in his letter to the Lord-Keeper, and the names also of those of the nobility who sued to her majesty for this boon. What a contribution that would be to the cause of truth and in settlement of the question of the ability of Shaksper to write a play or to write at all! Who, besides Daniel, were the several applicants for the post of Master of the Queen's Revels, and what did they urge in behalf of their respective claims? What did these noblemen, to whom Daniel refers, write about the applicants to her majesty? If the record or the papers, or either of them, could be found, and published exactly as they appear, it would go far to bring the truth to light.

I might suggest the same as to William Shaksper's estate. It should have been settled according to the laws of England, and an inventory of his goods and chattels and of all his personal estate should be preserved in the proper probate archives, or an official record thereof should have been kept. If that could be found, it would be a welcome addition to the meagre life-history of the man. If he had died the owner of books and manuscripts prepared by him, it would have conclusively settled the question of Shaksper's ability to write plays.

Before passing from the consideration of the letter of thanks from Daniel to Lord-Keeper Egerton I must ask the reader, whether a believer in the Shaksper claim or not, to analyze it carefully for the purpose of determining whether I am right or wrong in my construction of it.

I repeat that I interpret it thus—that Daniel, the writer of the letter, concedes that if his good friend, Drayton, had been chosen as Master of the Queen's Revels, he, Drayton, would have graced the position; but that as he, Drayton, was the author of plays then daily presented on the stage, he would not be a competent and impartial judge as to his own productions. The special reference is to Michael Drayton. And then Daniel alludes in a general way to other applicants for the position.

While Collier is mistaken in attributing Daniel's reference to the authorship of plays now daily presented on the public stages of London to Shaksper, he has enabled me to again direct the attention, especially of the English reader of the letter, to the opportunity afforded, and which may exist, of finding some clue to the names of those besides Drayton who did apply to Egerton for the position which Daniel thanked him for so heartily.

The reader, of course, will understand that the poem to which Daniel alludes in his letter to the Lord-Keeper had no reference whatever to the applications or the applicants for the place which Daniel secured. It was merely a complimentary effusion in praise of Daniel's benefactor.

## CHAPTER XII.

SHAKSPER NOT THE SHAKESCENE OF ROBERT GREENE.

*"He will give the devil his due."*

—First Henry IV, i, 2.

I approach the discussion of the proposition which heads this chapter with the hope that the unprejudiced reader will carefully and dispassionately consider the statements of fact made and the arguments adduced with the view solely of eliciting the truth. I will try to show, if I can, the falsity of the dictum of Malone, implicitly followed, without examination, by the whole army of commentators except Fleay, that one of the persons chiefly referred to in Greene's pamphlet and Chettle's apology was William Shaksper of Stratford-on-Avon. In order to be fair and candid and to give the reader an opportunity to use his own full and free judgment, I will first state the precedent uncontradicted facts and then set out the text on which Malone's guess is based.

Robert Greene, a dissolute but gifted poet and dramatist of England, died in great poverty and distress both of mind and body on the third day of September, 1592. Shortly before his death he wrote a book, or rather a pamphlet, called "Greene's Groat's-worth of Wit, bought with a Million of Repentance." It was originally published in 1592, having been entered at Stationer's Hall on the 20th day of September, 1592, but the earliest edition known was printed in 1596. This little work contains a reference to two persons, whose names are not mentioned,

but because and only because the word "Shake-scene" is used therein, it has been taken for granted by Malone and the commentators who have followed him that William Shaksper was referred to.

I will reproduce here Collier's version of the reference, so that I can not be accused of garbling the text. All students of Shakespeare criticism know that Collier was a pertinacious and sometimes unreasonable asserter of the Shaksper claim. In examining and considering the quotation, the reader must strike out the words in parenthesis, because they are not in the original text but are deluding interpolations of the partisan Collier. I give Collier's exact words:

"During the prevalence of the infectious malady of 1592, although not in consequence of it, died one of the most notorious and distinguished of the literary men of the time,—Robert Greene. He expired on the 3rd of September, 1592, and left behind him a work purporting to have been written during his last illness: it was published a few months afterwards by Henry Chettle, a fellow dramatist, under the title of 'A Groat's-worth of Wit, bought with a Million of Repentance,' bearing the date of 1592, and preceded by an address from Greene 'To those Gentlemen, his quondam acquaintance, who spend their wits in making Plays.' Here we meet with the second notice of Shakespeare, not indeed by name, but with such a near approach to it, that nobody can entertain a moment's doubt that he was intended. It is necessary to quote the whole passage, and to observe, before we do so, that Greene is addressing himself particularly to Marlowe, Lodge, and Peele, and urging them to break off all connection with players:—'Base minded

men all three of you, if by my misery ye be not warned; for unto none of you, like me, sought those burs to cleave; those puppets, I mean, that speak from our mouths, those anticks garnished in our colours. Is it not strange that I, to whom they all have been beholding; is it not like that you, to whom they have all been beholding, shall (were ye in that case that I am now) be both of them at once forsaken? Yes, trust them not; for there is an upstart crow, beautified with our feathers, that with his *Tiger's heart wrapp'd in a player's hide*, supposes he is as well able to bombast out blank-verse, as the best of you: and, being an absolute *Johannes Fac-totum*, is, in his own conceit, the only Shake-scene in a country. O! that I might entreat your rare wits to be employed in more profitable courses, and let these apes imitate your past excellence, and never more acquaint them with your admired inventions.'

“The chief and obvious purpose of this address is to induce Marlowe, Lodge, and Peele to cease to write for the stage; and, in the course of his exhortation, Greene bitterly inveighs against ‘an upstart crow,’ who had availed himself of the dramatic labours of others, who imagined himself able to write as good blank-verse as any of his contemporaries, who was a *Johannes Fac-totum*, and who, in his own opinion, was ‘the only Shake-scene in a country.’ All this is clearly leveled at Shakespeare, under the purposely-perverted name of *Shake-scene*, and the words, ‘Tiger’s heart wrapped in a player’s hide,’ are a parody upon a line in a historical play (most likely by Greene), ‘O, tiger’s heart wrapp’d in a woman’s hide,’ from which Shakespeare had taken his Henry VI, part iii.



“From hence it is evident that Shakespeare, near the end of 1592, had established such a reputation, and was so important a rival of the dramatists, who, until he came forward, had kept undisputed possession of the stage, as to excite the envy and enmity of Greene, even during his last and fatal illness. It also, we think, establishes another point not hitherto adverted to, viz: that our great poet possessed such variety of talent, that, for the purposes of the company of which he was a member, he could do anything that he might be called upon to perform: he was the *Johannes Fac-totum* of the association: he was an actor, and he was a writer of original plays, an adapter and improver of those already in existence (some of them by Greene, Marlowe, Lodge, and Peele), and no doubt he contributed prologues or epilogues, and inserted scenes, speeches, or passages on any temporary emergency. Having his ready assistance, the Lord Chamberlain’s servants required few other contributions from rival dramatists: Shakespeare was the *Johannes Fac-totum* who could turn his hand to anything connected with his profession, and who, in all probability, had thrown men like Greene, Lodge, and Peele, and even Marlowe himself, into the shade. In our view, therefore, the quotation we have made from the ‘Groat’s-worth of Wit’ proves more than has usually been collected from it.

“It was natural and proper that Shakespeare should take offense at this gross and public attack: that he did, there is no doubt, for we are told so by Chettle himself, the avowed editor of the ‘Groat’s-worth of Wit’: he does not indeed mention Shakespeare, but he designates him so intelligibly that there is no room for dispute. Marlowe, also, and not without reason, complained of the manner

in which Greene had spoken of him in the same work, but to him Chettle made no apology, while to Shakespeare he offered all the amends in his power.

“His apology to Shakespeare is contained in a tract called ‘Kind-heart’s Dream,’ which was published without date, but as Greene expired on 3d September, 1592, and Chettle tells us in ‘Kind-heart’s Dream,’ that Greene died ‘about three months’ before, it is certain that ‘Kind-heart’s Dream’ came out prior to the end of 1592, as we now calculate the year, and about three months before it expired, according to the reckoning of that period. The whole passage relating to Marlowe and Shakespeare is highly interesting, and we therefore extract it entire:

“‘About three months since died M. Robert Greene, leaving many papers in sundry booksellers’ hands: among others his Groat’s-worth of Wit, in which a letter, written to divers play-makers, is offensively by one or two of them taken; and because on the dead they can not be avenged, they wilfully forge in their conceits a living author, and after tossing it to and fro, no remedy but it must light on me. How I have, all the time of my conversing in printing, hindered the bitter inveighing against scholars, it hath been very well known: and how in that I dealt, I can sufficiently prove. With neither of them, that take offense, was I acquainted; and with one of them (Marlowe) I care not if I never be: the other (Shakespeare), whom at that time I did not so much spare, as since I wish I had, for that as I have moderated the heat of living writers, and might have used my own discretion (especially in such a case, the author being dead) that I did not I am as sorry as if the original fault had been my fault; because myself have seen his demeanour no less

civil, than he excellent in the quality he professes, besides, divers of worship have reported his uprightness of dealing, which argues his honesty, and his facetious grace in writing, that approves his art. For the first (Marlowe), whose learning I reverence, and at the perusing of Greene's book struck out what then in conscience I thought he in some displeasure writ, or had it been true, yet to publish it was intolerable, him I would wish to use me no worse than I deserve.'

"The accusation of Greene against Marlowe had reference to the freedom of his religious opinions, of which it is not necessary here to say more: the attack upon Shakespeare we have already inserted and observed upon. In Chettle's apology to the latter, one of the most noticeable points is the tribute he pays to our great dramatist's abilities as an actor, 'his demeanour no less civil, than he excellent in the quality he professes'; the word 'quality' was applied, at that date, peculiarly and technically to acting, and the 'quality' Shakespeare professed was that of an actor. 'His facetious grace in writing' is separately adverted to, and admitted, while 'his uprightness of dealing' is attested, not only by Chettle's own experience, but by the evidence of 'divers of worship.' Thus the amends, made to Shakespeare for the envious assault of Greene, shows most decisively the high opinion entertained of him, towards the close of 1592, as an actor, an author, and a man."

The reader must not forget that Collier has padded his quotations with proper names which were not in the original.

There are three great questions, and three only, to be considered here, as the reader will perceive after a careful reading of the foregoing extract:

First—Are Marlowe, Peele, and Lodge the three persons to whom Greene's warning is addressed?

Second—To whom of the two persons denounced does the word "Shake-scene" refer?

Third—Who were the two persons against whom the warning was directed?

Let it be accepted that the warning of Greene was directed, as Malone and his followers all suggest and believe, and as all disinterested and careful readers of Greene's book believe, to Marlowe, Peele, and Lodge, not enemies, but friends of Greene; who then was the upstart crow, beautified with the feathers of Greene, Marlowe, Peele, and Lodge, with his tiger's heart wrapped in a player's hide—the man who had assurance enough to believe that he could bombast out blank-verse as well as any of them, and who was an absolute *Johannes Fac-totum*, and, in his own conceit, the only Shake-scene in a country? It must have been one of the two persons thus described and specified by Greene, and who were they?

I assert, without fear of successful contradiction, that Marlowe could not have been one of them. Greene would not have warned his friend, Christopher Marlowe, to beware of Christopher Marlowe. Such a warning would have been absurd and ridiculous. Can any intelligent reader believe that Greene, writing, as it were, a death-bed warning to a friend and brother poet, Marlowe, against two plagiarists or imitators, would stigmatize the warned Marlowe himself as one of them and call him an ape, a bur, a puppet, an upstart crow, and a *Johannes Fac-totum*? A may warn B against his friend C, or his enemy D; but A, while having a sound mind in a sound body, would never and could never warn B, his friend, against

B himself, and load his warning with abusive epithets expressly directed at B.

William Shaksper could not have been one of them, unless there is some proof introduced to identify Shaksper as Shake-scene. That expression might refer to any player who was also a poet. It is of itself a mere epithet. Malone seized upon that word as referring to William Shaksper, and he might as well have taken the character of Mr. Shakestone in Heywood and Brome's play of the Witches of Lancashire and asserted that William Shaksper was thereby meant. It was a mere guess on the part of Malone, and an absurd one at that. Malone and the commentators say that here is a notice of Shaksper, not indeed by name, but with such a near approach to it that nobody can entertain a moment's doubt that he was intended. So Collier boldly asserts, and so do all the Shaksper worshipers. To bolster this up, they say that he was an actor, a writer of original plays, and that no doubt he contributed prologues or epilogues and inserted scenes, speeches, or passages for any temporary emergency. And Collier says, without the slightest authority for the statement, that he possessed such variety of talent that, for the purposes of the company of which he was a member, he could do anything that he might be called upon to perform. Let those who think with Collier produce, if they can, any prologue or epilogue, scene, speech, or passage which Shaksper produced on any temporary emergency. When and where did he act as a Johannes Factotum of any association, and if he did, of what association? When and where did Shaksper give evidence that he had the fierceness and cruelty of a tiger?

There is not to be found anywhere the slightest scrap of evidence showing that William Shaksper was a copyist from any writings of Greene, Marlowe, Peele, or Lodge, or from the writings of any one else. There is no evidence that he was a plagiarist or a Jack-of-all-trades, or that he could write blank verse or any other kind of verse, or that he could write anything at all, other than his name. There is nothing to show that Shaksper was cruel or vindictive at any time before 1593 or even afterward.

The men who were the objects of Greene's wrath may be sufficiently identified by Chettle's description of them; and students of the Elizabethan drama will find, upon examination, that my opinion as to the two men is the correct view. One of them was either Thomas Dekker or Anthony Monday. Thomas Dekker would only partly suit the description given by Greene, and I am strongly of opinion that Anthony Monday was the offender. Thomas Dekker was a Johannes Factotum or, as we commonly put it, "a Jack-of-all-trades." He was, or had been, a draper. He was a player and a playwright, and he was especially used by Henslowe, who was the tyrant over playwrights and players, as a dresser of plays. He supplied prologues and epilogues at the dictation of Henslowe. I am inclined to the opinion, from the perusal of plays of which he was the sole author, as well as his prose writings, that he had acquired a knowledge of law, for he was fond of using law terms, and he used them accurately. Read, for example, his description of term time in the lower regions:

"Here, they stand upon no demurrers. No *Audita querela* can here be gotten, no writs of error to reverse judgment. Here is no applying to a court of chancery

for relief, yet every one that comes hither is served with a subpoena. No, they deal altogether in this court upon the *habeas corpus*, upon the *capias*, upon the *ne exeat regnum*, upon rebellion, upon heavy fines, (but no recoveries) upon writs of outlawry to attach the body forever, and last of all upon execution after judgment, which being served upon a man is his everlasting undoing."

In the Gulls' Horn-Book, he says, "If they choose to discourse, it is of nothing but statutes, bonds, recognizances, fines, recoveries, audits, rents, subsidies, sureties, enclosures, liveries, indictments, outlawries, feoffments, judgments, commissions, bankrupts, amendments."

Dekker availed himself of every tale, story, or incident that he could quickly weave into a play; and Henslowe's Diary shows that whenever any patching of a play had to be done, no matter who wrote it, Dekker's services were called into requisition for that purpose. He wrote additions to *Faustus*. He wrote a prologue for *Tamerlaine*. He revised and added to *Jeronimo*, and, as will be hereafter shown, he was the author in part and in whole of more than forty plays. All that Collier merely guesses as to Shaksper applies truthfully to Dekker except as to the tiger's heart. He was the man whom Ben Jonson satirized as a poet ape, and as a plagiarist and dresser of plays.

As early as 1789, Dr. Farmer, who wrote an essay on the learning of Shakespeare, says, on page 75: "Shakespeare most certainly went to London, and commenced Actor thro' necessity, not natural inclination. Nor have we any reason to suppose that he did act exceedingly well. Rowe tells us, from the information of Betterton, who was inquisitive into this point, and had very early

opportunities of inquiry from Sir W. Davenant, that he was no extraordinary actor; and that the top of his performance was the Ghost in his own Hamlet."

Here are Rowe's exact words copied from Collier's note to Chapter 6 of his "Life of Shaksper": "His name is printed, as the custom was in those times, amongst those of the other players before some old plays, but without any particular account of what sort of parts he used to play; and though I have inquired, I could never meet with any further account of him this way than that the top of his performance was the Ghost in his own Hamlet." A man could not be a very extraordinary actor who only took the part of the Ghost in the play of Hamlet, or, as Collier hints, that of old Adam in "As You Like It."

Shaksper nowhere appears in any contemporary writing, or in any diary of the time, as filling the part of a Johannes Factotum, while Dekker does.

In Chettle's attempt at exculpation and apology, he asserts that what was published was written by Greene and that he, Chettle, merely copied it for license and printing purposes, because it was badly written, and he states apologetically that he left a part out but added nothing. He further adds that he was not acquainted with the two writers who took offense, and with one of them he did not care to be (evidently referring to the man with the tiger's heart). As to the other, he might have used more discretion as to him, since Greene was dead and especially because he had noticed the civil demeanor and excellent qualities of the writer, and besides divers of worship (by whom he means men of rank or noblemen) have reported his uprightness of dealing and his facetious



grace in writing. As for the first one mentioned, he, Chettle, revered his learning, and, when he read Greene's book, struck out what he thought Greene had in some displeasure written.

Anthony Monday, instead of Thomas Dekker, I feel quite sure was the man "with the tiger's heart," to whom Greene alluded. If I had lived in that era and had had knowledge of him, I would have deemed the appellation of "the tiger's heart" as a very appropriate one for him. A short sketch of his life will show these things—first, that he was a player, secondly, that he was a Johannes Factotum, and thirdly, that he had a tiger's heart.

Monday was born in 1553 and died in 1633. He was intended for a stationer, and was apprenticed to John Aldee to learn that trade. He left his employer and became an actor, probably a strolling player. He also wrote plays. He went to Rome, intending or pretending that he would study for the priesthood, but returned to England, and in 1581 he appeared as a witness against Campion and others who were tried under the laws against Papists. If he had stopped there and had merely given testimony, his conduct might have been excusable, but he carried his hatred and bigotry so far that when Johnson, Richardson, and others were executed on May 30, 1582, upon conviction under the English religious acts, he, Monday, stood at the foot of the gallows and openly disputed with and loudly contradicted the poor sufferers. Between 1580 and 1582, he became one of the Messengers of her Majesty's Chamber, and he wrote pamphlets and books under the pseudonym of Lazarus Piot. Monday was undoubtedly a great and skillful writer of plays, and

I am satisfied that he was one of the collaborators in the play of Julius Cæsar.

Before leaving the question of the identity of the man whom Greene, on his death-bed, so bitterly assailed, let us again briefly but carefully consider the distinguishing traits in the lives of the three men to whom I have called the reader's attention. Let us bear in mind that three characteristics are attributed to the man denounced by Greene. He was as vindictive and cruel as a tiger. He was a player, for his tiger's heart was wrapped in a player's hide, and he was a Johannes Factotum.

Now, since the warning or admonition was in part addressed to Marlowe, it is absurd to say that he was warned against himself, and he could not have been one of the two men whom Greene so severely berated. But even if the warning had not been meant for him, Marlowe was never a Johannes Factotum, and while he was a libertine and an atheist, he was not a vindictive and tiger-like man.

As to Dekker, while he was a player and a Johannes Factotum, he was never guilty of tigerish conduct. His dramatic reply to the *Poetaster* of Jonson was merely a wit combat, with nothing vindictive in it, and it took place long after poor Greene's death.

But in Anthony Monday all the three characteristics were combined. He was a player; he was a Johannes Factotum; he had, as I have shown and as history shows, a tiger's heart wrapped in a player's hide. The following is an account of him taken from the *Biographia Dramatica*, 1782:

"This author is celebrated by Meres amongst the comic poets as the best plotter; but none of his dramatic

pieces have come down to the present time. He appears to have been a writer through a long period, there being works existing published by him which are dated in 1580 and 1621 and probably both later and earlier than those years. In the year 1582 he detected the treasonable practices of Edward Campion and his confederates, of which he published an account, wherein he is styled 'sometime the pope's scholar allowed in the seminary at Rome.' The publication of this pamphlet brought upon him the vengeance of his opponents, one of whom, in an answer to him, has given his history in these words:

"Monday was first a stage player, after an apprentice, which time he well served with deceiving of his master, then wandering towards Italy, by his own report, became a cozener in his journey. Coming to Rome in his short abode there, was charitably received, but never admitted in the Seminary."

Returning to England, he again became a player and a writer of plays. This description accurately fits Greene's description in two particulars; and as to the third, I take it that a man, whether Protestant, Roman Catholic, Anglican Catholic, Greek Catholic, or Religionist of any church, who would stand at the foot of the gallows when men, doomed to death for adherence to their creed, were about to be launched into eternity, and hurl arguments and anathemas at them, was, to adopt the language of York to Queen Margaret, "more inhuman, more inexorable, O, ten times more, than tigers of Hyreania." As all this occurred ten years before Greene's death, Monday's antecedents must have been well known to Greene.

Now, who was this second playwright? He was a man of civil demeanor, with excellent qualities of head

and heart, a man well spoken of by the nobility. There was but one writer of plays at that time to whom it could refer, and that writer was Michael Drayton, a native of Warwickshire. His reputation as a playwright of civil demeanor with excellent qualities was well established.

Thus in 1601, in the *Return from Parnassus*, the famous Cambridge play, after eulogizing Spenser, *Ingenioso* reads the name of Michael Drayton, and *Judicio* says:

“Drayton’s sweet muse is like a sanguine dye  
Able to ravish the rash gazer’s eye.”

And then *Ingenioso* says: “However he wants one true note of a poet of our times, and that is that he can not swagger it well in a tavern nor domineer in a hot house.” This was an indirect but a very great compliment to and recognition of Drayton’s civil demeanor.

As to Drayton’s facetious grace in writing, *Henslowe’s Diary* shows that with Anthony Monday he wrote the following plays: “*A Comedy for the Court*,” and a play called “*Mother Red Cap*”; and that with Monday and others he wrote “*Cæsar’s Fall*,” “*Owen Tudor*,” “*Richard Cœur de Leon’s Funeral*,” “*The Rising of Cardinal Wolsey*,” and “*Sir John Oldecastle*”; while in the same diary no mention whatever is made of Shaksper. Drayton and Dekker collaborated in the composition of many plays, as will be hereafter shown. As to the opinion held of him by noblemen, English annals show that he was beloved and patronized by Sir Henry Goodere, Sir Walter Aston, Sir Anthony Cook, the Countess of Bedford and others of the nobility. On the other hand, there is nothing to show in any record of the times that William Shaksper was either well or ill spoken of by any nobleman.

A fine eulogy of Drayton is pronounced by Meres: "As Virgil doth imitate Catullus in the like manner of Ariadne for his story of Queen Dido, so Michael Drayton doth imitate Ovid in his England's Heroical Epistles.

"As Sophocles was called the bee for the sweetness of his tongue, so Drayton is termed the golden-mouthed for the purity and preciousness of his style and phrase.

"As Aulus Flaccus is reported among writers to be of an honest life and upright conversation, so Michael Drayton (*quem totius honoris causa nomino*) among scholars, soldiers, poets, and all sorts of people, is held for a man of virtuous disposition, honest conversation, and well governed carriage, which is almost miraculous among good wits in these declining times, when there is nothing but roguery in villainous man, and when cheating and craftiness is counted the clearest wit and soundest wisdom."

The theory of the Shaksperites is that the Groat's-worth of Wit is addressed among others to Marlowe, and if it was, it is certain that their theory that he, Marlowe, could have been the one of the playwrights who was called by Greene an apish imitator, is entirely wrong. He could hardly have been an imitator of himself, and why should Marlowe be warned to beware of Marlowe? All this really absurd theory as to Shaksper and Marlowe is merely founded upon the use of the word "Shake-scene" in Greene's Groat's-worth of Wit.

If now a careful examination should satisfactorily show to the literary world that either Monday, Dekker, or Drayton was the author of part or all of Third Henry the Sixth, in which the words, "O, tiger's heart wrapped in a woman's hide" occur, the mystery as to Greene's death-bed diatribe would be solved.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### LIES FABRICATED IN AID OF THE SHAKSPER PRETENSION.

*“Lord, Lord, how this world is given to lying.”*

—First Henry IV, v, 4.

One of the first lies coined to give some importance to the Shaksper claim is the very silly one that the Earl of Southampton gave one thousand pounds to Shaksper. This lie was set in motion long after Shaksper died, and was an invention of Davenant, who was reputed to be a bastard son of Shaksper. One thousand pounds in the time of Elizabeth were worth as much as \$25,000 now are. A constant repetition of this lie has the effect to make the careless reader believe in its truth. Yet there is no proof whatever to support the statement. Indeed there is no evidence that Southampton ever knew Shaksper. No letter of Southampton can be found showing even an acquaintance with Shaksper and if the Earl had ever given him any money or article of value, some evidence of it would long ago have been produced.

The second bold lie is the invention of Bernard Lintot, who got out an edition of the plays in 1710. He said that King James wrote Shaksper a letter with his own hand, and that a credible person then living (in 1710) who saw the letter in Davenant's possession, told him so. But Lintot took care not to mention the name of the credible person, and as Appleton Morgan well says, “had Davenant ever possessed such a letter, Davenant would have taken good care that the world should never hear

the last of it." It would have been set out in every biography of Shaksper at full length.

Another lie invented to give a reason for the learning necessary to make him a playwright is that Shaksper was a schoolmaster. It was absolutely necessary to give him some education higher than that which the few months at the Stratford grammar school could have given him, so it is broadly asserted without the slightest scintilla of evidence to support the assertion that he taught school in his native county. One Beeston told Aubrey that there was a rumor that Shaksper was a schoolmaster, and so Aubrey gave out the story of Beeston for what it was worth.

Another lie has been added to the list of lies of which Shaksper's biography is made up, to the effect that Shaksper was a clerk in a law office and a law student. This lie was required for the reason that in some of the plays legal phrases are used and a familiarity with law terms is occasionally noticeable. Of course, if there was any evidence whatever to be adduced on this point, which would be worthy of the least consideration, it would long ago have been unearthed and quickly heralded to the world.

The most silly, stupid, and ridiculous guess of all the guesses put before the reading public to make out a plausible claim for Shaksper as the author of the Sonnets, is the one set in motion by Thomas Tyler, aided by the Reverend W. A. Harrison. This Tyler hypothesis, stated succinctly, is that Shaksper had a liason with Mrs. Mary Fitton, one of Queen Elizabeth's maids of honor, and that she was the black-eyed woman alluded to in the 127th and 132d sonnets. For the purpose of fitting Shaksper

in as the writer of the sonnets, the reading public is asked to believe that "the gentle Shaksper" seduced or was seduced by Mrs. Fitton, and that he, Shaksper, the seducer, put the whole matter in print in a very delicate way in the Shakespeare Sonnets, so called, for all after-generations to read. Although Tyler and Harrison can produce no evidence whatever that Shaksper ever knew Mrs. Fitton, this horrible story is suggested by them, and his character is blackened and hers also in order to impress the credulous reader with the belief that Shaksper wrote sonnets which he never claimed and which, as I shall show in a subsequent chapter, he did not write.

The most harmless lie of all, but one which nevertheless is a lie, is the assertion generally believed that Shaksper was married to Anne Hathaway, the daughter of Richard Hathaway of Shottery. While this lie is an unimportant one, yet there is no reason why it should not be exposed and the real facts given, as they appear of record.

In the Episcopal register at Worcester, under the date of November 27th, 1582, appears the following minute: "*Item eodem die similis emanant licencia inter Wilhelmum Shaxpere et Annam Whateley de Temple Grafton*"; the *licencia* being one of matrimony, as shown by the previous entry. As no license was issued on the next day and as Shaksper was married on the 28th day of November, 1582, upon which day the marriage bond is dated, it is evident that a mistake was made as to the bride's name either in the license or in the bond.

But there was no child of Richard Hathaway of Shottery by the name of Anne Hathaway. The nearest resembling Christian name of any of his children was



Agnes Hathaway, and the Christian name given both in the license and the bond is Anne. The most reasonable supposition is that the maiden name of the bride was Anne Whateley and that she was the widow of one Hathaway and living at Temple Grafton at the time when she was married to William Shaksper.

As Morgan well says in his "Shakespeare, in Fact and Criticism," "The little cottage at Shottery, so long worshipped of tourists as the courting ground of great Shakespeare, may have to go into the limbo of exploded myths. Richard Hathaway of Shottery (owner of the cottage whose glories now bid fair to fade) in his will, dated September 1, 1581, bequeathed his property to seven children, among other provisions, giving six pounds thirteen shillings to his daughter Agnes, and as no Anne was mentioned (the other daughters being Catharine and Margaret) Agnes has invariably been supposed a clerical error for Anne. But Shakespeare study is fast being guided by modern students into the paths of common sense, and the convenient presumption that everything not accordant with the glib biographer of the greatest Englishman who ever lived, was a 'clerical error' is about to be pensioned off forever."

But the boldest and most astounding assertion is that William Shaksper wrote plays for Henslowe.

Phillips, in his "Outlines," Volume 1, page 109, gives currency to this huge lie by asserting the following: "Thus it appears that Shakespeare up to this period, 1594, had written all his dramas for Henslowe, and that they were acted under the sanction of that manager by the various companies performing from 1592 to 1594 at the Rose Theatre and Newington Butts."

Now I challenge any believer in Shaksper's ability to write plays to show that Shaksper is mentioned by Henslowe at all. If he had been able to write a play, he would have been hired by Henslowe, and the bargain and the pay would have been recorded. Or if he had been a dresser and reviser of plays, he would have been employed and paid for that work by Henslowe and the fact would have been noted. The Shaksperites, finding that Titus Andronicus had been put upon the stage in that year, jump immediately at the conclusion that Shaksper wrote it. And that is the sole foundation for the false statement that Shaksper wrote plays for Henslowe. It is true that Collier, in editing Henslowe's Diary, has seized the opportunity of inserting, in notes, references to Shaksper, so as to get his name into the index of the book. Not finding in the Diary the slightest allusion to his idol, he inserted in notes what he himself believed and what he desired the reader to believe.

I have paid no attention to the other silly lies invented to please and gratify the longings of the people, who are naturally anxious to read or hear something, whether true or false, about a person believed to be a great writer. Among such is the invention of the glove story. Queen Elizabeth, they say, dropped a glove while crossing the street, and the courtly Shaksper picked it up and handed it to her, while making at the same time a felicitous impromptu speech in praise of the beauty and talents of the Virgin Queen. And another, the silliest of all inventions, is the contribution of John Jordan and others to the catalogue of Shakespearean poetry, which catalogue contains among other choice selections the following:

## DAVID AND GOLIATH.

“Goliath comes with sword and spear  
And David with a sling;  
Although Goliath rage and swear,  
Down David doth him bring.”

The best commentary upon all these fabrications is uttered by Prince Henry in 1 Henry IV, ii, 4: “These lies are like the father that begets them, gross as a mountain, open, palpable.”

If the reader will ask the writers who give currency in their biographies of William Shaksper to the foregoing lies for the authority for their statements, he will find that they can present no satisfactory evidence in justification of their assertions. Can any one produce a letter or note from the Earl of Southampton to Shaksper evidencing the gift? or can a copy thereof be produced? Can any receipt or memorandum be found penned by or for Shaksper, acknowledging the receipt of so large a sum of money? Is there a record of such a transaction any where?

The same question might be asked as to the letter which it is pretended that King James wrote to Shaksper. Such a letter or a copy of it, if produced and authenticated, would put an end to all controversy, if it acknowledged directly or indirectly Shaksper's ability as a writer. Whatever faults King James had, he could not be accused of a want either of learning or discernment as to scholarship. If King James knew Shaksper, some evidence of that knowledge would long ago have been unearthed.

The reader might also ask when and where did Shaksper teach school? Who were his pupils? What evidence can

be produced that he ever taught a school, either in Warwickshire or any where else?

And if he was a lawyer's clerk, and a valued assistant to lawyers in Stratford or any where else in the preparation of their cases, how and when and by what reliable authority were the facts as to his clerkship and valuable services ascertained? It is only necessary for the reader to refer to the "Outlines" of Halliwell-Phillips to discover that there is no warrant for the story that he was a schoolmaster or a lawyer's clerk.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE CONJECTURES AND GUESSES WHICH MAKE UP THE SHAKSPER BIOGRAPHY.

*"Thou hast damnable iteration."*

—First Henry IV, i. 2.

I will ask the student reader to go over this chapter carefully, not because it will interest or please, but for the reason that it discloses how the life of an ignorant man has been manufactured or transformed into that of an intellectual, talented, and learned poet, by means of conjecture and bold assertion, based, as one of the manufacturers has to admit, not upon what was or is really known about the man, but upon the poetry which is circulated under a name somewhat like his.

It is very natural that the believers in the Shaksper claim to authorship should resort to the plays and poems to obtain material for their biographies of the man. His real life facts are so meager, so inappropriate, so disappointing, that they are compelled to formulate biographies of their idol based entirely on conjecture. A Shaksper biographer reasons thus: "Since nothing, absolutely nothing, of the slightest importance is known of the man called William Shaksper or Shakespeare, the reputed author of the Shakespeare plays and poems, except through the plays and poems themselves, I will manufacture a life of the man, that is, of such a man as the writer of the plays doubtless was. I will make him a schoolmaster. I will make him a lawyer's clerk and accurate adviser of all the lawyers in and about Stratford-on-Avon. I will make

him a gentle, courteous, able, and refined scholar. I will make him the petted companion of noblemen and the favorite, not only of the Virgin Queen, but also of the scholarly James. I will make him a traveler and sojourner in foreign lands, and a master of modern as well as of ancient languages. I will make him the patron and helper of young and aspiring, but inexperienced, poets. I will make him so alluring, mentally and physically, that such manufactured charms and gifts will account for his being not only courted, but even seduced, by a maid of honor of the high and mighty Elizabeth. And in order to shut off the criticisms of doubters and unbelievers, I will make him so intellectually tall, so much higher and greater than other literary men, that he will appear to the world as utterly indifferent to praise or censure. I will exalt him above all writers of every age and clime, not by the power of fact, but by means of conjecture and invention. All that I write in this vein will captivate and suit the popular taste. *Populus vult decipi et decipiatur.*"

The biographies of Shaksper, therefore, are not made up of real, actual facts, but of guesses, conjectures, and possibilities. They are mainly works of the imagination, more or less adorned and beautified according to the ability and talents of the composer of the biography.

I will commence with Collier, and I will merely give in this chapter a few of such phrases as are constantly employed by him and the other writers of Shaksper's biography to make up a life of Shaksper. What he desires the indulgent public to believe as fact, he puts in his biography in the conjectural form, thus: "It has been supposed that. Little doubt can be entertained that. It was probably. It has generally been stated and be-

lied. We can not help thinking that. It is, we apprehend. Malone conjectures that. It is highly probable that. We decidedly concur with Malone in thinking that. We doubt if. We may presume that. Considering all the circumstances, there might be good reason. We may take it for granted that. It has been alleged that. We therefore apprehend that. It is very possible, therefore. It has been matter of speculation that. We have additional reasons for thinking that. We can have no hesitation in believing that. We also consider it more than probable that. There is some little ground for thinking that. If the evidence upon this point were even more scanty, we should be convinced that. It was at this juncture probably, if indeed he were ever in that country, that Shaksper visited Italy. We have already stated our deliberate and distinct opinion that. It must have been about this period that. We may be sure that. We have concluded, as we think we may do very fairly, that. Another reason for thinking that, etc., is that. We may feel assured that. As far as we can judge, there is good reason for believing that. It is our opinion that. It is our conviction that. We apprehend likewise that. It is not at all improbable that. Our chief reason for thinking it unlikely that. We may suppose that. We may assume, perhaps, in the absence of any direct testimony that. It is highly probable that. We suppose Shakespeare to have ceased to act in the summer of 1604. There is no doubt that. There is reason for believing that. It is possible, as we have said, that. Such may have been the nature of the transaction. We can only conjecture. Nevertheless, although we suppose him. It is very likely that.

We hardly need entertain a doubt that," and so on *usque ad nauseam*.

It is by such conjectural phrases as the above that Collier makes up the life of William Shaksper, and he makes the following candid confession in the last paragraph of the concluding chapter "If the details of his life be imperfect, the history of his mind is complete; and we leave the reader to turn from the contemplation of the man Shakespeare to the study of the poet Shakespeare."

Halliwell-Phillips is more modest in his guesses and conjectures. He entitles his two large volumes "The Outlines of the Life of Shakespeare," and he has the candor to say, "I have no favorite theories to advocate, no wild conjectures to drag into a temporary existence, and no bias, save one inspired by the hope that Shakespearean discussions may be controlled by submission to the authority of practical evidences." And he further adds that, "it will thus be seen that no matter what pains a biographer may take to furnish his store, the result will not present a more brilliant appearance than did the needy shop of Romeo's Apothecary." He then forgets his resolution not to conjecture, and proceeds to conjecture as follows: "It must have been somewhere about this period, 1568, that Shakespeare entered into the mysteries of the horn-book and the A, B, C." (Vol. 1, page 40.) Again, on page 46, he says, "that Shakespeare in his early youth witnessed representations of some of these mysteries, can not admit of reasonable doubt." On page 53, he says: "Although there is no certain information on the subject, it may perhaps be assumed that. The best authorities unite in telling us that." On page 58, he says: "There can be no hesitation in concluding that."



I will now take up his conjectural phrases and give a few instances: "There are reasons for believing that. It is, however, all but certain that. It may be gathered from, etc., that. It is most likely, indeed, all but certain that. There is an old tradition which avers that there is every probability that. It may then fairly be said that. It is far more likely that. That the poet was intimately acquainted, etc., may be fairly assumed. It is all but impossible that. There can be little doubt that. It was the general belief that. It is not unlikely that. It is not likely that."

Sidney Lee has to resort also to the same guessing system in his life of Shakespeare. Here are a few samples: "It was doubtless with. It is possible that. There is a likelihood too that. We may assume that. It is unlikely that. It is therefore probable that. In all probability. It was probably. It is fair to infer. There is every indication that."

How Shaksper indulged in foreign travel is very cleverly attempted to be proved by the biographer's own experience. I quote from "William Shakespeare Portrayed by Himself," or a revelation of the poet written by Robert Waters, at page 222: "Considering, therefore, how little we know of the life of the poet, and how much he knew of the world, what scenes may he not have witnessed, what people may he not have seen, and what subjects may he not have studied, that we wot not of! His friend, the Earl of Southampton, was captain of one of the principal ships in the expedition against Spain in 1597, and afterwards had the command of a squadron under Essex. May not the poet have accompanied him on one of his voyages? His knowledge of the continent is too marvel-

ously exact to have been learned at second hand. Take, for instance, the Prince's, or rather King Henry's, description of French ground. The first thing that strikes one on making a journey from England to France is the difference in the general aspect of French soil, which looks dull and dark as compared with that of England. Now mark how King Henry describes it:

‘If we be hindered  
We shall your *tawny ground* with your red blood  
Discolor.’

“I have been in France, and I know of no word that describes its soil so exact as this. Now which is more probable, that the poet's knowledge came from reading traveler's books, or that it came from actual observation? So sure as Prince Henry had seen France with his own eyes, so sure had Shakespeare.”

Mr. Waters' question can be very easily answered. There is no probability to be worried over at all. Now mark, Mr. Waters, to quote Prince Henry's own words, “How plain a tale shall put you down.”

The fact recited below shows how worthless “may not's” and “may have been's” actually are. If Mr. Robert Waters will procure Appleton Morgan's “Study of the Warwickshire Dialect” and turn to page 460 of that carefully written work, he will discover that the writer of the play hastily borrowed from Holinshed. He will there read the following:

“A great part of ‘Henry VIII’ substantially consists of centos from Holinshed, and the dramatist often reproduces the speeches given by the historian. Thus Holinshed says that Henry answers the defiance of Mount-

joy, the herald: 'I wish not anie of you so unadvised as to be the occasion that I dye your tawny ground with your red blood.' Shakespeare merely reduces this to rhythm, thus:

'If we be hindered  
We shall your tawny ground with your red blood  
Discolor.'

"Still more curious is the following: Holinshed remarks in his history of Richard III, 'Before such great things, men's hearts of a secret instinct of nature misgive them, as the sea, without wind, swelleth himself before a tempest.' Shakespeare saw the appositeness of the simile and paraphrased it:

'By a divine instinct men's minds distrust  
Pursuing danger—as by proof we see  
The water swell before a boisterous storm.' "

Another writer, Fleay, goes beyond the others and boldly uses the phrase, "I conjecture that," to make his biography acceptable and palatable to the unsuspecting reader.

Such are the guesses and conjectural phrases that are used by the Shaksper biographers to make an impression on the reading public as to the ability of Shaksper to write plays and poems, and they do make an impression on the careless or ignorant readers. Where the facts do not fit, some excuse is found to bury the fact, and where there are no facts, invention is used to make a learned man out of one whose handwriting shows that he was too ignorant to write his own name correctly.

After reading the made-up and padded biographies, palmed off upon the innocent and gullible public as true lives of Shakespeare, the sensible reader feels like exclaiming with Coleridge, "In spite of all the biographies, ask your own hearts—ask your own common sense—to conceive the possibility of this man being . . . the anomalous, the wild, the irregular genius of our daily criticism. What! Are we to have miracles in sport? Or (I speak reverently) does God choose idiots by whom to convey divine truths to man?"

Or if still imbued with Shaksper idolatry, he can at least say with Hallam, when he alluded to the fact that all that the commentators told him of the man Shakespeare pictured him as anything but the master he was represented to be, "If there was a Shakespeare of earth, as I suspect, there was also one of heaven, and it is of him we desire to learn more."

It will enable the reader to partly verify what I have asserted by making brief citations from the most noted biographers of Shaksper. And first, here is one from Rolfe's "Shakespeare, the Boy," at page 118:

"How long William remained in the grammar school we do not know, *but probably not more than six years*, or until he was thirteen. In 1577, his father was beginning to have bad luck in his business, and the boy *very likely* had to be taken from school for work of some sort. As Ben Jonson said, 'Shakespeare had small Latin and less Greek'—perhaps none—and this was probably due to his leaving the grammar school before the average age. However that may have been, *we may be pretty sure that all the regular schooling he ever had was got there.*"

The next two citations are samples from Lee's "Life of Shakespeare." The first one is from page 79: "There is

a likelihood too that Spenser, the greatest of Shakespeare's poetic contemporaries, was first drawn by the poems into the ranks of Shakespeare's admirers. It is hardly doubtful that Spenser described Shakespeare in 'Colin Clout's Come Home Again' (completed in 1594) under the name of 'Aetion.'" The second one is copied from page 271, and illustrates the fact that Ward's testimony and the Bidford tradition, however ancient and venerable they really were, and although the first was the testimony of a preacher, did not particularly agree with his idea of what the real Shakespeare ought to be, and so he repudiates them "as unproven." "According to the testimony of John Ward, the vicar, Shakespeare entertained at New Place his two friends, Michael Drayton and Ben Jonson, in this same spring of 1616, but it seems drank too hard, for Shakespeare died of a fever there contracted. A popular local legend, which was not recorded until 1762, credited Shakespeare with engaging at an earlier date in a prolonged and violent drinking bout at Bidford, a neighboring village, but his achievements as a hard drinker may be dismissed as unproven."

I will give one more citation from a most remarkable book, called "Shakespeare's True Life," by James Walters, at page 160. It will be noticed how, for the purpose of helping his pet theory that Shaksper was a lawyer's clerk or assistant, he chooses to differ from Rolfe on the length of time of the grammar school tuition, and it will also be noticed how cleverly he invents the facts as to Shaksper's legal education and training. He even furnishes us with a graphic account of the lawyers who stirred up strife in Stratford, and takes pains to place Shaksper as clerical assistant in the office of one of them. So litigious, he says,

were the Stratfordians, that there was a constant demand by the whole corps of lawyers for his valuable services as a connexion. How this talented biographer gathered all these incidents in Shaksper's early life, he fails to explain. If he invented them, he certainly surpasses all the others in inventive power, and that is saying a great deal. He says, on page 160: "There is little doubt as to his having left the grammar school at an age we in these days deem very early. In every feature of the matter, the balance of evidence favors his having acted as clerk assistant in the office of Walter Roche, his earliest instructor in the guild school. There are known to have been some half dozen attorneys practicing in that town at that time; one, in particular, acted for his father and the Hathaway family. Six lawyers in a place of its size would have an active time in setting their fellow townsmen by the ears sufficient to yield a living for the whole six, and it is known to have been much given to litigation in those days. Either of the number commanding his services would derive no small advantage from what then, as now, is termed 'connexion.' Apart from young Will's talent in the office, we may rest assured that whatever he undertook would speedily bear the impress of his thought and action, and it is but reasonable to infer that a lawyer of clerical antecedents would remunerate him for services fairly, according to his ability and energy."

It is evident that the writer is not too tame. He would not be whipped for overdoing Termagant or out-heroding Herod. He can shoot arrows of imagination with a very long bow. His padding is unrivaled.

One of the many biographers, Frederick G. Fleay, shows in his introduction that he is very much ashamed of

his predecessors, for he says: "Previous investigators have, with industrious minuteness, already ascertained for us every detail that can reasonably be expected of Shaksper's private life. With laborious research they have raked together the records of petty debts, of parish assessments, of scandalous tradition, and of idle gossip. I do not think that, when stripped of verbiage and what the slang of the day calls padding, much more than this can be claimed as the result of the voluminous writings on this side of his career."

For my part, I wish that, for the sake of the truth of history, these searchers after facts had given their time to as industrious a search for the real author or authors of the poems and plays as they gave to these wretched, paltry details, which disgust the readers of Shaksper biographies.

One of the most amusing facts in connection with the Shaksperite idolaters is that when Ireland perpetrated his forgeries, consisting of a pretended letter of Queen Elizabeth to Shaksper, a pretended letter of Shaksper to the Earl of Southampton, pretended writings of Shaksper, and part of a pretended letter of Southampton to Shaksper, the men of taste, antiquarians and heralds, who viewed them unanimously testified in favor of their authenticity, and the world so believed until Malone, in his "Inquiry," exposed the forgery.

I can not help setting out from Malone's "Inquiry," page 163, for the amusement of the reader, one stanza of the verses pretended by Ireland to have been addressed by Shaksper to his mistress. The first stanza will suffice to show the reader how gullible Shaksper idolaters have been. I will not say "are now."

“Is there in heav-enne aught more rare  
Than thou sweete nymph of Avon fayre,  
Is there onne earthe a manne more trewe  
Than Willy Shakespeare is toe you.”

Webb, in his “Mystery of Shakespeare,” disposes of the conjectures and “might-have-been’s” of the eulogists of Shaksper when he says: “The world is not made up of ‘might-have-been’s,’ and we can not accept probabilities as facts, and we have not a particle of evidence to justify these assumptions. Still, if we choose to indulge our fancy, and to endow the player with that enormous receptivity with which he is endowed by Professor Dowden, if with the Professor we choose to compare him to the Arctic whale, which gulps in whole shoals of *acalephæ* and molluses, we may account for that vast and various amount of information which strikes us with amazement in the later works of Shakespeare.”



## CHAPTER XV.

### SHAKSPER'S REAL AND TRADITIONAL LIFE.

*"As tedious as a twice-told tale."*

—King John, iii, 4.

If William Shaksper of Stratford-upon-Avon did not write the plays and poems now attributed to him, the world at large would care very little about him, his family or his life-history. But that life-history, where it does not rest on vague tradition or mere invention but upon certain and fixed facts, is valuable as a means to identify the man Shaksper.

Rowe, the earliest biographer, says that he was the son of Mr. John Shaksper, who was a dealer in wool, while Aubrey says that his father was a butcher. William Shaksper was baptized on the 26th day of April, 1564, the baptismal entry on the register being as follows:

*"1564 April 26th, Gulielmus filius Johannes Shakspere."*

On what day, month, and year he was born, no record has been found, and hence the date of his birth can not be fixed. Aubrey says that when he was a boy he exercised his father's trade. Rowe says that "his father could give him no better education than his own employment, and that William went for a short time to a free school. He married while he was very young the daughter of one Hathaway, and afterwards falling into ill company he robbed the park of Sir Thomas Lucy of Charlecote and to escape prosecution ran away from his home and his family to London. He died in the fifty-third year of his age, and

was buried on the north side of the chancel in the great church at Stratford. He had three daughters, two of whom lived to be married; Judith, the elder, to one Mr. Thomas Quiney and Susannah to Dr. John Hall." This is all that Rowe says he "could learn of any note, either relating to himself or his family." He adds that "the character of the man is best seen in his writings." He could have added that Shaksper's father and mother could not write their own names; that Judith Quiney, his daughter, could not write her name; that Susannah Hall was illiterate, and that William Shaksper could hardly write his own name.

Rowe produced this biography in the year 1709. Afterward the Symmons edition of the plays from the text of Steevens and Malone was issued, and Symmons, the editor and a believer in Shaksper's capacity to write the plays, appended the following biography of the man:

"Little more than two centuries have elapsed since William Shakespeare conversed with our tongue and trod the selfsame soil with ourselves, and if it were not for the records kept by our church in its register of births, marriages, and burials, we should be at this moment as personally ignorant of 'the sweet swan of Avon' as we are of the old minstrel and rhapsodist of Meles. That William Shakespeare was born in Stratford-on-Avon; that he married and had three children; that he died before he had attained old age, and was buried in his native town, are positively the only facts in the personal history of this extraordinary man of which we are certainly possessed.

"To fill up this bare and most unsatisfactory outline, we must have recourse to the vague reports of unsubstan-

tial tradition or to the still more shadowy inferences of lawless and vagabond conjecture."

We know now, however, that Shaksper traded in property; that he signed his name to a deed and mortgage; that Francis Collins prepared a will for him which he signed in three different places, and that four of those signatures are preserved. We know also that he had petty lawsuits and that he was a money-getter. We do not know that he died from the effects of a drunken debauch, for that statement rests on the same shadowy foundation as do the stories about his dealings with the literati and their sacred majesties, Elizabeth and James.

Nothing upholds or sustains the pretension that Shaksper could write poetry at all except the two poetical effusions of Jonson and his conversation with Drummond. Without them, the world would have no faith in William Shaksper.

One of the Shaksper biographers, Fleay, speaking of the various Lives published, says that they have shown beyond doubt that Shaksper was born at Stratford-on-Avon, was married, had three children, left his home, made money, returned to Stratford, invested his savings there and died. In speaking of Phillips' "Outlines of Shaksper's Life," he says: "This book is a treasure-house of documents, and it is greatly to be regretted that they are not published by themselves, apart from hypotheses founded on idle rumors or fallacious misreasoning. I do not know of any work so full of fanciful theories and *ignes fatui*, likely to entice a deluded traveler out of the beaten path into strange quagmires. There is much else besides documents given in the present treatise,—discussions as to who might have been Shakespeare's school-

master, whether he was apprenticed to a butcher, whether he stole a deer out of a non-existent park, whether he held horses at the theatre door or was employed in any other equine capacity, whether he went to Denmark or Venice, and whether Lord Bacon wrote his plays for him."

The facts as to Shaksper's litigious spirit are brought out very prominently by Sidney Lee in his "Life of Shaksper," at page 206, through an enumeration of his petty lawsuits. "Shakespeare," he says, "inherited his father's love of litigation and stood vigorously for his rights in all his business relations. In March, 1600, he recovered in London a debt of 7£ from one John Clayton. In July, 1604, in the local court at Stratford, he sued one Philip Rogers, to whom he had supplied since the preceding March malt to the value of 1 £, 19s, 10d, and had on June 25th lent 2s in cash. Rogers had paid back 6s, and Shakespeare sought the balance of the account, 1 £, 15s, 10d. During 1608 and 1609 he was at law with another fellow townsman, John Addenbroke." He recovered a judgment against Addenbroke on February 15, 1609, for 6 £, but Addenbroke left the town. Lee adds that Shakespeare avenged himself by proceeding against one Thomas Hornby, who had acted as the absconding debtor's bail.

In commenting upon these facts in Shaksper's life-history, the late Richard Grant White gave utterance to the following words of lamentation, in which I am sure the most ardent worshiper of the divine William will coincide:

"These stories grate upon our feelings. The pursuit of an impoverished man for the sake of imprisoning him and depriving him, both of the power of paying his debt

and supporting himself and his family, is an incident in Shakespeare's life which it requires the utmost allowance and consideration for the practice of the time and country to enable us to contemplate with equanimity. Satisfaction is impossible. The biographer of Shakespeare must record these facts, because the literary antiquaries have unearthed and brought them forward as new particulars of the life of Shakespeare. We hunger, and we receive these husks; we open our mouths for food, and we break our teeth against these stones."

Passing from his real life, let us take up his life as tradition gives it. So much of the life-history of William Shaksper as depends upon tradition has a tendency to show that he could not have written the plays and poems. The educational tradition is as follows: I quote from Rowe:

"The narrowness of his father's circumstances and the want of his assistance at home forced his father to withdraw him from thence (the Stratford school) and unhappily prevented his farther proficiency."

If, now, we rely upon this statement, the presumption follows that William Shaksper was an uneducated man. A few months at a Stratford grammar school could not possibly avail to educate anybody, however naturally gifted. Collier, who spares no effort to magnify Shaksper's abilities, admits that we are destitute of all evidence beyond Rowe's assertion. He says: "That his father and mother could give him no instruction is quite certain from the proof that we have adduced that neither of them could write," and he adds further, "As we are ignorant of the time when he went to school, we are also in the dark as to the period when he left it. Rowe indeed has

told us that the poverty of John Shakespeare and the necessity of employing his son profitably at home induced him at an early age to withdraw him from the place of instruction." The presumption of Shaksper's want of education is further strengthened by two established facts—one that his handwriting, now said to be preserved in the British Museum, shows that he could hardly write his own name, and the other that he gave his own children no education.

The next traditional statement is that "he, Shakespeare, had by a misfortune common enough to young fellows fallen into ill company; and among them some that made a frequent practice of deer stealing, engaged him more than once in robbing the park that belonged to Sir Thomas Lucy of Charlecote, near Stratford, who had him whipped and sometimes imprisoned, and at last made him fly his native country to his great advancement. But his revenge was so great that he is his Justice Clodpate." Since there is no Justice Clodpate referred to or introduced into the plays, the tradition, at the very least, is devoid of accuracy. But even if this story were true, it affects the moral character of Shaksper detrimentally, and if all his known life facts do not militate against the charge, as we shall hereafter see, it would seem that he was not only a pilferer but a vindictive person.

As deer stealing was not to his credit, Malone and others furiously attack the tradition.

We come now to the tradition which treats of Shaksper's lasciviousness, as set out in Volume 1, page 331, of the "History of English Dramatic Poetry and the Stage."

"If in the course of my inquiries, I have been unlucky enough (I may perhaps say) to find anything which

represents our great dramatist in a less favorable light, as a human being with human infirmities, I may lament it, but I do not therefore feel myself at liberty to conceal and suppress the fact. The anecdote is this: 'Upon a time when Burbage played Rich. 3, there was a citizen grew so far in liking with him, that before she went from the play, she appointed him to come that night unto her, by the name of Rich. the 3. Shakespeare overhearing their conclusion, went before, was entertained, and at his game ere Burbage came. Then, message being brought that Rich. the 3 was at the dore, Shakespeare caused returns to be made, that William the Conqueror was before Rich. the 3. Shakespeare's name Willm.'"

If this story be true, to say the very least, it presents the man Shaksper to us in a very unfavorable light. No comment is necessary.

Next and last in order we have the traditional account of William Shaksper's last sickness and death.

The diary of the Rev. John Ward contains the following undated paragraph:

"Shakespeare, Drayton, and Ben Jonson had a merie meeting, and it seems, drank too hard, for Shakespeare died of a fever there contracted."

Here, then, we have four items of traditional evidence which, if we accept them as in the main reliable, show that William Shaksper was a person of limited education; that he was, while a young man, addicted to bad habits, and the associate of poachers and idlers; that in the middle of life, he was lewd and lascivious; and that his last sickness and death were caused by a drunken spree.

If we connect these traditional statements with the known facts about his life, it will be very plainly seen that they correspond.

His illiteracy is confirmed by his wretched handwriting and by his failure to educate his own children. If he had been a man of good habits and honest and straightforward in his dealings, he never would have attempted to perpetrate the fraud as to the grant of arms for his father. If he had been a virtuous gentleman, he would have treated his wife decently and would not have indulged in any illicit amours. And if he had been the exemplary, gentle, modest, and temperate man whom his admirers desire all mankind to worship, he never would have indulged in a wretched drinking bout with Ben Jonson or any one else. I do not wonder that Hallam says of the man whom he supposes to be the author of the plays that "to be told that he played a trick on a brother player in a licentious amour, or that he died of a drunken frolic, does not exactly inform us of the man who wrote *Lear*."

Rowe, being unable to fit Shaksper's life to the plays, says that "the character of the man is best seen in his writings." The reader will agree with me that the character of the man would be of some importance if he had the ability to write the Shakespeare plays and poems. Shaksper may have been a pilferer, a usurer, a libertine, a drunkard, and prone to litigiousity, and yet with all these faults, he might have been a competent composer of plays and poems, if he had had the requisite education. Francis Bacon, to whom the plays have been ascribed by many, was a barrator, a fawning sycophant, an ingrate, and a persistent office-hunter, but he was a well-educated and trained scholar.



The Shaksper biographers, acting on Rowe's suggestion, and finding nothing savory in Shaksper's life, have undertaken to manufacture long and learned biographies of the man, not from the facts, but from the writings wrongly attributed to him. All of them, except Farmer, have overlooked the disabling fact of Shaksper's ignorance.

## CHAPTER XVI.

THE PLAYS WERE WRITTEN BY A PROTESTANT OR  
PROTESTANTS.

*“Art thou a churchman?”*

—*Twelfth Night*, iii, 1.

No disinterested and observing person can read the Shakespeare plays without noticing that the author or authors were thoroughly Protestant. Hatred of Roman Catholicism appears in the plays, wherever it was thought necessary to allude to any form of religion. While there were occasional flings at Puritanism, they were slight and weak when contrasted with the heavy blows aimed in the plays at the pretensions of the Papacy. The writer or writers were ardent believers in the principles of the English reformers. A few examples will suffice to show not only that these exhibitions of detestation of Roman Catholicism were inserted in the plays to please the adherents of the Reformation, but also that they were the utterances of a Protestant zealot. In the play of “The Life and Death of King John,” Act 3, Scene 1, Pandulph, the Pope’s legate, is made to say:

“Hail, you anointed deputies of heaven!  
To thee, King John, my holy errand is.  
I Pandulph, of fair Milan cardinal,  
And from Pope Innocent the legate here,  
Do in his name religiously demand  
Why thou against the church, our holy mother,  
So wilfully dost spurn; and force perforce  
Keep Stephen Langton, chosen archbishop

Of Canterbury, from that holy see?  
 This, in our 'foresaid holy father's name,  
 Pope Innocent, I do demand of thee.

*K. John—*

What earthy name to interrogatories  
 Can task the free breath of a sacred king?  
 Thou canst not, cardinal, devise a name  
 So slight, unworthy and ridiculous,  
 To charge me to an answer, as the pope.  
 Tell him this tale; and from the mouth of England  
 Add thus much more, that no Italian priest  
 Shall tithe or toll in our dominions;  
 But as we, under heaven, are supreme head,  
 So, under heaven, that great supremacy,  
 Where we do reign, we will alone uphold,  
 Without the assistance of a mortal hand:  
 So tell the pope, all reverence set apart  
 To him and his usurp'd authority.

*King Phi.—*

Brother of England, you blaspheme in this.

*King John—*

Though you, and all the kings of Christendom  
 Are led so grossly by this meddling priest,  
 Dreading the curse that money may buy out;  
 And by the merit of vile gold, dross, dust,  
 Purchase corrupted pardon of a man  
 Who in that sale sells pardon from himself,  
 Though you and all the rest so grossly led  
 This juggling witchcraft with revenue cherish,  
 Yet I alone, alone do me oppose  
 Against the pope, and count his friends my foes.

*Pand.—*

Then, by the lawful power that I have,  
 Thou shalt stand curs'd and excommunicate:

And blessed shall he be that doth revolt  
 From his allegiance to an heretic;  
 And meritorious shall that hand be call'd,  
 Canonized and worshipp'd as a saint,  
 That takes away by any secret course  
 Thy hateful life."

And a little further on, Pandulph, addressing King Philip, says:

"Philip of France, on peril of a curse,  
 Let go the hand of that arch-heretic;  
 And raise the power of France upon his head,  
 Unless he do submit himself to Rome."

In Titus Andronicus, Act 5, Scene 1, Aaron says, "with twenty popish tricks and ceremonies."

Henry the Eighth is a thoroughly Protestant play. The second scene of act five, which depicts the bringing of Cranmer before the Council Chamber, the accusation against him of filling the whole realm with new opinions and heresies, his defense and protection by the bluff Harry, who had shaken off the temporal tyranny of Rome, is clearly the work of an enemy of the Roman Catholic Church. The grand eulogium pronounced by Cranmer upon Queen Elizabeth at her baptism, contained in the fourth<sup>th</sup> scene of the same act, testifies also very strongly to the Protestantism of the writer of the play. Cranmer says:

"Let me speak, sir,  
 For heaven now bids me; and the words I utter  
 Let none think flattery, for they'll find 'em truth.  
 This royal infant—heaven still move about her!—  
 Though in her cradle, yet now promises  
 Upon this land a thousand thousand blessings,  
 Which time shall bring to ripeness: she shall be—

But few now living can behold that goodness—  
 A pattern to all princes living with her,  
 And all that shall succeed: Saba was never  
 More covetous of wisdom, and fair virtue,  
 Than this pure soul shall be: All princely graces,  
 That mould up such a mighty piece as this is,  
 With all the virtues that attend the good,  
 Shall still be doubled on her: truth shall nurse her;  
 Holy and heavenly thoughts shall counsel her:  
 She shall be lov'd and fear'd: her own shall bless her;  
 Her foes shake like a field of beaten corn,  
 And hang their heads with sorrow: good grows with  
 her:

In her days every man shall eat in safety,  
 Under his own vine, what he plants; and sing  
 The merry songs of peace to all his neighbors:  
 God shall be truly known; and those about her  
 From her shall read the perfect ways of honour,  
 And by those claim their greatness, not by blood.  
 Nor shall this peace sleep with her: but as when  
 The bird of wonder dies, the maiden phœnix,  
 Her ashes new create another heir,  
 As great in admiration as herself;  
 So shall she leave her blessedness to one,  
 When heaven shall call her from this cloud of dark-  
 ness,

Who from the sacred ashes of her honour  
 Shall star-like rise, as great in fame as she was,  
 And so stand fix'd: Peace, plenty, love, truth, terror,  
 That were the servants to this chosen infant,  
 Shall then be his, and like a vine grow to him:  
 Wherever the bright sun of heaven shall shine,  
 His honour and the greatness of his name  
 Shall be, and make new nations: he shall flourish,  
 And, like a mountain cedar, reach his branches  
 To all the plains about him: Our children's children  
 Shall see this, and bless heaven.

*King—*

Thou speakest wonders.

*Cran.—*

She shall be, to the happiness of England,  
An aged princess; many days shall see her,  
And yet no day without a deed to crown it.  
Would I had known no more! but she must die;  
She must, the saints must have her; yet a virgin,  
A most unspotted lily shall she pass  
To the ground, and all the world shall mourn her."

Donnelly, in his Cryptogram, calls this portion of the play the Apotheosis of Cranmer. He says that "it is to be remembered that it was in this reign that Protestantism was established in England, and the man who, above all others, was instrumental in bringing about the great change was Thomas Cranmer, the first Protestant Archbishop of Canterbury. He, above all other men, was hated by the Roman Catholics. He, it was, who had sanctioned the divorce of Henry from Catharine; he, it was, who had delivered the crown to Anne upon the coronation; he had supported the suppression of the monasteries; he had persecuted the Roman Catholic prelates and people, sending numbers to the stake; and when the Roman Catholics returned to power under Mary, one of the first acts of the government was to burn him alive opposite Baliol College. It is impossible that a Roman Catholic writer of the next reign could have gone out of his way to defend and praise Cranmer, to represent him as a good and holy man and even an inspired prophet. And yet, all this we find in the play of Henry VIII. The play is, in fact, in large part, an apotheosis of Cranmer."

A Roman Catholic would not have made Juliet say to Friar Lawrence, in *Romeo and Juliet*, Act 4, Scene 1:

“Are you at leisure, holy father, now;  
Or shall I come to you at evening mass?”

Sir Walter Scott, a good Protestant, knew better when he said, in *Ivanhoe*, Chapter 32: “A mass amongst Christian men best begins on a busy morning.”

A Protestant dramatist, however scantily paid for his productions, and writing *currente calamo* in order to fulfil his contract with the manager of the theatre, would not care whether he said evening, morning, or noonday mass. For illustration as to haste, when Monday agreed with Henslowe to write a comedy for the Court, Drayton guaranteed that it should be ready in two weeks. (*Henslowe's Diary*, page 131.)

Recurring to *King John*, it should be stated that in the “*Troublesome Reign of King John*,” the earlier play which afforded much of the material for the construction of the *King John* of the Folio of 1623, the flings at the Roman Catholic Church were more virulent and bitter than in the present play. Collier, in his introduction to the revised play, commenting upon the *Troublesome Reign*, says, “although Shakespeare, like the author or authors of the old *King John*, employs the Bastard forcibly to raise money from the monasteries in England, he avoids the scenes of extortion and ribaldry in the older play in which the monks and nuns are turned into ridicule and the indecency and licentiousness of their lives exposed. Supposing the old *King John* to have been brought upon the stage not long after the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588, when the hatred of the Roman Catholics was at

its height, such an exhibition must have been extremely gratifying to the taste of vulgar audiences."

It will be clear to any one who will carefully read the first part of Henry the Sixth, that the writer of the fourth scene of the fifth act was disposed to picture the Maid of Orleans, who is held in saintly reverence by many members of the Roman Catholic Church, as a most depraved and immoral woman, guilty of witchcraft and fornication on her own confession. I am inclined to think, however, that this denunciation of Joan of Arc sprang more from the desire of the writer to pander to the British feeling against and the British hatred of France, prevailing at that time, than from any religious motive.

The allusions to Puritanism are jocose rather than severe, as, for instance, in Twelfth Night, Act 2, Scene 3, the following dialogue takes place:

*Mar.*—Marry, sir, sometimes he is a kind of a Puritan.

*Sir And.*—O! if I thought that, I'd beat him like a dog.

*Sir To.*—What, for being a Puritan? thy exquisite reason, dear knight?

*Sir And.*—I have no exquisite reason for't, but I have reason good enough.

*Mar.*—The devil a Puritan that he is, or anything constantly, but a time pleaser."

So also in All's Well, Act 1, Scene 3, the clown says, "for young Charbon, the Puritan, and old Poysam, the papist," and a little further on, he says, "though honesty be no Puritan."

In Winter's Tale, Act 4, Scene 2, the clown says: "But one Puritan amongst them and he says psalms to hornpipes," while in Pericles, Act 4, Scene 6, the bawd says, speaking of Marina, "She would make a Puritan of the devil."



If Francis Bacon either originated or revised the Shakespeare plays, or some of them, the citations from the plays, above set out, would be in consonance with his own belief. Thus, for instance, in his instructions to Sir George Villiers, afterward Duke of Buckingham, as to how Villiers should govern himself in the station of Prime Minister of the kingdom, he said, "In the first place, be you yourself rightly persuaded and settled in the true Protestant religion professed by the Church of England, which, doubtless, is as sound and orthodox in the doctrine thereof as any Christian Church in the world."

A little farther on, still speaking of the Church of England, he said: "The enemies and underminers thereof are the Roman Catholics, so styling themselves, on the one hand, whose tenets are inconsistent with the truth of religion professed and protested by the Church of England, whence we are called Protestants, and the Anabaptists and Separatists and Sectaries on the other hand."

Again, in another place, speaking of superstition, he said: "The causes of superstition are pleasing and sensual rites and ceremonies; excess of outward and pharisaical holiness, over-great reverence of traditions which can not but load the church; the stratagems of prelates for their own ambition and lucre, and the favoring too much of good intentions which openeth the gates to conceits and novelties."

In writing of judicature, he said that "Judges ought to remember that their office is *Jus dicere* and not *Jus dare*; to interpret law and not to make law or give law. Else will it be like the authority claimed by the Church of Rome, which, under pretext of exposition of Scripture, doth not stick to add and alter; and to pronounce that

which they do not find, and by show of antiquity, to introduce novelty."

The reader, I trust, will pardon a little moralizing here. What Bacon wrote nearly three centuries ago about superstition, as elaborated in his essays, finds its verification in the strong hold which superstition has upon the minds of the inhabitants of the Empire of Russia, who are dominated by the Greek Church. This subjection to superstition is illustrated in the preparation of the Russians for and their conduct of the war with Japan. While the Japanese rely for success in the warfare now waging between Japan and Russia upon the best, the very best war material for the army and navy, the best weapons, the best food and clothing and the best training for their soldiers and officers, the superstitious Russians greatly rely upon sacred relics, so-called—as, for instance, the toe of St. Serge, pictures and icons (fabled to have supernatural powers) to win victories for them. It is no wonder that men become atheists when they find that the church (using the term in its general sense, so as to embrace all Christian bodies excepting the peace-loving Society of Friends), which claims to have Christ, the preacher and Prince of Peace, as its founder and head, aids and abets belligerent rulers and warring nations in their reckless and bloody contests for supremacy. Men of sense and discernment know that there is a God of Peace and Good-will to all men, and they also know that there is no God of Battles, unless it be the devil, and that until a court of arbitrament between nations, with power to make and enforce its decrees is established, the divinity which will settle international controversies is not a relic nor a painting nor a saint's picture, nor an icon nor even a prayer, but the scientific

collocation of the best-trained fighters under the leadership of the most skillful generals, with the most approved weapons, light and heavy, which military ingenuity can invent and supply as against a power inferior in these equipments.

Frederick of Prussia said that he always found the God of Battles to be on the side of the strongest and best-equipped regiments.

When Cræsus, in his ostentation, exhibited his great stores of gold to Solon, that wise lawgiver said to him: "Sir, if any other come that hath better iron than you, he will be master of all the gold."

Sensible men also know that such a court of final arbitration could be firmly and permanently established if the Church of God, following the example of the despised Quakers, would steadfastly range itself on the side of everlasting peace between nations.

Charles Sumner, in his admirable oration on the "True Grandeur of Nations," thus speaks of the tremendous influence which war, though condemned by Christ, has derived from the church:

"The Christian Church, after the first centuries of its existence, failed to discern the peculiar spiritual beauty of the faith which it professed. Like Constantine, it found new incentives to war in the religion of peace; and such has been its character—let it be said fearlessly—even to our own day. The Pope of Rome, the asserted head of the Church, the Vicegerent of Christ on earth, whose seal is a fisherman, on whose banner is a lamb before the holy cross, assumed the command of armies, often mingling the thunders of battle with those of the Vatican. The dagger which projected from the sacred vestments of the Archbishop de

Retz, as he appeared in the streets of Paris, was called by the people 'the Archbishop's Prayer Book.' We read of mitred prelates in armour of proof, and seem still to catch the jingle of the golden spurs of the bishops in the streets of Cologne. The sword of knighthood was consecrated by the church; and priests were often the expert masters in military exercises."

To William Penn belongs the distinction, destined to brighten as men advance in virtue, of first in human history establishing the law of love, as a rule of conduct for the intercourse of nations.

A great man, worthy of the mantle of Penn, the venerable philanthropist Clarkson, in his life of the founder of Pennsylvania, says: "The Pennsylvanians became armed, though without arms; they became strong, though without strength; they became safe, without the ordinary means of safety. This pattern of a Christian Commonwealth never fails to arrest the admiration of all who contemplate its beauties. It drew an epigram of eulogy from the caustic pen of Voltaire, and has been fondly painted by many virtuous historians. Every ingenuous soul in our day offers his willing tribute to those celestial graces of justice and humanity, by the side of which the flinty hardness of the Pilgrims of Plymouth Rock seems earthly and coarse."

The true Shakespeare, speaking in the same humanitarian and Christian spirit, causes Westmoreland, in Act 4, Scene 1, of Second Henry the Fourth, to rebuke the martial Archbishop of York in the following language:

"You, lord archbishop,  
Whose see is by a civil peace maintain'd,  
Whose beard the silver hand of peace hath touch'd,

Whose learning and good letters peace hath tutor'd,  
 Whose white investments figure innocence,  
 The dove and very blessed spirit of peace,  
 Wherefore do you so ill translate yourself  
 Out of the speech of peace that bears such grace,  
 Into the harsh and boisterous tongue of war?"

Returning to the question of Shaksper's religious belief, a reference to the list of competent and learned playwrights who were contemporary with Shaksper will show that they were all Protestants, some of them being bigoted Protestants.

It may be remarked in this connection that the play of Sir John Oldecastle, which was written by four dramatists, Anthony Monday, Michael Drayton, Robert Wilson, and Richard Hathaway, and which was published in the name of William Shakespeare, was also a thoroughly Protestant production. Monday was an intense and vindictive hater of the Church of Rome, and Drayton also was imbued with the principles of the English Reformation. So, also, was Thomas Dekker. If Davies is to be trusted, the ignorant William Shaksper was a Roman Catholic. While Davies gives no reason for his statement, it would be natural that the uneducated son of an uneducated man would adopt and live and die in the faith of his parents, and it is an undisputed fact that John Shaksper, the father, was a Roman Catholic.

Halliwell-Phillips, in his second volume of the "Outlines of the Life of Shaksper," page 397, says that before September, 1592, the name of John Shaksper (William's father) was included in a list of recusants who were presented for not coming monthly to church according to the laws of her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth; and in *idem*, Vol.

I, page 264, he says that "there is no doubt that John Shaksper nourished all the while a latent attachment to the old religion, and although like most unconverted non-conformists of ordinary discretion who were exposed to the inquisitorial tactics of the authorities, he may have attempted to conceal his views even from the members of his own household; yet still, however determinately he may have refrained from giving them expression, it generally happens in such cases that a wave from the religious spirit of a parent will imperceptibly reach the hearts of his children and exercise more or less influence on their perceptions. And this last presumption is an important consideration in assessing the degree of credit to be given to the earliest notice that has come down to us respecting the character of Shaksper's own belief, the assertion of Davies that 'he died a Papist.' That this was the local tradition in the latter part of the Seventeenth Century does not admit of rational question. If the statement had emanated from a man like Prynne addressing fanatics, whose hatred of a stage-player would, if possible, have been intensified by the knowledge that he was a Romanist, then, indeed, a legitimate suspicion might have been entertained of the narrator's integrity; but here we have the testimony of a sober clergyman, who could have no conceivable motive for deception in what is obviously the casual note of a provincial hearsay." Phillips, in the foregoing, alludes to the statement of the Reverend Richard Davies, made in the year 1685, that Shaksper was a Roman Catholic.

Strong says, at page 11, in his book on "The Great Poets and their Theology": "In the plays there is no trace of Mariolatry nor of dependence for salvation upon

ritual or ceremony. Yet Shakespeare is as devoid of Puritanism as he is of Romish superstition. In an age of much clerical corruption, he never rails at the clergy. While he has some most ungodly prelates, his priests are all a credit to their calling. None of his characters are disseminators of skepticism. I can not explain all this, except by supposing that Shakespeare was himself a believer. Though he was not a theological dogmatist nor an ecclesiastical partisan, he was unerringly assured of the fundamental verities of the Christian scheme. Shakespeare had dug down through superficial formulas to the bed-rock of Christian doctrine. He held the truths which belong in common to all ages of the church. If any deny the personality of God, or the divinity of Christ, they have a controversy with Shakespeare. If any think it irrational to believe in man's depravity, guilt and need of supernatural redemption, they must also be prepared to say that Shakespeare did not understand human nature."

## CHAPTER XVII.

SHAKSPER, IF LEARNED, COULD NOT HAVE WRITTEN  
THE PLAYS.

*“Men of few words are the best men.”*

—Henry V, iii, 2.

When I assert that William Shaksper, even if a very learned man, could not have written the plays, I mean by that assertion that no one man, however gifted with education and talent, could by any possibility have written the plays. I assert the same as to the scholarly Bacon, rare Ben Jonson, or any other writer of the period during which the plays were written. I do not expect to convince by my reasons for this assertion any reader who believes that William Shaksper from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet was divine and not in the roll of common mortals. Being one of those who believe with Lafeu, in *All's Well that Ends Well*, Act 2, Scene 3, that since the Apostolic days “all miracles are past,” I weigh this Shaksper intellectually as other men must be weighed, and I will apply to him the test of fact.

I support my assertion by two infallible propositions, one being the sequence of the other. The first, which I will elaborate in this chapter, is that no one man in the Sixteenth Century, or in any century before or since, leaving out the God-man, our Savior, could use as many words as are found in the plays, and the second proposition is that an examination of the plays in the crucial manner to be hereafter explained shows that three men at the very least participated in the preparation and composition of



the plays. I may say in passing that the object of this crucial test applied by me was to find the real Shakespeare—the real revisionist—and not to pick out all the writers, good and bad, who may have placed in the plays an act or acts, or part of an act here or part of a scene there.

Upon a careful examination and study of the plays, I have found what the diligence of others has also established and verified, that they contain *over twenty-one thousand words*, leaving out, too, in this computation, the changes of particular words caused by number, case, person, gender, and tense. Let the reader keep the foregoing fact in mind. Now, what is and always has been man's or woman's word limit? A common farm laborer will not, during his whole lifetime, use over five hundred words. A business man, having what is called an average education, either at high school or college, will not use over three thousand words. Such voluminous and learned writers as Scott or Thackeray or Dickens were, and as Lew Wallace and Kipling are, did not and do not use even five thousand words. John Milton, according to the best authorities, surpassed all other writers as to word use by stretching the number to seven thousand. No writer, unless it be Michael Drayton, who was a great word-coiner, has ever exceeded Milton in the use of words. If Drayton's works were readily accessible to scholars, it would be found that he was *primus inter pares* as a maker of words.

Presumptively, therefore, if the writers of the plays were as prolific in words as Milton was, there were three of them at least and each one must have used seven thousand words entirely different from the other two. If judged by the Thackeray standard, there were not less than four of them, unless we accept the absurd theory

that if one man wrote them all, thereby using twenty-one thousand words, he must have been miraculously endowed. Dr. Holmes destroys that theory when he declares that "school or no school, without books and studies, we know that learning is impossible." And Bulwer finely satirizes the believers in genius without education when he says: "A problem in astronomy or a knotty passage in the fathers are all riddles, with which application has nothing to do. One's mother wit is a precious sort of necromancy which can pierce every mystery at first sight." Possibly the believers in the divine Shaksper afflatus base their theory upon Dogberry's charge to neighbor Sea-cole, as found in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Act 3, Scene 3, "God hath blessed you with a good name; to be a well-favored man is the gift of fortune, but to write and read comes by nature."

The surrounding facts support my position that one man could not have written the plays, and justify the reader in believing that plays produced in the Elizabethan era, generally speaking, were the work of collaborators. Henslowe's Diary, heretofore referred to in Chapter III, shows that plays were so composed. Every critic, every essayist, every student, and every commentator, however learned or prejudiced, must submit to Henslowe's authority. He was no guesser. What he wrote was truthful. Although unlearned and a speller who would rival Josh Billings in his best days, he jotted down cold facts. His Diary contains minute, truthful, and valuable information respecting the English drama in Shaksper's time. It contains the names of plays identical with or very similar to the titles of some of the Shakespeare plays; it nowhere mentions Shaksper's name; it shows that the English drama-

tists wrote plays and sold them outright for trifling sums to Henslowe; it shows that these plays thereafter became the property of Henslowe; it shows that certain dramatists were employed and paid by Henslowe to revise and dress the popular plays so purchased and adapt them to suit the fastidious taste of the frequenters of the theatre; and it also clearly shows that the principal plays were composed hurriedly by collaborators—two, three, four, five, and even six playwrights—who, after they had received their pay, presumably cared nothing more for their productions. Such collaboration, when applied to the Shakespeare plays, accounts for the great number of words in the plays. The fact of collaboration is also supported by an examination of the style of the plays and the peculiar phrases and turns of expression, differing in the several plays.

It is not necessary to give the reader here any opinion of mine on this point. He can not take up the work of any learned editor or commentator, who believed or believes that the Shakespeare plays were composed by William Shaksper, without speedily ascertaining that they, one and all, when analyzing the plays, ascribe their composition in part to several poets. For instance, *Troilus and Cressida*, some affirm, is the creation of two poets. Very many of them deny that *Titus Andronicus* was written by Shaksper at all. "*Timon of Athens*," says Fleay, "contains much matter from another hand." *Henry the Eighth*, they say, was written chiefly by Fletcher and Massinger, Shakespeare's share in it being only three scenes in acts one and two. A furious controversy, which has never yet been settled, has raged between the commentators headed by Malone on one side

and Johnson and Steevens on the other, as to the parties who composed First, Second and Third Henry the Sixth. With these controversies we need not now concern ourselves. I refer to them now to support and fortify my position that it was not in the ability and power of one man, however learned, to be the author of plays containing over twenty-one thousand separate words.

That the plays were composed by collaboration is also supported by another fact which has faced the commentators and caused them to foolishly advance beyond the region of common sense and make of their idol a quasi demi-god. To fill the place of a sole author, they discovered that he must have been a lawyer, or thoroughly familiar with law terms and legal principles. He must have been a physician or an adept in medical science. He must have been a theologian or a student of the Bible, conversant with biblical words and phrases. He must have been more or less familiar with entomology, geology, botany, archery, and, at the very least, he must have been a student of philosophy. All these gifts the commentators have labored to endow their idol, William Shaksper, with, in order to account for the learning on these subjects which irradiates and dignifies the plays.

But when in truth and in fact it is clear that originally the plays were created by several persons, all the difficulties vanish. The use of so many words is naturally explained. The differences in style and methods of expression are properly accounted for, and there is room enough in the glorious company of the poets to account for all the knowledge—legal, medical, scientific, theological, specific, or general—that has hitherto bothered the brains of the admirers of the Shakespeare plays in their attempts

to palm them upon the public as the offspring of one man.

The fact of collaboration is also shown by the labored attempts of the learned commentators to account for the diversity of the style of the plays by ascribing their composition to different periods in Shaksper's life. One period, imagined—or rather invented—by them, is his comic period; another is his tragic period, and still another is his historic period. When he got into one of these periods he had to remain there, according to their theory, until the passage of that period. These periods are set up by these commentators to explain the inequalities and irregularities of some of the plays, since, when he was in the comic period, he could not get out of it and do justice to the tragedy which the theatre-goers would demand of him.

Lest any reader should think that I am doing the commentators injustice in my statement of their real views as to the authorship, I will give their opinions briefly, quoting from an excellent authority, Gulien C. Verplanck, a learned man, who honestly believed in the Shaksper theory. These statements are from the introductory remarks at the beginning of each play in Verplanck's Shakespeare.

Referring to the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, he says that Hanmer and Upton pronounced with great confidence that he, Shaksper, could have had no other hand in it than enlivening with some speeches and lines, thrown in here and there, the production of some inferior dramatist.

In *All's Well that Ends Well*, Coleridge pointed out two distinct styles, not only of thought, but of expression; and Professor Tieck, at a later date, adopted and enforced the same belief.

As to *Troilus and Cressida*, Dryden said that the author began it with some fire, but that he grew weary of his task, and the latter part of the tragedy is nothing but a confusion of drums, trumpets, excursions, and alarms.

As to *Henry the Eighth*, the theory is maintained by Malone, Steevens, and others that the prologue, parts of Cranmer's speech in the last scene, and possibly some other passages, were written by Ben Jonson.

A majority of the later English critics have adopted or incline to an hypothesis brought out by Malone over sixty years ago, that the first part of *King Henry the Sixth*, as it now appears (of which no quarto copy is extant), was the entire or nearly the entire production of some unknown ancient dramatist. Malone's opinion is founded mainly, as relates to the first part, upon the dissimilarity of versification and phraseology to that of Shakespeare, and its resemblance in those things to the writings of Greene and Peele, and upon the classical allusions and Latin quotations, too learned and too abundant for the unlettered Shaksper.

Verplanck, speaking for himself, says, "In style and versification, *Richard the Third* has much of the cast of those portions of *Henry the Sixth* denied to be his."

As to *Hamlet*, he says that all the circumstances lead to the belief that *Hamlet* was the work of several different periods of the poet's life.

The most remarkable comment is made upon the play of *Pericles*. It is a circumstance to be noted that this play did not appear in the Folio of 1623. Ben Jonson called it a mouldy tale made up of seraps out of every dish. Steevens said that the drama of *Pericles* "contains no discrimination of manners (except in the comic dia-

logue), very few traces of original thought, and is evidently destitute of that intelligence and useful knowledge that pervades even the meanest of Shakespeare's undisputed performances." In this view Malone finally acquiesced.

Hallam says that "from the poverty and bad management of the fable, the want of effective and distinguishable character, and the general feebleness of the tragedy as a whole, I shall not believe the structure to have been Shakespeare's. The play is full of evident marks of an inferior hand."

Macbeth contains, as all the commentators agree, a part of Middleton's "Witch."

But it is against Titus Andronicus that the assaults of the host of commentators are particularly directed. Verplanck says that a great majority of the English Shakespearean editors, commentators, and critics, including some of the very highest names in literature, have concurred in rejecting this bloody and repulsive tragedy as wholly unworthy of Shakespeare, and therefore erroneously ascribed to him.

There is another very strong and convincing reason in favor of the fact of collaboration in the Shakespeare plays. I refer to the difference, which can not have escaped the vigilant eyes of the commentators, in the pronunciation or accentuation of words, and the difference also in names as applied to sex or to position in the ranks of opposing factions. In *Cymbeline*, Posthumus is rightly and wrongly pronounced, and Arviragus meets with similar treatment. Hecate is made a word of two and sometimes three syllables. In the *Taming of the Shrew*, Baptista is a man, while in *Hamlet*, Baptista is characterized as a woman, wife of Gonzago. In the *Merchant of Venice*, the distance

between Venice and Belmont is changed, and in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Milan and Verona are treated as seaport towns.

In Fleay's "*Life and Works of Shakespeare*," the author notes that there are discrepancies between *Richard III* and *3 Henry VI*, in this, that Gray, in act one, scene three of the first-named play, is depicted as fighting for the Lancastrians, whereas in the second he is represented as a Yorkist, a fact which shows a different hand in the two plays.

It is amusing to read Verplanck's reflection. "The glorious uncertainty of the law," he says, "has been exemplified and commemorated in a large and closely printed volume, containing nothing but the mere title of legal decisions, once acknowledged to be law, and since reversed or contradicted as 'cases overruled, doubted, or denied.' The decisions of the critical tribunals would furnish material for a much larger work. And Shakespeare criticism by itself would supply an ample record of varying or overruled judgments."

In the Shakespeare case, evil has been caused by two errors—the first, in the foolish belief that an ignorant man could write plays at all, and second, in the belief, as foolish and baseless as the first, that one man could be the sole composer of works containing over twenty thousand different words.

A late author, Webb, in his summary of evidence, presents the views of the commentators who ask the general reader to believe in the unity of Shakespeare, showing thereby that even they have no confidence in the theory. At page 20 of his chapter entitled "*The Unity of Shakespeare*," he says:



“To the Shakespearean scholars of the day, the plays of Shakespeare, like the Iliad of Homer, are a noise of many waters. Mr. Swinburne tells us that no scholar believes in the single authorship of *Andronicus*; that no scholar questions the part taken by ‘some hireling or journeyman’ in *Timon*, and that ‘few probably would refuse to admit a doubt of the total authenticity or uniform workmanship of the *Taming of the Shrew*.’ A host of experts, following in the footsteps of Malone, assert that the Second and Third parts of *King Henry the Sixth* include the work of Marlowe. The writers in the *Henry Irving Shakespeare* ascribe the last act of *Troilus and Cressida* to Dekker. Mr. Swinburne complains that the most characteristic portion of *Macbeth* has been attributed to Middleton. Mr. Phillips contends that the *Merry Wives of Windsor* has been interpolated by a botcher. Mr. Lee is as iconoclastic as the rest. Intolerant as he is of doubt as to the identity of Shakespeare, he, too, denies his unity. To him, Shakespeare is a noun of multitude, signifying many. He attributes one of the most striking scenes in *Macbeth* to a hack of the theatre; he suggests that the third and fifth acts of *Timon* were the work of a colleague with whom Shakespeare worked in collaboration; he holds that the vision of Posthumus in *Cymbeline* is a piece of pitiful mummery, which must have been supplied by another hand; and boldly carrying the judgment of Solomon into execution, he cuts the body of *Henry the Eighth* in two, and hands one half of it to Shakespeare and the other half to Fletcher.

“As the work of Shakespeare is said to have been interpolated by others, so the work of others is said to have been appropriated by Shakespeare. The *Hamlet*

mentioned by Nash in 1589 is attributed by Mr. Lee to Kyd; the King John which was published in 1590 is regarded by Mr. Marshall as an old play by an unknown writer; the Henry the Sixth, mentioned by Henslowe as performed in 1591, is described by Mr. Marshall as an old play which Shakespeare found at the theatre and slightly altered; the First part of the Contention, which was published in 1594, and the True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York, which was published in 1595, Mr. Boas tells us, are considered by eminent critics as plays in the composition of which Shakespeare took no part; and the Taming of a Shrew, which was published in 1594, is regarded by Mr. Swinburne as the work of an author as nameless as the deed of the witches in Macbeth. And yet Mr. Lee admits that Shakespeare drew largely on the Hamlet which he has attributed to Kyd; Mr. Marshall acknowledges that Shakespeare was indebted for the materials of his play to the King John of the unknown writer; the old play, Henry the Sixth, appears in the Folio as the work of Shakespeare; Mr. Boas confesses that Shakespeare transferred some three thousand two hundred and fifty lines, with little or no alteration, from the Contention and the True Tragedy to his Lancastrian Trilogy; and Mr. Swinburne recognizes the fact that in the Taming of the Shrew all the force and humor, alike of character and situation, belong to Shakespeare's eclipsed and forlorn precursor; that he tempered and enriched everything in his precursor's play, but in reality he added nothing."

All these statements and opinions of commentators tend to show that it is absolutely silly and absurd to credit one man with the authorship of the Shakespeare

plays. If nothing else would be a bar, the fact that man's capacity in the use of words is limited to less than ten thousand words is a sufficient answer to the Shaksper claim or the Baconian claim or the claim for any other individual poet to the composition of the plays. The solution of the question of the true authorship is to be found in collaboration as to a majority of the plays, and the original composition of the play was very often supplemented by a revision. The reader will find that Henry the Fifth, Hamlet, Romeo and Juliet, and the Merry Wives of Windsor were so revised.

In the first edition of Henry the Fifth there were only eighteen hundred lines. Some one revised it before the Folio of 1623 was issued, by the addition of seventeen hundred more lines. In his notice of the revision of that play, Knight says, "In this elaboration the old materials are very carefully used up; but they are so thoroughly refitted and dovetailed with what is new that the operation can only be compared to the work of a skillful architect, who having an ancient mansion to enlarge and beautify with a strict regard to its original character, preserves every feature of the structure under other combinations, with such marvelous skill that no unity of principle is violated; and the whole has the effect of a restoration in which the new and the old are undistinguishable."

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### THE LEARNING OF THE AUTHOR OR AUTHORS OF THE POEMS AND PLAYS.

*"I'll talk a word with this same learned Theban."*

—King Lear, iii, 4.

Was the author of the Shakespeare plays and poems a man of great or little learning? Or if there were two or more authors, were they learned or unlearned? Every careful reader is entitled to an opinion of his own on that point, without the aid of critics or commentators; and I venture to say that the person who will read the Shakespeare plays and poems without consulting the commentators will call the writer or writers of them very learned unless he believes that he or they were gifted with supernatural powers. Let me make a broader assertion. If the poems of Venus and Adonis and Tarquin and Lucrece and the plays we are considering (divested of all reference to William Shaksper) could be put into the hands of a thorough scholar who had never before seen them or heard either of them or their reputed author, and if he were asked to read them carefully, and after such reading to give an opinion as to whether the chief composer of the plays and poems was a learned or an unlearned man, I am quite sure that he would say that the author of the poems and plays was a very learned person, and I think that my readers will agree with me.

Nevertheless, if the disinterested reader whom I have selected as above, after reading the poems and plays without previously knowing anything whatever of the life-

history of William Shaksper of Stratford-on-Avon, the reputed author, will seek for a confirmation of his opinion among the writings of the essayists and commentators, he will be sorely bewildered.

Ben Johnson said of the reputed writer of the plays, "Though thou hadst small Latin and less Greek," and Digges, a contemporary, said, "Nature only helped him." Denham assures us that "all he had was from old mother wit." Milton talks of his "Native wood notes wild." Dryden said that "he wanted not the spectacle of books to read nature." Fuller, on whom the Shaksperites rely, declares positively that "his learning was very little. Nature was all the art used upon him, as he himself, if alive, would confess." The learned Dr. Farmer wrote a book to show that Shaksper was not a learned man. Langbaine said that "he was as much a stranger to French as Latin." Hume, in his "History of England," speaks of Shaksper as an author "without any instruction either from the world or from books." Simpson wrote that "the constant criticism which his contemporaries from Greene to Ben Jonson passed on him was that he was ignorant of language and no scholar." Richard Grant White called him "the untaught son of a Stratford yeoman," while Alexander Pope said that "he is the only author that gives ground for a new opinion that the philosopher and even the man of the world may be born as well as the poet." John Dennis declared that "he who allows Shakespeare had learning and a familiar acquaintance with the ancients, ought to be looked upon as a detractor from the glory of Great Britain." Bentham stated in his book on English schools and churches, published about the year 1686, that "the learning of Shaksper was very

little, and therefore it is more a matter for wonder that he should be a very excellent poet."

On the other hand, Mary Cowden Clark says that "the Venus and Adonis bears palpable tokens of college education and predilection, both in story and treatment." The erudite Reed pronounces it "a product of the highest culture, written throughout in the purest, most elegant and scholarly English of that day." Gildon, the well-known editor of the poem, said "that the man who doubts of the learning of Shakespeare hath none of his own." Mr. Theobald is "very unwilling to allow him so poor a scholar as many have labored to represent him." Mr. Upton wonders "with what kind of reasoning any one could be so far imposed upon as to imagine that Shakespeare had no learning." Dr. Grey declared that "Shakespeare's knowledge in the Greek and Latin tongues can not reasonably be questioned." Holmes says that "the writer of the plays was a classical scholar." Rowe found traces in him of the Electra of Sophocles; Coleman, of Ovid; Pope, of Dares Phrygius and other Greek authors; Farmer, of Horace and Virgil; Malone, of Lucretius, Statius, Catullus, Seneca, Sophocles, and Euripides; Steevens, of Plautus; Knight, of the Antigone of Sophocles; and White of the Alcestis of Euripides.

Donnelly unhesitatingly affirmed that "the author of the plays was unquestionably a profound scholar and a most laborious student. He had read in their own tongues all the great and some of the obscure writers of antiquity; he was familiar with the languages of the principal nations of Europe; his mind had compassed all the learning of his time and of preceding ages; he had pored over the pages of French and Italian novelists; he had read the

philosophical utterances of the great thinkers of Greece and Rome; and he had closely considered the narrations of the explorers who were laying bare the secrets of new islands and continents. It has been justly said that the plays could not have been written without a library, and can not to-day be properly studied without one. To their proper elucidation, the learning of the whole world is necessary. Goethe says of the writer of the plays, 'he drew a sponge over the table of human knowledge.'" Books after books have been written to show that the writer of the plays excelled in a knowledge of astronomy, botany, chemistry, entomology, geology, medicine, law, theology, and philosophy. "The man who wrote these plays made no mistakes as to his law," says Lord Chief Justice Campbell. He was skilled in medicine and surgery, according to Bucknill in his work on Shakespeare's medical knowledge. He knew about the circulation of the blood before Harvey. He knew about the laws of gravitation before Newton. "He was the prophet of geology," says Fullom. He was an accurate botanist. He was a naturalist and entomologist, according to Patterson. He was a profound biblical student, according to Wadsworth and Vincent. He was deeply learned in history and mythology; and finance was to him as an unsealed book. And above all, he was a very practical philosopher. All these specialties, if these writers are to be trusted, must have required much study, much aptitude and very much training.

I think, and I believe that the reader thinks and believes with me, that the writer of the poems and the principal writer of the plays was a learned, a very learned person.

In his "Myth," a book which ought to be read by every Shakespearean student, Morgan very strikingly calls attention to the learning of the dramatist: ". . . there are two characteristics of the Shakespearean works which, under the calmest and most sternly judicial treatment to which they could possibly be subjected, are so prominent as to be beyond gainsay or neglect. These two characteristics are—1. The encyclopædic universality of their information as to matters of fact; and, 2. The scholarly refinement of the style displayed in them. Their claim to eloquence and beauty of expression, after all, is a question of taste; and we may conceive of whole peoples—as, for example, the Zulus or the Aſhantees—impervious to any admiration for the Shakespearean plays on that account. But this familiarity with what, at their date, was the Past of history, and—up to that date—the closed book of past human discovery and research which we call Learning, is an open and indisputable fact; and the New Zealander who will sit on a broken arch of London Bridge and muse over the ruins of British civilization, if he carry his researches back to the Shakespearean literature, will be obliged to find that its writer was in perfect possession of the scholarship antecedent to his own date, and of the accumulated learning of the world down to his own actual day."

Of the writer of the two poems and *Midsummer Night's Dream*, I can say with Emerson that "he sits above the hundred-handed play of his imagination, pensive and conscious."

And because I so believe, I can not fit the man William Shaksper, as his life-history truly paints him, to the poetry which passes under his name.



When I read the true life-history of William Shaksper of Stratford-on-Avon, I find it, as O'Connor describes it, "a record unadorned by a single excellence or virtue. Before it, thoughtful men stand in utter perplexity. Hallam, an elegant and judicious mind, regards it with petulant disquietude. Guizot, a profound and penetrating intellect, notes it with a certain mystified curiosity. Coleridge recoils from it with anger and disgust, and declares that such a creature could not have written the drama. 'Does God choose idiots to convey truths to man!' he cries with indignation. You would say that he glared at the indisputable biography, enraged that 'it does not offer one single point of correspondence, however small, with the spirit of the plays.' "

When the disinterested reader who is desirous to find the real truth as to the life of William Shaksper, now buried under the accumulated rubbish of two centuries or more of conjecture and invention, has cleared away the disgusting mass, he must inevitably conclude that whether one man or several men wrote the plays, William Shaksper was too illiterate to have been such author or a participant in their composition.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### THE DIVERSE SPELLING OF THE NAMES.

*“Exceedingly well read, and profited  
In strange concealments.”*

—First Henry IV, iii, 1.

Before proceeding to an examination of the plays and poems, it may be profitable to the reader, in forming an opinion as to the authorship, to consider the fact that the man of Stratford-on-Avon never spelled his own name in the way the surname appeared on the title pages of the various publications, viz., Shake-speare, Shakespeare, and Shakspeare. If the reader should have “Smith” for a surname, and he should be written about as “Smythe,” he would naturally and rightly presume that the person so writing was not very intimately acquainted with him. Benjamin Jonson was a voluminous writer of plays and poems, and yet no educated intimate friend ever wrote to him or about him as “Johnson,” although the insertion of an “h” would have been a very pardonable mistake in the case of a stranger. I had to use, as to Jonson, the word “educated,” for I find that the ignorant Henslowe wrote of him twice as follows: at page 80 of the Diary, “R’d of Bengemene Johnsones share as follows 28 of July 1597,” and at page 256 he wrote, “Lent unto Bengemyne Johnson,” etc. Drayton’s name was never written “Dreyton” or “Draton” by his associates; and no very intimate friend made any mistake as to Chapman, Chettle, Fletcher, Marston, or Middleton. If we should read commendations in verse or prose by contemporaries of Dryden, Cowper, Addison, Gladstone, Dickens, or Tennyson, and

the name of the commended writer should be spelled by the commender as "Driden," or "Couper," or "Adison," or "Gladestone," or "Dikkens," or "Tenison," while we might admire the commendatory verses, we should naturally presume and believe that the authors were not personally acquainted with the men whom they praised, or if acquainted, not very familiarly. Any author, honestly desiring to eulogize a contemporary writer, living or dead, by means of a poem or prose writing, would be very careful to properly spell the name of the person to be eulogized.

In this matter of the Shakespeare plays and poems, while it is not very important if William Shaksper of Stratford-on-Avon did not write them, to ascertain whether Shaksper or some one else was pointed at by other writers as Shakespeare or Shake-speare, yet the inquiry may serve as an aid in elucidating the truth as to their authorship. Taking for granted, therefore, that the Shaksper of Stratford did not write the plays and poems, the reader should have before him the statements of writers of that era. And first in order comes Francis Meres, who, in 1598, in his "Palladis Tamia," wrote as follows: "As Plautus and Seneca are accounted the best for comedy and tragedy among the Latines; so Shakespeare, among ye English, is the most excellent in both kinds for the stage. For comedy, witnes his Gentleme of Verona, his Errors, his Love's Labor's Lost, his Love's Labor's Wonne, his Midsummer Night's Dreame, and his Merchant of Venice; for tragedy, his Richard the 2, Richard the 3, Henry the 4, King John, Titus Andronicus, and his Romeo and Juliet."

Thomas Heywood may be properly called next as a witness. He was not, like Ben Jonson, a man who would

resort to flattery or fawning; neither would he be disposed to knowingly exalt an ignoramus to the position of a great poet, and this is what he wrote in his "Hierarchie of the Blessed Angells," published in 1635:

"Mellifluous Shake-speare, whose enchanting quill  
 Commanded mirth or passion, was but Will;  
 And famous Jonson, though his learned pen  
 Be dipt in Castaly, is still but Ben.  
 Fletcher and Webster, of that learned packe  
 None of the mean'st, yet neither was but Jacke.  
 Deckers but Tom, no May nor Middleton;  
 And hee's now but Jacke Foord that once was John."

It will be noticed by the reader that Heywood hyphenates the word we are investigating, so that it is written in his book as "Shake-speare."

John Webster is the next witness, and this slow but surely great writer was not trying to deceive anybody when, in the year 1612, in his labored and careful introduction to the play of the "White Devil," he penned the following:

"Detraction is the sworn friend to ignorance; for mine own part, I have ever truly cherished my good opinion of other men's worthy labours: especially of that full and heightened style of Master Chapman: the laboured and understanding works of Master Jonson; the no less worthy composures of the both worthily excellent Master Beaumont and Master Fletcher; and lastly (without wrong last to be named), the right happy and copious industry of Master Shakespeare, Master Dekker, and Master Heywood; wishing what I write may be read by their light; protesting that, in the strength of mine own judgment, I

know them so worthy, that though I rest silent in my own work, yet to most of theirs I dare (without flattery) fix that of Martial,

*'Non norunt haec monumenta mori.'*”

This introduction was slowly and dispassionately penned. There is no humor about it, nor is there any attempt in the composition to deceive or cajole the reader. He deservedly and truthfully lauds Chapman, Jonson, Beaumont, Fletcher, Dekker, Heywood, and with the two last named “the right happy and copious industry of Master Shakespeare.” No attempt is made to use the name of this industrious Shakespeare for any purpose of gain; and the compliment to all the poets named is unquestionably written in sincerity. As in the matter of Heywood’s allusion heretofore quoted, it will be noticed that he calls the writer “Shakespeare” not “Shaksper,” and it is worthy of notice that Webster, like Heywood, entirely omits Michael Drayton.

Let the reader now notice what is said of a poet Shakespeare by Michael Drayton himself. I quote from his elegy in the shape of a poem descriptive of poets and poesy to his most dearly beloved friend, Henry Reynolds:

“Neat Marlowe, bathed in the Thespian springs,  
Had in him those brave translunary things  
That the first poets had, his raptures were  
All air and fire, which made his verses clear;  
For that fine madness still he did retain  
Which rightly should possess a poet’s brain.  
And surely Nash, though he a proser were,  
A branch of laurel yet deserves to bear,  
Sharply satiric was he, and that way

He went, since that his being to this day  
 Few have attempted, and I surely think  
 Those words shall hardly be set down with ink  
 Shall scorch and blast so as his could, where he  
 Would inflict vengeance; and be it said of thee,  
 Shakespeare, thou hadst as smooth a comic vein,  
 Fitting the sock, and in thy natural brain  
 As strong conception and as clear a rage,  
 As any one that trafficked with the stage."

It is evident that, unless Drayton was speaking of himself in the way of an aside by using the expression "And be it said of thee," he was eulogizing a person who was called by the name of Shakespeare and recognized as a poet.

Richard Barnfield also, in his "Remembrance of Some English Poets," published in 1598, mentions Shakespeare in the following poem which, for the reader's convenience, is here inserted in full:

"Live Spenser in thy Fairy Queen;  
 Whose like (for deep conceit) was never seen.  
 Crowned mayst thou be, unto thy more renown,  
 (As king of poets) with a laurel crown.

And Daniel praised for thy sweet chaste verse,  
 Whose fame is grav'd on Rosamond's black hearse;  
 Still mayst thou live and still be honored,  
 For that rare work, the White rose and the Red.

And Drayton, whose well written tragedies,  
 And sweet epistles soar thy fame to skies:  
 Thy learned name is equal with the rest,  
 Whose stately numbers are so well address.

And Shakspear, thou whose honey-flowing verse,  
 (Pleasing the world) thy praises doth contain,

Whose Venus and whose Lucrece (sweet and chaste)  
Thy name in fame's immortal book have plac'd  
Live ever you, at least in fame live ever;  
Well may the body die, but fame die never."

The reading world is familiar with what Ben Jonson wrote of Shakespeare, as published in the Folio of 1623, but it is not so familiar with what Ben said of him in his *Conversations with Drummond and his Discoveries*.

What he said to Drummond is as follows:

"He said Shakspeare wanted art, and sometimes sense, for, in one of his plays, he brought in a number of men, saying they had suffered shipwreck in Bohemia, where is no sea near by a hundred miles."

What he wrote in his *Discoveries*, is as follows:

"*De Shakspeare nostrat.—Augustus in Hat.*—I remember, the players have often mentioned it as an honor to Shakspeare, that in his writing (whatsoever he penned) he never blotted out a line. My answer hath been, Would he had blotted a thousand. Which they thought a malevolent speech. I had not told posterity this, but for their ignorance, who chose that circumstance to commend their friend by, wherein he most faulted; and to justify mine own candor: for I loved the man, and do honor his memory, on this side idolatry, as much as any. He was (indeed) honest, and of an open and free nature; had an excellent phantasy, brave notions, and gentle expressions; wherein he flowed with that facility, that sometimes it was necessary he should be stopped: *Sufflaminandus erat*, as Augustus said of Haterius. His wit was in his own power, would the rule of it had been so too. Many times he fell into those things, could not escape laughter; as when he said in the person of Cæsar, one speaking to him, 'Cæsar,

thou dost me wrong.' He replied, 'Cæsar did never wrong but with just cause,' and such like; which were ridiculous. But he redeemed his vices with his virtues. There was ever more in him to be praised than to be pardoned."

In this statement he asserted that Shakespeare wanted art and sometimes sense. To say that a man lacks sense is very uncomplimentary, but to say at one time that he lacked art and at another time,

"Thy art,  
My gentle Shakespeare, must enjoy a part,  
For though the poet's matter, nature be,  
His art doth give the fashion,"

is certainly very contradictory, and makes Jonson a very unreliable eulogist. Perhaps I may be wrong, but I have sometimes wondered whether it was really meant for a compliment to call Shaksper a swan—"The sweet swan of Avon." A swan never sings at all and it is only in the imagination of poets that he sings in his dying hours. Thus in *Othello*, Act 5, Scene 2, Emilia says, "I will play the swan and die in music." And in the *Merchant of Venice*, Act 3, Scene 2, Portia says, "He makes a swan-like end, fading in music."

However that may be, the reader who will examine the First Folio will note that Jonson spells the name of the reputed poet as "Shakespeare." It is also so spelled in the dedication and preface of that book. Hugh Holland spells it as "Shakespeare." Leonard Digges spells it as "Shakespeare" and "Shake-speare," and I. M. calls him "Shake-speare."

While of course it is not very important in the attempt at an elucidation of the authorship of the Shakespeare



plays that the questions hereinafter propounded should be satisfactorily answered, yet I have marshaled the statements of these great contemporary dramatists so that the reader will be aided to a reasonable conclusion as to who or what was meant by the constant use, by printers, of the word "Shakespeare" as the name of a play-writer. And the several questions which I propound are these:

If it be taken for granted, as a proved and accepted fact, that William Shaksper of Stratford-on-Avon, by reason of his ignorance, did not and could not write the plays attributed to him, several questions confront the reader, and the first one is: Was there in England during the years from 1593 to 1616, and later, a poet who was familiarly called and recognized as William Shakespeare or Shake-speare? There is nothing unusual about this. It is so in every nation where writers abound. The English Winston Churchill has just done the same to avoid confusion with the American Churchill. I copy the following from a leading newspaper: "Winston Churchill, the son of Lady Randolph Churchill, in order to avoid having his books confused with those of Winston Churchill, the American, and author of 'Richard Carvel,' will, in future, have his name on title pages read: 'Winston Spencer-Churchill.'"

Again, secondly, if it be taken for granted as a proved and accepted fact, that William Shaksper of Stratford-on-Avon, by reason of his ignorance, did not and could not write the plays now attributed to him, was there in England during the period above named, a concealed poet, who wrote or revised the plays in part or all, or who inserted in all or in a part of them the magnificent and sparkling poetical gems, culled and gathered from art,

from nature, from history, from philosophy, from science, and from ancient lore, which have always captivated and enchanted and will forever captivate and enchant the reading world?

Again, if the inability of Shaksper, as aforesaid, be taken for granted as a proved and accepted fact, was the appellation "William Shakespeare" merely assumed and used by the printers and publishers, with or without special reference to the Stratford man?

My conjecture is, and it is only a conjecture, that the second question should be answered in the affirmative, and that this concealed writer, whoever he was, used William Shaksper as his mask, and that whether this concealed poet wrote all or a part only of the plays, he induced Shaksper to appear as the author or reviser and to claim and obtain all the credit arising from the production and popularity of the plays. To safely act such a part, Shaksper must have been very reserved and distant, and this may account for the unfamiliarity of writers with his name.

I have purposely called this chapter one of conjecture, because there are no fixed facts which can be relied upon to answer the foregoing questions satisfactorily. I was at one time surprised to find that such an anagram as "Thomas Dekker's Speaker," would directly lead to the words "Shakespeare's Tom Dekker," but the reader and I are not trusting to nor relying upon anagrams or ciphers, but cold facts.

Some propositions may be stated here to which I think every intelligent and disinterested reader will give his assent.

If Francis Bacon wrote any or part of any of the Shakespeare plays, so called, it was necessary that the fact of

his authorship should be concealed as much as possible from the play-writers and actors who wrote for or were employed by the theatrical managers of that era, except such favored and trusted ones as Bacon could rely upon. If confided to the play-writers or actors generally, it would have soon been known to the Court and also in the city of London and throughout England.

Again, if Francis Bacon was a concealed dramatist as well as a concealed poet, and if he wrote any or part of the plays above specified, and if he induced William Shaksper, an ignorant man, to father them as his own, then, unless Shaksper kept aloof, so far as social intercourse was concerned, from the band of tragic and comic writers, such as Drayton, Dekker, Chettle, Middleton, and others who flourished at that time, his ignorance would have been, sooner or later, made manifest to them or some of them, and such commendatory expressions, as I have above set out, would never have been written.

Perhaps the last proposition could be better put thus: If Shaksper, an ignorant person, presented to the public, as his own, plays which Bacon wrote, then Shaksper's fraudulent conduct would presumably have become known to the playwrights above specified or some of them, if he associated with them familiarly. Of course, the reader is acquainted with Fuller's fancy picture of Shaksper and Ben Jonson at the Mitre Tavern. I call it a picture of fancy, because Fuller was only eight years old when Shaksper died, and the use of the word "behold" shows that he was romancing. This is what he said in 1662:

"Many were the wit-combats betwixt him and Ben Jonson; which two I behold like a Spanish great galleon and an English man-of-war. Master Jonson, like the for-

mer, was built far higher in learning; solid but slow in performance. Shakspeare, with the English man-of-war, lesser in bulk, but lighter in sailing, could turn with all tides, tack about, and take advantage of all winds, by the quickness of his wit and invention."

That brings me to the third proposition, which may be briefly stated thus: If Francis Bacon was a concealed dramatist, as well as a concealed poet, and if he wrote any or a part of the plays popularly called the Shakespeare plays, and if he permitted Shaksper to present them to the public and to receive the credit for them, as their author, the fact of such authorship, such concealment, and such user of Shaksper as Bacon's mask, must have been confidentially imparted to and known by Ben Jonson, since in no other way can his laudatory and commendatory utterances and his conduct be explained.

In the Morgan-Platt debate, *New Shakespeareana*, April and July, 1903, Mr. Morgan has very clearly shown that the name "Shakespeare" was variously spelled by publishers and others in Shaksper's time. He is right in asserting that there is nothing unusual as to that. But what would he say as to the wrong spelling of his own name by an intimate and well-educated friend? Or what would he expect other people to say of a man who professed to be Appleton Morgan, if the man should present a card on which he had written the name thus, "Apelton Morgon," and if asked to write it again, he should write "Apleton Maurgon"? Ought not such a man to be justly branded as an impostor? Would any scholar, acquainted with such a fact, recognize him as the real Appleton Morgan? It seems to me that a learned man ought to know how to spell his own name correctly. If in the

latter half of the Nineteenth Century, a gentlemanly looking man had introduced himself to the literary world as Mr. Thackeray, the great English writer, and had handed to any scholar his card reading thus, "William Makepiece Thackaray," the reader of the card would have regarded him as an impostor and cheat. Again, if in the present year a woman should appear in New York City, styling herself "Marie Corelli" and claiming to be the great writer who bears that name, and if on being asked by a reporter for a leading newspaper of that city to present him with her autograph, she should write her name as "Maria Correlli," the reporter would know at once that the woman was a fraud.

Because the man of Stratford-on-Avon wrote his name thus, "Shaksper," I have called him "Shaksper" in these chapters.

## CHAPTER XX.

FLOUNDERING IN THE BROAD HIGHWAY OF THE PLAYS.

*"Thou hast lost thy labor."*

—The Winter's Tale, iv, 4.

I started out in my examination of the plays after a great deal of what I thought was very careful preparation. First of all, I made a written list of the names of all the English writers of the Shaksper period of whom I could find any mention, which list I kept always before me during my examination of the text. These were: William Alabaster, William Alexander, Robert Armin, Francis Bacon, William Barksdale, Richard Barnfield, Francis Beaumont, Samuel Brandon, Nicholas Breton, Anthony Brewer, Richard Brome, William Browne, George Chapman, Henry Chettle, Robert Daborne, Samuel Daniel, John Day, Thomas Dekker, Michael Drayton, Thomas Drue, Richard Eads, John Fletcher, Phineas Fletcher, Nathaniel Field, John Ford, Abraham Fraunce, Ulpian Fulwell, William Gager, Thomas Garter, Robert Greene, Fulke Greville, Richard Hathaway, William Haughton, Thomas Heywood, Ben Jonson, Thomas Kyd, Thomas Legg, Thomas Lodge, John Lyly, David Mallet, Gervase Markham, Christopher Marlowe, John Marston, Philip Massinger, Thomas Middleton, Anthony Monday, Thomas Nash, Thomas Newton, Richard Niccols, George Peele, Henry Porter, Thomas Preston, Samuel Rowley, William Rowley, James Shirley, Martin Slater, Wentworth Smyth, John Still, John Taylor, Robert Taylor, Cyril Tourneur, Thomas Watson, John Webster, Robert Wilson, Henry Wotton, and Robert Yarrington.

I determined that I would be unbiased and unprejudiced while conducting the wearisome examination, but I must confess that at first I could not eliminate from my mind a natural feeling in favor of Francis Bacon. That arose in this way: I had been selected a few years ago, without previous consultation, by the noted Amaranth Club, a select literary organization of women whose polite requests on literary topics could not be refused, to take the position and make the attempt to show that Bacon was the author of the plays. Of course I consented and made the best argument I could in his favor—an argument founded upon the authority of Morgan's "Shakespearean Myth" and Holmes' "Authorship of Shakespeare"; and naturally enough, for a time I was inclined to espouse the Baconian theory. But while recognizing the bias occasioned by this cursory examination and necessary reliance *pro tempore* upon the arguments of others, I have subjected Bacon's works to the same crucial test that I applied to the others whose writings I felt it necessary to examine.

I will now explain the nature of the tests. Henry Ward Beecher, in one of his sermons, expressed much better than I can the difference, intellectually speaking, between men. This is what he said: "Johnson is never mistaken for Burke. The way of their words is so different. No one could confound Webster in his gigantic speeches and Emerson in the stringed pearls of his style. This is recognition of interior personality, which is far more individual than anything corporeal. Plato is dead, but Plato's writings exist and Plato exists from them, and there is a living Plato and a living Socrates. Thus we have personality as determined by matter and personality as determined by mind."

Let us now try Emerson and Webster in this matter of personality as determined by mind. Speaking of the Bunker Hill Monument, Webster said: "We wish finally that the last object to the sight of him who leaves his native shore, and the first to gladden him who may re-visit it, may be something which shall remind him of the liberty and glory of his country. Let it rise! Let it rise till it meet the sun in his coming; let the earliest light of the morning gild it and parting day linger and play on its summit."

Now contrast Emerson: "Through the thickest understanding will reason throw itself instantly into relation with the truth, that is its object, whenever that appears. But how seldom is the pure loadstone produced! Faith and love are apt to be spasmodic in the best minds. Men live on the brink of mysteries and harmonies into which yet they never enter, and with their hand on the door latch, they die outside."

Here, now, is a sample of Carlyle: "That such and such a one, who filled the whole earth with his hammering and troweling and would not let a man pass for his rubbish, turns out to have built of mere coagulated froth, and vanishes with his edifice, traceless, silently or amid hootings illimitable."

Who but Carlyle could have written such a sentence as that?

The style of Hawthorne, an inimitable master of lucid and pleasing detail, is easily recognizable: "Half-way down a by-street of one of our New England towns, stands a rusty wooden house with seven acutely-peaked gables, facing towards various points of the compass, and a huge clustered chimney in the midst."



An extract from Henry Clay will show the difference between his style and that of Webster. He was speaking for the recognition of the independence of the South American republics. "With regard to their superstition, they worship the same God with us. Their prayers are offered up in their temples to the same Redeemer, whose intercession we expect to save us. All religions united with government are more or less inimical to liberty. All separated from government are compatible with liberty."

I cite next and lastly an extract from the writings of a famous editor, statesman, and orator, Henry Watterson, whose style is familiar to American readers, and yet very hard to imitate: "Tried by this standard, where shall we find an example so impressive as Abraham Lincoln, whose career might be chanted by a Greek chorus as at once the prelude and epilogue of the most imperial theme of modern times? Born as lowly as the son of God, in a hovel; reared in penury, squalor, with no gleam of light or fair surrounding; without graces, actual or acquired; without name or fame or official training; it was reserved for this strange being, late in life, to be snatched from obscurity, raised to supreme command at a supreme moment, and entrusted with the destiny of a nation."

These quotations are made to illustrate the intellectual individuality or separation of each writer or orator. In your library, reader, you have, I shall suppose, the works of Scott, Thackeray, Dickens, George Eliot, Wallace, Lever, Trollope, Hugo, Balzac, Dumas, or Kipling. Examine, if you please, their books at any page, and you will notice what Beecher calls the intellectual individuality of each. Dickens repeats himself in each of his novels, and so do all the others.

There are other characteristics of writers and speakers which all who have carefully studied the subject will acknowledge. One is based on the limitation of the number of words used. An orator may talk very fast and very long. A writer may compose as many novels as Cooper did, but each speaker and each writer has only a limited command of words. That limit controls him, no matter how many times he uses the combinations of these words. He travels in a certain circuit, and can not get out of the verbal rut.

There is also, as to orators and writers, the characteristic of sameness and repetition. Each one has his favorite words, sentences, and expressions, which he repeats again and again with very little change at any time. By these characteristics they can generally be recognized and identified. Every writer, from Virgil down to Mark Twain, has his limit of words, his favorite phrase reproductions, and his repetitions, natural or dressed. And then, too, in general no two writers or speakers who write or speak much use the same words and phrases. Such similarity would be exceptional. I would rather, for instance, study and trace out the resemblance in the styles and turns of expression between Sir Philip Francis and Junius than depend upon a comparison of their handwriting. A man's writing may be disguised, but the modes of expression, the favorite and peculiar phrases and the repetitions are almost infallible guides to authorship, where the writing is not the work of collaborators.

I started out, therefore, on an examination of the plays with the determination to compare the words, phrases, sentences, and peculiar expressions found in them with those of the scholars and writers of the Shakspear period.

It is, of course, a hard and tedious work to make and apply the test of word and phrase limitation to the discovery of a concealed writer; and the details of the process, however sure the result may be, will naturally be dry and uninteresting to the general reader. It did not take me long, after I started on the road, to discover that I might safely eliminate from the list of probable authors of the poems and plays all except Francis Bacon, Henry Chettle, Samuel Daniel, Thomas Dekker, Michael Drayton, John Fletcher, Richard Hathaway, William Haughton, Thomas Heywood, Ben Jonson, Thomas Kyd, John Marston, Thomas Middleton, Anthony Monday, Henry Porter, Wentworth Smyth, John Webster, and Robert Wilson. The list, therefore, narrowed down to a select few, eighteen in number. Among these eighteen men, the true William Shakespeare and the writer or writers of the plays will be found by the diligent and painstaking student of English literature.

I began by making an alphabetical index of the familiar phrases and turns of expression used in each play, expecting, by comparing these phrases with the writings of contemporaries above named, to ferret out the true author. I had not taken into account, when I began, the inexorable fact that it is utterly impossible for one man, whose life-span scarcely ever exceeds seventy years, to use twenty-one thousand words. So, when I found myself, for instance, assured of the fact that I had unearthed in a particular play the words and phrases of Michael Drayton, I would be confronted in the very same play with the peculiar phrases and expressions of Thomas Dekker. And so I floundered in the broad highway, because of the fact of collaboration. Wherever a Shake-

speare play is a composite production, trouble—and a great deal of trouble—comes, and is bound to come, to the decipherer of authorship. In the five acts of any play, or in any play without numbered acts, composed by collaborators, the student will find a mixture of expressions, phrases, word and sentence peculiarities which will greatly puzzle and perplex him. The plays of Beaumont and Fletcher illustrate this difficulty. It is hard to tell where Beaumont ends or Fletcher begins and *vice versa*. When the bookseller, Moseley, issued an edition of Beaumont and Fletcher after Fletcher's death in 1625, Aubrey addressed to Moseley the following complaint, intended to be poetical, about the book:

“In the large book of plays, you late did print  
 In Beaumont and Fletcher's name, why in't  
 Did you not justice give to each his due?  
 For Beaumont of those many writ but few;  
 And Massinger in other few; the main  
 Being sweet issues of sweet Fletcher's brain.  
 But how came I, you ask, so much to know,  
 Fletcher's chief bosom friend informed me so.”

Another difficulty presented itself, which rendered progress hard, and that was the additional fact of revision or change made necessary from time to time after the play was written, either to suit the taste of the theatre-goers or the fastidious taste of the composer. The dresser of plays, as Ben Jonson styles him, employed by the manager, had much to do in the way of altering, reconstructing, and amending. Henslowe's Diary shows that conclusively. If the receipts of the theatre did not come up to Henslowe's expectation, or if the audience showed displeasure at the rendition of any particular part of the play,

or if it appeared to need an improvement to catch the ears of the groundlings, the reviser was called upon at once to make the necessary additions, eliminations, or amendments.

With a knowledge of these facts and difficulties, acquired after months and months of toil in the broad road of the plays, I found it necessary to leave that road, and to start afresh on the pathway of the poems.

## CHAPTER XXI.

THE SONNETS DO NOT LEAD TO THE TRUE SHAKESPEARE.

*"I had rather than forty shillings I had my book of songs and sonnets here."*

—Merry Wives of Windsor, i, 1.

As I desire to take the reader with me in the search for the real Shakespeare, I have blazed for him one path which may lead to the true goal. I call it the pathway of the poems. The Venus and Adonis and the Tarquin and Lucrece constitute that pathway, and the dedications with the argument annexed to Tarquin and Lucrece form an auxiliary path.

When I began my explorations in that path, I started with an investigation of the Areopagus literary club which was composed of a select few of English scholars, and which, as will be noticed, was very careless as to the preservation of the product of the talent and labors of its members. If that club had made and enforced a rule that all poems and plays of its members should be safely preserved and kept by some authorized custodian for future use, reference, or publication, much, very much would have been gained to English literature, and many of the great poems and plays of its members, which circulated in society after the authors were dead, would have been saved from destruction, and when published, credited to the real authors by the publishers, who in Elizabeth's day were rather piratical.

The Areopagus Club, I quote from Bourne, "was a club started before 1579; composed mainly of courtiers,

who aspired to be also men of letters, apparently with Sir Philip Sidney as its president, to which were admitted other men of letters, among others Spenser in particular, who hardly aspired to rank with the courtiers." It seems to have had Gabriel Harvey as a corresponding member and counselor in chief. Among its exercises we may reckon Sidney's "Lady of May" produced in 1578. Dyer and Greville were evidently busy members. Though very little of his writing survives, Dyer was accounted a great poet in his time, and the tragedies by Greville, which are extant, were, as he tells us, written in his younger days when Sidney was his associate in literary pursuits. Who were the other members of the club we know not, but it started out with the idea of establishing classical forms in English verse writing. Spenser, it seems, composed poems and dramas which are either lost or appropriated by some one under other titles. Among these I will mention *The Dying Pelican*, a large work finished and ready for the press in 1580, *The Dreams*, and *The Stemmata Dudleiana*, as to which he said, "I never did better." It is a fact not generally known that Spenser wrote nine comedies which have never appeared, at least under his name; and yet Harvey, to whom he sent them together with the *Fairy Queen* for review and criticism, and who was a splendid judge of a good poem or play, declared that these nine comedies were better than the *Fairy Queen*, a work which the student of English literature well knows ranks by universal consent with the *Æneid*, the *Canterbury Tales*, and the *Paradise Lost*. Harvey wrote to Spenser thus: "To be plain, I am void of all judgment, if your nine comedies come not nearer Ariosto's comedies either for the fineness of plausible execution or the rareness of

poetical invention than the Elvish Queen doth to his Orlando Furioso."

Unable to find the lost comedies or other writings of the members of the Areopagus Club, I turned to the poems. By the poems, I mean the Shake-speare Sonnets, the Venus and Adonis, and the Tarquin and Lucrece.

The diligent reader will wonder why I have left out the Shake-speare Sonnets, so called, from the list of pathways which lead toward the real author or authors of the plays; and therefore it is eminently proper that I should explain clearly why the Sonnets do not so lead, and as I myself started first on that supposed pathway, the consideration of the authorship of the Sonnets will receive immediate attention. I will try to make the reasons for my declaration of the name of the true author as clear and interesting to the studious reader as possible.

In the year 1609, a book appeared in England called "Shake-speare's Sonnets never before imprinted." The word "Shake" and the suffix "speare" were hyphenated, thereby distinguishing the hyphenated words from the surname "Shaksper." Mr. William Shaksper, the reputed author of the plays and poems, was living at that time, and he lived for more than six years thereafter, and he did not, so far as the world knows, either before or after the publication of the Sonnets, claim to be the maker, begetter, furnisher, or author of them or any of them; he did not take them to the publisher; he did not enter the book in the register of the Stationers' Company; he did not spell his name in the hyphenated way, and he did not dedicate the Sonnets to any one.

There was a dedication, however, on a separate leaf, next to the title page, in the following words:



"TO . THE . ONLIE . BEGETTER . OF .  
 THESE . INSUING . SONNETS .  
 MR . W . H . ALL . HAPPINESSE .  
 AND . THAT . ETERNITIE .  
 PROMISED .  
 BY .  
 OUR . EVER . LIVING . POET .  
 WISHETH .  
 THE . WELL-WISHING .  
 ADVENTURER . IN .  
 SETTING .  
 FORTH . T . T ."

Although Shaksper never claimed that he wrote the Sonnets, yet on account of the similarity in name, and also for the reason that Francis Meres, in 1598, alluded to "Shakespeare's sugared sonnets among his private friends," in his "Palladis Tamia," the weight of public opinion is now on the side of the claimants for Shaksper.

But because of the very natural doubt arising from the apparent illiteracy of Shaksper and from his failure to claim or acknowledge the Sonnets, and because of the further important fact that the statements and references of the sonneteer do not coincide even in the slightest detail with the known and undeniable incidents of Shaksper's life, and because also, as a learned writer well puts it, "while accepting the Meres mention as proof of the authorship of the Sonnets, all commentators, living and dead, reject the Meres list of plays," it has come to pass within the last few years that some learned students of Elizabethan literature have set up the claims of other men to the honor of the authorship of the Sonnets.

This is a step in the right direction, for if William Shaksper of Stratford-on-Avon did not write the Sonnets,

the literary world is interested in knowing who did, if such knowledge is attainable. An examination of the many books written on the subject of the supposed writer of the Sonnets and of the attempted explanations of the meaning set out in them (for the two must go together) discloses the names of the following reputed authors: Sir Walter Raleigh, Francis Bacon, Anthony Shirley, and William Shaksper.

In the year 1838 Armitage Brown wrote a book which contains a very fair dissection of the Sonnets. His arrangement of them is as follows:

Sonnets 1 to 26 inclusive are addressed to the poet's friend, persuading him to marry.

Sonnets 27 to 55 are addressed to the friend, forgiving him for having robbed him of his mistress.

Sonnets 56 to 77 are addressed to the friend, complaining of his coldness and warning him of life's decay.

Sonnets 78 to 101 are addressed to the friend, complaining that he, the friend, prefers another poet's praises and reproving him for faults that may injure his character.

Sonnets 102 to 126 are also addressed to his friend, excusing himself for having been some time silent, and disclaiming the charge of inconstancy.

Sonnets 127 to 152 are addressed to his mistress on the subject of her infidelity.

Coleridge concurs in the foregoing classification of the Sonnets. This division will enable the reader to study them understandingly if he so desires.

In the year 1797 Chalmers endeavored to show that the Sonnets were addressed to Queen Elizabeth. Massey disposes of that conjecture very summarily. "Her majesty," he states, "must have been sixty years of age

when the Sonnets were written. He, Chalmers, argues that Shakspeare, knowing the voracity of Elizabeth for praise, thought he would fool her to the top of her bent." Chalmers could produce no valid argument in support of his conjecture.

Coleridge guessed that the person addressed by the poet was a woman; and Knight also argued that portions of the Sonnets were addressed to a female. The careful reader will find the position of Coleridge untenable.

Drake, in 1817, was the first to suggest that the Sonnets were addressed to Henry Wriothesly, Earl of Southampton. Gerald Massey's book, entitled "Shakspeare's Sonnets never before interpreted," a ponderous work of six hundred and more pages, was written in support of the Drake theory.

For the purpose of identifying the real author and getting rid of the false and unfounded claim of the reputed authors above named, by means of an infallible test which the Sonnets themselves provide, I now set out at length sonnets numbered twenty (20), seventy-six (76), and one hundred and thirty-six (136), premising that the true interpretation of these three sonnets will solve the mystery and disclose the author.

#### SONNET 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 pricked thee out for women's pleasure;  
 Mine be thy love, and thy love's use their treasure."

## SONNET 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."

## SONNET 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 reckon'd 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 lov'st me,—for my name is *Will*."

The line in sonnet twenty, "A man in hue, all hues in his controlling," is undoubtedly descriptive of the friend and not of the poet himself.

Sonnet seventy-six (76) clearly refers to the poet himself, and when he says "that every word doth almost tell my name," he tells the reader that the several sonnets contain a clue which, if rightly followed, will lead to the discovery of his name.

Sonnet one hundred and thirty-six (136) in the last two lines furnishes an additional means of identification, for it identifies the poet by the name with which he was familiarly addressed.

The claim for Raleigh has been ingeniously and vigorously advocated by a distinguished Senator from Indiana, following the lead of the late William D. O'Connor in his "Hamlet's Note Book." That gifted and forcible writer thought that the author as indicated by the words "Mr. W. H." was Walter Raleigh, the *W* being the initial letter of his Christian name and the *H* the last letter of his surname; and he insisted, or at least earnestly suggested, that the Adventurer "T. T." (the first and last letters being similarly used), was the mathematician Thomas Hariot, who was Raleigh's fast friend and companion. Mr. O'Connor overlooked the fact that the person who subscribed the dedication was not a mysterious or concealed person at all, but a printer and bookseller of considerable eminence named Thomas Thorpe, as clearly appears from the register of the Stationers' Company, where the entry of the book is found thus:

"20 May, 1609"

"Thomas Thorpe. a book called Shake-speare's Sonnets."

Mr. O'Connor himself states that he had not at his command "the measured leisure necessary to establish these assertions beyond cavil and to spread open the meaning of the Sonnets." One great mistake was made by him, which has been also made by others, in supposing that the dedicatee, "Mr. W. H." was any one else than the mere procurer or furnisher of the sonnets to the publisher, Thorpe. His great mistake lies in the construction of the Sonnets as being principally connected with the personification of a divine purpose. He is quite right, however, in supposing that the author loved outward adornment; that he was poor, and that he personally knew the noble and ardent Giordano Bruno, but neither Mr. O'Connor nor any other advocate of Raleigh's authorship can show that he had a friend to whom the words of the seventh line of the twentieth sonnet above quoted are applicable. What dear friend of Raleigh's was "a man in hue, all hues in his controlling"? Again, it is impossible to show the applicability of the lines of the seventy-sixth sonnet to Raleigh's name. What word in the sonnets, frequently repeated, represents the name of Raleigh? Unless such a word can be found, it would be futile to make a claim in behalf of Raleigh. So also, it would be necessary to further show that Raleigh was called "Will" in order to be in accord with the statement in Sonnet 136:

"And then thou lov'st me, for my name is Will."

Raleigh was never called Will.

The same three tests will apply as well to Sir Francis Bacon and Anthony Shirley. What friend did Bacon have who answers the description of the writer's friend

in the twentieth sonnet, or what word, iterated and reiterated in the Sonnets, tells Bacon's name? Or when was Bacon ever called Will or Willy?

A very able anonymous writer, calling himself a graduate of Cambridge, has undertaken in a book lately published, entitled "Is it Shakespeare?" to argue that Bacon was the author of the Sonnets. To make his argument at all plausible, he is forced to take the position that Bacon was a libertine and even worse; that he was in touch with Queen Elizabeth's maids of honor, and very full of "wild oats." He tries to account for the Will of the Sonnets by guessing that the reference is to Will Shaksper, William Herbert, and Sir William Knollys. He calls Knollys a new candidate for the position, but not one of his introducing. The reader will notice that his theory as to the authorship of the Sonnets is all furnished out of conjecture, in imitation of the Shaksperite biographers. He uses, for illustration of his methods, such phrases as these: "Here I contend we have." "But I have a suggestion to make." "I suggest that." "I suggest as highly probable that." "I should not be surprised if." "I have sometimes thought that." "There seems little reason to doubt that." "My strong impression is." That is the very system of the Shaksperites. Besides indulging in conjecture, he endeavors to divide the Sonnets into classes to suit his theory. He asserts that it is difficult to believe that Bacon was the author of Sonnet 151. He is unable, he confesses, to solve the enigma of the dark lady. He can not explain the meaning of the line in the twentieth Sonnet; and at last, he surmises that the author had been reading the *Arcadia* of Sidney and that he had extracted much of the matter of the first thirteen Sonnets from that work. "It

looks," he says, "as if the author had been asked to try his pupil pen in turning Sidney's prose into sonnets. So many and close are the parallels, Sir Walter Scott thought that Sidney must have read the Sonnets." Here he was getting very near to the truth—he was on a very hot trail. The greatest trouble encountered by this writer is that he can not explain "how every word doth almost tell my name." He is clearly right in saying that the way to discover the chief writer of the plays is through the poems; but a more careful examination will convince this brilliant writer that the Sonnets do not lead to a discovery of any author of the plays.

Shirley's claim by one author is based upon the reference in Sonnets 76, 105, 135, and 136 to the words "one" and "all one" as if they pointed to the ancient seal of the Ferrers family, which contained the arms of the family upon a chimney piece with the motto "only one."

The sole merit in the argument is that the writer has grasped at one of the conceits of the author of the Sonnets, but has failed to fathom its meaning. Beyond this conceit, no valid argument can be adduced in support of Shirley. He does not fit the tests of Sonnets 20, 76, and 136.

But did Shaksper write the Sonnets?

To show that he did not write them, it is not necessary to rely merely upon his ignorance and consequent inability. I assert that upon the face of the Sonnets themselves, the evidence that Shaksper did not write them will appear plainly to the careful and disinterested reader. The first twenty-six sonnets undoubtedly refer to a male friend of the sonneteer; and the friend is earnestly entreated to marry. The friend was beautiful; he was



young; he had a beautiful mother; he was "a man in hue, all hues in his controlling" (whatever that may mean), as pictured in the twentieth sonnet, and he was very much beloved by the poet.

Now I challenge the most ardent, enthusiastic, and learned admirer of William Shaksper to point to any friend of his who will answer the description in these twenty-six sonnets, or whose name or description will correspond with the peculiar and unquestionably punning designation of the "man in hue" in the twentieth sonnet.

Mr. Thomas Tyler, who, with the aid of the Rev. W. A. Harrison, issued a carefully prepared and annotated edition of the Sonnets in 1890, has attempted to bridge over this difficulty by guessing blindly and boldly that the friend was the Earl of Pembroke and the Mr. W. H. to whom the bookseller Thorpe dedicated the Sonnets. It is both unreasonable and absurd that a plain man of the commonalty, one of the lower orders in England, when about to publish a book of poems, would address so exalted a personage as William Herbert, the Earl of Pembroke and Knight of the Garter, as plain "Mr. H." In the days of good Queen Bess, the title of "Right Honorable" would have been used in the dedication by one of the commonalty, and especially by a bookseller, when dedicating a book to such a superior in rank as an Earl. This Mr. H. was not even an Esquire. Titles then, as now, counted for something in England. When Mr. Tyler alleges that the Earl of Pembroke was the friend of Shaksper, it is necessary for him to give some reasonable proof that he knew Shaksper, or, if he knew him, that he liked him so much that he was willing to have him publicly notice his licen-

tious doings, and it is also necessary for him to identify him as "a man in hue, all hues in his controlling," and that he can not do.

The Tyler hypothesis is founded upon five conjectures or guesses, every one of which is either absurd, improbable, or unsupported by any reliable evidence.

1. That the Earl of Pembroke was the Mr. W. H. of Thorpe.

2. That Mrs. Mary Fitton, one of Queen Elizabeth's maids of honor, was the mistress of Shaksper, and was the black-eyed woman alluded to in the 127th and 132d sonnets.

3. That Shaksper played before the Queen.

4. That Mrs. Fitton knew him and thrust herself upon his acquaintance for the purpose of falling in love with him.

5. That Shaksper knew Pembroke and quarreled with him about this mistress of Shaksper.

All this is the veriest literary and causeless abuse of the dead, as unsubstantial "as the baseless fabric of a vision." It has not a fact to support it.

To show the reader with what skill Mr. Tyler has concocted the silly fiction about Mrs. Fitton, I quote from Tyler's "Shakespeare Sonnets," page 76:

"We are not able to connect Mrs. Fitton personally with Shakespeare by proof as direct as that which in the case of Herbert is furnished by the dedication of the First Folio."

The Rev. W. A. Harrison, however, some time ago called attention to evidence which brings Mrs. Fitton into connection with a member of Shakespeare's Company, that is, the Lord Chamberlain's Company, leaving it, as

Tyler conjectures, to be easily inferred that she must have been acquainted with the members of the Company generally, and especially with such as were more prominent. In 1600, William Kemp, the clown in the company, dedicated his *Nine Days' Wonder* to "Mistress Anne Fitton, Mayde of honor to Most Sacred Mayde Royal Queen Elizabeth."

Mr. Harrison certainly, with the aid of Mr. Tyler, has produced a nine days' wonder.

Because Mr. Kemp dedicated a book to Mrs. Fitton, "it is easy to be inferred," says Tyler, "that Mrs. Fitton must have been acquainted with the members of the theatrical company to which Kemp belonged, and especially with those who were most prominent; and that being so acquainted, it is easily to be inferred that this Mrs. Fitton should seduce or be seduced by the man of Stratford."

Tyler continues thus on page 77: "These facts are interesting and important, and even taken alone they would go far toward removing the difficulty which might otherwise be felt about Shakespeare's forming a connection with a lady of so high a rank as one of the Queen's maids of honor."

It seems to me that the fact that Kemp dedicated his book to Anne Fitton instead of a Mary Fitton would naturally indicate that even if he intended to dedicate his book to Mrs. Mary Fitton he was so little acquainted with a lady of so high a rank as one of Queen Elizabeth's maids of honor that he did not even know her Christian name. He certainly did not get the name right. And that thread must be a very slender thread indeed, infinitesimally so, which would give a woman of high

rank an acquaintanceship with all the members of Kemp's company because, forsooth, she happened to know one of them.

Mr. Tyler became a little despondent and shaky as to his theory about the attempted identification of Mrs. Fitton as the dark lady of the Sonnets, and he is compelled to state another very strong objection to his hypothesis. At page 77 of his work on the Sonnets he says:

"An objection, however, to identifying Mrs. Fitton with the lady of the Sonnets has been drawn from this very dedication of Kemp's. In addressing so very dark a lady as the lady of the Sonnets evidently was, would Kemp have dared to speak so disparagingly as he does of 'a Blackamoore?'—'But, in a word, your poore seruant offers the truth of his progresse and profit to your honourable view; receive it, I beseech you, such as it is, rude and plaine; for I know your pure iudgment lookes as soone to see beauty in a Blackamoore, or heare smooth speach from a Stammerer, as to finde any thing but blunt mirth in a Morrice dauncer, especially such a one as Will Kemp, that hath spent his life in mad Iigges and merry iestes.' In reply to the objection just mentioned, it must be observed that though the lady of the Sonnets is spoken of as 'black' in contrast to Elizabethan fairness, yet it is by no means implied that her skin was like that of a negro. No: she was clearly a brunette: her complexion was 'dun' (130, line 3)—a very different thing indeed. Then Kemp's allusion is not merely, or perhaps mainly, to the colour of a negro or 'blackamoore.' Probably he was thinking more of the features and modelling of the face of a negro, with their usual unsightliness, at least from our point of view."

Poor Will Shaksper! Not only was he made by tradition "William the Conqueror," but he is made by Tyler a prey to the seductive influences of "so very dark a lady" that it is a question whether her skin was like that of a negro, or only black in contrast to Elizabethan fairness. Mr. Tyler is not willing that he should have been seduced by a "blackamoore." He is entirely willing that he should have been seduced, however, by Mrs. Fitton, no matter what the color of her skin might have been, because he says at page 78 that, "What has just been said about Kemp and his dedication may easily suggest that, on Shakespeare's Company performing at Court, Mrs. Fitton may have become interested in Shakespeare, either as the author of the play or otherwise, and so have introduced herself to him."

Here, now, we have added by the admirers of the gentle Shaksper to the story of his impudent licentiousness in connection with the actor Burbage, the story of an illicit amour of Shaksper with the dark-eyed lady of the Sonnets, founded on the conjectured acquaintance of the lady with another actor, Kemp. Of such wretched stuff our knowledge of a man whom they worship as England's greatest poet is fabricated!

Worse even than that is the position which the gentle Shaksper is made to occupy by the adoption of the Harrison and Tyler hypothesis. He, whether the seducer of Queen Elizabeth's maid of honor or the victim of her wiles, writes, according to Tyler and Harrison, the sugared story of the amour in poetry for circulation among and the delectation of his private and particular friends. Not content, however, with such private circulation of the particulars of his lascivious and criminal conduct among his associates

and boon companions, he then suffers Thomas Thorpe, the printer, to publish his amorous proceedings for the benefit of the world at large in 1609, seven years before his death.

The Gerald Massey hypothesis, which is only formidable for its length, is more becoming, to say the least of it. Massey guesses that Shaksper was urging the Earl of Southampton to get married, and striving to make him, Southampton, immortal by means of the Sonnets, and that Elizabeth Vernon, whom the Earl married, was jealous of the dark-eyed lady of the Sonnets.

Massey's book is full of conjecture. Absurdities also characterize it. Thus, for instance, referring to the fact that Southampton was released from imprisonment after the death of Queen Elizabeth, Massey says "We may rest assured that Shakspeare was one of the first to greet his 'dear boy,' over whose errors he had grieved and upon whose imprudent unselfishness he had looked with tears, half of sorrow and half of pride. He had loved him as a father loves a son; he had warned him and prayed for him and fought in soul against fortune on his behalf, and he now welcomed him from the gloom of a prison on his way to a palace and the smile of a monarch. This was the poet's written gratulation."

The reader at this point would reasonably expect that the "written gratulation" of the poet would be in the shape of a delicate note or an epistle of some sort, but instead of that Massey audaciously sets out the one hundred and seventh sonnet as the gratulatory writing, quoting that particular sonnet in full as his warrant for his assurance of the truth of the foregoing statement, and forgetting or ignoring the fact that the Sonnets were written before 1598 and that Southampton was not released from prison

until April 10, 1603. The reference by Meres to "Shakespeare's sugared sonnets among his private friends" the reader will remember was printed in 1598, nearly five years before Southampton's exit from confinement.

The hypothesis of Henry Brown, who wrote a book about the Sonnets, is that the Sonnets are a purposed imitation of the extravagant assertions and eccentric love descriptions of the Italian and English sonneteers, as well as a satire on the times.

All these hypotheses ignore the primary and leading rule of construction as to prose and poetry, law and literature, which prevails and governs, viz: that words used must, if possible, be considered in their literal and ordinary signification, and that every part must be viewed in connection with the whole. It is very apparent that the writer of the Sonnets meant in the 76th sonnet to state that in almost every sonnet his name or a word that would represent or tell or betray his name appears. He also means to show in the 136th sonnet that he was called Will or Willy. Now while Shaksper may have been called "Will," what word is there in the Sonnets which almost tells his name, and who was the friend who was "a man in hue, all hues in his controlling?"

Just as in the case of Bacon, Raleigh, and Shirley, no word of similar meaning to the names of any of them can be found in the Sonnets to be fitted into their names, so no such word can be found to fit Shaksper's name. While the test in the 136th sonnet might apply to him, that in the 76th does not, and the description in sonnet twenty applied to no friend of his. The author of the Sonnets must appear on the face of the Sonnets somewhere. The writer so states. He was clearly a man fond of punning

and of using anagrams and riddles. He was a lover of women and a very ardent lover of one woman in particular, and he was a quick, impulsive, natural poet; he was a very warm friend and had many warm friends; he was a courtier and he has a peculiar style and manner by which, in addition to the means he himself employs in the Sonnets, his authorship may be detected. Who was this sonneteer? The Sonnets themselves will show.

But before undertaking to discover the sonneteer, let us briefly take up the vexed question of the identity of "Mr. W. H." the dedicatee of the Sonnets. We know of course that the dedicator "T. T." was not the author of the Sonnets, and that he was merely a printer named Thomas Thorpe. It is reasonably certain also, as already stated, that Mr. W. H. was a commoner pure and simple, because he was addressed by the printer as plain Mr. W. H. This Mr. H. was called by Thorpe "the only begetter of these ensuing sonnets." Thorpe meant of course by the word "begetter" that Mr. W. H. was the procurer or furnisher of the manuscript to him, and not the composer of the poetry contained in the manuscript. Who was this begetter or furnisher? While it is not of the slightest importance who he was or how he was called and known unless he can be connected in some way with the author, I will hazard a conjecture that he was the William Hewes who was a servitor and follower of the Essex family.

Walter, Earl of Essex, the father of Penelope Devereux, afterward Lady Rich, and of Robert the second Earl of Essex, the unfortunate favorite of Queen Elizabeth, died on the twenty-second day of September, 1576. Edward Waterhouse, who was with him during his last illness, thus describes the incidents which occurred just preceding his



death. I quote from the "Lives and Letters of the Devereux, Earls of Essex," written by Captain Devereux of the Royal Navy, Vol. 1, p. 145:

"The night following, the Friday night, which was the night before he died, he called William Hewes, which was his musician, to play upon the virginal and to sing. 'Play,' said he, 'my song, Will Hewes, and I will sing it myself.' So he did it most joyfully, not as the howling swan, which, still looking down, walleth her end, but as a sweet lark; lifting up his hands, and casting up his eyes to his God, with this mounted the crystal skies, and reached with his unwearied tongue the top of the highest heavens. Who could have heard and seen this violent conflict, having not a stonied heart, without innumerable tears and watery plaints?"

I am entitled, I think, to the foregoing conjecture, especially upon a matter so unimportant as the discovery of the full name—Christian and surname—of the conveyer of the Shake-speare Sonnets to printer Thorpe. But it is a mere conjecture.

## CHAPTER XXII.

PHILISIDES WROTE THE SONNETS, AND HOW IDENTIFIED.

*"A halting sonnet of his own pure brain."*

—*Much Ado About Nothing*, v, 4.

And who was Philisides, and how do you know that he wrote the Shakespeare Sonnets?

In the reign of Queen Elizabeth, every literary person knew who Philisides was.

Edmund Spenser, in lamenting his untimely death, wrote thus of him:

"Nor ever sing the love-lays which he made,—  
Who ever made such lays of love as he?  
Nor ever read the riddles which he said—  
Unto yourselves, to make you merry glee."

And the great poet, Michael Drayton, in his epistle to Reynolds, relates how Philisides infected his contemporaries and immediate successors with his puns and riddles:

"The noble Sidney with this last arose,  
That hero was for numbers and for prose,  
That throughly paced our language, as to show  
The plenteous English hand in hand might go  
With Greek and Latin, and did first reduce  
Our tongue from Lyly's writing then in use;  
Talking of stones, stars, plants, of fishes, flies,  
Playing with words and idle similes;  
As the English, apes and very zanies be  
Of everything that they do hear and see,  
So imitating his ridiculous tricks,  
They spake and writ all like mere lunatics."

Yes, Philisides was Sir Philip Sidney, and I feel sure that I can convince the reader that he wrote the Shakespeare Sonnets. I will give a few reasons which I think are valid and unanswerable in support of the claim.

The first one is that "love" is the chief word and argument of the Sonnets. It is found in them more than two hundred times. Love is the word which tells the author's name. He himself so states in the tenth line of the seventy-sixth sonnet:

"O know, sweet love, I always write of you  
And you and love are still my argument."

But how does love stand for and represent the name of Sir Philip Sidney? Sidney indulged rather extravagantly in what Camden calls "the alchemy of wit." In other words, he arranged his name in the form of an anagram or metagram. If the reader will consult a very interesting article on Spenser in Volume 2 of the Atlantic Monthly for November, 1858, on page 676, he will find Sidney's method of obtaining a pseudonym thus described. I here quote the material part of it:

"Sir Philip Sidney, having abridged his own name into Phil. Sid., anagrammatized it into Philisides. Refining still further, he translated Sid., the abridgment of Sidus, into Astron, and retaining the Phil. as derived from Philos, loved, he constructed for himself another pseudonym, and adopted the poetical name of Astrophil, star of love, or love star. Feeling moreover that the Lady Rich, celebrated in his sonnets, was the bright particular star of his affection, he designated her, in conformity with his own assumed name, Stella."

Hence Philip was "love" and Penelope Rich, or Stella, was the star of his love. Sidney was known both as Astrophil and Philisides to his friends and the men and women of letters, and therefore in the seventy-sixth sonnet he could truthfully say:

"Why write I still all one, ever the same?  
And keep invention in the noted weed,  
That every word doth almost tell my name  
Showing their birth, and where they did proceed."

A perusal by the reader of Sidney's life or of his poems will satisfy every disinterested reader that I have rightfully identified him by the word "love." That is the word which almost tells his name.

A second and very strong reason for identifying Sidney as the author of the Shakespeare Sonnets is founded upon the correct and reasonable interpretation of the seventh line of the twentieth sonnet—a line which has been a stumbling-block to all the commentators, and their name is legion. No one has hitherto been able to explain that line or to give the poet's meaning satisfactorily. The line reads thus:

"A man in hue, all hues in his controlling."

I explain it thus: Sir Philip Sidney had two very intimate friends—Sir Edmund Dyer and Fulke Greville, afterward Lord Brooke, and his love for them "was wonderful, surpassing the love of women." Sidney, Greville, and Dyer in their poems were fond of punning and playing upon their own names. Dyer, for instance, wrote a poem which elicited a poetical answer from Sidney and a poetical reply from Greville, and the name of Dyer in the last

stanza of one was changed into *Die ere*, while Greville's name in the replication was metamorphosed into *Grieve-ill*. I quote for the reader's benefit some of the verses. The first is from Dyer:

“O, frail inconstant, kind  
 O, safe in trust to no man!  
 No, women angels be, and lo  
 My mistress is a woman.

My muse, if any ask,  
 Whose grievous case was such?  
*Die ere* thou let his name be known,  
 His folly shows so much.”

A part of Greville's reply is as follows:

“And I myself am he  
 That doth with none compare,  
 Except in woes and lack of worth  
 Whose states more wretched are.

Let no man ask my name,  
 Nor what else I should be  
 For *Grieve-ill* pain, for low estate,  
 Doth best decipher me.”

The Shakespeare Sonnets were addressed to Dyer and in the twentieth sonnet Sidney puns upon Dyer's name, likening him to a dyer, who in his business controls and fixes all hues and colors.

And here a third good reason for the identification of Sidney as the author of the Sonnets can be adduced, namely, the connection and resemblance between the poet's statements and the surrounding facts and circum-

stances. Sidney, in the Sonnets, advises his friend Dyer to marry. He uses such arguments to persuade him as his own mentor, Hubert Languet, had previously urged upon him. Symonds says that "Languet frequently wrote, urging Sidney to marry and using arguments similar to those which Shake-speare pressed on his fair friend." Dyer was an unmarried man, and never did marry, and it is evident from his life-history that he was also deeply enamored of the wanton Lady Rich. Whenever she was in trouble, she made use of Dyer. So also did her brother, whom she ruled.

This dearly beloved friend of Sidney was a favorite at Court. He was an adviser of Sir Christopher Hatton; and, as above stated, Stella's brother, the Earl of Essex, greatly relied upon him. Thus, in the summer of 1587 Essex wrote to Dyer, after making a vain search for him at Winchester House, "I would have given a thousand pounds to have had one hour's speech with you; so much I would hearken to your counsel and so greatly do I esteem your friendship."

That Sidney was rather fond of giving such marrying advice as is used in the Sonnets is shown very plainly in his poetical dialogue between Geron and Histor in Chapter 71 of the "Arcadia." It will not appear strange to any reader of that book that Sidney could actually think or say that he loved a man as fondly as appears in the Sonnets, for in the "Arcadia" he similarly pictures the love of Musidorus and Pyrocles. D'Israeli, in his "Amenities of Literature," says that "their friendship resembles the love which is felt for the beautiful sex" and Coleridge observes that "the language of these two friends in the Arcadia is such as we would not use except to women."

Sonnets 37, 66, 110, and 125 very fairly describe Sidney. He was extremely poor and very proud, and his parents were always distressed by poverty. His body after death was seized for debt and kept three months from burial, until Walsingham mustered enough money of his own to pay Sidney's creditors. He bore the canopy (see sonnet 125) as a gentleman in waiting or cup-bearer for the Queen in the summer of 1578, and he learned enough from personal intercourse with courtiers, male and female, to utter the mournful cry which is contained in the 66th sonnet. Sidney's quarrel with Oxford and his bold and pointed letter to the Queen concerning the worthlessness and meanness of the Duke of Anjou, and the danger to the realm if she married a Roman Catholic, caused his disgrace and retirement from the Court.

Bourne, in his "Life of Sidney," says that "early in January, 1580, Sidney addressed to the Queen a very bold and memorable letter. It was the Protestants, Sidney urged, who were the stoutest, if not the only, supporters of the Queen's government. 'How their hearts will be galled, if not aliened, when they shall see you take for a husband a Frenchman and a Papist, in whom (howsoever fine wits may find farther dealings or painted excuses) the very common people know this, that he is the son of a Jezebel of our age—that his brother made oblation of his sister's marriage, the easier to make massacres of our brethren in belief—that he himself, contrary to his promise and to all gratefulness, having his liberty and principal estate by the Huguenots' means, did sack La Charite, and utterly spoil them with fire and sword!'

"'Since, then,' the brave courtier wrote in conclusion—  
'since, then, it is dangerous for your State—since to your

person it can be no way comfortable, you not desiring marriage, and neither to person nor State he is to bring any more good than anybody (but more evil he may)—since the causes that should drive you to this are fears of either that which can not happen or by this means can not be prevented—I do with most humble heart say unto your Majesty that, as for your standing alone, you must take it for a singular honour God hath done you, to be indeed the only protector of His Church. As for this man, as long as he is but Monsieur in might and a Papist in profession, he neither can nor will greatly shield you; and, if he get once to be king, his defence will be like Ajax' shield, which rather weighed down than defended those that bare it. Against contempt, if there be any, which I will never believe, let your excellent virtues of piety, justice, and liberality daily—if it be possible—more and more shine. Let such particular actions be found out, which be easy as I think to be done, by which you may gratify all the hearts of your people. Let those in whom you find trust, and to whom you have committed trust in your weighty affairs, be held up in the eyes of your subjects. Lastly, doing as you do, you shall be as you should be, the example of princes, the ornament of this age, the most excellent fruit of your progenitors, and the perfect mirror of your posterity.'”

The good sense of this long epistle did not influence the Queen, nor did the compliments with which it ended conciliate her. For at least two years longer she regarded the Duke of Anjou as her suitor, and Sidney was punished for his boldness by exclusion for a time from the royal presence. Languet was not mistaken in supposing that Sidney was in danger of imprisonment and might have to



flee the country. "You will hardly find safety in Flanders," Languet wrote on the 30th of January, "and still less in France; your religion shuts you out of Spain and Italy; so that Germany is the only country left to receive you, should you be forced to quit your own land."

The careful reader of English history will remember that in Camden's "Annals" it is related that Queen Elizabeth was so incensed by the publication of a book inveighing in violent terms against the proposed match with the Duke, which the author termed "an union of a daughter of God with a son of Antichrist," that she caused the author Stubbs, the publisher Page, and one Singleton, the printer, to be tried under an act passed by Philip and Mary against the writers and disseminators of seditious publications, and they were sentenced to have their right hands struck off. Elizabeth must have been very angry at Sidney for his bold protest against the intended marriage.

Sidney could very well say that he was made lame by Fortune's dearest spite. He was not permitted to marry Anne Cecil; and Penelope Devereaux, whom he dearly loved, was given away to Lord Rich, a man whom she despised and hated. Sidney was fond of spending money when he could get it and he was very liberal and aristocratic; but his means were limited and he was greatly in debt. He was in disgrace at Court: he was a dependent upon Leicester; he had made himself "a motley to the view."

A fourth reason for the belief that Sir Philip Sidney wrote the Shakespeare Sonnets is that his name, among his associates, was "Will" or "Willy." Spenser calls him so in his "Tears of the Muses." In the eclogue on Sidney's death, heretofore quoted, and printed in Davison's "Poetical

Rhapsodies" in 1602, Sidney is lamented in almost every stanza by the name of "Willy."

Thus it will now be noted by the careful reader that Sidney's friend was Dyer, "a man in hue, all hues in his controlling," exactly fitting the twentieth sonnet; that the poet was Sidney, whose name was "love"—the argument of the sonnets, as pointed out in sonnet seventy-six; and that his name, as expressed in the 136th sonnet, was "Will." It will also be particularly noted that all the surrounding facts and circumstances coincide with the poet's statements. The name of no other poet in the days of Elizabeth will successfully meet all these tests, and all must be met.

I give, now, a fifth reason for my opinion that Sidney wrote the Sonnets, namely, the similarity of style between the Shakespeare Sonnets and the acknowledged writings of Sidney.

Desiring to abstain from self-assertion and to plant myself upon the firm basis of received authority, I will lay down no rule of my own as to Sidney's style, preferring to adopt the judgment of Jusserand, who, in "The English Novel before Shakespeare," says, at page 255, that "the rules of Sidney's style consist first, in the antithetical and cadenced repetition of the same words in the sentences merely for effect, as for example, 'A greater greatness to give a kingdom than to get a kingdom,' and 'either for the love of honor or honor of his love.' Secondly, in persistently ascribing life and feeling to inanimate objects, as for example, 'Did you not mark how the wind whistled and the seas danced for joy; how the sails did swell with pride, and all because they had Urania?'"

I give a few examples under each rule:

## Jusserand's First Rule.

"Music to hear, why hearest thou music sadly?"

—Sonnet 8, 1.

"So long lives this and this gives life to thee."

—Sonnet 18, 14.

"Mine ransoms yours and yours must ransom me."

—Sonnet 120, 14.

"Love's fire heats water, water cools not love."

—Sonnet 154, 14.

## Jusserand's Second Rule.

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

—Sonnet 2, 1.

"Full many a glorious morning have I seen  
Flatter the mountain tops with sovereign eyes."

—Sonnet 33, 1.

"Lean penury within that pen doth dwell."

—Sonnet 84, 5.

"The roses fearfully on thorns did stand,  
One blushing shame, another white despair."

—Sonnet 99.

Sonnet 99 abounds in the ascription of life and feeling to inanimate objects, and a comparison of the sonnet with Sidney's writings will show many such resemblances.

Again, the phrases and turns of expression in the Sonnets afford striking resemblances to those which Sidney uses, as for example:

"*When forty winters* shall besiege thy brow."

—Sonnet 2, 1.

"*When forty winters* have I married been."

—Arcadia.

"And you must live, drawn by your own *sweet skill*."

—Sonnet 16, 14.

"With his *sweet skill*, my skillless youth he drew."

—Arcadia.

“Describe Adonis, and the *counterfeit*  
Is poorly imitated after you.”

—Sonnet 53, 5.

“I will think my pictures be image-like  
Of saints’ perfection, *poorly counterfeiting* thee.”

—Sidney.

“*Kind* is my love to-day, to-morrow *kind*,  
Still constant in a wondrous excellence.”

—Sonnet 108, 5.

“Such as you see, such still you shall me find,  
*Constant* and *kind*.”

—Arcadia.

“*Love is my sin*, and thy dear virtue, hate.”

—Sonnet 142, 1.

“Then *love is sin* and let me sinful be.”

—Astrophel and Stella.

Sidney and the author of the Sonnets were both fond of using ambiguous or paradoxical descriptions of persons or objects. To illustrate:

Shake-speare Sonnet numbered 135 reads thus (the “wills” not capitalized being italicized by me):

“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 my *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*.”

Sidney, in the 37th sonnet of *Astrophel and Stella*, indulges in the same kind of word play, as thus:

“Toward Aurora’s Court a nymph doth dwell,  
*Rich* in all beauties, which man’s eye can see,  
 Beauties so far from reach of words, that we  
 Abase her praise, saying she doth excel;  
*Rich* in the treasure of deserved renown,  
*Rich* in the *riches* of a royal heart,  
*Rich* in those gifts which giveth eternal crown;  
 Who though most *rich* in these and every part  
 Which make the patents of true worldly bliss,  
 Hath no misfortune but that *Rich* she is.”

Sidney and the author of the *Sonnets* both use the expressions: “And so, and in, and therefore, and though, and when alas, as I, but for, but now, but then, but yet, even as, farewell, for that, for as, hast thou, how much more, how oft, I never, if thou, like to, needs must, O else, O how, or if, perforce, save that, since what, since that, so oft, take heed, therefore, thou art, thus is, whereto, why dost thou.”

Other resemblances and peculiarities are readily traced. For instance, the author of the *Sonnets* ends a line with the letter I, as thus in sonnet 72, line 7: “And hang more praises on deceased I.”

Compare the “*Astrophel and Stella*” sonnets 103, 104, and 105:

“She so disheveled, blushed from window, I.”  
 “From out my ribs and puffing proves that I.”  
 “I swear by her I love and lack that I.”

In sennet 85 the poet uses the phrase, “And like unlettered clerk, still cry, Amen.”

It is noticeable that Sidney was a clerk in holy orders in the church of Whitford.

Both Mr. Brown, in his "Shake-speare's Sonnets Solved," and Massey, in his "Commentary on the Sonnets," unwittingly furnish corroborative evidence in favor of my claim for Sidney.

Mr. Brown asserts that Sidney's love for Stella (Penelope Rich) and her love for him gave rise to the Sonnets, and Massey admits that "the supposed dark lady of the Sonnets is the famous golden-haired, black-eyed beauty, Penelope Rich, the first love of Philip Sidney, the cousin of Elizabeth Vernon, the sister of Essex and the Helen of the Elizabethan poets."

The doctrine of the cycles is very clearly set out in Sonnet 123, which I ask the reader to consider very carefully; and it is very easy to show by authority from whence Sidney derived the views expressed in that sonnet. He was instructed by Giordano Bruno, who visited England in 1583, residing for several years in London.

Bourne, in his "Life of Sidney," states that on the evening of Ash Wednesday, 1584, Bruno was invited by Greville to meet Sidney and others to hear the reasons for his belief that the earth moves, and their meetings were frequent, for Bruno writes that, "We met in a chamber in Greville's house to discuss moral, metaphysical, mathematical, and natural speculations." Sidney imbibed his ideas and freely sympathized with him, and Bruno dedicated two of his books to Sidney.

The 107th sonnet has received all kinds of strained and foolish interpretation. One writer calls Bacon "the mortal moon," and Massey, Minton, and Tyler say that the mortal moon referred to in the sonnet denoted Queen

Elizabeth; but, viewed in the light which knowledge of the true author of the Sonnets sheds around them, it is clear that no man or woman is meant at all, but the great power of Turkey, represented by the crescent moon, which had then been humbled and crippled, and was no longer a disturbing element to either the Protestant or Papal world. Sidney had, from his first acquaintance with Languet, been so filled by him with news about thrones and dynasties and governmental complications that he could not keep Turkey out of his love sonnets; and so in the thirteenth sonnet of "Astrophel and Stella" he asks the question:

"Whether the Turkish new moon minded be  
To fill her horns this year on Christian coasts?"

Sonnets numbered 127, 128, 130, 131, and 132 clearly refer to Sidney's mistress, Penelope Rich, and he intimated that Dyer had supplanted him in her affections.

In the 127th sonnet he describes a woman whose "eyes are raven black." So were Stella's eyes. She is nowhere in any of the Sonnets described as a black woman, save in her deeds. Sidney speaks of them thus:

"When nature made her chief work, Stella's eyes,  
In color black, why wrapp't she beams so bright?  
Would she in heavy black, like painter wise  
Frame daintiest lustre, mix'd of shades and light?"

I do not understand that Sidney, in sonnet 130, admits that his mistress is deficient in any particular of beauty or accomplishments. He had read (or his friend Spenser had read to him) the extravagant description of a woman whose eyes Spenser compared to the sun, her lips to coral,

her breasts to snow, her hair to wires, her cheeks to roses, her breath to perfumes, her speech to music, and her walk to that of a goddess, and in this sonnet, in a spirit of pleasantry, he ridicules Spenser's bombastic description, and at the same time eulogizes his own beloved mistress.

Here is Spenser's extravaganza :

“Lo! where she comes along with portly pace,  
 Like Phoebe, from her chamber of the East,  
 Arising forth to run her mighty race,  
 Clad all in white, that seems a virgin best,  
 Her long, loose yellow locks like golden wire,  
 Sprinkled with pearl and pearly flowers atween,  
 Do like a golden mantle her attire,  
 Her goodly eyes like sapphires shining bright,  
 Her forehead ivory white,  
 Her cheeks like apples, which the sun hath rudded,  
 Her lips like cherries charming men to bite,  
 Her breast like to a bowl of cream uncudded,  
 Her paps like lilies budded,  
 Her snowy neck like to a marble tower,  
 And all her body like a palace fair,  
 Ascending up with many a stately stair,  
 To honor's seat and chastity's sweet bower.”

And Sidney, as I think, answers Spenser's extravagant eulogium of his mistress in the one hundred and thirtieth sonnet in a very modest way, thus:

“My mistress' 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 bely'd with false compare."

The next stanza very clearly shows what the allusions in the poet's mind to blackness really meant. The poet says:

"In nothing art thou black, save in thy deeds,  
 And thence this slander, as I think, proceeds."

A little farther on he says:

"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."

Stella with her black eyes, lovely face, and bewitching form, was very beautiful indeed, but she was a bad woman, and no one can read "Astrophel and Stella" without believing that Stella had been to Sidney the object of a coarse passion.

Her after life and her conduct with Charles Blount strongly testify against her.

Speaking of Lady Rich's illicit amours, Brown, in his work on the Sonnets, at page 219, very accurately relates the facts as to the "Stella" of Philisides:

"Lady Rich, while Sidney lived, gave scandal no tongue, but after his death, either through excessive grief, or hate of her lord, she forsook the path of virtue and fair

fame, and eventually her husband behaved cruelly to her; abandoned her, though not without just cause, and treated her in a manner that drove her to despair and revenge. Neglected by her husband for years, she, following his example, transferred her affections to another: she gave her love to Mountjoy, afterwards Earl of Devonshire, who doted upon her, and after some years married her. But disaster now followed disaster. Elizabeth banished her the Court; but upon James coming to the crown she and Lord Mountjoy came again into high favor. Scandal, however, followed her, and the illegality of her marriage with the earl while her husband was still living, which had just been effected to put a good colour upon their illicit loving, was discussed; and the king, exceedingly wrathful, told Mountjoy that he had 'purchased a fair woman with a black soul,' and though Mountjoy, in a letter to the King, showed legal reasons sufficient to show his right to marry her, it would not avail. This was more than he could bear; he retired from Court, and was soon after taken with a severe illness, consequent on his excessive grief, and died. His wife attended him to the last, and never survived this disgrace; she died shortly after, in 1606. A relative of Mountjoy declared she had brought shame upon her and her whole kindred. It would seem that Mountjoy, though deluded with the belief, was not her only lover. It also appears, during the latter years of the time she spent under the roof of her first husband, that he was not so much the tyrant as tyrannized over; for she, at her own option, sometimes left her husband's roof, and returned again to it; and upon her first fit of love for Mountjoy, she left her husband to live with him, and upon his being sent, by order of the Queen, to Ireland to aid

Essex to suppress the rebellion, she returned to her husband, though but to leave him on Mountjoy's return; and as remarked, she was not indifferent to the proffered love of others, though in a more guarded way. So, taking her for all in all, possibly no woman ever presented two such contrasted pictures, both in feature and in morals; she was radiant fair, yet intensely dark in the lustrous depth of her black eyes: she was, while Sidney lived, an example of virtue; after his death, blot upon blot darkened her illicit loving, till she sunk, like a luminous star, from dazzling radiance to oblivious infamy."

In this connection what Chambers, in his "Encyclopedia of English Literature," says of the Sonnets, is very appropriate to Sidney's character.

"We almost wish, with Mr. Hallam, that Shakespeare had not written these sonnets, beautiful as many of them are in language and imagery. They represent him in a character foreign to that in which we love to regard him—as modest, virtuous, self-confiding, and independent. His excessive and elaborate praise of youthful beauty in a man seems derogatory to his genius, and savors of adulation; and when we find him excuse this friend for robbing him of his mistress—a married female—and subjecting his noble spirit to all the pangs of jealousy, of guilty love, and blind, misplaced attachment, it is painful and difficult to believe that all this weakness and folly can be associated with the name of Shakespeare."

I will now explain how a bookseller could get possession of Sidney's "Sonnets" without authority. None of Sidney's works were published until long after his death. His poetry was circulated privately among his friends for several years, precisely as were the "sugared sonnets"

which Meres describes. Sidney died on the 17th day of October, 1586, and the "Arcadia" was not published until 1590. His friend Greville, in a letter to Walsingham, preserved in the State Paper Office, throws light on the way that booksellers then got possession of manuscripts:

"Sir, this day one Ponsonby, a bookbinder in Paul's churchyard, came to me and told me that there was one in hand to print Sir Philip Sidney's 'Arcadia,' asking me if it were done with your honor's consent, or any other of his friends. I told him to my knowledge, no; then he advised me to give warning of it to the Archbishop or Doctor Cosen, who have, as he says, a copy of it to peruse to that end," etc.

When we consider that Sidney did not desire that his poetry should be published, and that after he was mortally wounded at Zutphen, he asked that the "Arcadia" might be destroyed, and when we consider further that his poetry circulated for years among his friends and acquaintances with no special curator or preserver of it, we can understand how the booksellers could get a copy of his sonnets for publication in another's name.

The writer of the Shakespeare Sonnets, like Sidney, seems to have had no expectation nor desire that they should be published, for in sonnet 17 he writes:

"So should my papers, yellowed with their age  
Be scorn'd, like old men of less truth than tongue."

He looked no farther than to the limit of their existence in manuscript.

With all his faults, and he had many of them, Sidney was a great and gallant man. Greville says that, as he was leaving the battlefield of Zutphen, wounded and

thirsty with excess of bleeding, he called for some drink, which was brought to him; but as he was putting the bottle to his mouth he saw a poor wounded soldier carried along, longingly casting up his eyes at the bottle. Sir Philip thereupon took it from his mouth before he drank, and delivered it to the poor man with the words: "Thy necessity is yet greater than mine." Tristram, in the *English Illustrated Magazine*, thus beautifully points out the qualities which distinguish him from his contemporaries:

"It was not only that he united in one character the wisdom of a grave councilor and the romantic chivalry of a knight errant; it was not only that his genius and his learning made him the center of the great literary world which was at the moment springing into birth; it was not only that, friend of England's most imaginary poet, he, too, was gifted with the magic virtue, with the power to see the beauty which the eye can not see, and to hear that music only heard in silence; these qualities he shared with his contemporaries. In Raleigh's blood the tide of romance beat as strongly; Essex was as brilliant an ornament to the Court and a more munificent patron of genius; Drake showed as dauntless a courage in the face of his country's foes. But in the spiritual elevation of character which rose far above the standard of the age, and to which none of his contemporaries attained, Sidney stands alone. He was the bright figure of Christian chivalry in times full of grossness. He was the Bayard of an age in which most men knew no fear, but in which he alone among them was without reproach."

The reader will now understand why I do not invite him to try the Sonnets as a pathway to the authorship of the plays and poems.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### THE VENUS AND ADONIS TEST EXPLAINED.

*"Bring me to the test."*

—Hamlet. iii, 4.

No question of collaboration can possibly arise respecting the authorship of the poem of Venus and Adonis. I am certain that all scholars will agree with me that one man, and one man only, composed that poem. If, now, that man can be identified as, and indubitably shown to be the actual author of the poem, then the Shakespeare controversy will be conclusively and correctly settled. If a man named William Shaksper, of Stratford-on-Avon, wrote the Venus and Adonis or the Tarquin and Lucrece, or both of these poems, he also unquestionably wrote the most important and best portions of the so-called Shakespeare plays. But if it should appear that the real writer of the two poems or of either of them was not William Shaksper of Stratford, but a very different individual who merely assumed the name of William Shakespeare (not Shaksper or Shakspere) as a pseudonym, then the Shaksper of Stratford could not have been either the writer of the poems or of any part of the plays.

It will be observed that in the dedications to the poems the name is printed thus, "William Shakespeare." Since Shaksper, in his will and in the mortgage and deed, wrote his name "Shaksper," it is right to presume that if he had dedicated a poem to the Earl of Southampton, he would have spelled his own name correctly. The inferior in station, seeking to conciliate and please a patron very

greatly his superior in station, would *ex necessitate* spell his own name aright. While on this subject of the name, it is worthy of remark that no poem or play was ever attributed or conceded to William Shaksper or Shakspere by any printer or publisher. In the two poems, the name of William Shakespeare is used. In *Love's Labor's Lost*, printed in 1598, the name used is "Shakespere." In the *Hamlet* of 1603, it is again different, being printed thus: "Shake-speare," the Shake and speare being separated by a hyphen. So also in the last-named way the word is spelled in *Richard the Second*, printed in 1598; in *Richard the Third*, printed in 1598; in *Henry the Fourth*, printed in 1599; in the *Shake-speare Sonnets*, printed in 1609; and in *Romeo and Juliet*. In the other plays the word used is either "Shakespere" or "Shake-speare," but never "Shaksper." It is easy, very easy, to say that the printers and publishers were to blame for this egregious blunder, and that Shaksper took so little pride in his productions that he did not care to correct the mistakes in the spelling of his name by others, but that apology or attempted explanation, lame as it is, will not and can not apply as to the spelling by Shaksper of his own name.

It must be borne in mind by the reader that, as to the authorship of the two poems, I only give my opinion, based upon facts and circumstances as I have traced them, trusting that if I am right the reader and other students of English literature, who have more learning and leisure than I have, will make the title of the real author more complete and perfect; and being very willing to acknowledge my error if I am shown to be wrong in any statement or conclusion. I shall be content if I have aided the future discoverer of the truth in clearing and

illuminating the pathway to the real authorship. It will be understood, of course, that the discovery of the author of the poems would entitle the author to be the Shakespeare whom the world honors for his magnificent poetry, and desires to honor without mistake or cavil as to his identity.

The interesting, important, and vital question is this: What English writer can be found whose words, sentences, phrases, peculiar expressions, and style coalesce and harmonize with the same elements in the poems and plays? Such a man, if found, should be a poet of the first class; he should have a suitable and reliable birth-date and birth-place, a good education, not necessarily collegiate; intense application, great industry, acquaintance and even intimacy with scholars and noblemen, and familiarity also with courts and the customs and fashions of courts; he should be what is called a Protestant and a churchman; he should be an admirer of the gentle sex; he should be a user of Saxon words and Latin and Greek derivatives, and a maker and coiner of new and appropriate words; and he should be a man who was thoroughly familiar with every part and parcel of England and her history, as well as of her antecedent great men, both in Church and State.

The poem of *Venus and Adonis*, issued in 1593, contains one hundred and ninety-nine stanzas, each having six lines of ten syllables, the first four alternating and the last two making a rhyming couplet. It is an amatory poem after Ovid, unquestionably written by a scholar who was possessed of the true poetic fire; and the poem, which is of the lascivious type, must have been very popular in the latter part of the Sixteenth Century. It is exceedingly well constructed and is rich in poetic imagery. Whatever may be said of the plays or parts of them as to



the learning or ignorance of their composers, it is indisputable that no one but a learned man could have written the *Venus and Adonis*. Clark's testimony as to elegance and predilection, and Reed's panegyric as to the highest culture and use of scholarly English in its composition, can not be disputed.

The first edition in quarto was soon exhausted and it was republished in quarto by the same printer, Richard Field, in 1594. An octavo edition was printed by Field for John Harrison in 1596, and Harrison published another in 1600. According to Collier, copies exist of editions of 1602, 1616, and 1620; and John Wreittoun, of Edinburgh, printed an edition in 1627. The popularity of the poem is evidenced not only by these repeated publications, but also by the frequent mention of it by contemporary writers. It is alluded to in Peele's "*Merry Conceited Jests*," published in 1607, and in the same year by Thomas Heywood in his play of "*The Fair Maid of the Exchange*." Richard Barnfield noticed it in 1598; and William Barksted mentions it in 1607 in his "*Myrrha, the mother of Adonis*." In the "*Return from Parnassus*" there is a distinct poetical allusion to it. The poem is prefaced by a Latin quotation from Ovid. A dedication also is prefixed, as follows:

"To the right honourable Henry Wriothesly,

Earl of Southampton and Baron of Tichfield.

"Right Honorable: I know not how I shall offend in dedicating my unpolished lines to your lordship, nor how the world will censure me for choosing so strong a prop to support so weak a burden; only, if your honour seem but pleased, I account myself highly praised, and vow to take

advantage of all idle hours, till I have honoured you with some graver labour. But if the first heir of my invention prove deformed, I shall be sorry it had so noble a godfather, and never after ear so barren a land, for fear it yield me still so bad a harvest. I leave it to your honourable survey, and your honour to your heart's content; which I wish may always answer your own wish and the world's hopeful expectation.

“Your honour's in all duty,

“WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.”

In order to form an opinion as to the authorship of the *Venus and Adonis*, it was necessary to make an alphabetical list of the peculiar words, double-words, sentences, and turns of expression to be found in the poem, and then to make a detailed and careful examination of them. After that was accomplished, the matter of a comparison with the works of the great poets of that era confronted me, and I made a list of them for that purpose. Very soon I found upon examination that the names of very many of the writers whom I had selected could be eliminated, because their writings were not of the amatory class. I took it for granted that the writer had learning as well as poetic fire, for “the first heir of my invention” shows thorough scholarship. The list therefore gradually narrowed down to a select few, whom I have arranged alphabetically, namely—Francis Bacon, Francis Beaumont, George Chapman, Thomas Dekker, Michael Drayton, Christopher Marlowe, John Marston, Thomas Middleton, and John Webster. These were all learned men, with the requisite ability, poetical talent, and classical attainments. They were, one and all, intellectual giants.

Before proceeding further, I ought to state that it would be unprofitable as well as uninteresting to the reader to give the detailed statement of the trial tests which resulted in the failure to identify any one or more of those on the list above given, as the author of the poem. As the reader and I have no particular sympathy for, or prejudice against, any one of these poets, it will suffice if the processes are set out and the methods shown by means of which the authorship of the poem was arrived at.

Francis Beaumont was the friend, associate, and mentor of Ben Jonson and the reputed author of the amatory poem of "Salmacis and Hermaphroditus"; but he could not have been the author of *Venus and Adonis*, for he was too young in the year 1593 to possess the ability to write poetry at all.

Then came George Chapman, who took up Marlowe's unfinished poem of "Hero and Leander," beginning as to his share in the composition with the third Sestiad, thereby making it a complete poem. A comparison of his portion of the poem with my index showed me conclusively, as it will show the reader, that he could not have been the William Shakespeare of the *Venus and Adonis*. One short extract from the poem will give the reader who is not able to find the entire poem of "Hero and Leander" clear and convincing proof that Chapman's style and mode of expression (beautiful and stately as it is) would not fit the author of *Venus and Adonis*. This quotation also shows the reader that Chapman had conferred with Marlowe about the unfinished poem, which Chapman felt constrained, either from friendship or by reason of a direct request from Marlowe, to finish after Marlowe's death.

“Now, as swift as time  
 Doth follow motion, find the eternal clime  
 Of his free soul, whose living subject stood  
 Up to his chin in the Pierian flood,  
 And drunk to me half this musean story,  
 Inscribing it in deathless memory.  
 Confer with it and make my pledge as deep  
 That neither’s draught be consecrate to sleep  
 Tell it how much his late desires I tender,  
 If yet it know not, and to light surrender  
 My soul’s dark offspring, willing it should die  
 To love, to passion and society.”

Then there was John Marston, who wrote the love poem of Pygmalion after the manner of Venus and Adonis. But his poem, contrasted with the Venus and Adonis, is as cold as the statue which Pygmalion chiseled, before it was warmed into life for him. Two stanzas from the poem of Marston will clearly illustrate the point:

“Pygmalion, whose high love-hating mind  
 Disdained to yield servile affection  
 Of amorous suit to any woman-kind,  
 Knowing their wants and men’s perfection;  
 Yet love at length forced him to know his fate,  
 And love the shade whose substance he did hate.

For having wrought in ivory  
 So fair an image of a woman’s feature,  
 That never yet proudest mortality  
 Could show so rare and beauteous a creature,  
 Unless my mistress’ all-excelling face  
 Which gives to beauty beauty’s only grace.”

As to Beaumont, Chapman, and Marston, I will add that, while every student of English literature will admit

their ability as well as the greatness of their poetical talent and classical attainments, they nowhere betray themselves in any part of their works as originators or even imitators of the words, phrases, and peculiar turns of expression in the *Venus and Adonis*.

Christopher Marlowe then came in his turn. The subject was in his line of thought and worthy of his "mighty line." It was Marlowe, as Drayton beautifully puts it, who

"Bathed in the Thespian spring,  
Had in him those brave translunary things  
That the first poets had. His raptures were  
All air and fire, which made his verses clear."

His leading motive, as Symonds says, was the love or lust of unattainable things. He deserves in every way, as a prince of poets, the panegyric which Bullen has bestowed upon him:

"Never was a poet fired with a more intense aspiration for ideal beauty and ideal power. As some adventurous Greek of old might have sailed away, with warning voices in his ears, past the pillars of Hercules in quest of fabled islands beyond the sun, so Marlowe started on his lonely course, careless of tradition and restraint, resolved to seek and find some world far from ours, where the secret springs of knowledge should be opened and he should touch the lips of beauty."

A specimen of his style may be found in the following lines copied from his *Faustus*:

"Was this the face that launched a thousand ships  
And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?  
Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss.  
Her lips suck forth my soul; see where it flies!

Come, Helen, come, give me my soul again.  
Here will I dwell, for heaven is on these lips,  
And all is dross that is not Helena.  
O, thou art fairer than the evening air,  
Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars;  
Brighter art thou than flaming Jupiter  
When he appeared to hapless Semele;  
More lovely than the monarch of the sky  
In wanton Arethusa's azure arms."

But Marlowe died on the first day of June, 1593, and hence the *Venus and Adonis* could not have been written by him, since the writer thereof declares in his dedication that the poem with its unpolished lines is "the first heir of my invention." Since the poem was registered on April 18, 1593, it could not possibly have been a poem of Marlowe, for he had written many poems and plays previous to that date. It could not have been the first heir of his invention.

The same tests which were applied to Beaumont, Chapman, Marlowe, and Marston were applied also to Thomas Middleton and John Webster, and with the same result, thus narrowing the number of contestants to three—Francis Bacon, Thomas Dekker, and Michael Drayton.

It is a matter to be considered as to the *Venus and Adonis* as well as the poem called *Tarquin and Lucrece* that although they were apparently dedicated by a person whose name was very much like that of William Shaksper, yet, in the Folio of 1623, they were entirely unnoticed and omitted by Heminge and Condell, who professed that they were the guardians for Shaksper's orphan productions and that it was their province to gather his works.

If the syndicate of publishers named in the Folio procured the plays from the two players, the conclusion would

be natural that they gathered them together as the property of William Shaksper, the theatrical manager, whose rights in them were as absolute and good as the title to Henslowe's plays was in him. That is to say, if they were bought from the playwrights and fully paid for, and Heminge and Condell took the trouble to collect them, that would account for the failure to include the two poems among the works of Shaksper, since he had never purchased the poems from any one.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### VENUS AND ADONIS PHRASES REPEATED IN THE PLAYS.

*“Good phrases are surely, and ever were very commendable.”*

—Second Henry IV, iii, 2.

To enable the reader to judge for himself as to the resemblance between the words and phrases in the poem of Venus and Adonis and the plays which Meres enumerates as written by Shakespeare before the year 1598, I cite the following examples of similarity between the poem and the plays. They should be carefully examined and scrutinized by the studious reader. I am taking it for granted, as heretofore stated, that the Venus and Adonis was written by one man and one man only, and as I maintain the proposition that the plays embody the words and thoughts of several writers, the discovery of the writer of the poem will greatly aid in leading us to the discovery of the man who was the true Shakespeare. To avoid the charge of tediousness, I will cite only enough of resembling words and phrases to satisfy the reader that the author of the poem was a principal writer of the plays.

I first give the phrase or word to be particularly noted, and then under it, the resembling sentences.

#### ABOVE COMPARE.

*“The field’s chief flower, sweet above compare.”*

—Venus and Adonis, 8.

*“Which she hath praised him with above compare.”*

—Romeo and Juliet, iii, 5.

#### ALL COMPACT OF.

*“Love is a spirit all compact of fire.”*

—Venus and Adonis, 149.



"Are of imagination all compact."

—*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, iv, 1.

"If he, compact of jaw, grows musical."

—*As You Like It*, ii, 7.

ALL SWOLLEN.

"All swol'n with chafing, down Adonis sits."

—*Venus and Adonis*, 325.

"All swol'n and ulcerous, pitiful to the eye."

—*Macbeth*, iv, 3.

AN EMPTY EAGLE.

"Even as an empty eagle sharp by fast."

—*Venus and Adonis*, 55.

"Wert not all one, an empty eagle were set."

—*Third Henry VI*, iii, 1.

"And like an empty eagle,  
Tire on the flesh of me and of my son."

—*Third Henry VI*, iii, 1.

ANNOY (as a noun).

"But now I liv'd and life was death's annoy."

—*Venus and Adonis*, 497.

"Good angels guard thee from the boar's annoy."

—*Richard III*, v, 3.

ANTHEM.

"Her heavy anthem still concludes in woe."

—*Venus and Adonis*, 839.

"As ending anthem of my endless dolor."

—*Two Gentlemen of Verona*, iii, 1.

ANY JOT.

"If springing things be any jot diminished."

—*Venus and Adonis*, 417.

"Than in possession any jot of pleasure."

—*Third Henry VI*, iv, 2.

AT RANDOM.

"But hatefully at random dost thou hit."

—*Venus and Adonis*, 940.

“And the great care of goods at random left.”  
—Comedy of Errors, i, 1.

“I writ at random, very doubtfully.”  
—Two Gentlemen of Verona, ii, 1.

## BATE-BREEDING.

“This sour informer, this bate-breeding spy.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 655.

“Breeds no bate with telling of discreet stories.”  
—Second Henry IV, ii, 4.

## BATTERED SHIELD.

“His battered shield, his uncontrolled crest.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 104.

“Than foeman’s marks upon his battered shield.”  
—Titus Andronicus, iv, 1.

## BEPAINTED.

“Whose pretty mouth bepainted all with red.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 901.

“Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek.”  
—Romeo and Juliet, ii, 2.

## BUT ALL IN VAIN.

“But all in vain, good queen, it will not be.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 607.

“But all in vain are these mean obsequies.”  
—Second Henry VI, iii, 2.

“But all in vain, they had no heart to fight.”  
—Third Henry VI, iii, 2.

“Till Hymen’s torch be lighted, but in vain.”  
—The Tempest, iv, 1.

## BY SUBTILTY.

“Or as the fox, which lives by subtilty.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 675.

“Be it by gins, by snares, by subtilty.”  
—Second Henry VI, iii, 1.

CATERPILLARS.

“As caterpillars do the tender leaves.”

—Venus and Adonis, 798.

“And caterpillars eat my leaves away.”

—Second Henry VI, ii, 4.

CHAFES HER LIPS.

“He chafes her lips, a thousand ways he seeks.”

—Venus and Adonis, 477.

“Fain would I go to chafe his paly lips.”

—Second Henry VI, iii, 2.

CHAOS COME AGAIN.

“And beauty dead, black chaos comes again.”

—Venus and Adonis, 1020.

“And when I love thee not, chaos is come again.”

—Othello, iii, 3.

CHEERING UP.

“Till cheering up her senses all dismay'd.”

—Venus and Adonis, 996.

“Went through the army, cheering up the soldiers.”

—Richard III, v, 3.

CHURLISH DRUM.

“Scorning her churlish drum and ensign red.”

—Venus and Adonis, 107.

“The interruption of their churlish drums.”

—King John, ii, 1.

CLOSURE.

“Into the quiet closure of my breast.”

—Venus and Adonis, 782.

“Within the guilty closure of thy walls.”

—Richard III, iii, 3.

COAL-BLACK.

“And coal-black clouds, that shadow heaven's light.”

—Venus and Adonis, 533.

- “That comes in likeness of a coal-black Moor.”  
 —Titus Andronicus, iii, 2.
- “Coal-black is better than another hue.”  
 —Titus Andronicus, iv, 2.

## COLD FAULT.

- “With much ado the cold fault cleanly out.”  
 —Venus and Adonis, 694.
- “Saw'st thou not, boy, how Silver made it good  
 At the hedge corner in the coldest fault?”  
 —Taming of the Shrew, Ind., 20.

## COMES STEALING.

- “How she came stealing to the wayward boy.”  
 —Venus and Adonis, 344.
- “That time comes stealing on by day and night.”  
 —Comedy of Errors, iv, 1.

## CONGEALED BLOOD.

- “And stains his face with her congealed blood.”  
 —Venus and Adonis, 1122.
- “Thy tears would wash the cold congealed blood.”  
 —Third Henry VI, i, 1.

## COPE HIM.

- “They all strain courtesy who shall cope him first.”  
 —Venus and Adonis, 888.
- “They say he yesterday coped Hector in the battle.”  
 —Troilus and Cressida, i, 2.

## COPIOUS.

- “Their copious stories oftentimes begun.”  
 —Venus and Adonis, 845.
- “I hear his drum; be copious in exclams.”  
 —Richard III, iv, 4.

## CURST (meaning fierce).

- “Finding their enemy to be so curst.”  
 —Venus and Adonis, 887.

"They are never curst but when they are hungry."

—The Winter's Tale, iii, 3.

"In faith, she's too curst."

—Much Ado About Nothing, ii, 1.

DEFEATURE.

"And pure perfection with impure defeature."

—Venus and Adonis, 736.

"Then is he the ground of my defeature."

—Comedy of Errors, ii, 1.

DEW-BEDABBLED.

"Then shalt thou see the dew-bedabbled wretch."

—Venus and Adonis, 703.

"Bedabbled with the dew and torn with briars."

—A Midsummer Night's Dream, iii, 2.

DOTETH.

"Dumbly she passions, frantickly she doteth."

—Venus and Adonis, 1059.

"So much she doteth on her Mortimer."

—First Henry IV, iii, 1.

EAR THE LAND.

"And never after ear so barren a land."

—Venus and Adonis, Ded.

"And let them go to ear the land."

—King John, iii, 2.

"He that ears my land."

—All's Well that Ends Well, i, 3.

ENGINE OF HER THOUGHTS.

"Once more the engine of her thoughts began."

—Venus and Adonis, 367.

"O! that delightful engine of her thoughts."

—Titus Andronicus, iii, 1.

EXCEEDS COMMISSION.

"Chiefly in love, whose leave exceeds commission."

—Venus and Adonis, 568.

"Let not her penance exceed the King's commission."

—Second Henry VI, ii, 4.

## FAIR BREEDER.

- “Of the fair breeder that is standing by.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 367.
- “Among the fairest breeders of our clime.”  
—Titus Andronicus, iii, 1.

## FAIR FALL.

- “Fair fall the wit that can so well defend her.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 472.
- “Fair fall the face it covers.”  
—Love's Labor's Lost, ii, 1.

## FIE, FIE.

- “Fie, fie, fond love, thou art so full of fears.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 533.
- “Fie, fie, he says, you crush me, let me go.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 611.
- “Fie, fie, on all tired jades.”  
—Taming of the Shrew, iv, 1.
- “Fie, fie, unknot that threatening, unkind brow.”  
—Taming of the Shrew, v, 2.
- “Fie, fie upon her.”  
—Troilus and Cressida, iv, 5.

## FLEET-FOOT ROE.

- “Or as the fleet-foot roe that's tired with chasing.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 560.
- “As breathed stags, aye, fleeter than the roe.”  
—Taming of the Shrew, Ind.
- “Whip to our tents as roes run o'er the land.”  
—Love's Labor's Lost, v, 2.

## FLYING HARE.

- “Having the fearful, flying hare in sight.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 674.
- “Uncouple at the timorous flying hare.”  
—Third Henry VI, ii, 5.

FULL PERFECTION.

- “Whose full perfection all the world amazes.”  
 —Venus and Adonis, 634.  
 “Whose fullness of perfection lies in him.”  
 —King John, ii, 1.

GLISTER LIKE.

- “His eyes which scornfully glister like fire.”  
 —Venus and Adonis, 275.  
 “Away and glister like the god of war.”  
 —King John, v, 1.

GUISE.

- “This was thy father’s guise.”  
 —Venus and Adonis, 1177.  
 “This is her very guise.”  
 —Macbeth, v, 1.

HARSH SOUNDING.

- “Melodious discord, heavenly tune, harsh sounding.”  
 —Venus and Adonis, 431.  
 “To whom he sung in rude, harsh-sounding rhyme.”  
 —King John, iv, 2.

HEART’S ATTORNEY (the tongue).

- “But when the heart’s attorney once is mute.”  
 —Venus and Adonis, 335.  
 “Windy attorneys to their client’s woes.”  
 —Richard III, iv, 4.

HEART’S CONTENT.

- “And your honour to your heart’s content.”  
 —Venus and Adonis, Ded.  
 “Such is the fullness of my heart’s content.”  
 —Second Henry VI, iii, 2.  
 “Then though my heart’s content from love doth bear.”  
 —Two Gentlemen of Verona, i, 1.

## I ACCOUNT MYSELF.

- “I account myself highly pleased.”  
—Venus and Adonis, Ded.
- “O, thou, whose captain I account myself.”  
—Richard III, v, 2.

## I MUST CONFESS.

- “Then, gentle shadow, truth I must confess.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 1001.
- “Myself am struck in years, I must confess.”  
—Taming of the Shrew, ii, 1.
- “I must confess your offer is the best.”  
—Taming of the Shrew, ii, 1.

## I PROPHECY.

- “Since thou art dead, lo, here I prophesy.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 1135.
- “I prophesy the fearfullest time to thee.”  
—Richard III, iii, 4.
- “And here I prophesy the brawl to-day.”  
—First Henry VI, ii, 4.
- “And thus I prophesy that many thousand.”  
—Third Henry VI, i, 6.

## IDLE HOURS.

- “And vow to take advantage of all idle hours.”  
—Venus and Adonis, Ded.
- “Which waste of idle hours hath quite thrown down.”  
—Richard II, iii, 4.

## IDLE THEME.

- “And leave this idle theme, this bootless chat.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 422.
- “And this weak and idle theme.”  
—A Midsummer Night's Dream, v, 2.

## IMAGINARY.

- “All is imaginary, she doth prove.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 597.
- “The imaginary relish is so sweet.”  
—Troilus and Cressida, iii, 2.



IN DESPITE.

"Wherein she framed thee in high heaven's despite."  
 —Venus and Adonis, 721.

"Therefore, despite of fruitless chastity."  
 —Venus and Adonis, 750.

"In despite of the flesh and blood."  
 —Taming of the Shrew, Ind.

IN SPITE OF.

"And so in spite of death, thou dost survive."  
 —Venus and Adonis, 173.

"In spite of pope or dignities of church."  
 —First Henry VI, i, 3.

"In spite of us or aught that we could do."  
 —First Henry VI, i, 5.

IT CAN NOT BE.

"If he be dead, O no, it can not be."  
 —Venus and Adonis, 637.

"It can not be, it is impossible."  
 —Love's Labor's Lost, v, 2.

"It can not be, but he was murdered here."  
 —Second Henry VI, iii, 2.

"It can not be, but I am pigeon livered."  
 —Hamlet, ii, 2.

KEEP HIS REVELS.

"Love keeps his revels where there are but twain."  
 —Venus and Adonis, 123.

"The king doth keep his revels here to-night."  
 —A Midsummer Night's Dream, ii, 1.

KIND EMBRACEMENTS.

"Beating his kind embracements with her heels."  
 —Venus and Adonis, 312.

"And then with kind embracements, tempting kisses."  
 —Taming of the Shrew, Ind.

"Drew me from kind embracements of my spouse."  
 —The Comedy of Errors, i, 1.

## LIVELIHOOD.

- “The precedent of pith and livelihood.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 26.
- “Takes all livelihood from her cheek.”  
—All's Well that Ends Well, i, 1.

## LOUD ALARUMS.

- “Anon, then loud alarums he doth hear.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 700.
- “To endure her loud alarums.”  
—Taming of the Shrew, i, 1.

## LUSTY, YOUNG.

- “A breeding jennet, lusty, young and proud.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 260.
- “But lusty, young and cheerly drawing breath.”  
—King John, i, 3.

## MAKE USE.

- “Make use and time, let not advantage slip.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 129.
- “Make use and fair advantage of his days.”  
—Two Gentlemen of Verona, ii, 4.

## MAKES AMAIN.

- “Sick-thoughted Venus makes amain unto him.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 5.
- “Two ships from far making amain unto us.”  
—The Comedy of Errors, i, 1.

## MEAGRE.

- “Hard-favored tyrant, ugly, meagre, lean.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 781.
- “Of ashy semblance, meagre, pale and bloodless.”  
—Second Henry VI, iii, 2.

## MERMAID'S VOICE.

- “Thy mermaid's voice hath done me double wrong.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 429.

- "Bewitching like the wanton mermaid's song."  
 —Venus and Adonis, 777.
- "O! train me not, sweet mermaid, with thy note."  
 —The Comedy of Errors, iii, 2.
- "I'll stop mine ears against the mermaid's song."  
 —The Comedy of Errors, iii, 2.

MOIST HAND.

- "My smooth moist hand, were it with thy hand felt."  
 —Venus and Adonis, 143.
- "Give me your hand. This hand is moist, my lady."  
 —Othello, iii, 4.

NAUGHT ESTEEMS.

- "Alas, he naught esteems that face of thine."  
 —Venus and Adonis, 631.
- "And naught esteems my aged eloquence."  
 —Two Gentlemen of Verona, iii, 1.

NIGHT WANDERERS.

- "Or 'stonish'd as night wanderers often are."  
 —Venus and Adonis, 825.
- "Mislead night wanderers, laughing at their harm."  
 —A Midsummer Night's Dream, ii, 1.

NO MARVEL.

- "Therefore no marvel, though thy horse be gone."  
 —Venus and Adonis, 390.
- "Therefore no marvel, though Demetrius do."  
 —A Midsummer Night's Dream, ii, 3.

NOT GROSS TO SINK.

- "Not gross to sink, but light and will aspire."  
 —Venus and Adonis, 150.
- "Let love, being light, be drowned if she sink."  
 —The Comedy of Errors, iii, 2.

O, FAIREST MOVER.

- "O, fairest mover on this mortal round."  
 —Venus and Adonis, 368.
- "O, thou eternal mover of the heavens."  
 —Second Henry VI, iii, 3.

## O JOVE.

“O Jove, quoth she, how much a fool was I.”

—Venus and Adonis, 1015.

“Ah me, says one, O Jove, the other cries.”

—Love's Labor's Lost, iv, 3.

## OBDURATE, FLINTY.

“Art thou obdurate, flinty, hard as steel.”

—Venus and Adonis, 199.

“Thou stern, obdurate, flinty, rough, remorseless.”

—Third Henry VI, i, 4.

## OF TEEN.

“My face is full of shame, my heart of teen.”

—Venus and Adonis, 608.

“Of sighs, of groans, of sorrow and of teen.”

—Love's Labor's Lost, iv, 3.

## OLD, WRINKLED.

“Were I hard favor'd, foul or wrinkled old.”

—Venus and Adonis, 133.

“This is a man, old, wrinkled, faded, withered.”

—Taming of the Shrew, iv, 5.

## PEEVISH, SULLEN, FROWARD.

“Or like the froward infant, stilled with dandling.”

—Venus and Adonis, 562.

“No trust me, she is peevish, sullen, froward.”

—Two Gentlemen of Verona, iii, 1.

“And when she's froward, peevish, sullen, sour.”

—Taming of the Shrew, v, 2.

## PITCHY.

“So did the merciless and pitchy night.”

—Venus and Adonis, 821.

“But I will sort a pitchy day for thee.”

—Third Henry VI, i, 6.

PLUCK DOWN.

"Pluck down the rich, enrich the poor with treasure."

—Venus and Adonis, 1156.

"Ajax employed, plucks down Achilles' plume."

—Troilus and Cressida, i, 3.

PRIMROSE BANK.

"Witness this primrose bank, whereon I lie."

—Venus and Adonis, 151.

"Upon faint primrose beds, were wont to lie."

—A Midsummer Night's Dream, i, 1.

PURPLE TEARS.

"With purple tears that his wound wept, was drench'd."

—Venus and Adonis, 1054.

"O, may such purple tears be always shed."

—Third Henry VI, i, 6.

RAGING MAD.

"It shall be raging mad and silly mild."

—Venus and Adonis, 1145.

"Where from thy sight, I should be raging mad."

—Second Henry VI, iii, 2.

RECURES.

"A smile recures the wounding of a frown."

—Venus and Adonis, 465.

"Which to recure, we heartily solicit."

—Richard III, iii, 7.

SCARCITY.

"That on the earth would breed a scarcity."

—Venus and Adonis, 1150.

"Now heaven forbid such scarcity of youth."

—Troilus and Cressida, i, 3.

SEAL-MANUAL.

"Set thy seal-manual on my wax-red lips."

—Venus and Adonis, 516.

"There is my gage, the manual seal of death."

—Richard II, iv, 1.

## SET A GLOSS.

- “Set gloss on the rose, smell to the violet.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 936.
- “To set a gloss upon his bold intent.”  
—First Henry VI, iv, 1.

## SILLY LAMB.

- “And never fright the silly lamb that day.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 1098.
- “To shepherds looking on their silly sheep.”  
—Third Henry VI, ii, 5.

## SPEND THEIR MOUTHS.

- “Then do they spend their mouths: Echo replies.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 695.
- “For coward dogs  
Must spend their mouths when what they seem to  
threaten.”  
—Henry V, ii, 4.

## STAIN TO.

- “Stain to all nymphs, more lovely than a man.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 9.
- “Stain to thy countrymen, thou hear’st thy doom.”  
—Henry VIII, iv, 1.

## STRIKE DUMB.

- “Strike the wise dumb and teach the fool to speak.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 1146.
- “Deep shame hath struck me dumb.”  
—King John, iv, 2.

## SUCH-LIKE.

- “In such-like circumstance with such-like sport.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 844.
- “And I, for such-like petty crimes as these.”  
—Two Gentlemen of Verona, iv, 1.
- “Youth, liberality, and such like.”  
—Troilus and Cressida, 1, 2.

"And even with such-like valor."

—The Tempest, iii, 3.

"These as I learn and such-like toys as these."

—Richard III, i, 1.

"And many such like."

—Hamlet, v, 2.

SUFFERED.

"Else suffered, it will set the heart on fire."

—Venus and Adonis, 388.

"Which being suffered, rivers can not quench."

—Third Henry VI, iv, 8.

SUSPECT (as a noun).

"Her rash suspect, she doth extenuate."

—Venus and Adonis, 1106.

"He lived from all attainder of suspect."

—Richard III, iii, 5.

"And draw within the compass of suspect."

—The Comedy of Errors, iii, 1.

SWEATING PALM.

"With this, she seizeth on his sweating palm."

—Venus and Adonis, 25.

"Nay, if an oily palm be not a fruitful prognostication."

—Antony and Cleopatra, i, 2.

SWEET BOY.

"Sweet boy, she says, this night I'll waste in sorrow."

—Venus and Adonis, 583.

"And kneel, sweet boy, the Roman Hector's hope."

—Titus Andronicus, iv, 1.

"My heart, sweet boy, shall be thy sepulchre."

—Third Henry VI, ii, 5.

TAKE TRUCE.

"Till he take truce with her contending tears."

—Venus and Adonis, 82.

"Could not take truce with the unruly spleen."

—Romeo and Juliet, ii, 1.

## TENDER HORNS.

- “Or, as the snail, whose tender horns being hit.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 1033.
- “Than are the tender horns of cockled snails.”  
—Love's Labor's Lost, iv, 3.

## THE VERY LIST.

- “Now is she in the very lists of love.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 595.
- “The very list, the utmost bound.”  
—First Henry IV, iv, 1.

## THROBBING HEART.

- “My throbbing heart shall rock thee, day and night.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 1186.
- “Here may his head lie on my throbbing breast.”  
—Second Henry VI, iv, 4.

## TIMOROUS YELPING.

- “Even so the timorous yelping of the hounds.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 881.
- “A little herd of England's timorous deer  
Mazed with a yelping kennel of French curs.”  
—First Henry VI, iv, 2.

## TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF.

- “And vow to take advantage of all idle hours.”  
—Venus and Adonis, Ded.
- “Take all the swift advantage of the hours.”  
—Richard III, iv, 1.
- “Speed thou to take advantage of the field.”  
—King John, ii, 1.

## TO THE DISPOSING OF.

- “To the disposing of her troubled brain.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 1040.
- “To the disposing of the Cardinal.”  
—King John, v, 7.



TREMBLING ECSTASY.

- “Thus stands she in a trembling ecstasy.”  
 —Venus and Adonis, 895.  
 “Mark how he trembles in his ecstasy.”  
 —The Comedy of Errors, iv, 4.

TREMBLING JOINTS.

- “I fear'd thy fortune, and my joints did tremble.”  
 —Venus and Adonis, 642.  
 “A chilling sweat o'erruns my trembling joints.”  
 —Titus Andronicus, ii, 3.

TRODDEN ON.

- “For misery is trodden on by many.”  
 —Venus and Adonis, 707.  
 “For though the camomile, the more it is trodden on.”  
 —First Henry IV, ii, 4.  
 “The smallest worm will turn, being trodden on.”  
 —Third Henry VI, ii, 2.  
 “Where stained nobility is trodden on.”  
 —First Henry IV, v, 4.

TRUE MEN THIEVES.

- “Rich preys make true men thieves: so do thy lips.”  
 —Venus and Adonis, 724.  
 “The thieves have bound the true men.”  
 —First Henry IV, ii, 3.

TWENTY THOUSAND.

- “If love have lent you twenty thousand tongues.”  
 —Venus and Adonis, 775.  
 “And in possession, twenty thousand crowns.”  
 —Taming of the Shrew, ii, 1.  
 “Unto their losses, twenty thousand crowns.”  
 —Taming of the Shrew, v, 2.

TWENTY TIMES.

- “And twenty echoes, twenty times cry so.”  
 —Venus and Adonis, 834.

- “But twenty times so much upon my wife.”  
—*Taming of the Shrew*, v, 2.
- “Not once or twice, but twenty times you have.”  
—*The Comedy of Errors*, iii, 2.

## UNAPT TO.

- “With leaden appetite, unapt to toy.”  
—*Venus and Adonis*, 34.
- “I am a soldier, and unapt to weep.”  
—*First Henry VI*, v, 3.
- “Unapt to toil and trouble in the world.”  
—*The Comedy of Errors*, iii, 2.

## UNTREAD AGAIN.

- “She treads the path that she untreads again.”  
—*Venus and Adonis*, 908.
- “Where is the horse that doth untread again.”  
—*The Merchant of Venice*, ii, 6.

## VARIABLE PASSIONS.

- “Variable passions throug her constant woe.”  
—*Venus and Adonis*, 967.
- “I never heard a passion so confus'd, so strange, outrageous, and so variable.”  
—*The Merchant of Venice*, ii, 8.

## WAX (reference to).

- “And yields at last to every light impression.”  
—*Venus and Adonis*, 566.
- “Bears no impression of the thing it was.”  
—*Two Gentlemen of Verona*, ii, 4.

## WAYWARD BOY.

- “How she came stealing to the wayward boy.”  
—*Venus and Adonis*, 344.
- “This whimpled, whining, purblind wayward boy.”  
—*Love's Labor's Lost*, iii, 1.

## WEAL OR WOE.

- “Thy weal and woe are both of them extremes.”  
—*Venus and Adonis*, 987.

“And will be partner of your weal or woe.”  
—First Henry VI, iii, 2.

“Brief sounds determine of my weal or woe.”  
—Romeo and Juliet, iii, 2.

WHOSE HOLLOW WOMB.

“Whose hollow womb resounds like heaven’s thunder.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 268.

“Whose hollow womb inherits naught but bones.”  
—Richard II, ii, 1.

WITHIN HIS DANGER.

“Come not within his danger by thy will.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 639.

“You stand within his danger, do you not?”  
—Twelfth Night, v, 1.

WITNESS THIS.

“Witness this primrose bank, whereon I lie.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 151.

“Witness this army of such mass and charge.”  
—Hamlet, iv, 4.

WORSE AND WORSE.

“Your treatise makes me like you worse and worse.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 774.

“Worse and worse, she will not come, O, vile.”  
—Taming of the Shrew, v, 2.

“Worse and worse.”  
—Othello, ii, 1.

“I pray you, speak not, he grows worse and worse.”  
—Macbeth, iii, 4.

WRINGS HER BY THE NOSE.

“He wrings her by the nose, he strikes her on the  
cheek.”  
—Venus and Adonis, 481.

“Rear up his body, wring him by the nose.”  
—Second Henry VI, iii, 2.

The striking resemblances above set out are chiefly found in the plays which Meres, in his "Palladis Tamia" thus mentions:

"As Plautus and Seneca are accounted the best for comedy and tragedy among the Latins, so Shakespeare among the English is the most excellent in both kinds for the stage.

"For comedy, witness his Gentlemen of Verona, his Errors, his Love's Labor's Lost, his Love's Labor's Won, his Midsummer Night's Dream, and his Merchant of Venice. For tragedy, his Richard the 2, Richard the 3, Henry the 4, King John, Titus Andronicus, and his Romeo and Juliet."

All these plays had, therefore, been written before 1598, for this book of Meres was published in the summer of that year. We know from Henslowe's Diary that Titus Andronicus was acted on the stage as early as January 28, 1594; and Love's Labor's Lost, called "Beronne" and "Burbon" by the ignorant Henslowe, from Biron, one of the principal characters, was put upon the stage on November 2, 1597.

I feel that every reader will coincide with me in the belief, virtually amounting to a certainty, that the poem of Venus and Adonis was written entirely by one person, and that that person was the author, in part at least, of the plays attributed to Shaksper, quotations from which are set out in this chapter.

The following are peculiar and noteworthy words: "Aidance, clepes, cleped, clepeth, disjoined, enchanting, eyne, manage (as a noun), needs't, petitioners, proceedings, quoth (used seventeen times), repine (as a noun), and whereat (used seven times)."

I am well aware that the collocation of phrases in this chapter will not interest the general reader, but it may be of some little value to the student of English literature who is seeking for the true Shakespeare. I am only striving to give facts in aid of the search for the truth, coupled with my own opinion based upon those facts, and I leave the reader free to use the facts either for the purpose of forming his own opinion or of gathering more facts to enable him ultimately to reach a right conclusion. In trying to reach a conclusion he might be disturbed by the thought that perhaps the writers of that era may have borrowed from the Venus and Adonis phrases. Such may have been the case as to some of them, but the many striking resemblances in phrase and words between the Venus and Adonis and the plays lead the disinterested student to the conviction that such similarity was not the work of mere imitators.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### FRANCIS BACON CONSIDERED.

*“Such a one is a natural philosopher.”*

As You Like It, iii, 2.

The question as to the authorship of the *Venus and Adonis* is narrowed down in my opinion to three men, Francis Bacon, Thomas Dekker, and Michael Drayton. Were these men worthy of such authorship?

Before further examination and decision on the merits, I will briefly consider and state the poetical history of each, in the order above stated.

Francis Bacon was born on the 22d day of January, 1561, and died on the 9th day of April, 1626. In a letter to Sir John Davies, he speaks of himself as a concealed poet. Spedding, his best biographer, says that Bacon had all the natural faculties which a poet wants—a fine ear for metre, a fine feeling for imaginative effect in words, and a vein of poetic passion.

Taine, in his “History of English Literature,” thus describes him: “In this band of scholars, dreamers, and inquirers, appears the most comprehensive, sensible, originative of the minds of the age, Francis Bacon, a great and luminous intellect, one of the finest of this poetic progeny, who, like his predecessors, was naturally disposed to clothe his ideas in the most splendid dress; in this age, a thought did not seem complete until it had assumed form and color. But what distinguishes him from all others is, that with him an image only serves to concentrate meditation. He reflected long, stamped on his mind all the parts and rela-

tions of his subject; he is master of it, and then, instead of exposing this complete idea in a graduated chain of reasoning, he embodies it in a comparison so expressive, exact, lucid, that behind the figure we perceive all the details of the idea, like liquor in a fine crystal vase." Again he says, "He is a producer of conceptions and of sentences. The matter being explored, he says to us, 'Such it is; touch it not on that side; it must be approached from the other.' Nothing more; no proof, no effort to convince; he affirms and does nothing more; he has thought in the manner of artists and poets, and he speaks after the manner of prophets and seers."

On the 28th of February, 1587-8, a tragedy called "The Misfortunes of Arthur" and certain dumb-shows in which Bacon assisted were presented before the Queen at Greenwich. The dumb-shows and additional speeches were prepared by Bacon and others.

In the year 1595, Bacon composed a device called "The Conference of Pleasure" for his friend Essex, which was presented before Queen Elizabeth on November 17, 1595, the anniversary of the accession of the Queen. This device is printed in the letters and memorials of state of the Sidney family, and consisted in part of a dumb-show. Four characters are introduced, an old Hermit, a Secretary of State, a brave Soldier, and an Esquire. The Esquire presents them each in turn to her Majesty. The Hermit recommends the gift of the Muses. I will give an extract from each to show Bacon's style. The Hermit, *inter alia*, says:

"Whether he believe me or no, there is no prison to the thoughts, which are free under the greatest tyrants. Shall any man make his conceit as an anchorite, mured

up with the compass of one beauty or person, that may have the liberty of all contemplation? Shall he exchange the sweet travelling through the universal variety for one wearisome and endless round or labyrinth? Let thy master offer his services to the Muses. It is long since they received any into their court. They give alms continually at their gate; but few they have ever admitted into their palace. There shall he find secrets not dangerous to know; sides and parties not factious to hold; precepts and commandments not penal to disobey. The gardens of love, wherein he now placeth himself, are fresh to-day and fading to-morrow, as the sun comports them or is turned from them. But the gardens of the Muses keep the privileges of the golden age: they ever flourish and are in league with time. The monuments of wit survive the monuments of power. The verses of a poet endure without a syllable lost, while States and Empires pass many periods. Let him not think that he shall descend; for he is now upon a hill as a ship is mounted upon the ridge of a wave, but that hill of the Muses is above tempests, always clear and calm; a hill of the goodliest discovery that man can have, being a prospect upon all the errors and wanderings of the present and former times."

The Soldier, in his turn, recommends the profession of arms.

"Then for the dignity of the military profession," he says, "is it not the truest and perfectest practice of all virtues? of wisdom in disposing those things, which are most subject to confusion and accident; of justice in continually distributing rewards; of temperance in exercising of the straitest discipline; of fortitude in toleration of all labors and abstinence from effeminate delights; of con-



stancy, in bearing and digesting the greatest variety of fortune. So that when all other places and professions require but their several virtues, a brave leader in the wars must be accomplished in all. It is the wars that are the tribunal seat, where the highest rights and possessions are decided; the occupation of kings, the root of nobility, the protection of all estates."

In advocacy of statesmanship, the Statesman, in part, says:

"But what is thy master's end? If to make the prince happy he serves, let the instructions to employ men, the relations of ambassadors, the treaties between princes, and actions of the present time, be the books he reads; let the orations of wise princes or experimented counsellors in council or parliament, and the final sentences of grave and learned judges, in weighty and doubtful causes, be the lecturers he frequents. Let the holding of affection of confederates without charge, the frustrating of the attempts of enemies without battles, the entitling of the crown to new possessions without show of wrong, the filling of the prince's coffers without violence, the keeping of men in appetite without impatience, be the inventions he seeks out. Let policy and matters of state be the chief, and almost the only thing he intends."

In summing up, the Esquire replies, in part, as follows:

"Attend, you beadsman of the Muses, you take your pleasure in a wilderness of variety; but it is but of shadows. You are as a man rich in pictures, medals, and crystals. Your mind is of the water, which taketh all forms and impressions, but is weak of substance. Will you compare shadows with bodies, pictures with life, variety of many beauties with the peerless excellency of one, the

element of water with the element of fire? And such is the comparison between knowledge and love.

“Come out, man of war, you must be ever in noise. You will give laws, and advance force, and trouble nations, and remove landmarks of kingdoms, and hunt men, and pen tragedies in blood; and that which is worst of all, make all the virtues accessories to bloodshed. Hath the practice of force so deprived you of the use of reason, as that you will compare the interruption of society with the perfection of society? the conquest of bodies with the conquest of spirits? the terrestrial fire, which destroyeth and dissolveth, with the celestial fire, which quickeneth and giveth life?

“As for the Muses, they are tributary to her Majesty for the great liberties they have enjoyed in her kingdom during her most flourishing reign; in thankfulness whereof, they have adorned and accomplished her Majesty with the gifts of all the sisters. What library can present such a story of great actions, as her Majesty carrieth in her royal breast by the often return of this happy day? What worthy author or favorite of the Muses is not familiar with her? Or what language wherein the Muses have used to speak is unknown to her?”

In 1594 he took a chief part in the preparation of the Christmas revels at Gray's Inn for the purpose of entertaining the Queen and her courtiers and assisting in recovering the lost honor of Gray's Inn, which had suffered from the miscarriage of a Christmas revel. It appears from a letter found among Lord Burghley's papers that Bacon wrote, in substance, that he was sorry that the joint masque from the Four Inns of Court had failed; but that a dozen gentlemen of Gray's Inn were ready to furnish a

masque. An account of these revels, entitled "Gesta Grayorum" was printed in 1688.

Again he produced another device for Essex to be presented before the Queen. This was called "The Masque of the Indian Prince, or the Darling Piece of Love and Self-love." In this piece two wanderers are introduced. One of them is a young Indian Prince, who was born blind, and the other wanderer is his conductor or guide. The third speaker is the Squire, who appears also in the Essex masque.

There is nothing very different either in style or story in this last from the Essex masque, and the same Latin quotation is used in both, "*Amare et sapere.*"

The following extract will remind the reader of the laudations of the Virgin Queen in the Midsummer Night's Dream: "And at last, this present year, out of one of the holiest vaults, was delivered to him an oracle in these words:

"Seated between the old world and the new,  
 A land there is no other land may touch,  
 Where reigns a Queen in peace and honor true;  
 Stories or fables do describe no such,  
 Never did Atlas such a burden bear,  
 As she in holding up the world oppress't,  
 Supplying with her virtue everywhere  
 Weakness of friends, errors of servants best.  
 No nation breeds a warmer blood for war,  
 And yet she calms them by her majesty;  
 No age hath ever wits refined so far,  
 And yet she calms them by her policy;  
 To her thy son must make his sacrifice.  
 If he will have the morning of his eyes.

"This oracle hath been our direction hitherto and the cause of our wearisome pilgrimage. We do humbly

beseech your Majesty that we make experience whether we be at the end of our journey or not."

Bacon assisted in furnishing a Masque which was designed to celebrate the marriage of the Princess Elizabeth to the Count Palatine; and Chamberlain, writing on the 18th of February, 1612-3, in noticing the masque, speaks of Bacon as its chief contriver.

Of his translation of certain of the Psalms into English verse, I will give a few extracts to show his style. The first is from the ninetieth Psalm:

"O, thou who art our hope, to whom we fly,  
 And so hast always been from age to age,  
 Before the hills did intercept the sky,  
 Or that the frame was up of earthly stage.  
 One God thou wert and art and still shall be:  
 The line of life, it doth not measure thee.

Both death and life obey thy holy love,  
 And visit in their turns, as they are sent.  
 A thousand years with thee, they are no more  
 Than yesterday, which ere it is, is spent,  
 Or as a watch by night, that course doth keep,  
 And goes and comes unwares to them that sleep.

Thou carry'st man away as with a tide;  
 Then down swim all his thoughts that mounted high;  
 Much like a mocking dream that will not bide,  
 But flies before the sight of waking eye,  
 Or as the grass that cannot term obtain  
 To see the summer come about again.

Teach us, O Lord, to number well our days,  
 Thereby our hearts to wisdom to apply;  
 For that which guides man best in all his ways  
 Is meditation of mortality.

This bubble life, this vapor of our breath,  
 Teach us to consecrate to hour of death."

The second is a short extract from the translation of the 104th Psalm:

“The clouds as chariots swift do scour the sky;  
 The stormy winds upon their wings do fly;  
 His angels spirits are that wait his will  
 As flames of fire, his anger they fulfill.  
 The higher grounds where waters cannot rise,  
 By rain and dews are watered from the skies,  
 Causing the earth put forth the grass for beasts  
 And garden herbs served at the greatest feasts.  
 And bread that is all viands firmament  
 And gives a firm and solid nourishment,  
 And wine, man’s spirit for to recreate,  
 And oil, his face for to exhilarate.”

In the latter part of his life, Bacon wrote a short poem, which I insert in its entirety:

“The world’s a bubble, and the life of man  
 Less than a span;  
 In his conception wretched, from the womb  
 So to the tomb;  
 Cursed from his cradle and brought up to years  
 With cares and fears:  
 Who, then, to frail mortality shall trust,  
 But limns the water, or but writes in dust.

Yet, whilst with sorrow here we live opprest,  
 What life is best?  
 Courts are but only superficial schools,  
 To dandle fools;  
 The rural parts are turned into a den  
 Of savage men;  
 And where’s the city from foul vice so free  
 But may be termed the worst of all the three?

Domestic cares afflict the husband's bed,  
 Or pains his head.  
 Those that live single take it for a curse,  
 Or do things worse.  
 Some would have children; those that have them moan  
 Or wish them gone.  
 What is it, then, to have or have no wife,  
 But single thralldom or a double strife?

Our own affections still at home to please  
 Is a disease:  
 To cross the seas to any foreign soil,  
 Perils and toil.  
 Wars with the r noise affright us; when they cease,  
 We're worse in peace.  
 What then remains, but that we still should cry  
 Not to be born, or, being born, to die?"

I cite a few more short examples of his style in prose. In the description of Solomon's House in the fragmentary *New Atlantis*, written nearly three centuries ago, Bacon, prophet-like, describes improvements and conveniences, such as we now have. Thus, for instance, he causes the father of Solomon's House to say:

"We have also engine houses, where are prepared engines and instruments of all sorts of motions. There we imitate and practice to make swifter motions than any you have, either out of your muskets, or any engine that you have; and to make them, and multiply them more easily, and with small force, by wheels and other means: and to make them stronger, and more violent than yours are; exceeding your greatest cannons and basilisks. We represent also ordnance and instruments of war, and engines of all kinds: and likewise new mixtures and compositions of gunpowder, wild-fires burning in water and

unquenchable. Also fire-works of all variety both for pleasure and for use. We imitate also flights of birds; we have some degrees of flying in the air; we have ships and boats for going under the water, and brooking of seas; also swimming-girdles and supporters. We have divers curious clocks, and other like motions of return, and some perpetual motions. We imitate also motions of living creatures, by images of men, beasts, birds, fishes and serpents; we have also a great number of other various motions, strange for equality, fineness and subtilty."

Then follows Bacon's tribute to inventors. He seemed to have realized the fact, so well known to the mass of the people, especially in the United States, that the inventor, as a general rule, is not the pecuniary gainer by his invention, no matter how useful the device may be, and therefore in the following lines he proposes statues and liberal rewards for inventors:

"For our ordinances and rites: we have two very long and fair galleries: in one of these we place patterns and samples of all manner of the more rare and excellent inventions: in the other we place the statues of all principal inventors. There we have the statue of your Columbus, that discovered the West Indies: also the inventor of ships: your monk that was the inventor of ordnance, and of gunpowder: the inventor of music: the inventor of letters: the inventor of printing: the inventor of observations of astronomy: the inventor of works in metal: the inventor of glass: the inventor of silk of the worm: the inventor of wine: the inventor of corn and bread: the inventor of sugars: and all these by more certain tradition than you have. Then have we divers inventors of our own

of excellent works; which since you have not seen, it were too long to make descriptions of them; and besides, in the right understanding of those descriptions, you might easily err. For upon every invention of value we erect a statue to the inventor, and give him a liberal and honourable reward. These statues are, some of brass: some of marble and touch-stone; some of cedar, and other special woods gilt and adorned: some of iron; some of silver; some of gold."

But there is one statement of Bacon in his address on the Unity of the Church, which ought to be read and studied by every reader very carefully. Bacon plants himself in his enumeration of the considerations for the edification and pacification of the Church upon the authority of St. Paul, who, in his epistle to the Ephesians, declared himself to be "an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus."

This Apostle declared that unity was to be kept by having one Lord, one faith and one baptism, and Bacon's strong and really unanswerable proposition on church unity is that the particular form of Church Government, by reason of its omission from the Apostle's definition, is therefore neither essential nor possible. Thus, he says, "there should be but one form of discipline in all churches, and that imposed by necessity of a commandment and prescript out of the word of God; it is a matter volumes have been compiled of, and therefore can not receive a brief redarguation. I for my part do confess, that in revolving the Scriptures I could never find any such thing: but that God had left the like liberty to the church government, as he had done to the civil government; to be varied according to time, and place, and accidents, which



nevertheless his high and divine providence doth order and dispose. For all civil governments are restrained from God under the general grounds of justice and manners; but the policies and forms of them are left free; so that monarchies and kingdoms, senates and seignories, popular states and commonalties, are lawful, and where they are planted ought to be maintained inviolate.

“So likewise in church matters, the substance of doctrine is immutable, and so are the general rules of government: but for rites and ceremonies, and for the particular hierarchies, policies, and disciplines of churches, they be left at large. And therefore it is good we return unto the ancient bounds of unity in the church of God; which was, one faith, one baptism; and not, one hierarchy, one discipline; and that we observe the league of Christians, as it is penned by our Saviour; which is in substance of doctrine this: *He that is not with us, is against us*; but in things indifferent, and but of circumstance, this: *He that is not against us, is with us*. In these things, so as the general rules be observed: that Christ’s flock be fed; that there be a succession in bishops and ministers, which are the prophets of the New Testament; that there be a due and reverent use of the power of the keys; that those that preach the gospel, live of the gospel; that all things tend to edification; that all things be done in order and with decency, and the like: the rest is left to the holy wisdom and spiritual discretion of the master builders and inferior builders in Christ’s church; as it is excellently alluded by that father that noted, that Christ’s garment was without seam; and yet the church’s garment was of divers colours: and thereupon setteth down for a rule, *in veste varietas sit, scissura non sit.*”

There are three very good descriptions of Bacon's powers and ability, which are taken from contemporary writers.

Ben Jonson thus eulogizes him:

"Yet there happened in my time one noble speaker, who was full of gravity in his speaking. His language, where he could spare, or pass by a jest, was nobly censorious. No man ever spoke more neatly, more precisely, more weightily, or suffered less emptiness, less idleness, in what he uttered. No member of his speech but consisted of his own graces. His hearers could not cough or look aside from him without loss. He commanded when he spoke, and had his judges angry and pleased at his discretion. No man had their affections more in his power. The fear of every man who heard him was, lest he should make an end.

"Cicero is said to be the only wit that the people of Rome had equalled to their empire. *Ingenium par imperio*. We have had many, and in their several ages (to take in but the former *seculum*) Sir Thomas More, the elder Wiat, Henry earl of Surrey, Chaloner, Smith, Eliot, B. Gardiner, were for their times admirable; and the more because they began eloquence with us. Sir Nic. Bacon was singular, and almost alone, in the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's time. Sir Philip Sidney and Mr. Hooker (in different matter) grew great masters of wit and language, and in whom all vigour of invention and strength of judgment met. The earl of Essex, noble and high, and Sir Walter Raleigh, not to be contemned, either for judgment or style. Sir Henry Saville, grave and truly lettered; Sir Edwin Sandys, excellent in both; Lord Egerton, a grave and great orator, and best when he was provoked. *But*

*his learned and able (but unfortunate) successor is he, that hath filled up all numbers, and performed that in our tongue, which may be compared and preferred either to insolent Greece or haughty Rome.* In short, within his view, and about his times, were all the wits born, that could honor a language, or help study. Now things daily fall: wits grow downward, and eloquence grows backward: so that he may be named, and stand as the mark and acme of our language."

Sir Tobie Matthew calls him a literary monster. In his Address to the Reader, appended to his collection of letters, he says:

"We have also rare compositions of minds amongst us, which look so many fair ways at once that I doubt it will go near to pose any other nation of Europe to muster out in any age four men who, in so many respects, should excel four such as we are able to show—Cardinal Wolsey, Sir Thomas More, Sir Philip Sidney, and Sir Francis Bacon; for they were all a kind of monsters in their several ways.

"The fourth was a creature of incomparable abilities of mind, of a sharp and catching apprehension, large and faithful memory, plentiful and sprouting invention, deep and solid judgment for as much as might concern the understanding part:—a man so rare in knowledge, of so many several kinds, indued with the facility and felicity of expressing it all, in so elegant, significant, so abundant and yet so choice and ravishing a way of words, of metaphors, and allusions, as perhaps the world has not seen since it was a world.

"I know this may seem a great hyperbole and strange kind of riotous excess of speech; but the best means of

putting me to shame will be for you to place any man of yours by this of mine. And, in the meantime, even this little makes a shift to show that the Genius of England is still not only eminent, but predominant, for the assembling great variety of those rare parts, in some single man, which used to be incompatible anywhere else."

Osborne, a contemporary, has this to say of his ability:

"And my memory neither doth (nor I believe possibly ever can) direct me to an example more splendid in this kind than the Lord Bacon, Earl of St. Albans, who in all companies did appear a good proficient, if not a master, in those arts entertained for the subject of every one's discourse. So as I dare maintain, without the least affectation of flattery or hyperbole, that his most casual talk deserveth to be written, as I have been told his first or foulest copies required no great labour to render them competent for the nicest judgments: high perfection attainable only by use and treating with every man in his respective profession, and which he was most versed in.

"So as I have heard him entertain a country lord in the proper terms relating to hawks and dogs, and at another time outcant a London chirurgeon. Thus he did not only learn himself, but gratify such as taught him, who looked upon their calling as honoured by his notice. Nor did an easy falling into arguments (not unjustly taken for a blemish in the most) appear less than an ornament in him; the ears of his hearers receiving more gratification than trouble; and no less sorry when he came to conclude, than displeased with any that did interrupt him. Now, the general knowledge he had in all things, husbanded by his wit and dignified with so majestical a carriage he was known to own, struck such an awful reverence in those he

questioned, that they durst not conceal the most intrinsic part of their mysteries from him, for fear of appearing ignorant or saucy. All which rendered him no less necessary than admirable at the council-table, when in reference to impositions, monopolies, etc., the meanest manufacturers were an usual argument; and, as I have heard, he did in this baffle the Earl of Middlesex, who was born and bred a citizen, etc. Yet, without any great (if at all) interrupting his abler studies, as is not hard to be imagined of a quick apprehension, in which he was admirable."

In considering Francis Bacon, the reader and I are not concerned about his character or conduct or the incidents of his life, except as they bear upon the present investigation. It is not necessary for us to draw his frailties from their dread abode. Whether he was false to Essex or subservient to Buckingham, or guilty of accepting bribes without any palliating circumstances, concerns us not in this investigation. Was he a poet and a good one and was he, as he himself declares, a concealed poet? Was he an adept in philosophy? Was he a ready writer? Did he have all knowledge for his province? Had he the time, the inclination and the ability to compose or revise, amplify and embellish such plays as Hamlet, Othello, and Measure for Measure? One thing we do know about him that bears directly upon the subject-matter of our inquiry, and that is that he declared and implicitly believed that "the gardens of the Muses keep the privileges of the golden age; they ever flourish and are in league with time. The monuments of wit survive the monuments of power. The verses of a poet endure without a syllable lost, while States and Empires pass many periods."

## CHAPTER XXVI.

THOMAS DEKKER CONSIDERED.

*“Much is the force of heaven-bred poesy.”*

—Two Gentlemen of Verona, iii, 2.

Very little is known of Thomas Dekker by the reading public, and yet he was one of the best poets of the Elizabethan period. If what I have written or shall write about him will be the means of inducing students of English literature to closely investigate the facts as to his life, especially in connection with the contemporary poets and dramatists, much of the fog which has hitherto enveloped the question of Shakespearean authorship would be dispelled. No careful search has ever been made to obtain the facts as to Dekker's birth, parentage, family history and surroundings, or the time and place of his death.

His birthplace doubtless was London, because, in a book written by him, called “The Seven Deadly Sins of London,” and printed in 1606, speaking of the city of London, he says, “O, thou beautifullest daughter of the two united Monarchies! from thy womb received I my being; from thy breast, my nourishment.”

The term of his life probably extended over seventy years, because in the dedication of another book of his, entitled “English Villainies, seven several times pressed to death,” and dated in February, 1637, he says, “I preach without a pulpit: This is no sermon, but an epistle dedicatory which dedicates these discoveries, and my three-score years devotedly yours in my best service.”

In another book called “Wars, wars, wars,” issued in

1628, he writes, "For my heart danceth sprightly when I see (old as I am) our English gallantry."

There is another allusion to his age in the dedication affixed to his tragi-comedy called "Match Me in London," printed in 1631. Therein he says, "I have been a priest in Apollo's temple many years; my voice is decaying with my age, yet yours being clear and above mine shall much honor me if you but listen to my old tunes."

He is first directly mentioned in Henslowe's Diary on page 117, under the name of "Dickers," on the eighth day of January, 1597, as appears by the following entry: "Lent unto thomas Douton, the 8 of Janewary 1597 twenty shilliges to by a booke of Mr Dickers Lent XX s." What the name of the play was is not specified. On the next page are the following entries: "Lent unto the Company the 15 of Janewary 1597 to bye a book of Mr Dickers called Fayeton fower pounce. I say lent." The next entry on the same page shows that poor Dekker was in trouble, having been imprisoned in jail for debt. Henslowe, on page 118, records the following: "Lent unto the Company the 4 of febreary 1598 to discharge Mr Dicker out of the counter of the poultrely the some of fortie shilliges.

"I sayed, d to Thomas Douton xxx s."

As a matter of fact, before 1597 he had written for the theatres, and his productions were received with much favor.

The pleasant comedy of old Fortunatus must have been written by Dekker prior to or in the early part of the year 1595, for Henslowe, in his Diary, at page 64, makes the following entry: "16 of Febreary 1595 Rd at Fortunatus xxx s." It was a popular and paying play. The entries

in the Diary show that it was frequently acted and at good prices. In 1600 it was printed, the title page says, "As it was played before the Queen's Majesty this Christmas by the Right Honorable the Earl of Nottingham, Lord High Admiral of England, his servants."

The Queen must have been greatly pleased with the flattering language of Dekker's prologue. It is headed, "The prologue at Court; enter two old men," and it begins thus:

"1. Are you then traveling to the temple of Eliza?

"2. Even to her temple are my feeble limbs traveling: Some call her Pandora; some, Gloriana; some, Delphoebe; some, Astrea; all by several names to express several loves. Yet all these names make but one celestial body, as all those loves meet to create but one soul.

"1. I am one of her own Country and we adore her by the name of Eliza.

"2. Blessed name, happy country; your Eliza makes your land Elysium."

Henslowe shows, at page 161, that he paid to Dekker on December 12, 1599, the sum of forty shillings for making the "ending" or addition to *Fortunatus* for the Court. This reference is to the epilogue at Court at the end of the play, which is a direct and beautiful compliment to the Queen.

Including *Fortunatus*, I will enumerate fifty-two plays composed wholly or in part by Dekker. On January 8, 1597, he sold a play to Henslowe called *Phaeton*; on December 20th of the same year, he wrote additions to Marlowe's play of *Faustus*, and a prologue to *Tamerlane*. This is evidenced by Henslowe's entry at page 71 of the Diary. On March 1, 1598, he wrote the *Triplicity* of



Cuckolds. On March 13, 1598, he collaborated with Drayton and Chettle in the composition of the Famous Wars of Henry First, and the Prince of Wales. On March 25, 1598, with Drayton, Chettle, and Wilson, he wrote Earl Goodwin and his Three Sons; on March 30, 1598, in collaboration with Drayton, Wilson, and Chettle, he wrote Pierce of Exton, as Henslowe calls it. Collier notes, at page 121 of the Diary, that "Sir Piers of Exton killed Richard the Second, and this play was most likely connected with that historical incident."

If Shaksper did not have the ability to write the play of Richard II, why may it not be the joint work of Michael Drayton, Thomas Dekker, Henry Chettle, and Robert Wilson, who were thoroughly competent to compose it?

On May 22, 1598, with Wilson and Drayton, he wrote the Black Batman of the North. On June 10, 1598, with Wilson, Drayton, and Chettle, he wrote the second part of Earl Goodwin, and on June 30th of the same year he wrote Madman's Morris in conjunction with Wilson and Drayton. On July 17, 1598, he wrote Hannibal and Hermes; and on July 18th, Pierce of Winchester, each with the same collaborators. On August 19, 1598, he wrote Chance Medley with Wilson, Monday, and Chettle. On August 30, 1598, he and Drayton wrote Worse Afraid than Hurt, and on September 29, 1598, they wrote together the First Civil Wars in France. On November 3, 1598, they wrote the second part of the same play; and on the 18th of the same month, they composed the third part thereof. On February 15, 1599, he wrote, with John Day and William Haughton, the Spanish Moor's Tragedy; and on March 1, 1599, he furnished the Seven Wise Masters, in collabora-

tion with Chettle, John Day, and William Haughton. On April 7, 1599, Chettle and he began the play of *Troilus and Cressida*, receiving pay for it on the 17th of the same month; and on May 2, 1599, he wrote *Orestes Furies*. Again collaborating with Chettle, on May 26, 1599, he wrote the tragedy of *Agamemnon*. On July 15, 1599, he composed the fine play of the *Shoemakers' Holiday*, or the *Gentle Craft*, which was acted before the Queen on the succeeding New Year's Day by the Earl of Nottingham's servants. The edition of 1600 contains the prologue as it was pronounced before the Queen. On August 1, 1599, he wrote the play of *Bear a Brain*. With Ben Jonson as collaborator, on August 10, 1599, he wrote *Page of Plymouth*; and on August 23, 1599, with Henry Chettle, *The Stepmother's Tragedy*. Henslowe notes, at page 156 of the Diary, that he paid Dekker, Benjamin Jonson, Henry Chettle "and the other gentlemen" forty shillings for a play called *Robert the Second, King of Scots* tragedy. The play of *Sir John Oldecastle*, published as if by William Shakespeare, was the work of Monday, Drayton, Wilson, Hathaway, with additions by Thomas Dekker, for which additions Dekker received fifty shillings. The much-esteemed play of *Patient Grissel* was produced by him on October 16, 1599, in collaboration with Henry Chettle and William Haughton. On April 27, 1600, with John Day and Henry Chettle, he wrote the *Golden Ass* and *Cupid and Psyche*; and on June 14, 1600, he composed *Fair Constance of Rome*, in conjunction with Michael Drayton, Richard Hathaway, and Anthony Monday. On October 15, 1600, he wrote *Lady Jane*, in collaboration with Thomas Heywood, Wentworth Smyth, John Webster, and Henry Chettle. On January 16, 1601, he wrote the prologue

and epilogue for Pontius Pilate; and on the same day he was paid by Henslowe "for the altering of Tasso." On April 18, 1601, with Henry Chettle, he wrote King Sebastian of Portugal. On May 14, 1602, with Anthony Monday, he wrote Jephtha for Henslowe's Company, or, as the Diary spells it, "Jeffta." On May 29, 1602, he wrote the Two Harpies jointly with Michael Drayton, Thomas Middleton, John Webster, and Anthony Monday. On July 19, 1602, he wrote a play called Medicine for a Curst Wife; and about the same time he revised the play of Tasso, or "mended it" as Henslowe expresses it. On October 15, 1602, he wrote the second part of Lady Jane. On November 3, 1602, with the aid of Thomas Middleton, he wrote the Honest Whore, and on November 23, 1602, with Henry Chettle, he wrote the play of Christmas Comes but Once a Year. In 1602, to satirize Ben Jonson and punish him for the attack made upon him in the Poetaster, he wrote the famous play of Satiro-mastix, or the untrussing of the humorous poet. In 1622, with Philip Massinger, he wrote the Virgin Martyr. In 1631, he wrote the two plays called Match Me in London and The Wonder of a Kingdom. He also wrote with John Ford, the Sun's Darling and the Witch of Edmonton. He must also be credited with the second part of the Honest Whore, a share in Westward Hoe, The Whore of Babylon, Northward Hoe, The Famous History of Sir Thomas Wyatt, and the Roaring Girl.

The patient tracing of Dekker's playwriting life, as delineated in Henslowe's Diary and Pearson's Collection, shows conclusively that the proprietor of a theatre, for the consideration of a few paltry pounds, shillings, and pence, commanded the poetic and dramatic talent of the very

best poets of the time; that most of the plays were written in collaboration; and that when they received their pay, the writers lost all claim to their productions, which thereafter became the exclusive property of the owner of the theatre, no matter how ignorant or illiterate he might be. Dekker, as the Diary shows, while loose and prodigal, was an industrious, plodding, and ready writer. His plays were favorites at the Court and were produced before Queen Elizabeth.

As in the case of Bacon, I give a few specimens of his style. The first is from *Satiro-mastix* and is in praise of hair and a blow at bald pates, put into the mouth of Ben Jonson, alias Horace:

IN PRAISE OF HAIR.

“If of all the body’s parts, the head  
 Be the most royal: if discourse, wit, judgment,  
 And all our understanding faculties,  
 Sit there in their high Court of Parliament,  
 Enacting laws to sway this humorous world;  
 This little isle of man; needs must that crown,  
 Which stands upon the supreme head, be fair  
 And held invaluable; and that crown’s the hair.  
 The head that wants this honor stands awry,  
 Is bare in name and in authority.  
 Hair, ’tis the robe which curious nature weaves  
 To hang upon the head, and does adorn  
 Our bodies in the first hour we are born.  
 God does bestow that garment: when we die,  
 That, like a soft and silken canopy,  
 Is still spread over us. In spite of death,  
 Our hair grows in our grave, and that alone  
 Looks fresh, when all our beauty’s gone.  
 The excellence of hair in this shines clear  
 That the four elements take pride to wear

The fashion of it. When fire most bright does burn,  
 The flames to golden locks do strive to turn;  
 When her lascivious arms, the water hurls  
 About the shore's waist, her sleek head she curls,  
 And rorid clouds, being sucked into the air,  
 When down they melt, hang like fine silver hair.  
 You see the Earth, whose head so oft is shorn,  
 Frighted to feel her locks so rudely torn,  
 Stands with her hair on end, and thus afraid,  
 Turns every hair to a green naked blade.  
 Besides, when struck with grief, we long to die,  
 We spoil that most, which most does beautify,  
 We rend this head-tire off. I thus conclude  
 Colors set colors out. Our eyes judge right  
 Of vice or virtue by their opposites.  
 So, if fair hair to beauty add such grace,  
 Baldness must needs be ugly, vile and base."

Then comes the rejoinder of Dekker, alias Crispinus, giving baldness a higher place than hair.

#### IN PRAISE OF BALDNESS.

"The goodliest and most glorious strange-built wonder,  
 Which that great Architect hath made is heaven;  
 For there he keeps his Court. It is his kingdom.  
 That's his best masterpiece—yes, 'tis the roof  
 And ceiling of the world, that may be called  
 The head or crown of earth,—and yet that's bald.  
 All creatures in it bald. The lovely sun  
 Has a face sleek as gold; the full-checked moon  
 As bright and smooth as silver; nothing there  
 Wears dangling locks; but sometime blazing stars,  
 Whose flaming curls set realms on fire with wars,  
 Descend more low; look through man's fivefold sense,  
 Of all, the eye bears greatest eminence;  
 And yet that's bald—The hairs, that like a lace,  
 Are stitched to the lids, borrow those forms

Like pent houses to save the eyes from storms.  
 A head and face o'er grown with shaggy dross,  
 O! 'tis an orient pearl hid all in moss;  
 But when the head's all naked and uncrowned,  
 It is the world's globe, even, smooth and round.  
 Baldness is nature's *butt*, at which our life  
 Shoots her last arrow. What man ever led  
 His age out with a staff, but had a head  
 Bare and uncovered? he, whose years do rise  
 To their full height, yet not bald, is not wise.  
 The head is wisdom's house, hair but the thatch.  
 Hair! it's the basest stubble; in scorn of it,  
 This proverb sprung, 'he has more hair than wit.'"

The next quotation forms a part of the dialogue between  
 Celestine and her father in the same play:

Celestine says:

"Must I betray my chastity, so long  
 Clear from the treason of rebelling lust;  
 O husband! O my father! if poor I  
 Must not live chaste, then let me chastely die.

*Father—*

Ay, here's a charm shall keep thee chaste,  
 Come Come.  
 Old time hath left us but an hour to play  
 Our parts; begin the scene; who shall speak first?  
 Oh I. I play the king, and kings speak first.  
 We need no prologue, the king entering first.  
 He's a most gracious prologue. Marry, then,  
 For the catastrophe or epilogue.  
 There's one in cloth of silver, which no doubt,  
 Will please the hearers well, when he steps out.  
 His mouth is filled with words. See where he stands.  
 He'll make them clap their eyes besides their hands.  
 But to my part. Suppose who enters now  
 A King, whose eyes are set in silver; one

That blusseth gold, speaks music, dancing walks;  
 Now gathers nearer, takes thee by the hand,  
 When straight thou think'st, the very orb of heaven  
 Moves round about thy fingers. Then he speaks,  
 Thus—thus—I know not how.

*Celestine*—

Nor I to answer him.

*Father*—

No, girl! know'st thou not how to answer him,  
 Why, then, the field is lost, and he rides home,  
 Like a great conqueror. Not answer him?  
 Out of thy part already? foiled the scene?  
 Disranked the lines? disarmed the action?"

The father then proposes poison to her, and the husband addresses the father thus:

“Oh,

That very name of poison poisons me;  
 Thou winter of a man, thou walking grave,  
 Whose life is like a dying taper,  
 How canst thou define a lover's laboring thoughts?  
 What scent hast thou but death? What taste but  
 earth?

The breath that purls from thee is like the steam  
 Of a new-opened vault. I know thy drift.  
 Because thou art traveling to the land of graves,  
 Thou courtest company and hither bring'st  
 A health of poison to pledge death—a poison  
 For this sweet spring; this element is mine.  
 This is the air I breathe. Corrupt it not;  
 This heaven is mine, I bought it with my soul  
 Of him that sells a heaven, to buy a soul.”

As to learned opinions of Dekker, no one who has familiarized himself with Dekker's poetry will dispute the opinion of Charles Lamb that “Dekker had poetry enough for anything.”

But the chief reason for making him one of the triumvirate of poets best equipped for the position of author of the Shakespeare poems, is based upon the direct statements contained in the dramatic production which I will bring to the attention and careful scrutiny of the reader, and also because I believe that I can give cogent reasons for the opinion that Dekker was either the originator or reviser of some of the Shakespeare plays.

A play was publicly acted by the students of St. Joh 's College, Cambridge, in the year 1601-2, called "The Return from Parnassus." The author of it is unknown. It was printed in 1606. The play is in part devoted to a comparison of the respective merits of the poets and dramatists of that era.

In order that the reader may understand who were named and whose merits were discussed, I give here a verbatim copy of so much of the play as mainly relates to the consideration of the merits of the poets named, together with the observations of the principal commentators who have without question accepted Shaksper as the author of the poems and plays. The reader will find the play in the first volume of the "Ancient British Drama," at page 46. It is entitled "The Return from Parnassus, or the Scourge of Simony," publicly acted by the students of Saint John's College, in Cambridge.

In Act 1, Scene 2, *Judicio*, one of the chief characters, speaks of a book called "Belvedere, or the Garden of the Muses," and he says to *Ingenioso*, another character: "Turn over the leaf and thou shalt see the pains of this worthy gentleman—sentences gathered out of all kinds of poets, referred to certain methodical heads. Read the names."



“*Ing.*—So I will, if thou wilt help me to censure them  
 Edmund Spenser                    Michael Drayton  
 Henry Constable                  John Davis  
 Thomas Lodge                     John Marston  
 Samuel Daniel                     Kit Marlowe  
 Thomas Watson

Good men and true stand together; hear your censure.

What's thy judgment of Spenser?

*Jud.*—A sweeter swan than ever sang in poe,  
 A shriller nightingale than ever blest  
 The prouder groves of self-admiring Rome;  
 Blithe was each valley and each shepherd proud  
 While he did chant his rural minstrelsy.

*Ing.*—Pity it is that gentle wits should breed,  
 Where thick-skin choughs laugh at a scholar's need.  
 But softly may our honors ashes rest,  
 That lie by merry Chaucer's noble dust.

But I pray thee, proceed briefly in the censures, that  
 I may be proud of myself, as in the first; so in the last my  
 censure may jump with thine. Henry Constable, Samuel  
 Daniel, Thomas Lodge, Thomas Watson.

*Jud.*—Sweet Constable doth take the wondering ear  
 And lays it up in willing prisonment.  
 Sweet honey-dropping Daniel doth wage  
 War with the proudest big Italian,  
 That melts his heart in sugared sonneting.  
 Only let him more sparingly make use  
 Of others' wit and use his own the more;  
 That well may scorn base imitation.  
 For Lodge and Watson, men of some desert  
 Yet subject to a critic's marginal.  
 Lodge for his oar in every paper boat;  
 He that turns over Galen every day  
 To sit and simper Euphues' legacy.

*Ing.*—*Michael Drayton.*

Drayton's sweet muse is like a sanguine dye  
 Able to ravish the vast gazer's eye.

However he wants one true note of a poet of our times, and that is this, he can not swagger it well in a tavern nor domineer in a hothouse."

Then after describing and criticising John Davis, Lodge, Hudson, and John Marston, Christopher Marlowe and Benjamin Jonson, Ingenioso calls out: "William Shakespeare," and Judicio says:

"Who loves Adonis' love or Lucrece' rape,  
His sweeter verse contains heart-robbing life,  
Could but a graver subject him content,  
Without love's foolish lazy languishment."

Here is recognition of a man styled William Shakespeare as the author of the two poems.

Farther on in Act 4, Scene 3, there is a dialogue between two noted actors, Burbage and Will Kempe, two other characters of the play, and Kempe says, "I was once at a comedy in Cambridge and there I saw a parasite make faces and mouths of all sorts on this fashion." Burbage replies, "A little teaching will mend these faults and it may be besides they will be able to pen a part." And Kempe answers, "Few of the University pen plays well; they smell too much of that writer Ovid and that writer Metamorphosis, and talk too much of Proserpine and Jupiter. Why here's our fellow Shakespeare puts them all down, aye and Ben Jonson too. O, that Ben Jonson is a pestilent fellow; he brought up Horace, giving the poets a pill, but our fellow Shakespeare hath given him a purge, that made him bewray his credit.

*Burb.*—It's a shrewd fellow indeed."

Malone, who did much to lead astray all succeeding commentators as to the authorship of the plays, says: "In what manner Shakespeare put Jonson down does not

appear, nor does it appear how he made him bewray his credit. His retaliation, we may well be assured, contained no gross or illiberal attack and perhaps did not go beyond a ballad or an epigram."

Malone admits in the foregoing that nowhere in all of the Shakespeare writings does it appear that the Shakespeare of the poems and plays made Jonson bewray his credit; and then he guesses that he, Shaksper, may have written a ballad or epigram against Jonson. He also guesses that if he did write one, that it contained nothing "gross or illiberal." The disinterested reader, I am sure, will not care very much for Malone's guesses. He will fairly draw this inference from his statements, that with all his research, he, Malone, could find nothing in the so-called Shakespeare plays and poems which reflected upon or alluded to Jonson; and no one, not even the most rabid believer in Shaksper, pretends that any trace of any writings whatever of William Shaksper (except his signatures to certain legal papers) has been found either by Malone or any one else.

In Gifford's Memoir of Ben Jonson, attached to his plays, the Kempe and Burbage dialogue is introduced together with the remarks of Malone above quoted, "That perhaps the retaliation did not go beyond a ballad or an epigram." And then Gifford, who did not like Malone's fling at Jonson, adds the following: "But with Mr. Malone's leave, if it went as far as either, Shakespeare was greatly to be blamed, for Jonson had given him no offense whatever. I will take upon myself to affirm that the *Poetaster*, a play of Jonson's which contains an attack upon two contemporary dramatists, and particularly upon one of them who is dubbed '*The Poetaster*,' does not contain a

single passage that can be tortured by the utmost ingenuity of malice into a reflection on our great poet. It will scarcely be credited that the sentence last quoted (i. e. from Malone) should be immediately followed by these words: Shakespeare has, however, marked his disregard for the *calumniator* of his fame, by not leaving him any memorial by his will."

I find, and the most energetic searcher of Shakespearean essays, comments, and criticisms will find, that Malone was the leader of the host of Shakespearean critics and commentators and that generally his opinions and guesses, however wild and unreliable, have found favor with the believers in the William Shaksper of Stratford. He, Malone, was the brilliant and fierce exposé of Ireland's forgeries; and he was also the builder and strong supporter of the baseless fabric on which the Shaksper claim of authorship rests. Hence, when Malone resorts to guesses and surmises as to the attack by Jonson and the retaliation by Shakespeare, all the critics and commentators blindly follow his lead, and guess and surmise just as he did.

It is clearly shown, and all students of the plays and poems will admit, that a careful reading and study of the play called *The Return from Parnassus* will show that as early as 1601 it was believed that a person styled "Shakespeare" was the author of the two poems called *Venus and Adonis* and the *Rape of Lucrece*, for when *Ingenioso* calls out, "William Shakespeare," *Judicio* answers, referring unquestionably to Shakespeare,

"Who loves Adonis' love or Lucrece' rape,  
His sweeter verse contains heart-robbing life,  
Could but a graver subject him content,  
Without love's foolish lazy languishment."

It is also as clearly shown from the dialogue between Kempe and Burbage that "the pestilent fellow," Ben Jonson, had brought up Horace, giving the poets a pill, and that the shrewd fellow called Shakespeare had given Jonson a purge which had made him bewray his credit.

Now when, where, and how did Jonson bring up Horace, giving the poets a pill, and who was the poet referred to as giving Jonson a purge?

I maintain that the bringing up of Horace undoubtedly refers to the comical satire in the nature of the play composed by Jonson in 1600, called "The Poetaster and his arraignment," which was acted in 1600 and 1601 by the children of Queen Elizabeth's Chapel.

Whalley, in his life of Jonson, says that there was at this time a quarrel between Jonson and Dekker, and Dekker was personally alluded to in this play under the character of Crispinus. Dekker was bent on revenge and resolved, if possible, to conquer Jonson at his own weapons; for immediately after the rendition of the Poetaster, he wrote a play entitled "Satiromastix, or the untrussing of the humorous poet," and in this play Jonson is introduced under the character of Horace Junior. That the reader may see the force of my contention, I quote from Act 5, Scene 3 of the Poetaster, premising that Horace, whom Jonson brought up as a chief character in the play, thus addresses Cæsar, who sits as judge over Dekker, alias Crispinus:

"Please it, Great Cæsar, I have pills about me.  
 Mixt with the whitest kind of hellebore  
 Would give him a light vomit that should purge  
 His brain and stomach of those tumorous heats  
 Might I have leave to minister unto him."

Thereupon the leave is given by Cæsar to Horace, and he administers the pill to Crispinus, who casts up his affected, long, and uncommon words—such words as “retrograde, reciprocal, incubus, magnificate, turgidous, ventositous, prorumped,” words very much like some that are used in *Troilus and Cressida*.

That Dekker was fond of great swelling words will appear from a cursory examination of his writings. I find in them such words as “anthropophagized, apishness, authentical, calcination, cibation, circumgitations, circumgyrations, congelation, contentation, disquietness, galenist, encomiastic, enginous, inexorability, inquisitions, Mephistophelian, niggardize, Paracelsian, phantasticality, paradoxical, Phlegetontic, quadrupartite, repercussive, sublimation, unthriftiness.”

If the reader will now turn to the play of “*Satiromastix*,” written by Thomas Dekker in reply to Jonson’s play, and publicly acted by the children of St. Paul’s in ridicule of Jonson, he will find how a poetical purge was administered by Dekker to Jonson which made him bewray his credit.

Crispinus, *alias* Dekker, says in the arraignment of Horace, *alias* Ben Jonson:

“Under control of my dread sovereign,  
 We are thy judges; thou that didst arraign,  
 Art now prepared for condemnation;  
 Should I but bid thy Muse stand to the Bar,  
 Thyself against her wouldst give evidence  
 For flat rebellion ’gainst the sacred laws  
 Of divine poesy: herein most she missed,  
 Thy pride and scorn made her turn Satirist,  
 And not her love to virtue (as thou preachest)

Or should we minister strong pills to thee,  
 What lumps of hard and undigested stuff,  
 Of bitter satirism, of arrogance  
 Of Self-Love, of detraction, of a black  
 And stinking insolence, should we fetch up?  
 But none of these, we give thee what's more fit,  
 With stinging nettles, crown his stinging wit."

His sentence was as follows:

"*Imprimis* you shall swear by Phoebus and the half a score Muses, lacking one: not to swear to hang yourself, if you thought any man, woman, or child could write plays and rhymes, as well favored ones as yourself, you shall swear not to bombast out a new play with the old linings of jests stolen from the Temple revels. Moreover, you shall not sit in a gallery, when your comedies and interludes have entered their actions and there make vile and bad faces at every line, to make gentlemen have an eye to you and to make players afraid to take your part.

Besides, you must forbear to venture on the stage, when your play is ended, and to exchange courtesies and compliments with gallants in the Lords' room, to make all the house rise up in arms and to cry 'that's Horace, that's he, that's he, that's he, that pens and purges humors and diseases.'

Thirdly and lastly of all save one, when your plays are misliked at Court, you shall not cry Mew, like a pussy cat, and say you are glad you write out of the courtiers' element. In briefness, when you sup in taverns amongst your betters, you shall swear not to dip your manners in too much sauce; not at table to fling epigrams, emblems, or play speeches about you (like hail stones) to keep you out of the terrible danger of the shot, upon pain to sit at the upper end of the table at the left hand of Carlo Buffon; swear all this by Apollo and the eight or nine Muses.

*Horace.*—By Apollo, Helicon, the Muses (who march three and three in rank), and by all that belongs to Parnassus, I swear all this.

*Crispinus*.—That fearful wreath this honor is your due  
All poets shall be poet-apes, but you."

In this connection it is worthy of note that so powerfully operative was Dekker's purge as administered to Jonson, that the latter was forced to issue an apologetical dialogue, in the course of which he says:

"And since the comic Muse  
Hath proved so onerous to me, I will try  
If tragedy have a more kind aspect."

The allusion to Shakespeare as the administerer of the purge to Jonson, seems to be a direct and clear designation of Thomas Dekker as Shakespeare. It is admitted by the commentators that William Shaksper never had to their knowledge any controversy whatever with Jonson. The editor of the "Ancient British Drama," when introducing to the reader *The Return from Parnassus, or the Scourge of Simony*, says:

"*The Return from Parnassus, or the Scourge of Simony*, was publicly acted, as the title page bears, by the students of St. John's College, Cambridge. It is a most extravagant, but a very curious performance. Hawkins, in his preface to the 'Origin of the English Drama,' says: 'It is perhaps the most singular composition in the English language.' The admirers of Shakespeare will be interested by the mention made of him in the scene where Kempe and Burbage, his fellow actors, discourse of his quarrel with Ben Jonson. It would seem that Shakespeare had espoused the cause of Dekker, in the dispute between him and Jonson; though we may look in vain for the 'pill' given to the latter by the Bard of Avon."



Of course, the reader will understand that the statement of the editor that "it would seem that Shaksper had espoused the cause of Dekker" is a mere guess on the editor's part, since he declares that it is in vain to look for the pill given to Jonson by Shaksper.

Ingleby, in his "Century of Praise," after quoting from the *Return from Parnassus*, says: "The passage, 'O that Ben Jonson is a pestilent fellow; he brought up Horace, giving the poets a pill' alludes to Jonson's *Poetaster*, Act 5, Scene 3. The subsequent remark, 'but our fellow Shakespeare hath given him a purge that made him bewray his credit' is mysterious. Where did our Bard put Jonson to his purgation? Assuredly neither Stephano nor Malvolio could have been a caricature of Jonson, who was neither a sot nor a gull."

There is nothing mysterious about the giving of the purge, if we consider first that Shaksper was not referred to at all, and that Thomas Dekker was the man who gave Jonson the purge. The facts prove that Thomas Dekker, and Thomas Dekker only, administered the poetical purge to Jonson, for the two plays and the contemporary history so shows it. The Cambridge play also states that the two poems called *Venus and Adonis* and the *Rape of Lucrece* were written by Shakespeare, so-called, who gave the purge to Jonson. If, therefore, the statements contained in the play called *The Return from Parnassus* are reliable, then they identify Thomas Dekker as the Shakespeare who wrote the two poems, for the reason that it was Dekker who gave Jonson the purge which made him bewray his credit.

To test the reliability of *Ingenioso*, the *Introducer*, and *Judicio*, the *Judge*, I point the student to the criticisms

passed upon Spenser, Drayton, Marlowe, and Marston. Every reader will agree with me that their characters and standing as poets are truthfully delineated in the play. The students at Cambridge recognized the description given of Drayton as a just and truthful one, and Marston was known among his brother poets as "Kinsayder," the nickname given to him in the Cambridge play.

It may be objected that in the play Dekker did not administer a pill or purge to Jonson, but gave him a crown of stinging nettles. Literally speaking, that is true. But the writer of the play was not required, like a historian, to be accurate. Jonson administered the pills to Dekker and Dekker put a wreath of stinging nettles on Jonson's head, and the purge he gave him was the oath he compelled him to take. Yet it was a dreadful purge to Jonson, for he had to apologize to the literary public for what he wrote in the *Poetaster*.

In further confirmation of Jonson's jealousy and his intense hatred of one of the contemporary poets, I here copy a short poem of Jonson found among his Epigrams.

ON POET-APE.

"Poor Poet-ape, that would be thought our chief,  
Whose words are e'n the frippery of wit,  
From brokage is become so bold a thief,  
As we, the robbed, leave rage and pity it.  
At first, he made low shifts, would pick and glean,  
Buy the reversion of old plays; now grown  
To a little wealth, and credit in the scene,  
He takes up all, makes each man's wit his own;  
And told of this, he slights it. Tut, such crimes  
The sluggish gaping auditor devours;

He marks not whose 'twas first; and after-times  
 May judge it to be his, as well as ours.  
 Fool! as if half eyes will not know a fleece  
 From locks of wool or shreds from the whole piece."

The reader knows, of course, that the advocates for Bacon contend that these lines refer to William Shaksper, and that he was ridiculed by Jonson in the above as a poet-ape. But they overlook the fact that the poem points to a poet-ape as one who "would be thought our chief"; that is to say, the leader of the poets, an aspirant for the foremost place, and one who was a reviser, a mender and dresser of plays.

If William Shaksper could scarcely write his own name, as the facts show, he could not aspire to be the chief poet among so many learned dramatists. Jonson, *alias* Horace, is made to point out Dekker, *alias* Crispinus, as one of the twin poet-apes in *Satiro-mastix*, when he says: "Here be epigrams upon Tucca. Divulge these among the gallants; as for Crispinus, that Crispinass, and Fannius, his play-dresser, who, to make the Muses believe their subjects' ears were starved and that there was a dearth of poesy, cut an innocent Moor in the middle and served him in twice; as for these twins, these poet-apes, their mimic tricks shall serve with mirth to feast our Muse, whilst their own starve." Besides, Jonson himself, in the *Poetaster*, shows that Dekker was one of the men aimed at in his play. In Scene 3 of Act 5, the indictment against Dekker, joined with Demetrius Fannius, reads thus in part: "You are before this time jointly and severally indicted and here presented to be arraigned upon the statute of calumny, or *lex remnia*, the one by the name of Rufus Laberius Crispinus, *alias* Crispinas, poetaster and plagiary; the

other by the name of Demetrius Fannius, play dresser and plagiary."

Who was the poet-ape referred to by Jonson? I think that it could not have been Dekker, for the reason that so far as we know anything of Dekker's pecuniary condition, he lived, to quote a familiar phrase, from hand to mouth, and the reader will notice that the poet-ape is "now grown to a little wealth."

It could not have been John Marston, whom the Shaksperites describe as one of the two parcel poets whom Jonson satirized, because Marston dedicated the *Malcontent*, published in 1604, to Jonson in the following words:

"Benjamino Jonsonio"  
*Poetae*  
 Elegantissimo  
 Carissimo  
 Amico  
 suo candido et cordato  
 Johannes Marston  
 Musarum Alumnus  
 Asperam hanc suam Thaliam.  
 D. D.

Some of the commentators identify Crispinus as Marston and Fannius as Dekker, and others reverse the names. I reject Marston because elsewhere he is ridiculed by Jonson as Carlo Buffon.

While the solution of this question is not very important, I opine that Michael Drayton was one of the twins aimed at by Horace. He was a poet who had a right to be "and would be thought our chief," and as to a little wealth, the reader will remember that Daniel, in his letter to Egerton, describes Drayton as "the author of plays

now daily presented on the public stages of London and the possessor of no small gains." The reader will also call to mind the fact that Jonson was not regarded by his contemporaries as an admirer of Drayton. Jonson himself, in that poem which he called his "Vision on the Muses of his friend Michael Drayton," admits that such was the popular opinion, for at the very beginning of the poem he says:

"It hath been questioned, Michael, if I be  
A friend at all, or if at all, to thee."

## CHAPTER XXVII.

MICHAEL DRAYTON CONSIDERED.

*"This was a man."*

—Julius Cæsar. v, 5.

The reader unfamiliar with the details of Drayton's life will be struck with the similarity as to its facts to the traditional account of Shaksper's life. Michael Drayton was born at Hartshill in Warwickshire in or near the Forest of Arden in the year 1563. Shaksper was born in the same county, Warwickshire, in the year 1564. Aubrey, in his manuscript kept in the Ashmolean Museum, says that Shaksper's father was a butcher. The same Aubrey says that Michael Drayton was the son of a butcher. Rowe says that Shaksper was withdrawn from a grammar school at an early age. Drayton was educated at the free Grammar School of Atherstone. In his poetical epistle to Reynolds, he says of himself:

“For from my cradle, you must know that I  
Was still inclined to noble poesy,  
And when that once Pueriles I had read,  
And newly had my Cato construéd,  
In my small self I greatly marveled then,  
Amongst all other, what strange kind of men  
These poets were; and pleaséd with the name,  
To my mild tutor merrily I came  
(For I was then a proper goodly page,  
Much like a pigmy, scarce ten years of age),  
Clasping my slender arms about his thigh,  
'O, my dear master! can not you,' quoth I,  
'Make me a poet? Do it if you can,  
And you shall see I'll quickly be a man.'”

Who me thus answered, smiling, 'Boy,' quoth he,  
 'If you'll not play the wag, but I may see  
 You ply your learning, I will shortly read  
 Some poets to you.'

Drayton's education, as heretofore stated, was fostered by Sir Henry Goodere, of Polesworth, and Sir Walter Aston, of Blythe Hall. He was also greatly aided by the Countess of Bedford.

That his tutor was right in regarding him as of a waggish disposition is supported by the expression applied to him by Meres, borrowed from First Henry IV, A. 2, S. 4: "There is nothing but roguery to be found in villainous man."

The dramatic works of Drayton will be first considered, my chief authority being the reliable Diary of Henslowe. Within the short space of five years, Drayton wrote or assisted in the composition of twenty plays for Henslowe's theatre. I will specify the names of the plays and the dates when they were begun or finished, as they truthfully but ungrammatically appear in the Diary.

On December 22, 1597, in conjunction with Anthony Monday, he wrote the play of Mother Redcap. On January 20, 1598, he wrote the play of William Longsword. On March 3, 1598, aided by Thomas Dekker and Henry Chettle, he wrote the Famous Wars of Henry 1st and the Prince of Wales. On March 13, 1598, the entry in the Diary shows that he wrote with Henry Chettle a play, as Henslowe styles it, "Where a Welshman Appears." On March 30, 1598, with Thomas Dekker, Henry Chettle, and Robert Wilson, he wrote Piers of Exton. On May 22, 1598, collaborating with Thomas Dekker, Thomas Middleton, and John Webster, he wrote the Black Batman of the North. On June 10, 1598, he wrote Earl Goodwin

and his Three Sons, with the aid of Thomas Dekker, Henry Chettle, and Robert Wilson. On June 24, 1598, together with Anthony Monday, Henry Chettle, and Robert Wilson, he wrote Richard Cœur de Leon's Funeral. On July 1, 1598, aided by Thomas Dekker and Robert Wilson, he wrote the play of Madman's Morris. On July 17, 1598, assisted by the same two dramatists, he wrote Hannibal and Hermes. On August 9, 1598, he and Anthony Monday wrote a comedy for the Court, the name of which Henslowe omits. On August 10, 1598, he wrote Pierce of Winchester, with the help of Thomas Dekker and Robert Wilson. On August 25, 1598, in conjunction with Anthony Monday, Robert Wilson, and Thomas Dekker, he wrote Chance Medley. On August 30, 1598, he and Dekker wrote the play of Worse Afraid than Hurt. On September 29, 1598, Dekker and he composed the first part of The Civil Wars in France. On October 16, 1598, the two also wrote the play of Conan, Prince of Denmark. On November 3, 1598, they also wrote the second and third parts of the Civil Wars in France. Collaborating with Anthony Monday, Robert Wilson, and Richard Hathaway, on January 10, 1599, he wrote Owen Tudor. On October 16, 1599, he produced the famous play of Sir John Oldcastle, assisted by Anthony Monday, Robert Wilson, and Richard Hathaway. On June 3, 1600, with Thomas Dekker and Richard Hathaway, he composed the play of Fair Constance of Rome. On October 10, 1601, he wrote the Rising of Cardinal Wolsey, in collaboration with Anthony Monday, Henry Chettle, and Wentworth Smyth. On May 22, 1602, aided by Anthony Monday, Thomas Middleton, and John Webster, he wrote the play of Cæsar's Fall. On May 29, 1602, he wrote a play, the title of which



is very badly spelled in the Diary, but it appears to be the *Two Harpies* or *Harps*. In the composition of this play he was assisted by Dekker, Middleton, Monday, and Webster.

That he was a famous writer of tragedies, is stated by Barnfield in his "Remembrances of some English Poets" heretofore quoted; and Samuel Daniel, in his letter to Egerton, set out in Chapter XI, speaks of him as "the author of plays now daily presented on the public stages of London"; and he himself modestly refers, in the 47th stanza of his "Idea," to the time "when high desire of wit gave life and courage to my laboring pen."

A summary of his poetical works, other than dramatic, extends from 1591 to 1630. They embrace the *Harmony of the Church*, *Idea's Mirror*, *The Shepherd's Garland* in nine *Eclogues*, *Matilda*, the *Barons' Wars*, *Endymion* and *Phoebe*, *Legend of Robert the Duke of Normandy*, *Poems*, lyric and pastoral, *Odes*, *Eclogues*, *The Man in the Moon*, *The Battle of Agincourt*, and *Polyolbion*.

I will now give several specimens of his style. I cite two sonnets composed by him, the first to the river *Ankor*:

"Clear *Ankor*, on whose silver-sanded shore  
 My soul-shrined saint, my fair *Idea*, lies;  
 O blessed brook, whose milk-white swans adore  
 The crystal stream refined by her eyes,  
 Where sweet myrrh-breathing zephyr in the spring  
 Gently distils his nectar-dropping showers,  
 Where nightingales in *Arden* sit and sing  
 Amongst the dainty dew-impearléd flowers.  
 Say thus, fair brook, when thou shalt see thy Queen,  
 Lo, here thy shepherd spent his wandering years,  
 And in these shades, dear nymph, he oft hath been,

And here to thee he sacrificed his tears:  
 Fair Arden, thou my Tempe art alone  
 And thou, sweet Ankor, art my Helicon."

The next one is his last farewell to his lady-love:

"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 forever, 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."

These two sonnets are unsurpassed in the whole range of English literature.

The following poem, never before published, was written by Drayton on the night before he died:

"So well I love thee that without thee I  
 Love nothing: if I might choose, I'd rather die  
 Than be one day debarr'd thy company.

Since beasts and plants do grow and live and move,  
 Beasts are those men that such a life approve.  
 He only lives that deadly is in love.

The corn that in the ground is sown, first dies  
 And of one seed, do many ears arise;  
 Love, this world's corn, by dying multiplies.

The seeds of love first by thy eyes were thrown  
 Into a ground untilled, a heart unknown  
 To bear such fruit, till by thy hands was sown.

Look, as your looking glass by chance may fall,  
 Divide and break in many pieces small,  
 And yet show forth the selfsame face in all,

Proportions, features, graces just the same  
 And in the smallest piece, as well the name  
 Of fairest one discerns, as in the richest frame.

So all my thoughts are pieces but of you  
 Which put together makes a glass so true,  
 As I therein no other face but yours can view."

The description of Oberon's palace in *Nymphidia* is worthy of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and recalls Mercutio's description of Queen Mab:

"This palace standeth in the air  
 By necromancy placéd there,  
 That it no tempest needs to fear,  
 Which way soe'er it blow it.  
 And somewhat southward tow'rds the moon,  
 Whence lies a way up to the moon;  
 And thence the fairy can as soon  
 Pass to the earth below it.

The walls of spiders' legs are made,  
 Well mortised and finely laid;  
 It was the master of his trade  
 It curiously that builded;  
 The windows of the eyes of cats,  
 And for the roof, instead of slats,  
 Is covered with the skins of bats  
 With moonshine that are gilded."

Before leaving Nymphidia, I invite the reader's attention to the following extract from the same poem. Oberon, the King of the fairies, is chasing Queen Mab, who is in love with the fairy Knight Pigwiggin:

“ But let us leave Queen Mab awhile,  
 Through many a gate, o'er many a stile,  
 That now had gotten by his wile,  
     Her dear Pigwiggin kissing;  
 And tell how Oberon doth fare,  
 Who grew as mad as any hare  
 When he had sought each place with care  
 And found his Queen was missing.

By grisly Pluto he doth swear,  
 He rent his clothes and tore his hair,  
 And as he runneth here and there  
     An acorn cup he greeteth,  
 Which soon he taketh by the stalk,  
 About his head he lets it walk,  
 Nor doth he any creature balk,  
     But lays on all he meeteth.

The Tuscan Poet doth advance  
 The frantic Paladin of France,  
 And those more ancient do enhance  
     Alcides in his fury,  
 And others Ajax Telamon,  
 But to this time there hath been none  
 So Bedlam as our Oberon,  
     Of which I dare assure ye.

And first encountering with a Wasp,  
 He in his arms the fly doth clasp  
 As though his breath he forth would grasp,  
     Him for Pigwiggin taking:

'Where is my wife, thou rogue?' quoth he;  
'Pigwigin, she is come to thee;  
Restore her, or thou diest by me!'  
Whereat the poor Wasp quaking

Cries, 'Oberon, great Fairy King,  
Content thee, I am no such thing:  
I am a Wasp, behold my sting!'  
At which the Fairy started;  
When soon away the Wasp doth go,  
Poor wretch, was never frightened so;  
He thought his wings were much too slow,  
O'erjoyed they so were parted.

He next upon a Glow-worm light,  
You must suppose it now was night,  
Which, for her hinder part was bright,  
He took to be a devil,  
And furiously doth her assail  
For carrying fire in her tail;  
He thrashed her rough coat with his flail;  
The mad King feared no evil.

'Oh!' quoth the Glow-worm, 'hold thy hand,  
Thou puissant King of Fairy-land!  
Thy mighty strokes who may withstand?  
Hold, or of life despair I!'  
Together then herself doth roll,  
And tumbling down into a hole  
She seemed as black as any coal;  
Which vext away the Fairy.

From thence he ran into a hive:  
Amongst the bees he letteth drive,  
And down their combs begins to rive,  
All likely to have spoiléd,

Which with their wax his face besmeared,  
And with their honey daubed his beard:  
It would have made a man afeard  
To see how he was moiléd.

A new adventure him betides;  
He met an Ant, which he bestrides,  
And post thereon away he rides,  
Which with his haste doth tumble;  
And came full over on her snout,  
Her heels so threw the dirt about,  
For she by no means could get out,  
But over him doth tumble.

And being in this piteous case,  
And all be-slurréd head and face,  
On runs he in this wild-goose chase,  
As here and there he rambles;  
Half blind, against a molehill hit,  
And for a mountain taking it,  
For all he was out of his wit  
Yet to the top he scrambles.

And being gotten to the top,  
Yet there himself he could not stop,  
But down on the other side doth chop,  
And to the foot came rumbling;  
So that the grubs, therein that bred,  
Hearing such turmoil over head,  
Thought surely they had all been dead:  
So fearful was the jumbling.

And falling down into a lake,  
Which him up to the neck doth take,  
His fury somewhat it doth slake;  
He calleth for a ferry:

Where you may some recovery note;  
 What was his club he made his boat,  
 And in his oaken cup doth float,  
 As safe as in a wherry.

Men talk of the adventures strange  
 Of Don Quixote, and of their change  
 Through which he arméd oft did range,  
 Of Sancho Pancha's travel;  
 But should a man tell everything  
 Done by this frantic Fairy King,  
 And them in lofty numbers sing,  
 It well his wits might gravel."

It would be unfair to the reader to omit two of the dialogues found in the Muses' Elysium. They are extracted from Chalmer's "English Poets," fourth volume, and are called Nymphals. Drayton's description of the dialogues is contained in the first four lines of each.

"This Nymphal of delights doth treat,  
 Choice beauties and proportions neat,  
 Of curious shapes and dainty features,  
 Describ'd in two most perfect creatures."

The dialogue is conducted by Dorida and Rodope.

"*D.* My sweet, my sovereign Rodope,  
 My dear delight, my love,  
 That lock of hair thou sent'st to me,  
 I to this bracelet wove;  
 Which brighter every day doth glow,  
 The longer it is worn,  
 As its delicious fellows do  
 Thy temples that adorn.

*R.* Nay, had I thine, my Dorida,  
 I would them so bestow

As that the wind upon my way  
 Might backward make them flow;  
 So should it in its chief excess  
 Turn to becalmed air  
 And quite forget all boisterousness  
 To play with every hair.

*D.* To me, like thine, had nature given  
 A brow so arched, so clear,  
 A front wherein so much of heaven  
 Doth to each eye appear;  
 The world should see I would strike dead  
 The milky-way that's now,  
 And say that nectar Hebe shed  
 Fell all upon my brow.

*R.* O, had I eyes like Dorida's,  
 I would enchant the day,  
 And make the sun to stand at gaze  
 Till he forgot his way;  
 And cause his sister, Queen of streams,  
 When so I list by night,  
 By her much blushing at my beams  
 To eclipse her borrowed light.

*D.* Had I a cheek like Rodope's,  
 In midst of which doth stand  
 A grove of roses, such as these  
 In such a snowy land,  
 I would make the lily which we now  
 So much for whiteness name,  
 As drooping down, the head to bow  
 And die for very shame.

*R.* Had I a bosom like to thine,  
 When I, it pleased to show,  
 Where to the sky I would incline,  
 I'd make the ethereal bow,  
 My swannish breast, branch'd all with blue,  
 In bravery like the spring;  
 In winter to the general view  
 Full summer forth should bring.



- D.* Had I a body like my dear,  
 Were I so straight, so tall,  
 Or if so broad my shoulders were,  
 Had I a waist so small;  
 I would challenge the proud Queen of Love  
 To yield to me for shape,  
 And I should fear that Mars or Jove  
 Would venture for my rape.
- R.* Had I a hand like thee, my girl,  
 (This hand, O let me kiss)  
 These ivory arrows, pil'd with pearl,  
 Had I a hand like this;  
 I would not doubt at all to make  
 Each finger of my hand  
 To task, swift Mercury to take  
 With his enchanting wand.
- D.* Had I a thigh like Rodope's  
 Which 'twas my chance to view  
 When, lying on yon bank of ease  
 The wind thy skirt up blew;  
 I would say it were a column wrought  
 To some intent divine,  
 And for our chaste Diana sought  
 A pillar for her shrine.
- R.* Had I a leg but like to thine,  
 That were so neat, so clean,  
 A swelling calf so small, so fine,  
 An ankle round and lean,  
 I'd say to nature she doth miss  
 Her old skill, and maintain  
 She showed her masterpiece in this,  
 Not to be done again.
- D.* Had I that foot hid in those shoes,  
 Proportioned to my height,  
 Short heels, thin instep, even toes,  
 A sole so wondrous straight,  
 The foresters and nymphs at this  
 Amazed all should stand,

And kneeling down, should meekly kiss  
The prints left in the sand."

The next dialogue is conducted by Mertilla, Claia, and Cloris, and the subject is set out in the first four lines, as follows:

"A nymph is married to a fay,  
Great preparations for the day,  
All rites of nuptials, they recite you  
To the bridal, and invite you.

*M.* But will our Tita wed this fay?

*Cla.* Yea, and to-morrow is the day.

*M.* But why should she bestow herself  
Upon this dwarfish fairy elf?

*Cla.* Why, by her smallness, you may find  
That she is of the fairy kind.  
And therefore apt to choose her mate  
Where she did her beginning take;  
Besides he's deft and wondrous airy  
And of the noblest of the fairy,  
Chief of the Crickets of much fame  
In fairy, a most ancient name;  
But to be brief, 'tis cleanly done.  
The pretty wench is wooed and won.

*Clo.* If this be so, let us provide  
The ornaments to fit our bride;  
For they, knowing she doth come  
From us, in Elysium,  
Queen Mab will look she should be drest  
In those attires we think our best;  
Therefore some curious things let's give her,  
Ere to her spouse, we her deliver.

*M.* I'll have a jewel for her ear  
Which, for my sake, I'll have her wear;  
'Twill be a dewdrop and therein  
Of Cupids I will have a twin

- Which, struggling with their wings shall break  
 The bubble, out of which shall leak  
 So sweet a liquor as shall move  
 Each thing that smells, to be in love.
- Cla.* Believe me, girl, this will be fine,  
 And to this pendant, then take mine,  
 A cup in fashion of a fly  
 Of the lynx's piercing eye  
 Wherein there sticks a sunny ray  
 Shot in, through the clearest day,  
 Whose brightness Venus' self did move  
 Therein to put her drink of love,  
 Which for more strength she did distil.  
 The limbeck was a phoenix quill;  
 At this cup's delicious brink,  
 A fly approaching but to drink,  
 Like amber or some precious gum  
 It transparent doth become.
- Clo.* For jewels for her ears she's sped:  
 But for a dressing for her head,  
 I think for her I have a tire  
 That all fairies shall admire:  
 The yellows in the full blown rose,  
 Which in the top, it doth enclose.  
 Like drops of gold, one shall be hung  
 Upon her tresses, and among  
 Those scattered seeds (the eye to please)  
 The wings of the cantharides,  
 Linked with the rainbow that doth rail  
 Those moons in, in the peacock's tail;  
 Whose dainty colors, being mixed  
 With the other beauties, and so fixed  
 Her lovely tresses shall appear  
 As though upon a flame they were:  
 And to be sure she shall be gay  
 We'll take those feathers from the jay  
 About her eyes in circlets set,  
 To be our Tita's coronet.

- M.* Then, dainty girls, I make no doubt,  
 But we shall neatly send her out;  
 But let's among ourselves agree  
 Of what her wedding gown shall be.
- Cl.* Of pansy, pink and primrose leaves,  
 Most curiously laid on in threaves;  
 And all embroidery to supply,  
 Powdered with flowers of rosemary;  
 A trail about the skirt shall run  
 The silkworm's finest, newly spun,  
 And every seam, the nymphs shall sew  
 With smallest of the spinners' clue,  
 And having done their work, again  
 These to the church, shall bear her train,  
 Which for our Tita we will make  
 Of the east slough of a snake,  
 Which, quivering as the wind doth blow,  
 The sun shall it, like tinsel show.
- Cl.* And being led to meet her mate,  
 To make sure that she want no state,  
 Moons from the peacock's tail, we'll shred  
 With feathers from the pheasant's head,  
 Mixed with the plume of so high price,  
 The precious bird of paradise;  
 Which to make up, our nymphs shall ply  
 Into a curious canopy.  
 Borne o'er her head (by our inquiry)  
 By elfs, the fittest of the fairy.
- M.* But all this while, we have forgot  
 The buskins, neighbors, have we not?
- Cl.* We had; for those, I'll fit her now,  
 They shall be of the lady-cow.  
 The dainty shell upon her back  
 Of erimson, strewed with spots of black;  
 Which, as she holds a stately paece,  
 Her leg will wonderfully grace.
- Cl.* But then for music of the best,  
 This must be thought on for the feast.

*M.* The nightingale, of birds most choice,  
 To do her best, shall strain her voice;  
 And to this bird, to make a set,  
 The Mavis, Merle and Robinet;  
 The Lark, the Linnet and the Thrush,  
 That make a choir of every bush.  
 But for still music, we will keep  
 The Wren and Titmouse, which to sleep  
 Shall sing the bride, when she's alone,  
 The rest into their chambers gone,  
 And like those upon ropes that walk  
 On gossamer from stalk to stalk,  
 The tripping fairies, tricks shall play,  
 The evening of her wedding day.

*Cl.* But for the bride bed, what were fit?  
 That hath not been talked of yet.

*Cl.* Of leaves of roses, white and red,  
 Shall be the covering of her bed;  
 The curtains, valance, testers, all  
 Shall be the flower imperial;  
 And for the fringe, it all along  
 With azure harebells shall be hung;  
 Of lilies shall the pillows be,  
 With down stripped off the butterfly.  
 Come, bright girls, come all together  
 And bring all your offerings hither.  
 You must have a buxom bevy:  
 All your goodly graces levy.  
 Come in majesty and state  
 Our bridal here to celebrate.  
 Summon all the sweets that are  
 To this nuptial to repair,  
 Till with throngs, themselves they smother,  
 Strongly stifling one another,  
 And at last they all consume  
 And vanish in one rich perfume.  
 With tapers let the temple shine;  
 Sing to Hymen hymns divine;

Load the altars till there rise  
 Clouds from the burnt sacrifice.  
 With your censers, swing aloof  
 Their smells till they ascend the roof.  
 Violins, strike up aloud;  
 Ply the gittern, scour the crowd;  
 Let the nimble hand belabor  
 The whistling pipe and drumbling tabor.  
 To the full, the bagpipe rack,  
 Till the swelling leather crack.  
 The Gods, this feast as to begin,  
 Have sent of their ambrosia in.  
 Then serve we up the straw's rich berry,  
 The respas and Elysium cherry,  
 The virgin berry, from the flowers,  
 In Hybla wrought in Flora's bowers.  
 Full bowls of nectar, and no girl  
 Carouse but in dissolved pearl:  
     For our Tita is this day  
     Married to a noble fay."

The laudations of Drayton as a poet were many and deserving. The eulogium of Robert Tofte, the translator of Ariosto's "Satires," has been heretofore cited.

William Browne, one of England's greatest poets, and a contemporary, after eulogizing Sidney and Spenser, thus speaks of Drayton:

"Drayton, among the worthiest of all those,  
 The glorious laurel or the Cyprian rose  
 Have ever crowned, doth claim in every line  
 An equal honor from the sacred Nine:  
 For if old time could, like the restless main,  
 Roll himself back into his spring again,  
 And on his wings bear this admired Muse,  
 For Ovid, Virgil, Homer to peruse;  
 They would confess that never happier pen  
 Sung of his love, his country and the men."

Writing of the *Polyolbion*, a work of great labor and infinite study, which associated Drayton's name with the rivers, forests, hills, mountains, and valleys of England, George Wither, a contemporary poet, says:

“And some unborn will say,  
 (I speak the truth, whate'er men think to-day),  
 Ages to come, shall hug thy poesy,  
 As we, our dear friends' pictures, when they die.”

Ben Jonson, in what he calls his “*Vision on the Muses* of his friend, Michael Drayton,” when he adverts to his “*Battle of Agincourt*,” says:

“There thou art Homer; pray thee use the style  
 Thou hast deserved, and let me read the while  
 Thy catalogue of ships, exceeding his,  
 Thy list of aids and forces, so it is  
 The poet's act: and for his country's sake,  
 Brave are the musters that the Muse will make;  
 And when he ships them, where to use their arms,  
 How do his trumpets breathe! What loud alarms!  
 Look how we read the Spartans were inflamed  
 With bold Tyrætus' verse; when thou art named,  
 So shall our English youth urge on and cry  
 An Agincourt! an Agincourt! or die.”

Doubtless I have already satisfied the reader that I had good cause to select Drayton as one of the three poets who were worthy to be called and known as Shakespeare; and as I will hereafter show that he had “a main finger” (to use Heywood's expression) in the making of some, at least, of the Shakespeare plays, it is proper that I should summarize the additional reasons for exalting Drayton to so high and honorable a position.

Drayton was not merely a scholar, a wit and a good poet, but he was thoroughly versed in English history; and the historical plays are in line with the events described in his historical poems. He himself in his rhyming epistle to Sandys, Treasurer for the Virginia Colony, says,

“It was my hap before all other men  
To suffer shipwreck by my forward pen,  
When King James entered, at which joyful time  
I taught his title to this isle in rhyme  
And to my part did all the Muses win,  
With high-pitch pæans to applaud him in.”

It could not have been on account of his gratulatory poem to King James that the new sovereign flouted him. A man, superior in station, is not apt to treat with contempt another who eulogizes him, especially in well-written poetry. A much more plausible and satisfactory reason could be found in the fact that James must have known or suspected that Drayton was one of the writers of the play of Richard the Second, which figures so largely in the examination of the deluded followers of Essex, for that play treated of the deposing of a king. That Drayton was one of the collaborators in the composition of that play, I think that I shall be able to show.

There are two other circumstances heretofore alluded to, which had to be weighed in the consideration of Drayton's claims. The reader will remember that Heywood, in giving nicknames to his contemporary poets, including Shake-speare, leaves out the name of Drayton; and Webster, in praising the industrious Shakespeare and others, also omits Drayton. Some of these poets were identified by special names. Thus Marston was called



"Kinsayder," Monday was known as "Lazarus Piot," and Drayton was "the Gentle Shepherd or Rowland," and Davies styled him the "poet Decius."

Another remarkable circumstance in connection with the Shakespeare question is the fact that after the poem of Tarquin and Lucrece appeared in 1593, Drayton, in 1594, published his poem of Matilda, the seventh stanza of which reads as follows:

"Lucrece, of whom proud Rome hath boasted long,  
Lately revived to live another age,  
And here arrived to tell of Tarquin's wrong,  
Her chaste denial and the tyrant's rage,  
Acting her passions on our stately stage;  
She is remembered, all forgetting me,  
Yet I as fair and chaste as e'er was she."

In all succeeding editions of the poem, Drayton omitted this stanza. As Collier says in his introduction to the poem of Lucrece, "the stanza above quoted contains a clear allusion to Shakespeare's Lucrece, and a question then presents itself, why Drayton entirely omitted it in the after impressions of his Matilda."

There is another singular circumstance in connection with the poem of Lucrece. In 1624, eight years after the death of William Shaksper, an edition of Lucrece was published which purported to be newly revised and which was accompanied also by marginal explanatory notes.

Naturally, only the author of the poem would take so much trouble as appears to have been taken as to this edition of Lucrece, and no dramatic poet of the time indulged in marginal notes, as the reader will find, except Michael Drayton. His habit in respect to revision will be hereafter considered in connection with the plays.

Again, the reader of lines 400 to 413 of Lucrece, who compares them with the 57th and 58th stanzas of the sixth canto of Drayton's Barons' Wars, will be struck with the wonderful resemblance. For the benefit of the casual reader, I will place them in regular order one after the other.

LUCRECE, LINES 400 TO 406.

“Her hair, like golden threads, play'd with her breath  
 O modest wantons! Wanton modesty!  
 Showing life's triumph in the map of death,  
 And death's dim look in life's mortality;  
 Each in her sleep themselves so beautify,  
 As if between them twain, there were no strife,  
 But that life lived in death, and death in life.”

DRAYTON'S BARONS' WARS, 57.

“Her loose hair look'd like gold, (a word too base  
 Nay more than sin, but so to name her hair)  
 Declining as to kiss her fairer face,  
 No word is fair enough for thing so fair,  
 Nor ever was there epithet could grace  
 That by much praising, which we much impair,  
 And where the pen fails, pencils can not show it.”

LUCRECE, LINES 407 TO 413.

“Her breasts like ivory globes, arched with blue  
 A pair of maiden worlds unconquered,  
 Save of their lord, no bearing yoke they knew,  
 And him by oath they truly honored,  
 These worlds to Tarquin, new ambition bred,  
 Who, like a foul usurper, went about  
 From this fair throne to heave the owner out.”

## DRAYTON'S BARONS' WARS, 56.

“Where her fair breasts at liberty were let,  
Whose violet veins in branched riverets flow,  
And Venus' swans and milky doves were set  
Upon those swelling mounts of driven snow;  
Whereon while Love to sport himself doth get,  
He lost his way, nor back again could go,  
But with those banks of beauty set about,  
He wandered still, yet never could get out.”

It must be considered also that Drayton was a thorough scholar, a master and maker of words, a man familiar with the Court, with the most distinguished and learned men of his time, with all the customs and habits of the people, with the idioms of Warwickshire, with Gloucestershire where, at Clifford, he sojourned in the summer months, with the plants and flowers, the hills, the mountains, and the rivers of the British Isles. Hunter says, “I see not why Drayton should not now be placed, as he was by his contemporaries, in the first class of English poets.” Speaking of the Polyolbion, D'Israeli said in the “Amenities of Literature,” “The grand theme of this poet was his fatherland. The Muse of Drayton passes by every town and tower; each tells some tale of ancient glory or of some worthy who must never die. The local associations of legends and customs are animated by the personifications of mountains and rivers; and often, in some favorite scenery, he breaks forth with all the emotion of a true poet. He has not, says Lamb, left a rivulet so narrow that it may be stepped over without honorable mention, and has associated hills and streams with life and passions beyond the dreams of old mythology.”

I have not been able to tell the reader who were Drayton's parents, or whether he was married or single, although I believe that a search would show that he was married, probably in Dublin, to Mary Martin; nor whether he made a will or not. It appears that in the latter part of his life, he lodged in London at the Bay Window house next to the east end of St. Dunstan's Church in Fleet Street; and that he died there on December 23, 1631.

"The only manuscript in the British Museum, on Drayton, is number 24,491, Hunter's *Chorus vatuum*. It refers to a poetical brochure entitled 'Parthea, a funeral pyramid to the honor of the very virtuous gentlewoman (now in glory), Mrs. Elizabeth Gray, daughter of Richard Gray, Esquire, and sometime wife of J. M. Martin, of Cork, by his sister Mrs. Mary Drayton, allied to the prince of English poets, Michael Drayton, Esquire, interred at Atherstone, *de anno* 1614, *aetat* 24.'"

In the ably conducted debate between Appleton Morgan and Isaac H. Platt, reported in *New Shakespeareana* for April and July, 1903, Mr. Morgan calls attention to the fact that the plays are packed with Warwickshirisms and that the Warwickshire dialect could not have been placed in the plays with a design of promoting their popularity or success. Mr. Morgan collected four hundred and eighty-eight of these isms. And as to names, he has found a frequent use of Warwickshire names. For instance in the *Taming of the Shrew* will be found such Warwickshire names as Sly, William Visor, Peter Turf, Henry Pimpernell, Marion Hackett, Wincot, old John Naps of Greece, and many others. He also calls attention to the fact that the plays are packed with puns, of which the significance depends upon a Warwickshire pronunciation

of the vowels, instancing the pun as to "ship" and "sheep," in *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Act 1, Scene 1, line 73.

In forming an opinion, therefore, as to whether or not Michael Drayton was one of the composers of part or all of the Shakespeare plays, the reader must keep in mind the fact that Drayton was born, educated, and trained in Warwickshire.

A complete edition of Drayton's works would be very acceptable to the lovers of good English literature. Such an edition was projected by the Rev. Richard Hooper, and three volumes appeared in 1886, under the alluring but deceptive title of "The complete works of Michael Drayton." These volumes, however, contained only the poems of *Polyolbion* and the *Harmony of the Church*, omitting his best poems; and the publication then stopped, probably because of the death of the accomplished editor; and there is no good edition of his complete works.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

WHAT THE DEDICATIONS SHOW.

*“By indirections find directions out.”*

— Hamlet, ii, 1.

The prose writings connected with the Shakespeare plays and poems may be properly divided into three classes or parts. One part consists of the letters scattered at intervals throughout the plays. Another consists of the dedications of the two poems; and the third consists of the argument which precedes the poem of Tarquin and Lucrece. It is not my purpose, neither is it necessary, to dissect or specially consider either the letters or the argument, because, if the plays were composed by collaborators, or, if after they or any of them were completed, they were revised, altered, or dressed by another than the original composer, any argument in favor of a particular authorship based upon them would be regarded as unreliable, or at the least, disputable.

The argument preceding the poem of Tarquin and Lucrece is very like to that which precedes Ben Jonson's *Sejanus*, as the reader will find on examination. I have carefully compared them and believe that Jonson was the composer of both arguments.

In a lesser degree, the objection of unreliability applies to the two dedications, but not for the same reason. I wish to be entirely frank with the reader. No matter how strong an argument in favor of any particular writer may be drawn from the dedications, it can be objected with some show of truth that both of the dedications

might have been composed and furnished by the publishers. Every student of English literature knows that publishers took great liberties with unclaimed productions during the Elizabethan era. Printers and publishers then, unlike those of the present day, were despots. They assigned the authorship of a work to any man they pleased and they dedicated it to whom they pleased. Not only that, but they did what they deemed best for their own interests with a manuscript, abridging or enlarging it to suit themselves. Nash, the satirist and dramatist, says that the printers added four acts to his play, "The Isle of Dogs," without his consent or the least guess of his drift or scope. Bacon, in his dedication of his *Essays* to his brother Anthony, touches upon the same despotic custom when he says, "These fragments of my conceits were going to print; to labor the stay of them had been troublesome and subject to interpretation; to let them pass had been to adventure the wrong they might receive by untrue copies, or by some garnishment which it might please any that should set them forth to bestow upon them."

Wither, in his "Scholar's Purgatory," 1625, says of publishers, "If he gets any written matter in his power likely to be vendible, whether the author be willing or not, he will publish it, and it shall be contrived and named also according." Besides, the mere fact of a similarity in the phraseology as between one or both of the dedications and a prior dedication to the play of another man, would strengthen the doubt. As for instance, in the dedication of the play of *Cornelia*, presumably written by Thomas Kyd, are these words, "But chiefly that I would attempt the dedication of so rough *unpolished* a work to the *survey*

of your so worthy self. . . . And never spend one hour of the day in some kind service to your honor and another of the night in wishing you all happiness."

Again, in the dedication of Whitney's "Choice of Emblems," published in 1586, occurs also the following striking resemblance to the later Venus and Adonis dedication: "Being abashed that my ability can not afford them such as are fit to be offered up to so honorable a survey; yet if it shall like your honor to allow of any of them, I shall think my pen set to the book in happy hour, and it shall encourage me to assay some matter of more moment as soon as leisure will furnish my desire in that behalf."

In considering therefore what my researches show as to the two dedications, the reader will understand that the argument from the dedications can not be a very convincing one.

Dedications in the time of Elizabeth and James, which emanated from the authors, may be classified thus: There were those which were intended to obtain the patronage of some distinguished man or some friend of literature. There were those also which were intended as courteous acts to those who had befriended, or were relatives of, the writer. And then, again, there were those which were carelessly made without regard for or reference to anybody.

An examination of the dedications written by Michael Drayton shows that they were mainly of the first class. He dedicated his compositions to Aston or Goodere, or to those of the nobility who could help him or had helped him as patrons. Bacon's dedications belonged to both the first and second class, but they were made chiefly to his



friends and kinsmen; while Dekker's dedications are found in the first and third class. Naturally, if Drayton had written the *Venus and Adonis*, as the first heir of his invention, and had caused it to be published, he would have dedicated the poem to Sir Henry Goodere or Sir Walter Aston, for they were his sincere friends and patrons. I have examined the dedications made by Drayton and I can not find in them any particular resemblance to the dedications of the two poems. In trying Bacon, I find some resemblances.

In the *Venus and Adonis* dedication, the writer says: "I account myself highly praised," while Bacon, in a letter to the Lord Treasurer, Vol. 6, Edition 1803, page 385, says, "I account myself much bound."

In the *Tarquin and Lucrece* dedication, the writer says, "The warrant I have of your honorable disposition," while Bacon, in a letter to Lord-Keeper Egerton, Vol. 6, page 32, says, "of your Lordship's honorable disposition, both generally and to me." In the same dedication occur the words, "Being part in all I have devoted yours," while in the dedication to Henry the Seventh, Vol. 5, page 4, Bacon says, "In part of my acknowledgment to your Highness."

In the ending of the *Venus and Adonis* dedication, the writer says, "which I wish may always answer your own wish," and in that of the *Tarquin and Lucrece*, he says, "To whom I wish long life, still lengthened with all happiness.

Your Lordship's in all duty."

Bacon, in a letter to Essex, Vol. 6, page 8, says,

"I wish you all honor,

Your Lordship's in most faithful duty."

And at page 13 he says, "And so I wish you all increase of honor. Your honor's poor kinsman in faithful service and duty."

And again, Vol. 5, page 220, he says in a letter to Burghley, "I wish your Lordship all happiness," and at page 270, in a letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury, he says, "And so I wish your Grace all prosperity." *Idem*, pages 272 and 278, 304 and 325.

If Bacon wrote the two dedications, he had in mind his relation to the Earl of Southampton, who was Bacon's friend, and on whom also Bacon in return conferred many favors. As an evidence of this continuing friendship, Bacon wrote to him, Vol. 5, page 281, referring to the accession of James, "it is as true as a thing that God knoweth, that this great change hath wrought in me no other change towards your Lordship than this, that I may safely be to you now, which I was truly before."

In the dedication of his translation of the Psalms, made while he was on a sick-bed, he said to Herbert, the dedicatee, "it being my manner for dedications to choose those that I hold most fit for the argument."

I can find nothing in the dedications written by Dekker at all resembling the two dedications now under consideration, but he throws light upon the habit of the writers of that period as to dedications when, in the dedication to "News from Hell," written in 1606, speaking of patrons, he says, "The strongest shields that I know for such fights (against the reception of a book) are good patrons; from whom writers claim such ancient privileges that howsoever they find entertainment, they make bold to make acquaintance with them (though never so merely strangers) without blushing."

Dekker dedicated his *Satiro-mastix* to the World, beginning thus: "World, I was once resolved to be round with thee, because I know 'tis thy fashion to be round with everybody; but the wind shifting his point, the vane turned; yet because thou wilt sit as Judge of all matters (though for thy labor thou wearest Midas' ears and art *monstrum horrendum, informe ingens cui lumen ademptum*, whose great Polyphemean eye is put out) I care not much if I make description before thy universality of that terrible Poetamachia commenced between Horace, the Second, and a band of lean-witted poetasters." When he wrote the Pleasant Comedy of the Gentle Craft, he dedicated it to "all good fellows, professors of the gentle craft; of what degree soever."

After examining all the dedications of his books and plays, I find no resemblance in the style or words to those which precede the two poems.

Tracing by the dedications, therefore, is not a fair or very convincing test. There is, however, in the study and examination of the dedications to the two poems, one fact which is worthy of consideration. It will be noticed by the reader that the signatures to the dedications are thus spelled: "William Shakespeare." I give as my authority for this statement the "Outlines" of Halliwell-Phillips.

If, now, the reader will turn back to Chapter VIII, he will find that Sir Frederic Madden, who examined the original will of the man of Stratford, insists that he wrote his name thus "Shakspere." Chalmers and Drake, who were believers in Shaksper's authorship of the plays and whom Madden antagonized on this point, claimed that he wrote his surname thus, "*Shakspeare*," while I contend

that an examination carefully made of the facsimiles shows that William of Stratford wrote his name thus, "*Shaksper.*" Now, whether he wrote his own name as Shakspere, Shakspeare, or Shaksper, he did not write his name as "Shakespeare" when he signed the mortgage, deed, and will, as the dedicator of the two poems did.

Of course it is easy to suggest that the discrepancy might have been caused by a blunder of the printer; but a young writer who was putting out a poem as the first heir of his invention and dedicating it to a powerful nobleman whose patronage and favor might be of great value to him, would very naturally take care that his name should be spelled properly. He might be careless as to printers' mistakes in the body of the poem, but he would not suffer his surname to be incorrectly printed at the end of the dedication, if he were the real author of the dedicated work. And if the printer made a mistake as to the name of the dedicator of the *Venus and Adonis*, it would be natural that the composer would correct the mistake in the succeeding dedication of the *Tarquin and Lucrece*. He would desire to be made famous in the literary world in his own name. While a writer might wish to conceal his name by the use of a pseudonym, he would not use a pseudonym so like his own in spelling and pronunciation as Shakespeare is to Shakspeare, Shakspere, or Shaksper.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

WHITHER THE PATHWAY OF THE POEMS LEADS.

*"Thou art not what thou seem'st."*

—Lucrece, 600.

While the reader may have doubts as to the authorship of the dedications prefixed to the two poems, I have affirmed and now reiterate that he will accept as an established fact that each of the two poems was the work of one man only, and he also believes and always will believe with unshaken and unshakable faith that he who wrote the two poems was the William Shakespeare or Shake-speare of the plays. The poems, therefore, furnish the key which in the hands of the skillful scholar and searcher will unlock the door of the literary chamber which contains the name of the hidden composer of the best and most noteworthy portions of the plays. I may not be that scholar and searcher, and I may give an erroneous opinion, but I shall at least have paved the way for more learned examiners, who will be able to find the real author of the poems and to certify whether I am right or wrong.

An examination of the two poems shows the following peculiarities:

*First.*—That the writer was very much in the habit of using the termination "eth" as applied to the third person singular of the indicative mood and present tense.

To facilitate the examination, I have separated and alphabetically arranged the verbs so used in each poem. In the Venus and Adonis, they are as follows:

“Ariseth, barketh, breaketh (3), breatheth (3), breedeth, burneth, coasteth, comforteth, deviseth, doteth, falleth, feedeth, filleth (2), gazeth, goeth, hasteth (2), heaveth, languisheth, leadeth, listeth, looketh, loseth, marketh, noteth, presenteth, raineth, reckoneth, relenteth, relieveth, remaineth, resisteth, reviveth, seemeth (2), seizeth, shooteth, sinketh, sorteth, staineth, suggesteth, swelleth, thriveeth, tormenteth, upheaveth, waxeth, whetteth, willeth.”

In the Rape of Lucrece, they are as follows:

“Attendeth, awaketh, boundeth, burneth, coucheth, dazzleth, dreadeth, easeth, excelleth, fawneth, feareth, gazeth, granteth, greeteth, healeth, imparteth, leadeth, lendeth, lighteth, maketh, marcheth, needeth, panteth, pineth, pleadeth, rouseth, slaketh, smiteth, starteth, stealeth, suspecteth, urgeth, vanisheth, wanteth (2).”

In the Venus and Adonis, of eleven hundred and ninety-four lines, there are fifty uses of the termination “eth.” In the Rape of Lucrece, containing eighteen hundred and fifty-five lines, there are thirty-five instances of such use.

No such frequent use of this termination is found either in the works of Drayton or Dekker. While both used the termination occasionally, they only used it moderately. It was not so as to Bacon. He indulged in an excessive use of the termination, much more so than any other writer of that time. This will clearly appear to the general reader by a perusal of his letters and literary or legal papers. I will give a few instances from his works, casually jotted down:

“Abateth, accepteth, addeth, agreeth, appeareth, asketh, aspireth, assureth, becometh, beholdeth, breaketh,

breedeth, bringeth (2), carrieth, causeth, changeth, cometh (2), consulteth, consumeth, containeth, corrupteth, dasheth, depriveth, desireth, destroyeth, diminisheth, distill-eth, disturbeth, divideth, eclipseth, embaseth, encourageth, endangereth, enricheth, envieth (2), establisheth, esteemeth, examineth, expresseth, extinguisheth, falleth, faireth (2), filleth, flieth, followeth (3), gathereth, giveth, goeth (3), governeth, healeth, holdeth (2), hurteth, importeth, imposeth, inclineth, increaseth, incurreth, inspireth, inviteth, joineth, keepeth (2), kindleth (2), knoweth (2), leaveth, looketh, loseth, maketh (9), noteth (4), openeth (2), passeth (3), perfecteth, perplexeth, pointeth, presseth, pretendeth, prevaieth, procureth, propoundeth, putteth (2), raiseth, ravisheth, redoubleth, remaineth, removeth, requireth, resembleth, resteth, returneth, saileth, seemeth (6), selleth, serveth (2), settleth, sheweth (2), signifieth, sinketh, sorteth, spendeth, spreadeth, standeth (3), stayeth, studieth, sufficeth, taketh, talketh, teacheth (2), thinketh, threateneth, traduceth, traveleth (3), troubleth, turneth (6), walketh, windeth, worketh, yieldeth."

While this use of the termination "eth" was a peculiarity of that era, and while instances of its use may be found in the works of Drayton and Dekker, Bacon's works are conspicuous for the profuse and extravagant use thereof.

*Secondly.*—The writer of the two poems often used a word which was not to be found by me, after diligent search, but once in the writings of Drayton and Dekker. I refer to the word "whereat," inserting here in full for the reader's convenience the lines wherein it is found.

In *Venus and Adonis*, the reader will find it thus used:

- "The boar, quoth she; *whereat* a sudden pale."  
—L. 589.
- "*Whereat*, the impartial gazer late did wonder."  
—L. 748.
- "*Whereat* amazed, as one that unaware."  
—L. 823.
- "And now she beats her heart, *whereat* it groans."  
—L. 829.
- "*Whereat* she starts, like one that spies an adder."  
—L. 878.
- "*Whereat* her tears began to turn their tide."  
—L. 979.
- "*Whereat* she leaps that was but late forlorn."  
—L. 1026.
- "*Whereat* each tributary subject quakes."  
—L. 1045.

In the Rape of Lucrece it is used twice, thus:

- "*Whereat* a waxen torch forthwith he lighteth."  
—L. 178.
- "*Whereat* she smiled with so sweet a cheer."  
—L. 264.

Drayton seems to have been particularly fond of the word "*whenas*" and he uses it a great deal in the "Barons' Wars," so much so that it will attract the reader's attention, but neither he nor Dekker use the word "*whereat*." "*Whenas*" seems to have been a Draytonian word.

If the reader will take up Bacon's "Apology in certain imputations concerning the late Earl of Essex" and the "History of Henry the Seventh," he will find the use by Bacon of the word "*whereat*," as follows:

- "She saw plainly *whereat* I leveled."  
—Vol. 3, p. 221.
- "*Whereat* she seemed again offended."  
—Vol. 3, p. 224.
- "*Whereat* I remember she took."  
—Vol. 3, p. 227.



"*Whereat* there was great murmur."

—Vol. 5, p. 22.

"*Whereat* there was much wondering."

—Vol. 5, p. 25.

"*Whereat* Hippias was offended."

—Vol. 6, p. 79.

*Thirdly.*—There is another peculiarity of the two poems which deserves to be particularly pointed out and which has hitherto escaped the notice of commentators. I refer to the unusual number of similes indulged in by the composer. These may be separated into two groups designated by the words "as" and "like." In the *Venus and Adonis* there are fifty-nine similes, and in the *Rape of Lucrece* there are eighty-two, making in these two poems one hundred and forty-one in all. This large number of similes in the *Venus and Adonis* I set out at length, as follows:

"As coals of glowing fire. As an empty eagle. As on a prey. As the spring. As in disdain. As from a furnace. As they were mad. As a dying coal. As apt as new-fallen snow. As the wind is hushed. As the wolf doth grin. As the berry. As the bright sun. As the fleet-foot roe. As poor birds. As those poor birds. As air and water. As if another chase. As burning fevers. As mountain snow. As caterpillars do. As one that unawares. As night wanderers often are. As one full of despair. As one with treasure laden. As falcon to the lure. As the snail. As when the wind. As dry combustible matter. Like a bold-faced suitor. Like a dive dapper. Like a fairy. Like a nymph. Like sturdy trees. Like misty vapors. Like a man. Like a band. Like heaven's thunder. Like fire. Like feathered wings. Like a melancholy malcontent. Like a falling plume.

Like a lowly lover. Chorus-like. Like two silver doves. Like a jade. Like a red morn. Like the deadly bullet. Like the fair sun. Like the moon in water. Glutton-like. Like a wild bird. Like the froward infant. Like a pale-faced coward. Like lawn being spread. Like to a mortal butcher. Like glowworms. Like an earthquake. Like thyself, all stained. Like a labyrinth. Like the wanton mermaid's song. Like sunshine after rain. Like a glutton dies. Like shrill-tongued tapsters. Like a milch doe. Like one that spies an adder. Like soldiers when. Like milk and blood. Like the proceedings. Like sluices. Like a stormy day. Like many clouds. Like pearls in glass. Like stars ashamed of day. Like a king perplexed. Like two thieves. Like a vapor."

In the Rape of Lucrece, the similes are as follows:

"As bright as heaven's beauties. As is the morning's silver-melting dew. As one of which. As from this cold flint. As in revenge. As roses. As lawn. As corn o'er grown. As servants. As minutes fill up hours. As their captain. As those bars. As if the heavens. As the fair and fiery pointed sun. As if between them. As the grim lion. As one in dead of night. As fowl hears falcon's bells. As a thought unacted. As the full-fed hound. As palmers chat. As smoke from Ætna. As from a mountain spring. As a child. As the dark earth. As frets upon an instrument. As the poor frightened deer. As winter meads. As the earth. As marble. As in a rough-grown grove. As lagging fowls. As heaven. As if some mermaid. As subtle Sinon. As if with grief. As Priam him did cherish. As through an arch. As from a dream. As silly jeering idiots. Coward-like. Like a virtuous deed. Like little frosts. Like a virtuous monu-

ment. Like an April daisy. Like marigolds. Like golden threads. Like ivory globes. Like a foul usurper. Like straggling slaves. Like a new-killed bird. Like a trumpet. Like a falcon towering. Like a white hind. Like deceit. Like whirlwinds. Like a troubled ocean. Like Gods. Like a jade. Like to a bankrupt beggar. Like a thievish dog. Like a wearied lamb. Like water that. Drone-like. Like still-pining Tantalus. Like the snow-white swan. Like sluices. Like an unpracticed swimmer. Like a gentle flood. Like a melting eye. Like the dewy night. Like ivory conduits. Like a goodly champaign plain. Like a press of people. Like dying coals. Like bright things stained. Like a heavy-hanging bell. Like a constant and confirmed devil. Like wildfire. Like rainbows in the sky. Like old acquaintance. Like a late-sacked island."

A partial examination of the works of Bacon shows that he abounds in similes. I will give the reader a few examples of them, premising that many others can be found in his writings.

"As an hireling. As the sticks of a faggot. As the lawyers speak. As old wives' fables. As young men. As a courtesan. As with servants. As the forbidden fruit. As were Ceres, Bacchus. As a pasquil or satire. As vain princes. As the chaff. As a watch by night. As with a tide. As the grass. As chariots swift. As a tale told. As flames of fire. As ships. As water. As the shrines. As the serpent of Moses. As the statue of Polyphemus. As a nursery garden. As the ark of Noah. As the waters. As the flight of birds. As the swarming of bees. As a Tartar's bow. As a flight of birds. As from a rock. As with a strong tide. As an heaven of

stars. As Queen Mary said of Calais. As a year with two harvests. As one awaked. As great engines. As a phoenix. As Atalanta's balls. As Africanus was. As a vanity and ventosity. As a plant. As pyramids. As the greyhound. As the hare. As Periander. As the priest. As Julius Cæsar did. As flowers of Florence. Like the images of Cassius and Brutus. Like fruitful showers. Like the benefits of heaven. Like an ill mower. Like the fruitful tree. Like noble gold. Like waters after a tempest. Like branches of a tree. Like the pulling out of an aching tooth. Like a piece of stuff. Like a child following a bird. Like the fish Remora. Like a bell-ringer. Like the miller of Granchester. Like an old christening. Like another Æneas. Like a pedant. Like thunder afar off. Like a churchman. Like a hawk. Like a perspective glass. Like Penelope's web. Like an alphabet. Like the humor of Tiberius. Like the frets on the roof of houses. Like a lark. Like waters to physicians. Like a helmet. Like a good Protestant. Like a broker's shop. Like Hercules' column. Like a foolish bold mountebank."

If I should say that similes occur often in the works of Drayton and Dekker, as also in the works of other poets of that era, and that they were even found in abundance, I should have to say that in Bacon's works they occur in superabundance.

There is, however, one play, designated as a doubtful Shakespeare play, called "King Edward the Third," a play which will be hereafter referred to, in which the same profusion of similes abounds which is so noticeable in Bacon's works. To save the reader the trouble of searching for them, I quote them from the play as follows:

“As at the coronation of a king. As an abstract or a brief. As a May blossom. As a throne. As plenteous as the sun. As on the fragrant rose. As a sail. As a lion. As a kneeling vassal. As the vantage of the wind. As when the empty eagle flies. As on an anvil. As a blushing maid. As a shade. As a mournful knell. As black as powder. As when a whirlwind. As things long lost. As a bear. Like to fruitful showers. Like a conqueror. Like the lazy drone. Like the April sun. Like a country swain. Like a cloak. Like inconstant clouds. Like her oriental red. Like to a flattering glass. Like a glass. Like a fading taper. Like the sun. Like an humble shadow. Like as the wind. Like to a meadow. Like sweetest harmony. Like fiery dragons. Like unnatural sons. Raven-like. Like an oven. Like a tottering wall. Like a skittish and untamed colt. Like a thirsty tiger. Like stiff-grown oaks. Like Perseus’ shield. Like a sapless tree. Like emmets on a bank. Lion-like. Haggard-like. Like the continual laboring woodman’s axe. Like a silver quarry. Like a half moon. Like a soldier. Like a ring. Like a slender point. Like a Roman peer.”

The reader will pardon the digression here that he may first consider the style of the writer of *Edward the Third* by reference to one quotation, which is only one of many philosophical passages in the play; and secondly, that he may obtain a clue to the authorship by the setting out of another quotation from the play paralleled by a few sentences from Bacon’s *Essay on Death*.

In Act 2, Scene 2, Warwick, addressing his daughter, says:

“An honorable grave is more esteem’d  
Than the polluted closet of a king:

The greater man, the greater is the thing,  
 Be it good or bad, that he shall undertake:  
 An unrequited mote, flying in the sun,  
 Presents a greater substance than it is;  
 The freshest summer's day doth sooner taint  
 The loathed carrion that it seems to kiss:  
 Deep are the blows made with a mighty axe.  
 That sin doth ten times aggravate itself  
 That is committed in a holy place:  
 An evil deed, done by authority,  
 Is sin and subornation: Deck an ape  
 In tissue, and the beauty of the robe  
 Adds but the greater scorn unto the beast.  
 A spacious field of reason could I urge  
 Between his glory, daughter, and thy shame.  
 That poison shows worst in a golden cup;  
 Dark night seems darker by the lightning flash;  
 Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds;  
 And every glory that inclines to sin,  
 The shame is trebled by the opposite."

If the reader will peruse the play, he will discover that the author devotes a great part of the play to such philosophical utterances in verse as are found in the Shakespeare plays and the two poems.

The other quotation is taken from the fourth scene of the fourth act, and the first impression of the reader will be that it was either copied from or originated by the author of Bacon's *Essay on Death*.

AUDLEY SAYS:

"To die is as common as to live;  
 The one in choice, the other holds in chase,  
 For from the instant we begin to live,  
 We do pursue and hunt the time to die.

First bud we, then we blow, and after seed,  
 Then presently we fall, and as a shade  
 Follows the body, so we follow death.  
 If then, we hunt for death, why do we fear it?  
 Or, if we fear it, why do we follow it?  
 If we do fear, with fear we do but aid  
 The thing we fear to seize on us the sooner.  
 If we fear not, then no resolv'd proffer  
 Can overthrow the limit of our fate;  
 For whether ripe or rotten, drop we shall  
 As we do draw the lottery of our doom."

## BACON SAYS:

"It is as natural to die as to be born; and to a little infant, perhaps the one is as painful as the other. He that dies in an earnest pursuit is like one that is wounded in hot blood, who for the time scarce feels the hurt: And therefore a mind fixed and bent upon somewhat that is good, doth avert the dolor of death. I have often thought upon death, and I find it the least of all evils. All that is past is as a dream; and he that hopes or depends upon time coming, dreams waking. So much of our life as we have discovered is already dead; and all those hours which we share, even from the breasts of our mother until we return to our grandmother, the earth, are part of our dying days; whereof even this is one, and those that succeed are of the same nature, for we die daily; and as others have given place to us, so we must in the end give way to others."

There are resemblances also between the play and the poems, as, for instance, in Act 4, Scene 4, the Herald says: "Seeing thy body's living date expired," while in Lucrece, line 25, the poet says, "An expired date, canceled ere well

begun." In Act 3, Scene 3, Edward says, "Against the kind embracement of thy friends"; while in *Venus and Adonis*, line 312, the poet says, "Beating his kind embracement with her heels." In Act 3, Scene 1, the Mariner says,

"As when the empty eagle flies,  
To satisfy his hungry griping maw."

While in *Venus and Adonis*, line 55, the poet says, "Even as an empty eagle, sharp by fast."

That I am not singular in calling the reader's attention to this remarkable play of Edward the Third, I insert the following from the first volume, page 125, of Halliwell-Phillip's "Outlines," showing that he also had been so struck by the style and phraseology of that play as to give it the particular notice embodied in the following extract:

"In an anonymous and popular drama entitled 'The Reign of King Edward the Third' produced in or before the year 1595, there are occasional passages which, by most judgments, will be accepted as having been written either by Shakespeare or by an exceedingly dexterous and successful imitator of one of his then favorite styles of composition. For who but one or the other could have endowed a kind and gentle lady with the ability of replying to the impertinent addresses of a foolish sovereign in words such as these:

'As easy may my intellectual soul  
Be lent away and yet my body live,  
As lend my body, palace to my soul,  
Away from her, and yet retain my soul.  
My body is her bower, her court, her abbey,  
And she an angel, pure, divine, unspotted;  
If I should lend her house, my lord, to thee,  
I kill my poor soul, and my poor soul me.'"



The reader will next find in the two poems a general style and manner of versification very different from that which characterizes the poetry of Drayton and Dekker. Drayton makes his principal personage, whether hero or heroine, the narrator, generally summoning them from the mansions of the dead to recite their woes, their sufferings or their achievements, and the poetry is of the narrative or descriptive style. This characteristic of Drayton was noted by Schlegel when he wrote his eulogy upon the play of Sir John Oldcastle, in the mistaken belief that he was eulogizing Shakespeare. Dekker also indulged in the descriptive style, as will manifestly appear to the reader who will peruse his "Canaan's Calamity" (which follows the Venus and Adonis versification), or any one of his lengthy poems.

On the other hand, the poet of the Venus and Adonis and the Rape of Lucrece is distinguished by his philosophical utterances. Hazlitt's criticism embodies the truth when he says: "The two poems appear to us like a couple of ice houses. They are about as hard, as glittering and as cold. The author seems all the time to be thinking of his verses and not of his subject—not of what his characters would feel, but of what they shall say. The whole is labored up-hill work. The poet is perpetually singling out the difficulties of the art to make an exhibition of his skill in wrestling with them. A beautiful thought is sure to be lost in an endless commentary upon it." Venus philosophizes about jealousy, nature, love, death, the world, and beauty.

In the Rape of Lucrece, Tarquin, after rising from his couch and lighting his torch, devotes ten full long stanzas of the poem to premeditation upon the dangers of his

enterprise; eight more to solicitation; while Lucrece uses ten more stanzas in reply. After the accomplishment of his purpose, fifteen more stanzas are consumed by Lucrece in a digressive address to Night, eight more similarly to Opportunity, fourteen more to Time as the master of opportunity, eight more she spends in caviling and apostrophizing Day, four in addressing the birds of the morning, and especially Philomel, and then she uses five more stanzas in the making of her will. As Rolfe says, in his introduction to the poems, "In Lucrece, the action is delayed, and delayed that every minute particular may be described, every minor incident recorded. In the newness of her suffering and shame, Lucrece finds time for an elaborate tirade appropriate to the theme 'Night,' another to that of 'Time,' another to that of 'Opportunity.' Each topic is exhausted. Then studiously a new incident is introduced, and its significance for the emotions is drained to the last drop in a new tirade." There is nothing in all this to remind one of anything similar either in Drayton or Dekker, nor in any other writer of the time except Bacon. It reminds us of Bacon's Essay upon Death, upon Love, upon Beauty, upon the Vicissitude and Mutations of Time and upon Nature. It recalls also his remarks in his letter of advice to Essex upon Opportunity, Vol. 5, p. 247. "I will shoot my fool's bolt," he says, "since you will have it so. The Earl of Ormond to be encouraged and comforted. Above all things, the garrison to be instantly provided for. For opportunity maketh a thief."

Since writing the above, I have been favored with a perusal of "The Mystery of William Shakespeare," by Webb, in which the author calls attention to another peculiarity of the writer of the poems; namely, that he

was versed in the law; and he affirms that if anything is certain in regard to the poems, it is certain that the author was a lawyer. Now, neither Drayton nor Dekker were lawyers. "The poems," he says, "sparkle with a frosty brilliance which led Mr. Hazlitt to compare them with palaces of ice. This frosty brilliance, according to Professor Dowden, is the light with which the ethical writings of Bacon gleam, and which plays are the worldly maxims which constitute his philosophy of life."

Finally, the accomplished Shakespearean scholar observes that "the poems abound with endless exercises and variations on such themes as Beauty, Lust, and Death; as Night, Opportunity, and Time. In reality they are essays of the philosopher in verse; and even Love is treated in the poems exactly as he treats it in the Essays. In the poems, the Queen of Love proposes to sell herself to the young Adonis. The consideration is to be 'a thousand kisses,' the number to be doubled in default of immediate payment; the deed is to be executed without delay; and the purchaser is to set his sign-manual on her wax-red lips. The Roman matron, in her agony of shame, makes the abridgment of a will in which she bequeaths her resolution to her husband, her honor to the knife, her shame to Tarquin, and her fame to those who still believed in her purity; and Collatinus is to oversee the will."

There is one other fact to be considered which militates against the Drayton theory. The poem of Venus and Adonis is singularly free from Warwickshireisms, to use a word of Morgan. What he says at page 11 of his "Study in the Warwickshire Dialect" is unanswerable. "If the Venus and Adonis was written in Warwickshire by a Warwickshire lad who had never been out of it, it ought to

contain a little Warwickshire word to betray the precincts of its writer and its conception. Richard Grant White loved to imagine young Shakespeare, like young Chatterton and many another young poet, coming up to London with his first poem in his pocket. 'In any case, we may be sure that the poem,' he says, 'was written some years before it was printed; and it may have been brought by the young poet from Stratford in manuscript, and read by a select circle, according to the custom of the time, before it was published.' If William Shakespeare wrote the poem at all, it would seem as if Mr. White's proposition is beyond question, so far as mere dates go. But if the result of a glossary of the Warwickshire dialect, as paralleled with the poem, is to discover no Warwickshire in a poem written by a Warwickshire man in Warwickshire, or soon after he left it to go elsewhere, it would look extremely like corroboration of the evidence of the dates by that of the dialect."

I have followed the path of the two poems, and that path points Baconward. The facts elicited by my examination are before the reader and he can draw his own conclusion from those facts. Bearing in mind that William Shaksper of Stratford-on-Avon is eliminated from consideration because of his illiteracy, he will understand that the question of the authorship of the poems and plays is to be determined only by the weight, not of direct, but of circumstantial evidence. Consequently, his opinion as to the authorship of the poems may differ from and be better than mine, especially if he will carefully study the two poems.

## CHAPTER XXX.

### TROILUS AND CRESSIDA AND THE TAMING OF THE SHREW EXAMINED.

*"Faith, thou hast some crotchets in thy head now."*

—Merry Wives of Windsor, ii, 1.

It was not my design in writing this book to prepare and give to the reader an examination and analysis of all the Shakespeare plays, because the examination is only for the purpose of trying to identify, if possible, some one or more of the writers of the plays.

I have therefore limited the consideration of the plays to a part only, including therein some of those which Meres in his "Palladis Tamia" referred to and which were composed before 1598. The reader of course will understand that I am not seeking to extol the beauties or to criticise the blemishes, if any, of the plays examined. In the consideration of the question of the authorship of the plays specified in this and the succeeding chapters, I shall endeavor to bring the facts before the reader, so that he and I can draw our own conclusions and opinions from the facts. In order not to be tedious, I have confined my examination to a consideration of the style of a few of the participants in their composition.

I will begin with the two plays entitled Troilus and Cressida and the Taming of the Shrew.

The first fact to which I will call the reader's attention, as attested by reliable evidence, is that the play of Troilus and Cressida was originally written by Thomas Dekker and Henry Chettle.

My authority for this statement of fact is the Diary of Philip Henslowe, which, as heretofore shown, is recognized as a reliable authority by all the commentators. It is not only a reliable authority, but it is the very best authority on the subject of the original composition of some of the so-called Shakespeare plays. Henslowe's Diary is entitled to a high degree of credit, because it was kept by a disinterested man, who cared nothing for any poet or dramatist except in so far as he could buy his plays for the smallest amount of money; and his Diary, outside of his expense account and common transactions, is in effect a statement of the names of the plays, either by the actual name given to the play, badly spelled, or an identifying reference to the play by the use of the name of some one of the chief characters therein, together with the amount paid for the play, or book as it was then called, and very often the names of the several writers who composed the play. As has already been stated in Chapter III, the Henslowe Diary shows that Thomas Dekker and Henry Chettle, in the spring of the year 1599, wrote the play of *Troilus and Cressida*. Presumptively, therefore, this play was written by Dekker and Chettle, unless it can be shown by proof which would overcome that presumption that Henslowe's Diary was, as to that point, incorrect; or that there were two plays on that subject with the same name; or that some one took the play after Dekker and Chettle had written it and added to or subtracted from the original composition. Collier, who edited and indexed the Diary, appends this note below Henslowe's entry: "Malone quotes this remarkable entry (showing that Dekker and Chettle were engaged in April, 1599, on a play with the name and on the subject adopted

by our great dramatist) in Shaksper by Boswell, 3, 331. Henslowe gets a little nearer the proper spelling of the title in a subsequent memorandum." It is a fact not to be disputed that William Shaksper of Stratford-on-Avon never claimed that he was the author of this play.

In the Stationers' Register is an entry in the following terms:

"7 Feb. 1602-3, Mr Roberts the booke of Troilus and Cresseda, as yt is acted by my Lo Chamberlens men."

Here there is no allusion to the name of Shaksper or Shakespeare. But in 1609, the name of "William Shakespeare" is attached to an edition of Troilus and Cressida. Such a publication might be of some avail to overcome the presumption that Dekker and Chettle wrote the play, were it not for two facts: First, that the attaching of that name to plays which William Shaksper did not write renders such an ascription of no value. As Morgan in his "Myth," speaking of the plays ascribed to Shaksper, says, "It is certainly a fact that none of these from Hamlet to Fair Em, from Lucrece to the Merry Devil of Edmonton, did William Shaksper ever either deny or claim as progeny of his. He fathered them all as they came and no questions asked; and had Ireland been at hand with his Vortigern, it might have gone in with the rest." His name was attached, as we have seen, to the play of Sir John Oldcastle, in 1600, but the discovery of Henslowe's Diary put an end to that falsehood, and there is no valid reason why the statements in the Diary as to the authorship of Troilus and Cressida should not also be accepted for truth.

The second fact is that the careful reader of the play will find therein the style of two different persons. Collier, a Shakespeare worshiper, says, in his introduction to the

plays, that "Everybody must be struck with the remarkable inequality of some parts of Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*, especially toward the conclusion; they could hardly have been written by the pen which produced the magnificent speeches of Ulysses and the other earlier portions." Verplanck, one of the most reliable editors, says, as to this play, "The Shakespearean critics have found ample room for theory. I have already noticed the supposition of Dryden and of Sir Walter Scott that the play was left imperfect, or hurried to a conclusion with little care after parts had been as carefully elaborated. Another set of English commentators, from Steevens to Seymour, have satisfied themselves that Shakespeare's genius and taste had been expended in improving the work of an inferior author, whose poorer groundwork still appeared through his more precious decorations. This, Steevens supposes, might be the *Troilus and Cressida* on which Dekker and Chettle were employed in 1599, as we learn from Henslowe's Diary."

These opinions and guesses made by the commentators, great and small, support the title of Dekker and Chettle to the authorship of *Troilus and Cressida*. I will ask the reader, whether a believer or unbeliever in Shaksper's ability to write a play, to read it carefully, and then to ask himself the question, "Does it appear on its face to be the work of one man solely?" and he will be forced to answer that two men, at the least, composed it.

I have already shown and will further show that Dekker and Chettle had not only the ability to write the play, but also that all the *indicia* are corroborative of their original joint authorship. Groshart's terse poetical description of Dekker's gifts as a dramatic poet is directly in point:



"In far back Jacobean days, the name  
 Of Dekker seen on any title page  
 Drew magnet-like, men's eyes; he was the rage.  
 He had that force in him which did tame  
 Even rare Ben; or call it mother wit  
 Or genius, his lightest works still live."

The following from Pearson's "Memoir" well describes him: "His stores of wisdom and his wealth of imagination were for forty years lavished on the world, but with little or no reward to himself. He wrote continually under the stress of want and was often compelled to seek friendly aid to release him from the walls of a debtor's prison. A wretched hand-to-mouth existence, a career made sordid by the constant necessity of writing for daily bread, seems to have been his lot from first to last, relieved, perhaps, by occasional glimpses of happiness and repose such as he must have enjoyed when composing some of the choicest of the series of dramas which constitute his chief title to fame."

And as for Henry Chettle, the Diary of Henslowe shows that Chettle was esteemed so competent as a play writer, and the thrifty and enterprising manager, Henslowe, was so appreciative of his ability "to tickle the ears" of an English audience, that he secured his services by a bond conditioned that he would write plays exclusively for the Earl of Nottingham's players. He was also employed to write plays for the Court. He was a printer, a stationer, and so much of a ready writer that he was a participant in the composition of over forty plays, among which may be enumerated Patient Grissel, The Rising of Cardinal Wolsey, in two parts, The Danish Tragedy, The Death of Robert Earl of Huntington, The Step-mother's Tragedy,

Robert the Second, Damon and Pythias, King Sebastian of Portugal, Like Quits Like, and Vayvode.

Passing from the proof of the competency of the two dramatists, let us take up the discriminating marks and consider first the oaths, exclamations, identical expressions, and ejaculations:

The ejaculations are as follows:

“And fell so roundly. Beshrew your heart. By God’s lid. By Venus’ hand. Go hang yourself. God-a-mercy. Ha, ha, ha. How rank soever. O, admirable. Regard him. Serve your turn. This is kindly done. To say the truth. Welcome, welcome.”

Next let us consider the big words in *Troilus and Cressida*; such as Jonson, in his *Poetaster*, caused Dekker to be indicted for using. They are: “Attributive, circumvention, commixtion, conflux, consanguinity, co-riveled, corresponsive, deracinate, dividable, embrasures, expressure, fixture, fraughtage, infectiously, insisture, mappery, medicinale, monstrosity, oppugnancy, primogenitive, propension, propugnation, protractive, rejoindure, taciturnity, transportance, uncomprehensive, unrespective, waftage.”

Compare these with the following big words in *Patient Grissel*, a play which was mainly written by Dekker and Chettle, and a play in which Francis Bacon had no part: “Accoutrements, capricious, collocation, condolment, conglutinate, delinquishment, dignifying, diogenical, disconsolation, expatiate, fastidious, fustian, gallimaufry, gratulate, incongruent, magnitude, misprize, misprision, oblivionize, outlandish, penurious, solitariness, synthesis.”

Consider also the long words heretofore set out in Chapter XXVI, and gathered from Dekker’s plays.

Words used in *Troilus and Cressida* and once only in the play, and also used by Dekker, are as follows:

“Blackamoor, brainless, inveigled, lifter, mealy, plaguy, unclasp, waftage, wenching.”

When *Troilus* says “Do not give advantage to stubborn critics,” Dekker, in *Knights Conjuring*, says, “Take heed of critics.” When *Pandarus* says, “and I have a rheum in mine eyes too,” Dekker, in 2 *H. W.*, A. 2, S. 1, says, “I am troubled with a whoreson salt rheum.” Neither Bacon or Drayton, nor indeed any dramatic poet of the time, save the creator of *Simon Eyre* and *Orlando Frisco-baldo*, could have written in *Troilus and Cressida* the following:

“Now the rotten diseases of the south, the guts-griping, ruptures, catarrhs, loads o’ gravel i’ the back, lethargies, cold palsies, raw eyes, dirt-rotten livers, wheezing lungs, bladders full of imposthume, sciaticas, lime kilns i’ the palm, incurable bone-ache, and the rivelled fee-simple of the tetter, take and take again such preposterous discoveries,” or the following, “thou damnable box of envy . . . you ruinous butt; you whoreson indistinguishable cur . . . thou idle immaterial skein of sleyd silk, thou green sarcenet flap for a sore eye, thou tassel of a prodigal’s purse, thou?”

These abusive phrases are all distinctly Dekkerian. Nevertheless, there are marks of Bacon in this play, plainly to be discovered, as if he had taken the work of another or others and incorporated some of his philosophical views and reflections therein. For instance, in his “*Advancement of Learning*,” Vol. 1, Edition of 1803, page 139, referring to Aristotle, he says, “And as he elegantly expoundeth the ancient fable of Atlas that stood fixed and

bore up the heaven from falling, to be meant of the poles or axletrees of heaven, whereupon the conversion is accomplished, so assuredly men have a desire to have an Atlas or axle tree within to keep them from fluctuation." While Ulysses, in Act 1, Scene 3, says:

"And such again as venerable Nestor, hatched in silver  
Should with a bond of air (strong as the axle tree  
On which heaven rides) knit all the Greekish ears  
To his experienced tongue."

And again in Act 2, Scene 2, Hector says, "So madly hot that no discourse of reason"; while Bacon, in Vol. 1, p. 26, says, "Martin Luther, conducted no doubt by an higher providence but in *discourse of reason*." It will be noticed by the reader that the same expression occurs in Hamlet, A. 1, S. 2, L. 150.

But it is especially in the frequency of the similes in the play that the reader will find Bacon's handiwork. I will set them out for the reader's benefit:

"As true as steel; as plantage to the moon; as sun to day; as turtle to her mate; as iron to adamant; as earth to the center; as true as Troilus; as false as air; as water; as wind; as sandy earth; as fox to lamb; as wolf to heifer calf; as stepdame to her son; as false as Cressid; as a prophet; as knots; as bending angels; as be stars in heaven; as the wind; as the axle tree; as banks of Lybia; as truth's simplicity; as tediously as hell; like Perseus' horse; like the commandment; like a strutting player; like a chime a-mending; like as Vulcan; like a mint; like merchants; like chidden Mercury; like a star disorbed; like one besotted; like fair fruit in an unwholesome dish; like an engine not portable; like a bourne, a pale, a shore;

like a strange soul; like vassalage; like unbridled children; like a fountain stirred; like a puling cuckold; like a lecher; like a book of sport; like a peacock; like an hostess; like a leather jerkin; like butterflies; like an arch; like a gate of steel; like a rusty nail; like an entered tide; like a gallant horse; like a fashionable host; like the gods; like a dew drop; like an ague; unlike young men."

I can not give adhesion to the view expressed by Webb and other gifted writers that Bacon wrote this play. It was, in my opinion, based upon the foregoing facts, originally the production of Dekker and Chettle, added to and philosophically dressed by Francis Bacon. How he got the play, or from whom or from what source he obtained it, is not very essential except in corroboration of the theory that he made additions to it. The natural presumption is that the original authors, after being paid for it, had no further care for nor proprietorship in it; that it passed into the possession and ownership of William Shaksper, and as such owner he got credit for the original authorship of Dekker and Chettle as well as Bacon's amendments and additions.

#### THE TAMING OF THE SHREW.

When the reader's attention is drawn to the question of the origin of the play of *The Taming of the Shrew*, he will find by an examination of Henslowe's Diary, at page 36, the following entry:

"11 of June, 1594. Rd at the Tamyng of a Shrowe IX s."

The editor of the Diary, Collier, in a note adds the following: "No doubt the old *Taming of a Shrew*, printed in 1594, and recently reprinted by the Shake-

speare Society under the care of Mr. Amyot, from the sole existing copy in the library of the Duke of Devonshire."

It is also to be noted that this performance of June eleventh was the only performance of that particular play in Henslowe's theatre, which fact, added to the other fact of the mention of the paltry sum of nine shillings by way of receipts, shows that the play of the Taming of a Shrew, as printed in 1594, did not please the theatre-goers.

A perusal of the play as printed by the Shakespeare Society also shows that it was a very hastily written production.

In the Taming of the Shrew, printed in the Folio of 1623, the characters of the play are changed, and the place is also changed from Athens to Padua. But the Induction is retained, amplified and beautified, and the play itself is very entertaining and mirth-provoking.

A few short extracts from the old play will give the reader an insight into the method of the revision. In the play of 1594 the Induction opens thus:

"Enter a Tapster, beating out of doors Slie, drunken.

*Tap.* You whoreson drunken slave, you had best be gone  
And empty your drunken paunch somewhere else,  
For in this house thou shalt not rest to-night.

*Slie.* Tilly vally by crise, Tapster I'll fese you anon,  
I do drink of my own instigation.  
Here I'll be a while. Why, Tapster, I say,  
Till's a fresh cushen here,  
Heigho, here's good warm lying."

Let him also compare the following with the revision of it in Act 2, Scene 1.

"*Alf.* Ha, Kate, come hither, wench, and list to me.  
Use this gentleman friendly as thou canst.

*Fer.* Twenty good morrows to my lovely Kate.

*Kate.* You jest, I am sure; is she yours already?

*Fer.* I tell thee Kate. I know thou lov'st me well.

*Kate.* The devil you do. Who told you so?

*Fer.* My mind, sweet Kate, doth say I am the man,  
Must wed and bed and marry bonny Kate.

*Kate.* Was ever seen so gross an ass as this?

*Fer.* Ay, to stand so long and never get a kiss.

*Kate.* Hands off I say, and get you from this place,  
Or I will set my ten commandments in your face."

Alf. abbreviated from Alfonso is the Baptista of the revised play. *Fer.* standing for Ferando is altered to Petruchio, and the Christian names of the other two daughters are changed. The reader who will take the trouble to make the comparison which I suggest, will agree with me that the reviser of the play greatly improved and beautified it, and especially the Induction. He certainly was a skillful word-painter.

Henslowe's Diary throws light on the composition and authorship of the play, as will appear by the following entries: At page 224, "Lent unto Thomas Downton and Edward Jeube, to geve unto Thomas Dickers, in earneste of a comody called a medyson for a curste wiffe 19 July 1602, forty shillinges." At page 225, "Lent unto Thomas Downton, the 31 of July 1602, to paye unto Thomas Dickers, in pte of payment of his comodey called a medyson for a curste wiffe the some of forty shillings."

Collier appends the following note to this entry: "This 'medicine for a curst wife' was probably some new version of the Taming of a Shrew which preceded Shakespeare's comedy, and which has been reprinted by the Shakespeare Society from the unique copy of 1594 in the library of the Duke of Devonshire."

At page 237, "Layd out more for the company, in pte of paymente for a booke called 'Medsen for a curste wife,' the some of— unto Thomas Deckers, ten shillings."

At page 238, "Pd at the apoyntment of the Company, the 1 of Septmbr, in pte of paymente for a comodey called 'a medysen for a curste wiffe' to Thomas Deckers some of thirty shillings."

Collier's note appended to this entry is as follows: "This sum of 30s. with the £4 in the preceding entry, £2 on 31st of July and 10s. which Dekker received on the 27th August, made up the sum total of £8 for the play of 'A Medicine for a curst wife.'" On the 27th of September, Dekker was paid 10s. over and above his price for the "Medicine for a curst wife," owing perhaps to its great success when acted.

The entry to which Collier refers appears on page 240 of the Diary and reads thus: "Pd unto Thomas Deckers, the 27 of Septmbr 1602 over and above his price of his booeke called a Medysen for a curste wiffe some of ten shillings."

It appears therefore that Dekker not only received from the hard-fisted Henslowe a good price for his clever comedy, but he opened his purse-strings to the amount of ten shillings more as a gift to Dekker in consequence of the great success of the play.

Is Collier right in his opinion that this was a version of the old *Taming of a Shrew*, and am I right in asking the reader to believe with me that this costly comedy of Dekker's was the comedy which appeared in the Folio of 1623 as a Shakespeare play, revised and amended, however, by another hand?

I support my belief that Dekker's "Medicine for a curst wife" is the "Taming of the Shrew," as found with



amendments and additions in the Shakespeare plays, for the following reasons:

The ejaculations, familiar expressions and phrases are such as Dekker habitually used, and they are not found, at least to any extent, in the writings of other dramatists of that era.

The ejaculations are as follows: "A vengeance on; aye, prithee, Fie, fie, Gramercies; God-a-mercy; O, pardon me; O, this woodcock; Tush, tush."

The phrases are as follows: "A meacock wretch; Belike (twice used); By this light; Get you hence (twice used); God give him joy; God send you joy; Here's no knavery; I am undone; I charge you in the Duke's name; *imprimis* (twice used); In brief (twice used); Lead apes in hell; Nay, I have ta'en you napping; Of his signs and tokens; Old worshipful; Old master; Pitchers have ears; Resolve me that; Take heed; 'Tis passing good; Where be these knaves."

The words used only once in the plays and also used by Dekker are, "coney-catched, logger-headed, o'erreach, metaphysics, mother-wit."

All these ejaculations, expressions, and words are found in *Fortunatus*, *Satiro-mastix*, *The Shoemakers' Holiday*, and *the Honest Whore*.

A most remarkable phrase of identification is found in the first act and first scene. Dekker was fond of using Latin sentences, and he aired his Latin in his prose and poetry whenever he could get an opportunity. In his *Belman's Night Walk* he quoted the following from the *Eunuch of Terence*, "*Redime te captum quam queas minimo*," and so to make a rhyme, he puts into the mouth of *Tranio*, in the Shakespeare play, Act 1, Scene 1, the following:

“If love have touched you, nought remains but so,  
*Redime te captum quam queas minimo.*”

Dekker can also be traced in the Induction. “*Paucas pallabris*” was a favorite expression of his. See the Roaring Girl, Act 5, Scene 1. “Go by, says Jeronimo,” he was fond of quoting. “I’ll not budge an inch, boy” is repeated in the Honest Whore; and the expression, “But I would be loth” is also used by Dekker in Act 2, Scene 2, of Fortunatus.

The style of the writer is the style of Dekker. Take for instance the first words of Grumio, in the hall in Petruchio’s Country-house as set out in Scene 1 of Act 4:

“*Gru.*—Fie, fie, on all tired jades, on all mad masters, and all foul ways! Was ever man so beaten? was ever man so rayed? was ever man so weary? I am sent before to make a fire, and they are coming after to warm them. Now, were not I a little pot, and soon hot, my very lips might freeze to my teeth, my tongue to the roof of my mouth, my heart in my belly, ere I should come to a fire to thaw me; but, I, with blowing the fire, shall warm myself, for, considering the weather, a taller man than I will take cold. Holla, hoa! Curtis!”

There are in the play of Patient Grissel, written by Dekker, Chettle, and Haughton, several allusions to the taming of shrews. I cite one.

In Act 5, Scene 2, Sir Onan, producing his wards, says to the Marquess “I will learn your medicines to tame shrews.” This play was printed in 1603, and the expression is remarkable because Henslowe’s Diary shows, as heretofore set out, that Dekker in the summer of 1602 received money from Henslowe on account of the comedy

he was writing, called by the illiterate manager "A medicine for a curst wife."

While Dekker should have credit for the composition of the major part of the Taming of the Shrew, I can not help thinking that the man who wrote the Venus and Adonis amended the Induction to this play and smoothed the rough portions of it. Dekker was a hasty and careless writer, and every reader of his works will agree with me that he was always in need of a literary polisher.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

MEASURE FOR MEASURE, TITUS ANDRONICUS, AND PERICLES  
EXAMINED.

*“Opinion’s but a fool.”*

—Pericles, ii. 2.

How can the literary public make some reparation to the poet and dramatist of Lincolnshire, the sturdy and amiable Thomas Heywood, who wrote or had “a main finger” in the writing of over two hundred and twenty plays, many of which were stolen from him without any recognition of his authorship by the printers and publishers who flourished in those days? I know that the reader will be pleased if the author of “A Woman Killed by Kindness” can be truthfully connected with the composition of part or all of any one or more of the Shakespeare plays.

Henslowe’s Diary shows, at page 230, the following entry:

“Ld owt at the apoyntment of Thomas Hewode, in earnest of a play called Like quits Like unto Mr. Harey Chettell and thomas Hewode, the 14 of Janewary 1602 some xxxx s.” It is evident, therefore, that in 1602 Heywood and Chettle wrote a play for Henslowe’s Company which Henslowe called “Like quits Like.”

In Act 5, Scene 1, of Measure for Measure, the play now under consideration, the following words are uttered by the Duke:

“The very mercy of the law cries out  
 Most audibly even from his proper tongue,  
 An Angelo for Claudio, death for death;  
 Haste still pays haste and leisure answers leisure,  
 Like doth quit like and measure still for measure.”

I am quite sure that the unprejudiced reader will agree with me that the play which Henslowe's entry referred to was this very play of *Measure for Measure*, now wrongly accredited to Shaksper. It may have been changed or amended afterward, but presumptively it was the same play. When Collier, who edited Henslowe's *Diary*, came across this entry, he brushed it aside with his probabilities and possibilities by the following note appended to page 230 of the *Diary*: “It is just possible that this may have been a play on the same story as *Measure for Measure*, near the end of which this line occurs: ‘Like doth quit like, and measure still for measure.’ The success of *Measure for Measure* at this date might have produced the rival play. As has often been the case, the title of the piece was clumsily filled in by Henslowe after he made the entry.”

But presumptively the entry, which is unquestionably a correct statement of the original authorship of the play of *Measure for Measure*, shows that Thomas Heywood and Henry Chettle wrote the play.

Although it differs, as Verplanck says, and as all commentators admit, in a marked manner in diction, versification and still more in general spirit and tone of sentiment from the other Shakespeare comedies, neither that fact nor the Henslowe entry are sufficient to put the Shaksper worshipers on inquiry. They do not care to doubt. Nothing can shake their idolatrous belief.

If the reader, for illustration, will turn to Isabella's words in Act 2, Scene 2, he will see at once the difference in style:

“Nothing but thunder. Merciful heaven!  
That rather with thy sharp and sulphurous bolt  
Splits't the unwedgeable and gnarled oak,  
Than the soft myrtle; but man, proud man.”

The syllable is wanting in the middle, as the reader will notice.

Let the reader also notice the date of this payment of earnest money to Heywood and Chettle. It is January 14, 1602, and it is certain from a memorandum made by the master of the revels that *Measure for Measure* was acted at Court in December, 1604.

As to the competency of Heywood and Chettle to write a good play, the evidence is overwhelming. Charles Lamb calls Heywood the “prose Shakespeare,” and says of him, “His scenes are to the full as natural and affecting. Generosity, courtesy, temperance in the depths of passion; sweetness, in a word, and gentleness, Christianity, and true hearty anglicism of feelings, shaping that Christianity, shine through his beautiful writings in a manner more conspicuous than in those of Shakespeare.”

And as to Chettle, Meres, in his “*Palladis Tamia*,” published in 1598, mentions him as “one of the best for comedy.” But the finest tribute to him was paid by Dekker after Chettle's death, in his *Knights Conjuring*. In describing the other world to which we enter after death, Dekker pictures a grove in the fields of Joy, standing by itself like an island, called the Grove of Bay Trees “to which resort none but the children of Phœbus (poets and

musicians). In one part of which grove, old Chaucer, revered for priority, blithe in cheer, buxom in speech and benign in his behavior, is circled round with all the makers of poems of his time.

“In another company sat learned Watson, industrious Kyd, ingenious Aitchlow and (though he had been a player moulded out of their pens) yet because he had been their lover and a register to the muses, inimitable Bentley; these were likewise carousing to one another at the holy well, some of them singing pæans to Apollo, some of them hymns to the rest of the gods, whilst Marlowe, Greene, and Peele had got under the shade of a large vine, laughing to see Nash (that was newly come to their college) still haunted with the sharp and satirical spirit that followed him here on earth.” Then after describing a bitter speech of Nash, delivered to the assembled poet ghosts, he adds—“He had no sooner spoken this, but in comes Chettle sweating and blowing by reason of his fatness, to welcome whom, because he was of old acquaintance, all rose up and fell presently on their knees to drink a health to all the lovers of Helicon.”

And here I must make a short digression. After a perusal of the “Shaksper not Shakespeare” of Edwards, and especially that part bearing on Shaksper’s ignorance, a witty and very accomplished woman exclaimed, “If this be true, if Shaksper was an ignorant fellow, and if the spirits of the departed hold intercourse with each other in the next world, how amazed and crestfallen will the believers in Shaksper as Shakespeare appear when they meet him on the other side.” That felicitous remark naturally furnishes the material for a supplemental Dekker’s dream.

If Dekker could return from the abodes of the dead, and indulge in a supplemental dream, the incident pictured to his imagination might have for its time one of the early years of the twentieth century and for its place the very same paradisaical grove in the field of Joy, so like an island, which was frequented by the poets and dramatists mentioned by Dekker. The particular spot is a secluded one, set apart for the use and pleasure of the Shakespearean critics and commentators. A notable group is gathered there. Among them may be seen the spiritual form of Edmond Malone, the indefatigable, precise, and learned searcher after facts as to Shakespeare. Near to him stands Richard Farmer, that doughty and terrible foe of those who claim that "the sweet swan of Avon" was an educated and accomplished scholar; while close by his side is the critical and studious Richard Grant White, who was endeavoring to convince Farmer that the gentle Shaksper was a thorough scholar, versed in all the learning of the ancients, familiar with the Greek, Latin, and modern languages, as well as a complete master of the Aristotelian and Baconian systems of philosophy. Just as he had finished his eloquent speech, up came Gulien C. Verplanck, the accomplished and fair-minded editor and Shakespearean critic, and suggested that, to put an end to controversy, it would be a comparatively easy matter to send a message to the planetary sphere which the great bard inhabited and solicit him to honor them with his presence and to permit them to gaze upon that face which rare Ben Jonson referred to in his address to the reader in the Folio, when he said,

"Oh, could he but have drawn his wit  
As well in brass, as he hath hit  
His face."



White's proposition secured unanimous assent and thereupon a messenger was summoned and the request announced to him. The messenger proved to be Richard Brome, whilom a servant to Jonson and a protege and admirer of Dekker, the dreamer. Very soon he reappeared with the William Shaksper of Stratford-on-Avon. When Shaksper came before the commentators, Malone, who was delegated by the assembly to welcome him (first making a low obeisance) addressed him thus: "All hail, thou prince of poets; thou paragon of philosophers; thou divinely inspired dramatist; thou Warwickshire warbler of native wood-notes wild; thou William the Conqueror who came in before Richard the Third; thou myriad-minded, gigantic or rather mastodonic prodigy of intellect; thou Nestor in judgment; thou Socrates in philosophical genius; thou Ovid in the poetry of love; thou—thou—"

At this point, the eulogistic Malone was rudely interrupted by the shade of William of Stratford, who petulantly exclaimed, "Stop that thouing, Mr. Malone, it is as unwelcome as Coke's fling at Raleigh, and very untruthful. You are all of you on the wrong scent. Ben Jonson has made fools of all of you, and indeed of the whole literary world as well. It was not my fault. I never claimed to be a poet or a playwright. I am more sinned against than sinning. I never boasted or swaggered about authorship. Like Mrs. Quickly, I do not love swaggering. I can not abide swaggerers. I never put my name to any book or pamphlet. I am not accountable for the poetical stuff, good, bad, or indifferent, which publishers and others have fathered upon me. I did not even have the talent to write the doggerel which tradition has credited me with—not even the epitaph upon the miserly John a Comber.

Of course, I can not help laughing occasionally at you, most learned shades, for being so easily humbugged; but that was the way of the world, especially in the publishers' line, in my lifetime, and I presume the people are about the same now as they were then. They have always liked to be humbugged. I bid you all adieu." As he started off, White, turning to his astounded and disappointed associates, said, "You know that I always said that that man Shaksper's words have never reached us, and not a familiar line from his hand or the record of one interview at which he was present, and you all know that in the earth-world I always had doubts about his ability to write the plays." But White's words were drowned and lost in the thundering cry of Malone as he shouted after the retreating Shaksper, "Away with you, you mouldy rogue, you bottle-ale rascal, you basket-hilt stale juggler; away, I say, you scullion, you rampallian, you fustilarian; I'll tickle your Catastrophe for you!"

Returning to Chettle, he who will examine the play of Patient Grissel and compare Chettle's rendering of the part of Babulo therein with the comic parts of Measure for Measure, will recognize at once the style and manner of Chettle in that part of Measure for Measure.

Nevertheless, although Heywood and Chettle undoubtedly originated in 1602 the play of Measure for Measure, yet there are portions of it which neither of them could have composed, as, for instance, the beautiful philosophical principles and precepts with which this play abounds. Neither Heywood or Chettle could have written the dialogue in Act 2, Scene 2, between Angelo and Isabella, in which the latter pleads for her brother's life; or the commentary of the Duke upon life in Scene 1 of Act 3,

or the conversation between Claudio and Isabella in the same scene.

They seem to me to be in the Baconian vein, and when in Act 5, Scene 1, I read these words of Isabella,

“For Angelo,  
His act did not overtake his bad intent  
And must be buried but as an intent  
That perished by the way; thoughts are no subjects;  
Intentions but merely thoughts.”

I am reminded of what Bacon wrote, as set out in the Hermit's speech:

“Whether he believes me or no, there is no prison to the thoughts, which are free under the greatest tyrants.”

My opinion, founded upon the facts hereinbefore recited, would be that Francis Bacon took the original play of *Measure for Measure* and dressed and beautified it with his views upon life, death, justice, and mercy. I think so because no other poet of the time could have so revised, amended, and embellished the play. It probably came hastily, roughly, and crudely in the first instance from the hands of Heywood and Chettle, who certainly earned their forty shillings for its production. If it did not, and if it came from them as it afterward appeared in the Folio of 1623, then the fair and clear presumption is that they, Heywood and Chettle, are entitled to the full credit for it. But if it did start from them in a crude state, it was probably revised and dressed for the entertainment of the Court between 1602 and 1604, and if Bacon was the reviser and beautifier, he did so as a concealed poet and in the name of Shakespeare. Of course my opinion may be erroneous as to the reviser, and some

other poet of that era may have executed the revision, and I may have erred in my selection. If I have, then Michael Drayton should be pointed to as the one next to Bacon most capable of such revision.

There is one expression of the Duke in the first scene of Act 1, which would indicate that the words were used for the purpose of pleasing King James. The Duke is made to say—

“I love the people,  
But do not like to stage me to their eyes.  
Though it do well, I do not relish well  
Their loud applause and *aves* vehement.”

Whoever wrote this must have been familiar with the King's dislike for the crowding of the multitude about him. A shrewd courtier, if he had an opportunity to revise the original play, would have been quick to insert such a passage in the play. Phillips, at page 214, Vol. 1 of the “Outlines,” speaking of the King's players, says: “The company are found playing at Oxford in the early part of the summer of 1604. In the Christmas holidays of the same year, on the evening of December 26th, the comedy of Measure for Measure was performed before the Court at Whitehall, and if it were written for that special purpose, it seems probable that the lines, those in which Angelo (he means Vincentio, the Duke) deprecates the thronging of the multitudes to royalty, were introduced out of special consideration to James the First, who, as is well known, had a great dislike to encountering great crowds of people. The lines in the mouth of Angelo appear to be somewhat forced, while the metrical disposition is consistent with the idea that they might have been the result of an after-thought.”

The opinion herein expressed that Francis Bacon revised and embellished *Measure for Measure* is strengthened by the singular and much-quoted sentence found in the letter of Sir Tobie Matthew addressed to his patron and benefactor, Bacon, wherein he says, "I will not return you weight for weight, but measure for measure."

Among the plays in the First Folio, *Titus Andronicus* was inserted. Although printed several times previously, it had never been claimed by nor credited to Shaksper. It was first printed in 1594 and then in 1600, and again in 1611, and it was acted in Henslowe's theatre (where Shaksper did not play) as early as January 23, 1593-4. There is, therefore, nothing to connect Shaksper with the authorship of this play except the unreliable statement of Meres and the fact that it is incorporated in the First Folio.

Who reads *Titus Andronicus*, or who cares to read it? Where is the enthusiastic commentator who will go into raptures over it, as Schlegel did over Sir John Oldcastle? Where is the lecturer who will dilate before admiring audiences upon the beauties of the play or the philosophy which it teaches? What Shakespeare Club directs its members to delineate the virtues or the faults of its heroes and heroines? What actor or theatrical manager brings it upon the stage? Reader, have you ever waded through those columns of horrors upon horrors multiplied which abound in the play of *Titus Andronicus*? If you have not, try to read it and compare it with the *Midsummer Night's Dream* or *As You Like It* or *Twelfth Night*. Let me feast you upon its horrors. In the second scene of the very first act, the limbs of Alarbus, the captive son of Tamora, the queen of the Goths, are lopped off and his

entrails used to feed the sacrificing fire. A little farther on in the same scene, Titus Andronicus murders Martius, his own son. In the third scene of the second act, Bassanius is stabbed and murdered in the forest, his body thrust into a pit, and Lavinia, his wife, is dragged off and ravished. In the next scene of the same act, Martius and Quintus, sons of Andronicus, are lured into the same pit and left to perish; while in the fifth scene of the same act, Lavinia's hands are hacked off and her tongue is cut out. Act three, in the first scene, minutely details the cutting off with an axe of the hand of Titus by Aaron, the Moor; and when that is accomplished, the heads of his two sons, Martius and Quintus, and his own mangled hand are presented to him. The catalogue of crime is not yet ended, for in the second scene of the fourth act, the nurse who attended on Tamora is stabbed and killed. In the third scene, Titus becomes violently insane, and in the fourth scene, a clown is hanged. To continue the chapter of murders, mayhem, and rape, the fifth act provides for the cutting of Chiron's throat by Titus, and then for the deliberate murder of Chiron's brother Demetrius by throat-cutting. Titus then causes the bones of the two villains, so murdered, to be ground to powder, and the powdered mass to be mixed with their blood into a paste. The blood of the two victims is saved for this purpose by the tongueless and handless Lavinia, and the pasty compound is baked into a pie. As soon as this palatable pie is prepared for use, Titus murders Lavinia and induces Queen Tamora to eat the pie which had been made out of the blood and bones and heads of her own sons. Lucius then kills Saturninus, the emperor, while Titus kills Tamora, and her body is thrown forth to beasts and birds of prey.

Aaron, 'the arch fiend, "the damned Moor," who is the instigator of all these fiendish acts and hellish plots, is punished by being buried breast deep in the ground and starved to death. In Titus Andronicus the reader is treated to twelve murders, a rape, several acts of mayhem and mutilation, with a little cannibalism to vary the monotony of murder.

Thackeray, that prince of novelists, must have had the Andronicus in his mind's eye when he caused his hero Pendennis to lapse into a gloomy, tristful mood, and while in that pessimistic state to produce that wonderful tragedy at the reading of which, though he killed sixteen persons before the second act, his fond mother was unable to restrain her laughter, thereby irritating the horror-creating author so much that he thrust the tragic masterpiece into the fire.

To give an example of the style of the writer or writers of Titus Andronicus, I will cite one of Aaron's speeches in reply to the accusations of Lucius, quoting from the first scene of the fifth act:

*“Lucius.* Art thou not sorry for these heinous deeds?

*Aaron.* Ay, that I had not done a thousand more.

Even now I curse the day (and yet I think,  
 Few come within the compass of my curse),  
 Wherein I did not some notorious ill;  
 As kill a man or else devise his death;  
 Ravish a maid, or plot the way to do it;  
 Accuse some innocent or forswear myself;  
 Set deadly enmity between two friends;  
 Make poor men's cattle break their necks:  
 Set fire on barns and haystacks in the night,  
 And bid the owners quench them with their tears.  
 Oft have I digged up dead men from their graves,

And set them upright at their dear friends' doors,  
 Even when their sorrows almost were forgot.  
 Tut, I have done a thousand dreadful things,  
 As willingly as one would kill a fly;  
 And nothing grieves me heartily indeed,  
 But that I can not do ten thousand more."

It is no wonder that the commentators, big and little, are either in doubt or despair as to Shaksper's authorship, or vehement in denial of his right to be the maker or begetter of the play. Samuel Johnson, the Sir Oracle of the English literati, declares that "all the editors and critics agree in supposing this play spurious. I see no reason for differing from them, for the coloring of the style is wholly different from that of the other plays." Hallam says that Titus Andronicus is now by common consent denied to be in any sense a production of Shaksper; and Verplanck adds that "to these critics may be added the names of Malone, Steevens, Boswell, Seymour, and a host of others, including all the commentating editors except Capell."

The fiercest and most bitter attack upon the right of "the myriad-minded man" to the authorship of this play is made by Gerald Massey. He argues that it is absurd and ridiculous to father this cannibalistic catalogue of horrors upon Shaksper.

It is clear then that even the Shakespearean critics and commentators repudiate Titus Andronicus. They throw discredit on Meres, and virtually reject "the true original copies" of Heminge and Condell. I think that they are right about that. The well-recognized maxim, *falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus* (false in one thing, false in everything), applies as well in literature as in law. If Heminge



and Condell falsely and fraudulently imposed Titus Andronicus upon the innocent public, what confidence can any sensible person have in the Shaksper authorship of any of the plays included in the Folio of 1623?

With Shaksper out of the way, by the admission of his own learned, enthusiastic, and blindly devoted adorers, who then did write this rejected play? Can we find a father for the unfortunate Titus?

Upon a cursory examination I was at first inclined to believe that Marlowe wrote this play, but upon a careful study of it, and a comparison of its unusual words and familiar phrases with those of other writers of the period, I believe that Francis Bacon had no more to do with its composition than I have. He could not have been its originator, although he might have been the amender or reviser of some part or parcel of it. I am of the opinion, based upon the following facts, that Drayton and Dekker originally composed this hastily written play.

In Titus Andronicus there are seventeen words not used in the other plays and used only in that play. These are, "big-boned, bubbling, Cocytus, dreary, effectually, erst, execrable, feere, Hymeneus, ignominy, lovingly, meshed, metamorphosis, misbelieving, seizeth, sprawl, sumptuously, and waxing"; and there are eight words used once only in all the other plays and used in this play, viz: "Affy, checkered, circling, dissembled, espied, ravisher, re-edified, reproachful, ruinate." All these words are Draytonian words found in Queen Margaret, Brandon to Mary, Idea, Cynthia's Quest, Polyolbion, Harmony of the Church, and Barons' Wars. Identical expressions also point to Drayton. I give a few examples taken from Nymphidia, the Barons' Wars, Mooncalf, the Owl, and Polyolbion:

## WORTHILY SUCCEEDS.

In Act 1, Scene 1, Marcus says: "Whom worthily you would have now succeed."

Drayton, in *Barons' Wars*, Chapter 5, Line 54, says: "Richard, his son, him worthily succeeds."

## CONTENT THEE.

In Act 1, Scene 2, Titus says: "Content thee, prince."

Drayton, in *Nymphidia*, says: "Content thee, I am no such thing."

## BE RULED BY ME.

Tamora says: "My lord, be ruled by me."

Drayton, in *Nymphidia*, says: "Be ruled by me."

## SINGLED FORTH.

In Act 2, Scene 3, Lavinia says: "Are singled forth to try experiments."

Drayton, in *King John to Matilda*: "One favor from the rest, I singled forth."

## HISSING SNAKES.

In same scene Tamora says: "A thousand hissing snakes."

Drayton, in *Nymphidia*, says: "By the hissing of the snakes."

## O WONDROUS THING.

In Act 2, Scene 4, Tamora says: "O wondrous thing."

Drayton, in *Mooncalf*, says: "O most wondrous thing."

DISMAL BLACK.

In Act 4, Scene 2, the nurse says: "A joyful, dismal, black and sorrowful issue."

Drayton, in *Lady Jane Dudley*, says: "Before the black and dismal days begin." And in *Isabella to Richard Second*, Drayton says: "Black, dismal, fatal, inauspicious."

INCARNATE DEVIL.

In Act 5, Scene 1, Lucius says: "O worthy Goth, this is the incarnate devil."

In the *Owl*, Drayton says: "And makes a saint of an incarnate devil."

ASSURE THEE.

In the same scene Aaron says: "Why, assure thee, Lucius."

Drayton, in *Catherine to Tudor*, says: "Assure thee, Tudor, majesty can be."

CRAVE A PARLEY.

In the same scene Aurelius says: "We crave a parley."

Drayton, in *Nymphidia*, says: "A parley now we crave."

BLACK AS JET.

In Act 5, Scene 2, Titus says: "Provide two proper palfries, black as jet."

Drayton, in *King John to Matilda*, says: "Thy eyeballs, black as jet."

O SWEET REVENGE.

In same scene Titus says: "O sweet revenge."

Drayton, in *Barons' Wars*, Chapter 6, Line 80, says: "O dire revenge."

STILL RENEW.

In Act 5, Scene 2, Saturninus says: "And by her presence still renews his sorrows."

Drayton, in *Polyolbion* 1, page 108, says: "Old sorrows still renews."

Dekker seems to have written a small part of the play, as for instance the first and second scenes of Act 2. Ejaculations, such as the following, are used in these two scenes, and also by Dekker: "Trust me, O monstrous, gramercy, would serve your turn, and ring a hunter's peal." It was also a habit of Dekker to display his knowledge of Latin by inserting Latin phrases wherever he could, and so in Act 2, Scene 1, he makes Demetrius say: "*Sit fas aut nefas*, till I find the stream to cool this heat, a charm to calm these fits. *Per stygia, per manes velor*." I have thought that the words put by Dekker into the mouth of Horace, alias Jonson, in *Satiro-mastix*, concerning the innocent Moor cut in two in the middle, might refer to the play of *Titus Andronicus*. The words, as put into the mouth of Horace, alias Ben Jonson, are:

"As for Crispinus, that Crispin-asse, and Fannius, his play dresser, who (to make the Muses believe their subjects' ears were starved and that there was a dearth of poesy) cut an innocent Moor in the middle to serve him in twice; and when he had done, made Paul's work of it; as for these twins, these poet apes, their mimic tricks shall serve, with mirth, to feast our muse whilst their own starve."

This bloody and revolting play must have been written very hurriedly. It undoubtedly suited the taste of the frequenters of Henslowe's theatre. In Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair*, there is a sneer at those critics who will swear that "Jeronimo or *Andronicus* are the best plays yet." The *Diary of Henslowe* shows that *Andronicus* was acted at his theatre on several occasions in 1593, and the edition of 1600 recites that it had been often played by the theatrical servants of the Earl of Pembroke, the Earl of Derby, and the Earl of Sussex.

The reader will be amazed at the way *Pericles* has been treated by commentators. Heminge and Condell professed in their dedication to the Folio of 1623 to have collected and published Shaksper's works. Nevertheless the play of *Pericles* did not appear in that volume, although it had been printed in 1609 and 1619 and accredited on the title page to William Shakespeare. Heminge and Condell ought to have known of these editions and certainly of the play itself, for it was a popular play and held the stage for many years. It was not until 1664 that it appeared with what are now called the Shakespeare plays, and with no special authorization.

Rowe, in his edition of 1709, rejected it, saying that "it is owned that some part of *Pericles* was written by him (Shaksper), particularly the last scene."

Pope's edition followed Rowe's, and in his preface he declared that he "made no doubt that these wretched plays, *Pericles*, *Loerine*, *Sir John Oldcastle*, can not be admitted as his."

Following Pope and Rowe, *Pericles* was rejected by Warburton, Theobald, Hammer, and Johnson, as well as by the common popular editions. It never would have

appeared again had it not been for Malone's insertion of it in his edition. Hallam declared that "from the poverty and bad management of the fable, the want of effective and distinguishable character and the general feebleness of the tragedy as a whole, I should not believe that structure to have been Shakespeare's." He elsewhere, in his "Literature of Europe," insists that "the play is full of evident marks of an inferior hand." Gifford rejects the play and styles it "the worthless *Pericles*." Collier says, "an opinion has long prevailed, and we have no doubt it is well founded, that two hands are to be traced in the composition of *Pericles*. The larger part of the first three acts were in all probability the work of an inferior dramatist."

Here, then, we have a play which seems to have no real title to be called a Shakespeare play at all. Ben Jonson called it a "mouldy tale" made up "of scraps out of every dish."

The first impression on reading it carefully is that it was a play very hastily written, and it bears marks of collaboration. Any one who has studied Thomas Dekker's style and works will surely recognize Dekker's handiwork in parts of this play and especially in the fourth act. The conversation between the Pander, Bawd, and Boulton, in Scene 3, is truly Dekkerian. So also are the conversations in Scene 6 of the same act. In Act 2, the conversation with the fisherman, in Scene 1, is full of Dekker's familiar expressions. "I'll fetch thee with a wanion" occurs in Act 2, Scene 1, of the *Shoemakers' Holiday*, and the phrase "the great ones eat the little ones" is found in the *Roaring Girl*, Act 3, Scene 3. Dekker's craving to display his knowledge of foreign languages finds ample scope in the next scene, wherein the devices upon the

various shields are set out. Gower's songs are plainly the offspring of Dekker in part and Drayton in part. In Act 4, the phrase "Hight Philoten" is paralleled in *Nymphidia*, and the word "prest," in the sense of prepared, is similarly used by Drayton in his *Harmony*, at page 251.

I will quote a few instances of Draytonian expressions:

In Act 2, Scene 5, Simonides says, "I am glad of it with all my heart."

In his *Idea*, Drayton says, "I am glad, yea, glad with all my heart."

In Act 2, Scene 3, Thais says, "To me he seems like diamond to glass."

In *Shore to Edward*, Drayton says, "To make a glass to seem a diamond."

Pericles says, "But like lesser lights did veil their crowns to his supremacy," while Drayton in *Barons' Wars*, C. 3, S. 18, says, "The lesser lights, like sentinels in war." In Act 2, Scene 4, First Lord says, "Wrong not yourself then, noble Helicane," while in *Matilda*, S. 70, Drayton says, "Wrong not thy fair youth, nor the world deprive." In Act 4, Scene 4, Cleon says, "Were I chief lord of all the spacious world," while in *Isabel to Mortimer*, Drayton says, "which was chief lord of the ascendant then." In Act 5, Scene 1, Pericles says, "Who starves the ears she feeds," while in *Brandon to Mary*, Drayton says "and starve mine ears to hear of my despatch."

I can find no trace of Bacon in this play.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

RICHARD THE SECOND AND JULIUS CÆSAR EXAMINED.

*“I’ll example you with thievery.”*

—Timon of Athens, iv, 3.

The play of Richard the Second has attracted more attention than any other play contained in the Folio of 1623, for the reason that it gave rise to a famous incident in the Essex conspiracy. The following brief extract from the arraignment of Sir Gilly Merrick, as set out in Bacon’s works, edition of 1803, 3d Vol., p. 183, shows how the play was linked with the story of that rebellion, the facts as to the acting of the play being introduced in evidence to show that Merrick was privy to the plot.

Merrick was commander over Essex House, and, to quote Bacon’s words, “some few days before the rebellion (about February 1, 1600), with great heat and violence, he had displaced certain gentlemen lodged in an house fast by Essex-house, and there planted divers of my lord’s followers and complices, all such as went forth with him in the action of rebellion. That the afternoon before the rebellion, Merrick, with a great company of others that afterwards were all in the action, had procured to be played before them the play of deposing King Richard the Second. Neither was it casual, but a play bespoken by Merrick. And not so only, but when it was told him by one of the players that the play was old, and they should have loss in playing it, because few would come to it, there were forty shillings extraordinary given to play it, and so thereupon played it was. So earnest was



he to satisfy his eyes with the sight of that tragedy, which he thought soon after his lordship should bring from the stage to the state, but that God turned it upon their own heads."

This incident has been made use of by some writers to connect Francis Bacon with the authorship of the play. I can not extract from the foregoing recital any argument in support of the Baconian theory founded on that occurrence. Indeed, as it is clear that Bacon virtually conducted the examinations of the prisoners, unless he really was "the meanest of mankind," he would not have uttered the harsh words that appear in his writings about this "Catalinary knot and combination of rebels." Besides, there is nothing in the incident itself to connect him with the authorship. Merrick's call for the play was not inspired by Bacon; and if any other play which lacked parent had been called for by Merrick, it could just as easily have been fathered upon Bacon. I find that I am supported in this opinion by Appleton Morgan, who in his "Shakespeare in Fact and in Criticism," at page 178, says:

"If Francis Bacon wrote Richard II, it was a piece of matchless effrontery for him to maintain that his own production had been displayed as a counterfeit presentment in aid of a treason in which his friend was engaged."

There is no direct and positive evidence as to the authorship, such, for instance, as the declaration of the author himself or of the several authors (if more than one), and hence I can only give the reader the results of my examination of the play, with my opinion based thereon.

Two things are patent to the reader. The play had been tried upon the stage before 1600, for one of the players

told Merrick that it was old. It had been upon the stage for several years, having probably run its course, and it was not popular enough to draw a crowd; and so they exacted forty shillings from Merrick, as an extraordinary incentive, before they would play it.

It is mentioned by Meres, and hence the original play must have been written before 1598.

My examination of this play leads me to the conclusion that Michael Drayton had a principal part in its composition. I will place before the reader the several phrases in each act, with the corresponding resemblances in Drayton's poems, in corroboration of my view.

#### INVETERATE MALICE.

Gaunt, in Act I, Scene I, says, "Aimed at your highness no inveterate malice," while Drayton, in his *Barons' Wars*, Canto I, St. 30, says, "Her too deep settled and inveterate malice."

#### HIGH A PITCH.

Richard says, "How high a pitch his resolution soars"; and Drayton, in his fourth *Eclogue*, says, "To soar beyond the usual pitch of men." So also in Drayton's *Legend of Robert Duke of Normandy*, he says,

"To that high pitch as raised his desire,  
Show'd at the first, the pitch it was to fly."

#### MAKE INCISION.

Richard says, "Deep malice makes too deep incision"; while in *Idea*, St. 50, Drayton says, "First make incision on each mastering vein."

## SHARPER SPUR.

In Act 1, Scene 2, the Duchess says, "Finds brotherhood in thee no sharper spur"; and in *Piers Gaveston*, Drayton says, "Which proved sharp spurs to my untamed desire."

## MINE INNOCENCY.

In Act 1, Scene 3, Bolingbroke says, "Mine innocency and Saint George to thrive," while Drayton, in *Matilda*, St. 83, says, "O, let the grave mine innocency hold."

## WHOLESOME COUNSEL AND UNSTAYED YOUTH.

In Act 2, Scene 1, Gaunt says, "In wholesome counsel to his unstayed youth"; while Drayton, in his dedication to Queen Isabel, says, "Imperfections of heedless and unstayed youth," and in his *Heroical Epistles*, p. 189, he says, "Wholesome counsel to."

## NO WHIT.

Gaunt says, "The waste is no whit lesser than thy land." Drayton, in *Nymphidia*, says, "No whit her state impairing."

## COMFORTABLE WORDS.

The Queen, in Act 2, Scene 2, says, "For heaven's sake, speak comfortable words." In *Legend of Robert*, Drayton says, "Giving the soldiers comfortable words"; and he uses the same phrase in *Queen Margaret*.

## I WOULD TO GOD.

York uses this expression and Drayton also in *Duke Humphrey to Queen Eleanor*.

## AT SIX AND SEVEN.

York says, "And everything is left at six and seven"; while Drayton, in *Barons' Wars*, C. 5, S. 37, says, "Except that thou set all at six and seven."

## THE WAVERING COMMONS.

Bagot says, "And that's the wavering commons"; while Drayton, in *Richard 2 to Isabel*, says, "The uncertain commons, touched with inward care."

## STANDS CONDEMNED.

Bolingbroke says, "Will you permit that I shall stand condemned"; Bushy says, "Wherein the king stands generally condemned"; while Drayton, in *King Henry to Rosamond*, says, "And stand condemned by a council's doom."

## 'TIS NOT MY MEANING.

Berkeley says, "'Tis not my meaning"; while Drayton, in *dedication to Harmony*, says, "my meaning is not."

## MARS OF MEN.

York says, "Rescued the Black Prince, that young Mars of men"; while Drayton, in *Agincourt*, says, "That Mars of men, this king of earthly kings."

## DISSOLVED TO TEARS.

Richard, in *Act 3, Scene 2*, says, "As if the world were all dissolved to tears"; while Drayton, in *Barons' Wars*, C. 6, S. 70, says, "Dissolved to tears, she followed him, O tears."

## AN ANOINTED KING.

Richard says, "can wash the balm from an anointed king," and York says, "Com'st thou because the anointed king is here"; while Drayton, in *Barons' Wars*, C. 5, S. 15, says, "The awful right of an anointed king."

## DEPOSING OF A KING.

Richard says, "Containing the deposing of a king," and again, "For the deposing of a rightful king"; while Drayton, in *Barons' Wars*, C. 5, S. 9, says, "What toucheth the deposing of a king."

## PLUCKED UP.

Gardiner says, "Plucked up root and all by Bolingbroke." Drayton, in the poem of Cromwell, says, "Who, her religion plucked up by the root."

## PLUCKED DOWN.

In Act 4, Scene 1, Richard says, "Your cares set up do not pluck my cares down." Drayton, in *Pol.* 1, p. 157, says, "Will pluck down all the church."

## YET UNBORN.

Carlisle says, "The children yet unborn shall feel this day." Drayton, in *2 Margaret*, says, "The babe that's yet unborn shall rue."

## PLAINTS AND PRAYERS.

Duchess says, "That hearing how our complaints and prayers do pierce." Drayton, in *Barons' Wars*, C. 6, S. 70, says, "Her complaints so piercing and her grief so much."

## TIME RUNS POSTING.

Richard says, "But my time runs posting on." Drayton, in *Piers Gaveston*, says, "When posting time that never turns again."

## FATAL HAND.

Bolingbroke says, "A deed of slander with thy fatal hand." Drayton, in *Eleanor to Duke Humphrey*, says, "A fatal hand his sovereign to have slain."

Such phrases as these are also common to both: "If aught but, I doubt not but, give me leave." The play uses "sky-aspiring," and Drayton uses "sky-attempting."

Single words used only once in all the plays, used in this play of *Richard the Second*, and used also by Drayton, are as follows: "Abet, crossly, dangling, disburdened, intermixed, misgoverned, monarchize, noblesse, streaming, thundering, well-disposed, well-meaning."

Michael Drayton was not only thoroughly fitted to write the play of *Richard the Second*, but he was familiar with every incident of Richard's reign. He had immortalized Richard in his *Epistles*, and the subject was peculiarly in his line. Whoever will read his *Barons' Wars* and his *Heroical Epistles*, and study Drayton's style, will conclude that there is no necessity for searching for any other poet than Michael Drayton to find the principal author of *Richard the Second*. Poor Drayton suffered from the indifference of James the First. The king seemed to dislike him, and it may have been because of a suspicion engendered in the king's mind that Drayton had a main hand in the composition of *Richard the Second*. In Drayton's *Epistle to George Sandys*, as heretofore shown,

he gives vent to his mortification and disgust at his ill treatment by the king. As a matter of fact indisputable, the play of Richard the Second was put upon the stage before 1597, for its first appearance in print was in that year, and the name of no author was attached to it.

Valentine Simms, who printed that edition for Andrew Wise, printed another in the year 1598 and on the title page put these words, "By William Shake-speare." Between that period and 1608, the additions of the parliament scene and the deposing of King Richard were added to the original play, and I should be inclined to think that these new additions are what Henslowe refers to in the Diary, at page 121, by the following entry: "Lent unto the company to geve Mr Willson, Dickers, Drayton and Cheattell in part payment of a booke called Perce of Exstone, the some of forty shillings." Collier, in a note, says, "Sir Piers of Exton killed Richard II, and this play was most likely connected with this historical incident." Since the new additions to Richard the Second, published in 1608, embrace the story of Exton's villainous act, it is very likely that Henslowe paid Drayton, Wilson, Dekker, and Chettle for these very additions about the first of April, 1598. Henslowe, of course, was not very particular about the title of the plays which he bought. All that he cared to do was to write some name, if only that of one of the characters of the play, by which he could identify his purchase.

I must not omit to call the reader's attention to the prophecy of Gaunt, recorded in the first scene of act second, beginning thus: "Methinks I am a prophet new inspired." It is not only in the very style of Drayton, but the lines embody the passionate love of the poet for the land of his

nativity. D'Israeli, in his "Amenities of Literature," speaking of the Polyolbion, beautifully and truthfully describes Drayton's patriotic feelings when he says, "The grand theme of this poet was his fatherland! The muse of Drayton passes by every town and tower, and tells some tale of ancient glory or of some worthy who must never die."

Drayton's style, to any one familiar with his poems descriptive of preparations for war or a campaign, may be recognized in Northumberland's speech on the last page of the same scene, a part of which is here inserted for the reader's convenience:

"*North.* Then thus: I have from Port le Blanc, a bay  
 In Brittany, received intelligence  
 That Henry, duke of Hereford, Reginald Lord  
 Cobham,  
 That late broke from the duke of Exeter,  
 His brother, Archbishop late of Canterbury,  
 Sir Thomas Erpingham, Sir John Ramston,  
 Sir John Norbery, Sir Robert Waterton and Francis  
 Quoint,  
 All these well furnished by the duke of Bretagne,  
 With eight tall ships, three thousand men of war,  
 Are making hither with all due expedience,  
 And shortly mean to touch our northern shore."

The man who wrote the Barons' Wars, the Heroical Epistles, and Queen Margaret summed up in them the gathering of forces for battle in the very same way that Northumberland does in the play at the request of Ross.

I pass on to the play of Julius Cæsar, and I fix the date of its composition in the year 1602. In this, I differ from the guessers and conjecturers, like Malone and others, who have stated that this play could not have been written



before 1607. I place the date at 1602, for the reason that Henslowe so fixes it in his Diary. The entry will be found at page 221, and a verbatim copy of it (followed by a note of Collier's) reads as follows:

“Lent unto the companye, the 22 of May, 1602, to geve unto Antoney Monday and Mikell Drayton, Webster, Mydleton and the rest, in earneste of a Boocke called Sesers Falle the some of V li.”

Collier's note at the foot of this page reads thus: “Malone passed over this important entry without notice: it shews that in May, 1602, four poets who are named (*viz.*, Monday, Drayton, Webster, and Middleton) and some others not named, were engaged in writing a play upon the subject of the fall of Cæsar. See Collier's *Shakespeare* 7, 4, where it is contended that the *Julius Cæsar* of our great dramatist was written in 1603.”

Collier's opinion that *Julius Cæsar* was written in 1603 is based upon a fact which actually supports my date and is in line with Henslowe's memorandum. Collier says: “In Drayton's *Barons' Wars*, the poet, speaking of Mortimer, says:

‘Such one he was, of him we boldly say  
 In whose rich soul all sovereign powers did suit,  
 In whom in peace the elements all lay  
 So mixed as none could sovereignty impute;  
 As all did govern, yet all did obey;  
 His lively temper was so absolute,  
 That it seemed when heaven his model first began,  
 In him it showed perfection in a man.’

“Italic type is hardly necessary to establish that one poet must have availed himself, not only of the thought, but of the very words of the other. The question is, was

Shakespeare indebted to Drayton or Drayton to Shakespeare?"

The natural and truthful answer to Collier's question is that the Shakespeare who wrote the fifth scene of the fifth act of *Julius Cæsar* was the Michael Drayton who wrote *Mortomeriados*, published in 1598, and therefore there was neither borrowing nor purloining. Craik, the author of "*The English of Shakespeare*," in commenting on this scene, at page 345 of his book, says, "This passage is remarkable from its resemblance to a passage in Drayton's poem of the *Barons' Wars*."

In Drayton's subsequent edition of the *Barons' Wars*, issued in 1619, he remodeled the passage, retaining, however, all the substantive part of the former editions.

There are other remarkable resemblances, not hitherto brought to the notice of scholars in such a way as to call particular attention to Drayton. I now note them. In Act 2, Scene 1, line 83, Brutus says, "For if thou *path* thy native semblance on." Here "path" is used as a verb. Coleridge wished to change the word to "put," and so did Knight; but "path" is a Draytonian word, and the proper one. In one of Drayton's notes appended to *Rosamond*, he says, "For this never did so strangely *path* itself," and in *Duke Humphrey to Eleanor*, he says, "Pathing young Henry's unadvised ways."

There was no Decius Brutus as stated in the play. Decimus Brutus was meant, and he had been the particular favorite and friend of Cæsar. In the play he is wrongly called Decius, not by the printer, but by the writer of the play, and that may account for the nickname of the "poet Decius" given by Sir John Davies to Drayton.

In Act 2, Scene 2, Calphurnia says:

“When beggars die, there are no comets seen;  
The heavens themselves blaze forth the death of  
princes.”

The same thought occurs in Drayton's Queen Margaret:

“As when some dreadful comet doth appear,  
Athwart the heaven that throws his threatening light,  
Some, war, some, plagues, some, famine greatly fear;  
Some, falls of kingdoms or of men of might.”

And in Matilda, he says:

“And as a comet in the evening sky,  
Struck with amazement every wondering eye.”

But in the phrases peculiarly familiar to young scholars and declaimers, the identification of Drayton manifests itself plainly. Thus, in Act 1, Scene 2, Cassius says:

“The torrent roar'd; and we did buffet it  
With *lusty sinews*;

while Drayton, in Pol. 1, p. 16, says:

“Their *lusty sinews* swell, like cables as they strive.”

In the next line of the play the word “stemming” is used, and used only once in the plays, and it is used by Drayton in Mortimer to Isabel.

In the same act and scene, Cæsar says, “Yond Cassius has a *lean and hungry look*”; and Drayton, in Pol. 1, p. 77, says: “The *lean and hungry earth*.” Cassius says: “And bear the palm alone,” while Drayton, in Pol. 3, page 46, says: “And bear the palm away”; and at page 55, *idem*, he says: “the palm away to bear.” Brutus says: “Till

then, *my noble friend*, chew upon this"; Drayton, in his epistle to Jeffreys, says: "*My noble friend*, I would." In the third scene of the same act, Casca says:

"I have seen tempests, when the scolding winds  
Have riv'd the knotty oaks";

and Drayton, in Eclogue second, says: "Now am I like the aged knotty oaks."

Cassius says: "Our yoke and sufferance *shows us womanish*." Drayton, in Pol. 2, p. 183, says: "Apparel often *shows us womanish*."

In Scene 1 of Act 3, Antony says: "A curse shall light upon the limbs of men"; while Drayton, in Heroical Epistles, p. 184, says: "My curse light on his head."

In Scene 2 of the same act, Antony says:

"Ingratitude, more strong than traitor's arms,  
Quite vanquished him."

Drayton, in the 53d stanza of Matilda, exclaims:

"Ingratitude, how deeply dost thou wound!"

First Citizen says: "O, piteous spectacle!" while Drayton, in Barons' Wars, C. 2, S. 67, exclaims: "O, spectacle."

First Citizen says: "O! most bloody sight"; while Drayton, in Pol. 3, p. 45, says: "O! most amazing sight," and in Barons' Wars, C. 2, S. 69, he says: "O, bloody age."

Third Citizen says: "Pluck down benches," and the Fourth Citizen says: "Pluck down forms"; while Drayton, in Pol. 1, p. 157, says: "Will pluck down all the Church."

In the third scene of act four, Brutus says:

“Let me tell you, Cassius, you yourself  
Are much condemned to have an *itching palm*.”

while in Agincourt, Drayton says:

“Felt as they thought, their bloody palms to itch.”

In the first scene of act five, Cassius says:

“And in their steads, do ravens, crows and kites,”

while Drayton, in David and Goliath, says:

“The kites and ravens are not far away.”

In the fourth scene, Lucilius says: “I dare assure thee,” while Drayton, in Nymphidia, says: “I dare assure you.”

Among the words used once only in the plays and used in this play, and also used by Drayton, are, “rabblement, illuminate, recreate, and tag-rag.” The word “cautalous” used in Scene 1, Act 2, is a Draytonian word, used by him in Queen Margaret, and it is also found in Coriolanus, A. 4, S. 1, L. 33.

These striking resemblances show one of two things: either that Drayton was a great plagiarist, or else that he had a part in the composition of the play generally called Julius Cæsar. It is clear, as an examination of Henslowe’s Diary will show, that Drayton was the most careful and industrious writer of plays of the many poets in Henslowe’s employment. His honesty, sincerity, and ability have never been questioned by critics, commentators, or students of the drama. The entry of the composition of Cæsar’s Fall shows that Drayton was a party to the authorship of the play. It had noble parents. Anthony

Monday, "our best plotter" (according to Meres), Thomas Middleton, and John Webster, three poets and dramatists of the first rank, were Drayton's coadjutors. In the Folio of 1623 the play is called, at the beginning and over each page, "The Tragedy of Julius Cæsar," and at the beginning of the Folio it is entered as "The Life and Death of Julius Cæsar."

If the reader will compare the colloquy between Brutus and Portia, as found in Act 2, Scene 2, with that between Hotspur and Lady Percy, as found in Act 2, Scene 3, of Henry the Fourth, he will be struck with the marvelous resemblance in the style and even the thoughts expressed. If I am right in my opinion, based on the foregoing facts, as to the composers of Julius Cæsar, it will be found on an examination of Henry the Fourth that Drayton wrote that particular part of a scene in Henry the Fourth.

In Act 2, Scene 1, of Julius Cæsar, which I particularly specify as the work of Drayton, the reader will notice the wrong use of the word "*exorcist*." An exorcist, according to the Standard Dictionary and all other authorities as to definition, is one who casts or drives out evil spirits; he is one who expels evil spirits by means of adjuration or incantation, or the like. The ceremony of exorcism is used in the Greek and Latin churches. But in Julius Cæsar, Ligarius uses the word improperly, for in Act 2, Scene 1, replying to Brutus, he says:

•  
"Thou, like an exorcist, has conjur'd up  
My mortified spirit."

The writer believed that an exorcist was one who raised spirits instead of casting them out. And so in Cymbeline,

A. 4, S. 2, the poet wrongly says: "No exorcist harm thee," and in *All's Well*, A. 5, S. 3, the King exclaims:

"Is there no exorcist  
 Beguiles the truer office of mine eyes?"

The poet makes the same blunder in *Second Henry the Sixth*, A. 1, S. 4, where Bolingbroke asks, "Will her ladyship behold and hear our exorcisms?"

If the careful reader will examine the works of Michael Drayton, he will find that Drayton was such a blunderer. He will also find that Thomas Dekker so blundered in his dedication of *Satiro-mastix*.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

HENRY THE SIXTH, PARTS 1, 2, AND 3, EXAMINED.

*"Let's go hand in hand."*

—Comedy of Errors, v, 1.

The earliest reliable evidence as to this play, available to the reader, I have carefully collected from Henslowe's Diary, the entries being copied from pages 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, and 30.

"R'd at Henery the VI, the 3 of Marche, 1591, £ 3, 16s, 5d."

"R'd at Hary VI, the 7 of Marche, 1591, £ 3."

"R'd at Hary VI, the 11 of Marche, 1591, 47s, 6d."

"R'd at Harey the 16 of Marche, 1591, 31s, 6d."

"R'd at Harey the VI, the 28 of Marche, 1591, £ 3, 8s."

"R'd at Harey the VI, the 5 of Aprell, 1591, 41s."

"R'd at Harey the VI, the 13 of Aprell, 1591, 26s."

"R'd at Harey the VI, the 21 of Aprell, 1591, 33s."

"R'd at Harey the VI, the 4 of May 1592, 16s."

"R'd at Harey the VI, the 7 of Maye 1592, 22s."

"R'd at Harey the VI, the 19 of Maye 1592, 30s."

"R'd at Harey the VI, the 25 of Maye 1592, 24s."

"R'd at Harey the VI, the 12 of June 1592, 33s."

"R'd at Harey the VI, the 19 of June 1592, 31s."

"R'd at Harey the 6, the 16 of Janewary 1593, 46s."

"R'd at Harey the VI, the 31 of Janewary 1593, 26s."

Collier, the editor, has inserted, at page 22, the following note: "This play, whether by Shakespeare or not, was extremely popular and profitable. It produced Henslowe £1, 11s, 0d for his share on its fourteenth representation.



On its performance in 1591, we here see that it brought him £3, 16s, 5d. Malone was of the opinion that it was the First part of Henry the Sixth, included among Shakespeare's works; and it is certain that this entry of 3 March 1591 relates to its original production, as Henslowe has put his mark *ne* in the margin."

As to the fourth entry, Collier says, "Meaning, no doubt, Harey or Henry VI."

The natural presumption from the foregoing entries is that Malone was right in his opinion that this play was the first part of Henry the Sixth, unless it can be shown to the contrary.

As the true authorship of the several parts is the matter now to be considered, I will state what the results of my investigation are, based on an examination of the several parts of the play; and I will put the reader in possession of the facts so that he can judge for himself.

It is very clear from a study of the opinions of the most learned commentators, believers as they were and are in Shaksper's ability and learning, that they nevertheless repudiate his authorship of the three parts of Henry the Sixth. The following quotation from Verplanck's introductory remarks attached to the play in his edition of the plays, very clearly and concisely states the consensus of opinion on the subject:

"For two centuries from their first appearance, these plays, containing the story of Henry VI, were acknowledged, read, acted, and printed and reprinted as the genuine works of Shakespeare, with a universality of acquiescence which was scarcely interrupted by a dogmatic doubt or denial of authenticity thrown out by the feeble Theobald, the paradoxical Warburton or the over-ingenuous

Morgann. It may, therefore, surprise many readers, who may not have kept pace with the later Shakespearean criticisms, to be informed that a majority of the later English critics have adopted or incline to an hypothesis, brought forward by Malone about sixty years ago, that the first part of King Henry VI. as it now appears (of which no quarto copy is extant), was the entire, or nearly the entire production of some unknown ancient dramatist."

Further on, Verplanck states that "Malone's argument is contained in a long dissertation printed in the several Variorum editions of Shakespeare. It is founded mainly, as relates to this first part, upon its dissimilarity of versification and phraseology to that of Shakespeare; and its resemblance in those things to the writings of Greene and Peele, etc.; upon the classical allusions and Latin quotations, too learned and too abundant for the unlettered Shakespeare; upon two or three slight historical inaccuracies or discrepancies with the other plays of this series; upon the use of Hall's Chronicle as the historical authority, instead of Holinshed, who is known to have been Shakespeare's guide; with some still slighter circumstances."

Here, now, is a fatal blow administered to the begetters or producers of the three parts of Henry the Sixth, whether you call them Heminge and Condell or a syndicate of publishers or Francis Bacon.

Now, my study of the several parts of this play induces me to believe that Michael Drayton and Thomas Dekker were the principal composers of the play as it appeared in the Folio of 1623. I find many traces also of Anthony Monday in the play.

I will first show Drayton's connection with the several parts of the play by means of phrases or expressions com-

mon to him and also to one of the writers of the play, and then supplement them with the list of words used once or twice only in this particular play and in all the plays, as also in the works of Drayton. Dekker's connection with the authorship will then be set out in the same order.

Some of the identical expressions are as follows:

#### LINGERING WARS.

In A. 1, S. 1, the Messenger says, "One would have *lingering wars* with little cost"; while in Pol. 2, p. 8, Drayton says, "But by the *lingering wars*."

#### TO ADD TO.

The third Messenger says, "My gracious lords, *to add to* your laments"; while Drayton, in Isabel to Richard 2, says, "*To add to* our afflictions."

#### UNDAUNTED SPIRIT.

The same messenger says, "His soldiers spying his *undaunted spirit*"; while in Cromwell, Drayton says, "That is the man of an *undaunted spirit*"; and in Pol. 1, p. 193, Drayton says, "Which their undaunted spirits soon made that conqueror feel." This phrase is repeated in A. 3, S. 2, where Talbot says, "*Undaunted spirit* in a dying breast"; and also in A. 5, S. 5, where Suffolk says, "Her valiant courage and *undaunted spirit*."

#### BE NOT DISMAYED.

In A. 1, S. 2, the Bastard of Orleans says, "*Be not dismayed*, for succor is at hand"; while in Eleanor Cobham to Duke Humphrey, Drayton says, "*Be not dismayed*, nor

let my name affright"; and in Owen Tudor to Queen Catherine, he uses the same expression.

BE NOT AMAZED.

Pucelle says, "*Be not amazed*, there's nothing hid from me"; while in Agincourt, St. 4, Drayton says the same.

TO THE LAST GASP.

Pucelle says, "*Fight till the last gasp*, I will be your guard," and in the third part, A. 2, S. 1, Warwick says, "Where your brave father *breathed his latest gasp*"; while Drayton, in Barons' Wars, C. 5, S. 64, says, "To his last gasp to move them with his woe," and *idem* in Divorce.

BRIGHT STAR OF.

Charles says, "*Bright star of Venus*," while Drayton, in Idea, St. 4, says, "*Bright star of beauty*."

HALCYON DAYS.

Pucelle says, "Expect St. Martin's summer, halcyon days"; while Drayton, in Pol. 3, p. 174, says, "Prognosticates to them a happy halcyon day."

ENDLESS PRAISE.

Charles says, in Act 1, Scene 6, "Shall in procession sing her *endless praise*." Drayton, in Pol. 2, p. 119, says, "But to his *endless praise*, our English Athelstan."

SCOURGE OF FRANCE.

Countess says, in A. 2, S. 3, "Is this the *scourge of France*?" Drayton says, in a note made by him in Elea-

nor to Duke Humphrey, "That *scourge of France* and the glory of the Englishman."

## FOR THE NONCE.

Countess says, "This is a riddling merchant *for the nonce*." Drayton, in *Nymphidia*, says, "And daintily made *for the nonce*."

## THE WHOLE FRAME.

Talbot says, "I tell you, Madam, were *the whole frame* here." Drayton, in *Barons' Wars*, C. 3, S. 46, says, "And *the whole frame* of heaven made up the choir."

## FAME HATH BRUITED.

Countess says, "I find thou art no less than *fame hath bruited*." Drayton, in *Agincourt*, says, "But what is *bruited* of the general *fame*."

## SHARP AND PIERCING.

Plantagenet says, in A. 2, S. 4, "Ay, *sharp and piercing* to maintain his truth"; while Drayton, in *Nymphidia*, says, "He had a *sharp and piercing* sight."

## PLUCK THIS RED ROSE.

Suffolk says, "I *pluck this red rose* with young Somerset." Drayton, in *Queen Margaret*, says, "To *pluck their red rose* quite up by the root."

## I DOUBT NOT BUT.

Plant., in A. 2, S. 5, says, "*I doubt not but* with honor to redress." Drayton, in *Pol.* 2, p. 168, uses the same words.

## SMOOTHED BROW.

Warwick, in A. 3, S. 1, says, "As by his *smoothed brow* it doth appear." Drayton, in Pol. 1, p. 152, says, "Who to that time still with a *smoothed brow*."

## FLESH AND SINEWS.

Exeter says, "Till bones and *flesh and sinews* fall away"; while Drayton, in Eleanor to Duke Humphrey, says, "To tear both *flesh and sinews* from the bone."

## VULGAR SORT.

Pucelle says, in A. 3, S. 2, "Talk like the *vulgar sort* of market men." Drayton, in De La Poole to Queen Margaret, says, "With the base *vulgar sort* to win his fame."

## LEAN FAMINE.

Talbot says, in A. 4, S. 2, "*Lean famine*, quartering steel and climbing fire"; while Drayton, in King Henry to Rosamond, says, "Nor yet did pale fear or *lean famine* live."

## STRATAGEMS OF WAR.

Talbot says, in A. 4, S. 5, "To tutor thee in *stratagems of war*"; while in Queen Margaret, Drayton says, "Expert in all the *stratagems of war*."

## ILL-BODING STARS.

Talbot says, "But O malignant and *ill-boding stars*"; while Drayton, in Queen Isabel to Richard 2, says, "And all *ill-boding planets* by consent."

## LIKE A HUNGRY LION.

Talbot says, "And *like a hungry lion* did commence"; while Drayton, in Pol. 2, p. 276, says, "Upon the envied French, *like hungry lions* flew."

## TO STOP THE EFFUSION OF.

Gloster says, in A. 5, S. 1, "*To stop effusion of our Christian blood*"; while in Agincourt, Drayton says, "*To stop the effusion of their husband's gore.*"

## CONDITIONS OF A FRIENDLY PEACE.

King Henry says, "To draw conditions of a friendly peace"; while in Idea, 63, Drayton says, "I offer free conditions of fair peace."

## IN EARNEST OF.

Pucelle says, A. 5, S. 3, "*In earnest of a further benefit.*" Drayton, in Shore to Edward, says, "*In earnest of a greater good.*"

## AS IF WITH CIRCE.

York says, "As if with Circe she would change my shape"; while Drayton, in Barons' Wars, C. 6, St. 77, says, "And like a Circe metamorphosest."

## CRAVE A PARLEY.

Suffolk says, "We'll *crave a parley*"; and Drayton, in Idea, 63, says, "*A parley now I crave.*"

## TO SUFFER SHIPWRECK.

K. Henry, in A. 5, S. 5, says, "Either *to suffer shipwreck* or arrive," while Drayton, in Elegy to Sandys, says, "*To suffer shipwreck* by my forward pen."

The following are examples in Part Second:

## RULES THE ROAST.

Gloster says, in A. 1, S. 1, "Suffolk, the new-made Duke that *rules the roast*"; while Drayton, in Pol. 3, p. 52, says, "He was the man that only *ruled the roast.*"

## WEAR THE DIADEM.

York says, "Nor *wear the diadem* upon his head." Drayton, in De La Poole to Queen Margaret, says, "By true descent, to *wear the diadem*."

## HEAVED IT UP.

Duchess says, in A. 1, S. 2, "And having both together heaved it up." Drayton, in Q. Margaret, says, "Even to the height his powerful hand upheaved."

## WEIGHTY CAUSE.

Duchess says, "With my confederates in this *weighty cause*." Drayton, in Pol. 1, p. 5, says, "Like some great learned Judge to end a *weighty cause*." Cardinal, in A. 3, S. 1, says, "What counsel give you in this *weighty cause*?"

## ASSURES ME.

Warwick says, "My heart *assures me*." Drayton, in Isabel to Mortimer, says, "My glass *assures me*."

## BE PATIENT, GENTLE.

Gloster says, in A. 2, S. 4, "*Be patient, gentle* Nell." Drayton, in Duke Humphrey to Eleanor, says, "*Be patient, gentle* heart."

## THE NEEDY COMMONS.

York says, in A. 3, S. 1, "Because I would not tax the needy commons." Drayton, in Duke Humphrey to Eleanor, says, "Upon the needy commonalty to lay."

## VAUNTS OF NOBILITY.

Suffolk says, "And such high *vaunts of his nobility*." Drayton, in Matilda, says, "To *vaunt of my nobility* were vain."



## RAVENOUS WOLVES.

Q. Margaret says, "For he's inclined as are the *ravenous wolves*"; while Drayton, in Queen Margaret, says, "As when a rout of *ravenous wolves* are met."

## BASILISK AND KILL.

K. Henry says, in A. 3, S. 2, "Come, basilisk, and kill the innocent gazer with thy sight." Drayton, in Mat., 75, says, "Like as the basilisk to kill."

## AWKWARD WINDS.

Q. Margaret says, "And twice by *awkward wind* from England's bank"; while in R. 2 to Isabel, Drayton says, "Driven by *awkward winds* and boisterous seas."

## BREATHLESS CORPSE.

K. Henry says, "Enter his chamber, view his *breathless corpse*." In Idea, 47, Drayton says, "Oft hath been proved the *breathless corpse* will bleed."

## TIMELESS DEATH.

Q. Margaret says:

"Then you belike suspect these noblemen  
As guilty of Duke Humphrey's timeless death."

While in Queen Margaret, Drayton says:

"Which good Duke Humphrey first of all must taste  
Whose timeless death interpreted their haste."

In Duke Robert, Drayton says, "Thy strength was buried in his timeless death."

## NEVIL'S RACE.

Suffolk says:

“Whose fruit thou art,  
And never of the *Nevil's* noble *race*.”

while in Owen Tudor to Q. Margaret, Drayton says,  
“Warwick, the pride of *Nevil's* haughty *race*.”

## MANDRAKE'S GROAN.

Suffolk says, “Would curses kill, as doth the *mandrake's* *groan*”; while Drayton, in Geraldine to H. Howard, says, “*Mandrake's* dreadful *groan*”; and in Nymphidia, he says, “By the *mandrake's* dreadful *groan*.”

## BLACK DESPAIR.

K. Henry says, in A. 3, S. 3, “And from his bosom purge this *black despair*”; while Drayton, in Lady Jane to Dudley, says, “Arm'd against *black despair* and all her kind.”

## O, SPECTACLE.

First Gent. says, in A. 4, S. 1, “*O*, barbarous and bloody *spectacle*”; see 3 H. 6, A. 2, S. 5. Drayton, in Barons' Wars, C. 2, S. 67, says, “*O, spectacle*, ever able to affright.”

## CLOUTED SHOON.

Cade says, in A. 4, S. 2, “Spare none but such as go in *clouted shoon*”; while in Pol. 3, p. 95, Drayton says, “the club and *clouted shoon*.”

## RUDE AND MERCILESS.

Messenger says, in A. 4, S. 4, “Of hinds and peasants, *rude and merciless*.” Drayton, in Barons' Wars, C. 4, S. 43, says, “Whose giddy commons, *merciless and rude*.”

## KENTISH REBELS.

Q. Margaret says, "These *Kentish rebels* would be soon appeased"; and King Henry says, "Trust not the *Kentish rebels*"; while Drayton makes Margaret say in De La Poole to Q. Margaret, "A *Kentish rebel*, a base upstart groom."

## CURSE LIGHT ON YOU.

Cade says, in A. 4, S. 7, "God's *curse light on you* all." Drayton, in Isabel to K. Rich. 2, says, "My *curse light on* his head."

## PUISSANT POWER.

Mess. says, in A. 4, S. 9, "The Queen from France hath brought a *puissant power*"; Somerset says, "With a *puissant and a mighty power*." In Barons' Wars, C. 2, in the Argument, Drayton says, "At Burton's bridge the *puissant powers* are met."

## GALLOW GLASSES AND KERNES.

Mess. says, "Of Gallow glasses and stout Kernes." In Her. Epist., p. 176, Drayton says, "To land the Kernes and Irish gallow glasses."

## THE FLOWER DE LUCE OF FRANCE.

York says, in A. 5, S. 1, "On which I'll toss *the flower de luce of France*." Drayton, in Agincourt, says, "Which lately lost *the flower de luce of France*."

## THE RAMPANT BEAR AND RAGGED STAFF.

Warwick says, "The rampant bear chained to the ragged staff." Drayton, in De La Poole to Q. Margaret, says, "The white bear rampant and the ragged staff."

## KITES AND CROWS.

York says, "And made a prey of carrion *kites and crows*"; while in Barons' Wars, C. 2, S. 67, Drayton says, "His quartered corse of *kites and crows* devoured."

## IT GRIEVES MY SOUL.

Warwick says, in A. 5, S. 2, "*It grieves my soul* to leave thee unassailed." In Pol. 5, p. 274, Drayton says, "*It grieves my zealous soul.*"

## DEDICATE TO.

Y. Clifford says, "He that is truly *dedicate to war.*" Drayton, in Barons' Wars, C. 4, S. 16, says, "Such as indeed were *dedicate to arms.*"

In the Third Part, some of the expressions are:

## THE REGAL SEAT.

Warwick says, "And this the *regal seat*; possess it, York." Drayton, in Agincourt, says, "Claiming the *regal seat.*"

## ACCURSED BE.

Exeter says, "*Accursed be* he that seeks to make them foes"; while in K. Henry to Rosamond, Drayton says, "*Accursed be* that heart, that tongue, that breath."

## PROTECTOR OF THE REALM.

Margaret says, "The Duke is made *protector of the realm.*" Drayton, in Q. Margaret, says, "Was both *protector of the realm* and King."

## MISERABLY SLAIN.

Rutland says, in A. 1, S. 3, "He be as *miserably slain* as I." In Barons' Wars, C. 6, S. 64, Drayton says, "Were at their entrance *miserably slain*."

## MISERABLE STATE.

Q. Margaret says, in A. 1, S. 4, "I should lament thy *miserable state*"; while Drayton, in Isabel to R. 2d, says, "To part us in this *miserable state*."

## SINGLED FORTH.

Richard says, in A. 2, S. 1, "And watched him how he *singled Clifford forth*"; while in King John to Matilda, Drayton says, "I *singled forth* that pleased my fancy best."

## I SEE THREE SUNS.

Edward says, "Dazzle mine eyes, or do *I see three suns?*" In Queen Margaret, Drayton says, "*Three suns were seen*, that instant to appear."

## BLAME ME NOT.

Rich. says, "I know it well, Lord Warwick, blame me not." In Mary to Brandon, Drayton says, "*Blame me not, Brandon*"; and in Owen Tudor to Q. Cath. he says, "*Blame me not, madam*."

## KNIT HIS ANGRY BROW.

Clifford says, in A. 2, S. 2, "Thou smiling, while he *knit his angry brow*." In Mary to Brandon, Drayton says, "If when thou com'st I *knit mine angry brow*."

## THINGS ILL-GOT.

K. Henry says, "That *things ill got* have ever bad success." In *Mooncalf*, Drayton says, "For *goods ill-gotten* do consume as fast."

## FOUL STIGMATIC.

Q. Margaret says, "But like a *foul* misshapen *stigmatic*." In *De La Poole* to Q. Marg't, Drayton says, "*Foul*, ill-favor'd, crook-back'd *stigmatic*."

## EARTH BE DRUNKEN.

Warwick says, in A. 2, S. 3, "Then let the *earth be drunken* with our blood"; while in *Agincourt*, Drayton says, "And make our *earth drunk* with English gore."

## EMBROIDERED CANOPY.

K. Henry says, in A. 2, S. 5, "Than doth a *rich embroidered canopy*"; while in *Mary to Brandon*, Drayton says, "Under a *rich embroidered canopy*."

## DEPARTING GROANS.

Richard says, "A deadly *groan*, like life and death *departing*." Drayton, in *Barons' Wars*, C. 4, S. 45, says, "And for her accents, sad *departing groans*."

## SWARM LIKE FLIES.

Clifford says, in A. 2, S. 6, "The common people *swarm like* summer *flies*"; while in *Piers Gaveston*, Drayton says, "Thus do they *swarm like flies* about the brim."

## BRAKE SHROUDED.

1st Keeper says, in A. 3, S. 1, "Under this thick grown *brake*, we'll *shroud* ourselves"; while in *Piers Gaveston*, Drayton says, "Sits *shrouded* in some solitary *brake*."

## BROOK DELAY.

Lady Gray says, in A. 3, S. 2, "Right gracious Lord, I can not *brook delay*." In Mary to Brandon, Drayton says, "How ill we women *brook delay*."

## WEAR THE WILLOW GARLAND.

Bona says, in A. 3, S. 3, "I'll *wear the willow garland* for his sake." In Muses' Elysium, Drayton says, "The *willow garland weareth*."

## AT UNAWARES.

Warwick says, in A. 4, S. 2, "*At unawares* may beat down Edward's guard"; and in A. 4, S. 4, Queen Elizabeth says, "Or by his foes, surprised *at unawares*." In Barons' Wars, C. 5, S. 58, Drayton says, "Turning the leaf, he found *at unawares*."

## STANDS THE CASE.

Gloster says, in A. 4, S. 5, "Thus *stands the case*"; while in Idea, St. 2, Drayton says, "So *stands the case* with me."

## LAUREL CROWN.

Clarence says, in A. 4, S. 6, "Adjudged an olive branch and *laurel crown*"; while in the 4th Eclogue, Drayton says, "The oaken garland and the *laurel crown*."

## MANGLED BODY.

Warwick says, in A. 5, S. 2, "Why ask I that my *mangled body* shows." In Barons' Wars, C. 4, St. 44, Drayton says, "In *mangled bodies*, her anatomy."

## SANDS AND ROCKS.

Queen Margaret says, in A. 5, S. 4, "More than with ruthless waves, with *sands and rocks*." In Barons' Wars, C. 4, St. 37, Drayton says, "Mongst rocks and sands in danger to be lost."

I desire now to invite the reader's particular attention to the remarkable similarity of expression as between the author of the third scene of the second act and the third scene of the third act of the third part of this play, and Drayton in his *Polyolbion*, Vol. 3, page 74.

In the second act, Edward, addressing Warwick, says:

"I throw my hands, mine eyes, my heart to thee,  
Thou setter up and plucker down of kings!"

and in the third act, Queen Margaret says:

"Peace, impudent and shameless Warwick, peace,  
Proud setter up and puller down of kings!"

while Drayton, in *Pol.* 3, p. 74, says:

"Thus fortune to his end, this mighty Warwick brings,  
This puissant setter up and puller down of kings."

and in Queen Margaret to De La Poole, he says:

"Proud setter up and puller down of kings."

Again, in the second scene of the third act, Gloster says:

"I can add colors to the cameleon;  
Change shapes with Proteus for advantages."

while in *Piers Gaveston*, Drayton says:



“Like theameleon, whilst time turns the hue,  
And with false Proteus put on sundry shapes.”

In the sixth scene of the fifth act, Gloster says:

“For often have I heard my mother say,  
I came into the world with my legs forward,  
The midwife wondered; and the women cried,  
O Jesus bless us, he is born with teeth.”

In Queen Margaret to De La Poole, Drayton says (speaking of Gloster), “Born toothed and with his feet forward,” and a little farther on, “with teeth in his head.”

In the fourth scene of the first act of the Third Part, York says, “My ashes, as the phœnix, may bring forth”; while Drayton, in Henry Howard to Geraldine, says, “I will renew thee, phoenix-like, again.”

The following expressions are used alike by one of the composers of the play and Drayton:

“A sort of, and to conclude, and yet methinks, as free as heart could wish, but now of late, but stay, but to conclude, content thyself, delays breed doubts, how say'st thou, insulting Knight, nay, be not angry, proclamation made, ravenous wolf, shepherd swain, silly sheep, think'st thou, thirsting after, timeless death, unfeigned love.” Drayton's favorite expressions, “when as,” “for then as,” used in this play, also betray him.

Words used once only in this play, and not elsewhere used in any of the other plays, and used also by Drayton, are as follows:

“Ashy, Atlas, augmented, ban-dogs, behoof, bemoaned, bested, Bevis of Southampton, bewrayed, bloodthirsty, blotting, certify, choicely, conditionally, confusedly, cooped, cornets, dangerously, Deborah, Dædalus, defend-

ant, deluded, discerned, divining, easeful, embroidered, enchantress, erecting, everliving, exequies, exorcisms, expulsed, extinguish, far-fet, foot-stool, forecast, fraudulent, guerdoned, harbouring, hearten, hunger-starved, ill-got, immortalized, impairing, imperiously, intrenched, invective, leper, lineally, minotaurs, mirthful, muttered, overweening, overpass'd, overpeered, Parisians, Pendragon, procurator, propounded, quenchless, quitting, reproachfully, rigorously, Septentrion, servility, shaghaired, sleight, sprawlest, sturdy, subversion, subvert, thirsting, top-branch, treacherously, turmoiled, unnaturally, voiding, withstand."

Words used twice only in this play and in the plays, and also used by Drayton, are as follows:

"Affy, Amazonian, attempting, bereaved, big-swoln, brown bill, characterized, checkered, commixtures, corrosive, degraded, disproportion (as a verb), double, engirt, enticing, erst, fabulous, forewarned, gazers, heroic, ignobly, ill boding, infringed, invoke, luckless, munition, obloquy, o'ermatched, overgone, overrun, peaceably, pensive, politely, reasonless, remorseless, resident, stigmatic, struggling, threadbare, tire, tresses, unconquered, yelping."

Drayton also uses the following words which are used in this play and three times only in all the plays: "Coverture, deathsman, futherance, remorseless, ruinate, treble, younger."

When the reader considers that Michael Drayton was thoroughly familiar with the doings of kings, nobles, and commonalty in that period of English and French history dramatized in the several parts of this play, and that he had celebrated the amours and quarrels of the most notable participants in rhyme, he will be the more inclined, after

careful examination, to believe, with me, that Michael Drayton was a principal composer of Henry the Sixth. He is full of poetry, of love, of war, of history, of geography, of religion, of the lore of fairy freaks and fairyland.

Thomas Dekker appears in the second scene of act second of 1 Henry 6th; in part of scene first, act first, of 2 Henry 6th; in the third and fourth scenes of the second act; in the third, sixth, and tenth scenes of the fourth act; and in the first scene of the fifth act, of the Third Part. I trace him by these phrases peculiar to him, as found in his plays, as for instance, "I muse, since there's no remedy, heart's content, imprimis, I fear me, a fig for, and so farewell, it was never merry world, by my faith, O gross, and, to speak truth, how now, what news, Mass, like an ostrich, ay, by my faith."

The third scene of the first act of the First Part is, in my opinion, the sole work of Anthony Monday, the man with the "tiger's heart." The reader will remember that the play of Sir John Oldecastle has been identified by Henslowe's Diary as the work of Monday, Drayton, Wilson, and Hathaway. Monday opens the play with a quarrel and attempt at fighting between the followers of Lord Herbert and Lord Powis. There is a great tumult. As they are fighting, the mayor and townsmen enter, and the mayor orders a proclamation to be read, commanding the peace and dispersing the parties. So in Henry the Sixth, Gloster's men in blue coats and Winchester's men in tawny coats quarrel, and the mayor enters with officers and makes a proclamation similar to that made by the Mayor of Hereford.

In the scene in Henry the Sixth, the words are as follows:

- Win.* Gloster, thou'lt answer this before the pope.  
*Glo.* Winchester goose! I cry—a rope! a rope!  
 Now beat them hence, why do you let them stay?  
 Thee I'll chase hence, thou wolf in sheep's array.—  
 Out, tawny coats!—out, scarlet hypocrite!
- (Here Gloster's men beat out the Cardinal's men, and enter, in the hurly-burly, the Mayor of London and his Officers.)
- May.* Fie, lords! that you, being supreme magistrates,  
 Thus contumeliously should break the peace!
- Glo.* Peace, Mayor! thou knowest little of my wrongs.  
 Here's Beaufort, that regards not God nor king,  
 Hath here distrained the Tower to his use.
- Win.* Here's Gloster too, a foe to citizens:  
 One that still motions war, and never peace,  
 O'ercharging your free purses with large fines;  
 That seeks to overthrow religion,  
 Because he is protector of the realm:  
 And would have armour, here, out of the Tower,  
 To crown himself king, and suppress the prince.
- Glo.* I will not answer thee with words, but blows.  
 (Here they skirmish again.)
- May.* Nought rests for me, in this tumultuous strife,  
 But to make open proclamation.—  
 Come, officer: as loud as thou canst cry.
- Off.* All manner of men, assembled here in arms this  
 day, against God's peace, and the king's, we charge  
 and command you, in his highness' name, to repair  
 to your several dwelling-places; and not to wear,  
 handle, or use, any sword, weapon, or dagger,  
 henceforward, upon pain of death.
- Glo.* Cardinal, I'll be no breaker of the law;  
 But we shall meet, and break our minds at large.
- Win.* Gloster, we'll meet, to thy dear cost be sure:  
 Thy heart-blood I will have for this day's work."

And in the scene in Oldcastle, the words are these:

“(As they are fighting, enter the Mayor of Hereford, his officers and townsmen with clubs.)

*May.* My lords, as you are liegemen to the crown,  
True noblemen, and subjects to the king,  
Attend his highness' proclamation,  
Commanded by the Judges of Assize,  
For keeping peace at this assembly.

*Her.* Good master, Mayor of Hereford, be brief.

*May.* Serjeant, without the ceremonies of O Yes,  
Pronounce aloud the proclamation.

*Ser.* The King's Justices, perceiving what public mischief may ensue this private quarrel, in his Majesty's name do stoutly charge and command all persons, of what degree soever, to depart this city of Hereford, except such as are bound to give attendance at this assize, and that no man presume to wear any weapon, especially Welsh hooks and forest bills.”

The style is that of Monday, and in both plays his flings at the papacy are undisguised. Besides, in the scene now under consideration, an expression is used precisely like that used by Monday in the play of John a Kent, viz., “I'll be your Warrantize.”

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

RICHARD THE THIRD AND KING JOHN EXAMINED.

*“An honest tale speeds best being plainly told.”*

—Richard Third, iv. 4.

The tragedy of Richard the Third, when it was first published in 1597, for Andrew Wise, contained no reference to any author. When again published in 1598, for Andrew Wise, the title page contained the following: “By William Shake-speare.”

It should be remarked that in 1602, Wise had another edition printed with these words added: “Newly augmented, By William Shakespeare.” It was again published in 1605 with the same words, the Shakespeare being hyphenated.

Then it appeared in the Folio of 1623, with additions, particularly in scene second of the first act. Who prepared and put in these additions? They were not in the quartos at all.

In this connection two very singular facts appear, to which very little attention has been paid. One of them, the last one mentioned, has never been noticed. Henslowe's Diary shows that in the year 1602 Henslowe paid to Benjamin Jonson ten pounds for a play which Henslowe calls “Richard Crookback.” The entry in the Diary, at page 223, is as follows: “Lent unto bengemy Johnstone, at the apoyntment of E. Alleyn and Wm Birde, the 24 of June 1602, in earneste of a boocke called Richard crockbacke, and for new adiecyons for Jeronymo the some of XII.”

The other fact appears in the sixth volume of "Thomas Heywood's Dramatic Works," published in 1874 by Pearson, at page 352. Heywood there inserts a copy of a prologue and epilogue written by himself and used in the acting of Richard the Third. Heywood prefaces the prologue with the following:

"A young witty lad playing the part of Richard the Third, at the Red Bull, the author, because he was interested in the play, to encourage him, wrote him this prologue and epilogue: 'The boy, the speaker.' The prologue begins thus:

'If any wonder by what magic charm,  
Richard the third is shrunk up like his arm;  
And where in fulness you expected him,  
You see me only crawling like a limb  
Or piece of that known fabric and no more,  
When he so often hath been view'd before.'"

How Heywood, as an author, was interested in this play, he does not explain. He may have referred to the True Tragedy of Richard the Third, of which he may have been the author, or he may have been a collaborator in the making of the Shake-speare play. Whatever relation, if any, either Jonson or Heywood had with the play of Richard the Third, which we are now considering, my examination and study of the play leads me to believe that whether Jonson and Heywood had or had not a part in it, Michael Drayton, Thomas Dekker, and John Webster were concerned in the composition of it.

The Draytonian expressions are, "A plague upon; I humbly take my leave; I will resolve you; God wot; I doubt not but; No marvel; O bloody; To make amends; would to God."

The Draytonian words found only once in this play and in none of the other plays, are: "Bedashed, blindly, causer, encompasseth, circling, dewy, dimming, eavesdropper, ferryman, high reared, libels, light foot, nonage, obsequiously, opprobriously, outshining, revolving, spicery, and straitly." Three words, "disgracious, re-edified, underhand," are found in Drayton and this play and twice only in all the plays.

Some of the identical phrases are herewith set out:

In A. 1, S. 1, Gloster says, "Grim-visaged war hath smoothed his wrinkled front"; while Drayton, in Pol. 1, p. 193, says, "Yet with grim-visaged war, when he her shores did greet."

Gloster says, "A bonny eye, a passing pleasing tongue," while Drayton, in Idea, 42, says, "Some say I have a passing pleasing strain."

Hastings says, "And his physicians fear him mightily," while Drayton, in Pol. 2, p. 47, says, "And mightily doth fear."

In the second scene, Gloster says, "Is not the causer of the timeless deaths," while in Duke Robert, Drayton says, "Thy strength was buried in his timeless death."

In Act 2, Scene 3, Citizen says, "For emulation now, who shall be nearest," while Drayton, in Piers Gaveston, says, "For emulation ever did attend."

In Act 3, Scene 2, Hastings says, "What news, what news in this our tottering State?" while Drayton, in Barons' Wars, C. 1, S. 5, says, "Which, like an earthquake, rent the tottering state."

In Scene 4, Gloster says, "Upon my body with their hellish charms"; while Drayton, in Mooncalf, says, "In wreaths contorted, mumbling hellish charms."



Hastings says, "Who builds his hopes in air of your fair looks"; while Drayton, in *Idea*, 63, says, "I build my hopes a world beyond the sky."

In Scene 5, Gloster says, "And bestial appetite in change of lust"; while Drayton, in *Piers Gaveston*, says, "But what might please my bestial appetite."

In Scene 7, Buckingham says, "This general applause and cheerful shout," while in *Matilda*, S. 6, Drayton says, "The wife of Shore wins general applause."

Buckingham says, "And almost shouldered in the swallowing gulf," while in *Pol.* 3, p. 8, Drayton says, "Into that swallowing gulf, which seems as it would draw."

In A. 4, S. 1, Queen Elizabeth says, "To feed my humor, wish thyself no harm," while in Drayton's dedication to *Harmony*, he says, "To feed my vain humor."

Queen Elizabeth also says, "Whom envy hath immured within your walls," while Drayton, in *De La Poole* to Q. Margaret, says, "To rouse the French, within these walls immured."

In Scene 4, Richard says, "Wrong not her birth," while Drayton, in *Matilda*, 70, says, "Wrong not thy fair youth."

Richard says, "To high promotions and great dignity," while Drayton, in *Barons' Wars*, C. 1, S. 13, says, "The seignories and high promotion."

Richard says, "She comes again, transformed to orient pearl," while Drayton, in *Pol.* 3, p. 193, says, "As though her wat'ry path were paved with orient pearl."

In A. 6, S. 2, Richard says, "Lines of fair comfort and encouragement," while in *Pol.* 3, p. 9, Drayton says, "that I should receive much comfort and encouragement therein."

Richard says, "In God's name, cheerly on," while in Pol. 3, p. 217, Drayton says, "Yet cheerly on, my Muse, no whit at all dismayed."

In A. 5, S. 3, Ghost says, "Think how thou stab'st me in my prime of youth," while Drayton, in Pol. 2, p. 14, says, "In my prime of youth."

Ghost says, "And Richard falls in height of all his pride," while Drayton, in Pol. 2, p. 144, says, "In her height of pride."

Drayton and one of the writers of the play also use the word "annoy" as a noun. One uses the phrase "seat royal," and the other, "the royal seat." Richard says, "Delay leads impotent and snail-paced beggary," while Drayton says, "delay breeds doubt." The Duchess says, "That my woe-wearied tongue is still and mute," while Drayton, in Barons' Wars, C. 6, S. 95, says, "Her woe-tied tongue, but when she once could free." The Duchess says, "Thy age confirm'd, proud, subtle, sly and bloody," while Drayton, in Barons' Wars, C. 5, S. 6, says, "A man, grave, subtle, stout and eloquent." Richard says, "All unavoided is the doom of destiny," while Drayton, in Agincourt, says, "O powerful doom of unavoided fate," and in Cromwell, he says, "But O! what man his destiny can shun?" Richard says, "devised at first," while Drayton, in Matilda, 53, says, "Sure first devised."

Another Draytonian peculiarity is noticeable in the accenting of the word "aspect," heretofore referred to. Thus Anne says, "whose ugly and unnatural aspect." Now this very word is a part of the addition made to the quarto in the Folio. The same word will be found later on in Gloster's speech in the same act and scene, where he says, "shamed their aspects with store of childish drops,"

and this speech is also a part of the addition to the Folio. Unless, therefore, some contemporary dramatist so pronounced and used the word, it would be fair to presume that Drayton made the additions to the Folio. That such additions were made by some one after Shaksper's death is very clear. Collier says, in his introduction to the plays, that "with respect to the additions in the Folio of 1623, we have no means of ascertaining whether they formed part of the original play. Our text is that of the Folio, with due notice of all the chief variations." He further adds, in the same introduction, that "Malone was of the opinion that Shakespeare wrote Richard the Third in 1593, but did not adduce a particle of evidence and none in fact exists."

Passing from Drayton, Dekker's connection with the play can be traced by the following exclamations and phrases used familiarly by him: "Ay, prithee peace; but God be thanked; but leaving this; cry mercy; go current; go to; God he knows; gramercy; high imperial; I cry thee, mercy then; I cry you mercy; I fear me; I muse; Let us to't, pell mell; pitchers have ears: saw'st thou; seldom or never; take heed; that as I am a Christian; tut, tut; well, let that rest; what news abroad."

Single words used once only in the plays and by Dekker, are: "Cacodaemon, intelligence, pefellow, prodigality, rooting."

There are two words used in this play and also used by Dekker which especially attracted my attention. One is "keycold," used by Anne in Scene 2 of Act 1, thus: "Poor keycold figure of a holy king." It is also used in *Tarquin and Lucrece* at line 1774, thus: "And then in keycold Lucrece' bleeding stream"; while in *Satiro-mastix*, Dekker

causes Sir Quintilian to say, "For fear your wise brains take keycold." I can not find this word *keycold* in the writings of any contemporary.

The word "peise" is another unusual word uttered by Richmond, in Scene 3 of Act 5. He says, "Lest leaden slumbers peise me down to-morrow." Dekker uses it thus in *Fortunatus*, A. 2, S. 2.

Webster's participation in this play does not seem to be large. I trace him by the expressions, "I misdoubt; I will love her everlastingly; I'll not meddle with it, this palpable device." Act 3, Scene 6, appears to be his.

As to Francis Bacon, if he had anything to do with this play at all, it could only have been by a revision of it.

The *Life and Death of King John* made its first appearance in the Folio of 1623, but in the years 1591, 1611, and 1622, a play called "the first and second part of the troublesome reign of John, King of England" was printed. The issue of 1591 was not ascribed to any one, but that of 1611 had on the title page the letters "W. Sh" and that of 1622 had on it "W. Shakespeare." Steevens averred that the ascription to Shakespeare was fraudulent. Dr. Farmer claimed that William Rowley wrote the play; and Pope was of the opinion that it was written by Shakespeare and Rowley.

The man or men who wrote "The Troublesome Reign" were haters of Roman Catholicism, for in the play, as Collier has shown, "the monks and nuns are turned into ridicule and the indecency and licentiousness of their lives exposed."

The present play, if carefully examined, shows that two of the makers or revisers were Michael Drayton and Thomas Dekker. It is in their style and it embodies

their phrases and expressions. I will give, as to each, a few examples to identify them.

Identical expressions found in Drayton and in King John are as follows: "A muzzled bear; adverse winds; arguments of love; arms invasive; barbarous ignorance; be ruled by me; cheerful eyes; closely in; come tripping; gentry of the land; groveling lies; he intendeth; heaven knows; I conjure thee; I find; in the meantime; jaws of danger; linked together; possession of my bosom; slippery place; speedy messenger; the curse of Rome; the latest breath; to the disposing of." Words used only once in the plays and used in this play, and also by Drayton, are: "Cincture, cockered, dispossessed, fleshly, glorified, gracing, groveling, harbored, incessantly, inglorious, invasion, ransacking, sinewed, unattempted." The word "aspect" is also wrongly accented, just as Drayton used it.

Exclamations pointing to Dekker are, in part, as follows: "And so farewell; beshrew thy very heart; by my faith; come, come; Godamercy, fellow; I am amazed; I muse; in brief; zounds." Identical phrases, in part, are: "Dogged spies; dost thou understand me; 'foresaid; hanged and quartered; I was never so; in likeness of a new-trimmed bride; to make a more requital." The Bastard, in Act 2, Scene 2, is made to say: "Zounds, I was never so bethumped with words since I first called my brother's father dad," while Dekker, in 1 H. W., A. 4, S. 2, says, "God's life, I was never so thrummed since I was a gentleman." Among the words used once only and also by Dekker are "congeal, convertite, and rondure."

As in Richard the Third, if Bacon had anything to do with this play, it could only have been as a hasty shaper or reviser of it; I can discover no trace of his style therein.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

### HENRY THE EIGHTH AND THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA EXAMINED.

*“Every why hath a wherefore.”*

—Comedy of Errors, ii, 2.

In the investigation of the authorship of the play of Henry the Eighth, the reader and I should first turn our attention to the Diary of Philip Henslowe. So far as is now known, this play made its first appearance in print in the Folio of 1623. Of course, the commentators, having no facts or circumstances favorable to its composition by Shaksper to guide them, have indulged in conjectures as to the date of its composition. Collier maintains and insists that it was written in 1604. Dr. Johnson, Malone, and the earlier commentators assign the original date to 1602, and they assert that additions were made to it in 1613. To support this theory as to the additions, they take the position that it must have been acted first during the reign of Elizabeth, and that after her death on the 24th of March, 1602-3, Ben Jonson wrote the prologue and part of Cranmer's speech in the last scene. There can be no doubt that the eulogy on King James, which is blended with the panegyric of Queen Elizabeth, was annexed to the play after the king had ascended the throne.

While the primary object of this chapter is not to fix the exact date of the production of Henry the Eighth, yet, when connected with the question of the authorship, it becomes a very important matter. An examination of Henslowe's Diary shows that while no play under the

distinctive name of Henry the Eighth appears therein, yet a play does appear under the title of "the Rising of Cardinal Wolsey," as to which Henslowe went to a very great and extraordinary expense—over one hundred pounds—in its preparation for the stage, and four very competent and learned dramatists were employed by him in its composition. These were Michael Drayton, Anthony Monday, Henry Chettle, and Wentworth Smyth. The first entry will be found at page 202 of the Diary, and its exact reading is as follows: "Lent unto Roberte shawe, to lend unto hary Chettell and Antonye Mondaye, and Mihell Drayton, in earnest of a booeke called the Rissenge of carnowlle Wolsey the 10 of Octobr 1601 xxx s." At page 203, the following entry occurs: "Lent unto the companye the 9 of Novmbr to pay unto Mr Mondaye and Harry Chettell, in pt payment of a booeke called the Risyng of Carnowlle Wollsey the some of x s." And again, at page 204, the following entry will be found: "Lent unto the company the 12 of Novmbr 1601 to pay unto Antony Mondaye and hary Chettell, mihell Drayton and Smythe in full paymente of the first pt of carnowll Wollsey the some of three pounds."

Not only did Henslowe pay a handsome sum for this play, an unusual thing for him, but it appears that the play was licensed piecemeal by the Master of the Rolls, and as Collier states and as the Diary shows, "a further point established by the same authority is that Henslowe expended an unusual amount in getting up the drama. On the tenth of August 1601, he paid no less than twenty-one pounds for velvet, satin, and taffeta for the dresses, a sum equal now to about one hundred pounds. Upon the costumes only, in the whole, considerably more than two

hundred pounds were laid out, reckoning the value of money in 1601 at about five times its value at present."

I call the reader's attention, in this connection, to the remarks of the learned editor of Verplanck's *Illustrated Shakespeare* as to the costume and decorations required for the proper staging of this play. "The reign of Henry the Eighth," he says, "is admirably fitted for a drama of show and splendor, as well in magnificence and variety of costume and decoration as in architectural and scenic embellishments. The play was probably written originally with a view to this very purpose, and it has kept its place on the English stage by continual revivals with increased cost and splendor." These remarks of the commentator are admirably fitted to the play of Cardinal Wolsey, and the mere question of name is the only matter of difference to be explained. Wolsey is the central figure in the play of Henry the Eighth. Henslowe was very apt to call a play purchased by him by the name of one of the characters. I think that he did so as to *Love's Labor's Lost*, designated as "Beroune," and *Richard the Second*, designated as "Piers of Exton." Even the Shakespeare commentators seem to be of the opinion that the play was put upon the stage in 1613, when the Globe Theatre was burned, under the name of "All is true."

The Baconian claim that this play was a continuation by Bacon of a historical series, following his *Henry the Seventh*, while an ingenious theory, is unsupported by the style of the play.

I call the reader's attention, in this connection, to the peculiarities of the versification, noticed by the various editors and felicitously described by Verplanck "as carefully avoiding the pause at the end of lines, and overflow-



ing the regular rhythm with added syllables,—not as in other plays in a single line or two, here and there, but in long passages and apparently on some system.” One critic says, “If the reader will turn to Act 2, Scene 4, he will see that many of the lines end with particles, and that scarcely one of the lines is marked by a pause at the termination. Many other passages could be pointed out with this peculiarity.”

It will not be seriously contended by any students of Bacon’s style that such manner of versification was a peculiarity of his. Neither is there anything in the fact that Bacon’s prose history of Henry the Eighth was left unfinished. In looking over his works, the reader will notice that he left many subjects unfinished. In other words, he would begin on a particular subject and, before proceeding very far, totally abandon it. Besides his Henry the Eighth, I notice that, among others, his Essays, civil and moral, his New Atlantis, his Advertisement touching a holy war and his history of Great Britain, were not perfected. He did not always finish what he projected. Bacon may have added parts of Cranmer’s speech and a few other passages prior to the staging of the play in 1613, but the great body of the play was evidently not composed by him. My own opinion is that Drayton wrote all of the Cranmer speech and the greater part of the play.

Because Drayton’s style and Drayton’s phrases, as well as those of Chettle, appear in this play, it is fair to presume that the play called “The Rising of Cardinal Wolsey,” on which so much money was spent by the penurious Henslowe, was the basis or groundwork for the revised play of 1613. In that original composition Bacon could have had no hand, for he would not have worked on

a play in collaboration with the four poets named by Henslowe. He could not have done so without creating more or less gossip among the players and poets as to his participation in the business of playwriting for theatrical managers.

There has always been a feeling of doubt and unrest among the best commentators and critics—those who have never doubted Shaksper's right to the play—as to the authorship of this play. Spedding, who was a brilliant writer and the best and most careful biographer of Bacon, was of the opinion that the play of Henry the Eighth was written by several collaborators. He assigns to John Fletcher the third and fourth scenes of the first act; the first and second scenes of the second act; all of act three (except the second scene) to the king's exit; and all the rest of the play except the first scene of act five. I presume that Spedding's attention had never been called to the three entries in Henslowe's Diary, set out in this chapter. I think that he is clearly right in his opinion that the play was a collaborated play, but the facts disclosed in the Diary as to the making of the play of *The Rising of Cardinal Wolsey*, coupled with the extraordinary expense and pains taken to attract an audience, cause me to believe that Drayton, Monday, Chettle, and Smyth should receive the credit for the original composition of Henry the Eighth.

There is another fact to be noted regarding the making of this play which sustains my view of the authorship as to one of the collaborators. This fact has been brought out by the very honest and searching investigation of Appleton Morgan. This great Shakespearean scholar shows, in his "Study of the Warwickshire Dialect," page

460, as heretofore quoted, that a great part of Henry VIII substantially consists of centos from Holinshed, and that the dramatist often reproduces the speeches given by the historian.

Such easy alterations of the prose history would nicely suit the views of three or four needy dramatists.

It must also be considered that Drayton was a Warwickshire man, born and bred, and the Warwickshire words used in this play can properly be charged to him.

As a further identification of Drayton's connection with this play, I cite the reader to the following confirmatory facts: Wolsey says, "Sweet aspect," with the accent on the penultimate, and Drayton, in *King Edward to Mrs. Shore*, uses the phrase "sweet amiable aspect," with a similar accent. Wolsey says, "And sounded all the depths and shoals of honor," while Drayton, in his preface to the *Epistles*, says, "Sounded the depths of." Butts says, "The high promotion of his grace of Canterbury"; and Drayton, in *Barons' Wars*, C. 1, S. 13, says, "The seignories and high promotion." Cranmer says, "And like a mountain cedar," while Drayton, in *Margaret to De La Poole*, says, "And like a mounting cedar." Norfolk says, "his practices to light," and Drayton uses the same words in *Mooncalf*. Norfolk says, "in most strange postures," and Drayton, in *Barons' Wars*, C. 6, S. 38, says, "In postures strange, their limber bodies bending." Campeius says, "They will not stick to say," and Drayton, in *Pol. 3*, p. 10, in his address to the reader, says, "And some of our outlandish unnatural English stick not to say." Gardiner says, "Commotions, uproars, with a general taint," and Drayton, in *Pol. 3*, p. 48, says, "For those rebellions, stirs, commotions, uproars here."

Gardiner says, "But stop their mouths with stubborn bits," while Drayton, in *Barons' Wars*, C. 2, S. 24, says, "The angry horse, chafed with the stubborn bit." Further examples are, "Unpartial judging; The sacring bell; high and mighty; Guy and Colbrand."

Words used only once in this play and in no other play, and used also by Drayton, are, "Bewailing, Bevis, choicest, cinque-ports, illustrated, innumerable, praemunire, undoubtedly."

I have not been able to find, for the purpose of comparison, a copy of any play written by Wentworth Smyth.

There are several entries in the *Diary* preceding those heretofore quoted, which tend to show that Henry Chettle was first employed to write the play of *Cardinal Wolsey*. On August 18, 1601, Chettle received twenty shillings from Henslowe "for his book of *carroulle Woltsey*," and on August 21, 1601, Robert Shaw received from him twenty shillings "for vellvett and mackying of the docters gowne in *Carroulle Wollsey*." Evidently the other three poets were employed to fit the play to suit the taste of the theatre-goers.

Passing from *Henry the Eighth*, I will briefly consider the play of the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, in connection solely with the question of authorship.

Any reader of the play, familiar with the learning and talents of Francis Bacon, if asked whether in his opinion Bacon was the sole composer of this play, would say, I think that it was the work of two men at least, and that one of the writers either had no especial knowledge of the location of the places in Italy, or if he had, did not care to be accurate, and further that he had no regard whatever for the unities. Bacon certainly never would have made

seaport towns out of Milan and Verona. He never would have indulged in the silly punning on "ship" and "sheep" which Proteus and Speed indulge in, in the first scene of the first act. He might have taken this play as it came crude from the hands of the hasty composers and treated it to a revision.

Thomas Dekker may clearly be traced in it. The Milan and Verona blunder would have been an easy matter for the poet who placed Horace at the Court of William Rufus. Blackstone said that "the great fault of this play was the hastening too abruptly and without preparation to the denouement."

Upton and Hammer were of the opinion that this play was "the production of some inferior dramatist" and that "Shakespeare could have had no other hand in it than enlivening it with some speeches and lines, thrown in here and there." Other commentators are of the opinion that the play was the earliest work of the idolized ignoramus of Stratford. The words used once only, and exclamations and phrases which I cull from it, are clearly betrayers of the handiwork of Thomas Dekker in this play. They are, in part, as follows: "A vengeance on't; an unmannerly slave; and so farewell; bear witness; by mine honesty; cruel-hearted; currish; fie, fie; full-fraught; gentlemen-like; go to; good-hap; he makes me no more ado; here is a coil; I fear me; I must where is no remedy; *imprimis*; inscrutable; it is no matter; it shall go hard; lumpish; marry, quoth he; metamorphosed: my very heart-strings; nothing is impossible; O, miserable; poor habiliments; she hath more hair than wit; so gingerly; tedious nights; the best is; to speak puling; true constancy; trust me; water spaniel."

The expression "so gingerly" used by Julia in the second scene of Act 1, is used by Dekker in A. 1, S. 1 of the *Honest Whore*.

Drayton's co-operation with Dekker in this play is also manifest. I find it in such identical expressions as the following: "A peevish girl; and fit for great employment; and yet methinks; how say'st thou; I am peremptory; I can not choose but; I dare to be bold; I do conjure thee; is she not passing fair; muse not that; not a whit; rude, uncivil touch; therefore, I pray you; think'st thou; thou know'st; will serve the turn; you are hard beset."

Reference has been had to the words so aptly called *Warwickshireisms* by Morgan in his careful study of the *Warwickshire dialect*. As summarized, he finds *Warwickshireisms* in the several plays as follows: In *All's Well that Ends Well* 15, in *As You Like It* 16, in *Anthony and Cleopatra* 10, in the *Comedy of Errors* 9, in *Coriolanus* 13, in *Cymbeline* 7, in *Julius Cæsar* 7, in *King John* 11, in *Hamlet* 34, in *1st Henry 4th* 10, in *2nd Henry 4th* 13, in *Henry 5th* 34, in *1st Henry 6th* 5, in *2d Henry Sixth* 21, in *3d Henry Sixth* 10, in *Henry Eighth* 9, in *Winter's Tale* 23, in the *Merchant of Venice* 16, in *Troilus and Cressida* 20, in the *Tempest* 15, in *Twelfth Night* 14, in *King Lear* 14, in *Love's Labor's Lost* 17, in *Macbeth* 13, in *Measure for Measure* 14, in the *Midsummer Night's Dream* 14, in the *Merry Wives of Windsor* 9, in *Much Ado about Nothing* 8, in *Othello* 17, in *Pericles* 4, in *Richard the Second* 2, in *Richard the Third* 8, in *Romeo and Juliet* 15, in the *Taming of the Shrew* 9, in *Timon of Athens* 11, in *Titus Andronicus* 5, and in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona* 4.

I can find no reference to this play in *Henslowe's Diary*.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

### THE FALSTAFF PLAYS AND THE COMEDY OF ERRORS CONSIDERED.

*“A deal of skimble-skamble stuff.”*

—First Henry IV, iii. 1.

Henry the Fourth is not referred to in Henslowe's Diary, but Henry the Fifth is noted on page 26, under the date of May 14, 1592. Malone fixes the date of First Henry the Fourth at 1597; Chalmers, at 1596; and Halliwell, at 1593, but I think that the reader will agree with me that it must have preceded Henry the Fifth. I suspect that the play must have been on the stage at first with Oldcastle as the fat leader of the jolly crowd, because in Act 1, Scene 2, Prince Henry says, “As the honey of Hybla, my old lord of the castle,” and the expression would be meaningless as applied to Falstaff. It was printed in 1598 with no reference whatever to any author, and a second edition was issued in 1599, with these words added, “Newly corrected by W. Shake-speare.” As my examination is chiefly directed to the original composition of the play, I will leave the question of the maker of the correction or revision open for future examination, suggesting, however, to the unprejudiced reader that in so far as the published plays of 1598 and 1599 furnish evidence as to composition, the presumption is that, while as to the original play the authorship was not stated, the play was corrected between 1598 and 1599 by some one whose name is set down as “W. Shake-speare.”

The Second Part of Henry the Fourth was printed in 1600, and it is evident that originally, as in the first part,

the name of Oldcastle was used instead of Falstaff, because in the second scene of the second act of the quarto of 1600, the prefix of "Old." is retained before a speech which belongs to Falstaff.

The Second Part was greatly revised and augmented before insertion in the Folio of 1623. As in the case of the first part, I am of the opinion that either Francis Bacon or Michael Drayton was the reviser.

The same observation will apply to Henry the Fifth, which was enlarged from eighteen hundred to thirty-five hundred words, being almost doubled in size.

As these three plays contain fifty-seven Warwickshire words, as shown by Appleton Morgan, and as Drayton was a constant reviser, dresser, and augments of his productions, it would be fair to presume that he was the man who revised these three plays, if he had a part in their original production. The main question, therefore, is, Who had a part in their original production? I think that Michael Drayton and Thomas Dekker had a principal part therein.

In Chapter XXXIII, the facts upon which I base my belief that Michael Drayton participated in the composition of the three parts of Henry the Sixth were made specially prominent. While he, as I believe, also participated in the creation of the two parts, first and second, of Henry the Fourth and Henry the Fifth, much, very much of the comical and mirth-provoking portions of these plays, as well as of the Merry Wives of Windsor, must be credited to Thomas Dekker. The reader, I think, will discover Dekker as one of the composers, first, by the ejaculations found in these plays, and which are also found in his writings. I cite a part of them as follows:



“A good varlet; ay prithee; Beshrew thy heart; Beshrew your heart; By my faith; By the wars; By the white hand; By this light; Dame Partlet; God-a-mercy; Hang him, rogue; Hem; How now, what news; I am undone; I cry you mercy; O monstrous; O, pardon me; O rare; Prithee peace; Quoth a; Saving your reverence; So clap hands, and a bargain; This is excellent sport; Thou hempseed; To conclude; To say the truth; Well, God be thanked; Well said, in faith; You muddy conger.”

And secondly, he will also be recognized by the words and phrases peculiar to him and also found in these plays, such as, “A soused gurnet; aconitum; buff jerkin; carbonado; chuffs; cocksure; *et ceteras*; flame colored; gallants; gammon; hydra-headed; midriff; pottlepots; sixpenny; incomprehensible; intelligencer; leather jerkin; nut hook; starveling; stewed prune.”

Thirdly, Dekker will be identified by the expressions common both to him and to the Falstaff plays, examples of which are here given.

#### AMENDMENT OF LIFE.

Prince Henry says, “I see a good amendment of life in thee.” Dekker, in *Fortunatus*, 1-1, says, “But here follows no amendment either of life or of livery.”

#### EXCEEDINGLY WELL.

Hotspur says, “In faith, it is exceedingly well aimed.” Dekker, in *H. W.*, A. 2, S. 1, says, “Exceedingly well met.”

#### GAMMON OF BACON.

2 Carrier says, “I have a gammon of bacon.” Dekker, in 2 *H. W.*, A. 2, S. 1, says, “For as much as a gammon of bacon.”

## IT HOLDS CURRENT.

Chamberlain says, "It holds current that I told you." Dekker, in *Knights Conjuring*, says, "It goes for current."

## SHOW IT A FAIR PAIR OF HEELS.

P. Henry says, "And to show it a fair pair of heels"; while Dekker, in *Patient Grissel*, A. 4, S. 2, says, "But so, God help me, mistress, I shall show you a fair pair of heels"; and in *Match Me in London*, he says, "She hath shewed you another bright pair of heels."

## MY OLD WARD,—HERE I LAY.

Falstaff says, "Thou knowest my old ward:—here I lay." Dekker, in the *Virgin Martyr*, says, "I lay at my old ward."

## I MADE ME NO MORE ADO.

Falstaff says, "I made me no more ado, but took all their seven points." Dekker, in *2 H. W.*, A. 1, S. 1, says, "I make me no more ado."

## PLUMED LIKE ESTRIDGES.

Vernon says, "All plum'd like estridges that wing the wind." Dekker, in *Fort.*, A. 2, S. 2, says, "I plumed thee like an ostrich."

## SOUSED GURNET.

Falstaff says, "If I be not ashamed of my soldiers, I am a soused gurnet." Dekker, in *1 H. W.*, A. 2, S. 1, says, "You soused gurnet."

## TATTERED PRODIGALS.

Falstaff says, "That I had a hundred and fifty tattered prodigals." Dekker, in 2 H. W., A. 4, S. 1, says, "It's no matter, he finds no tattered prodigals here."

## YOU MUDDY CONGER.

Doll says, "Hang yourself, you muddy conger, hang yourself." Dekker, in S. Hol., A. 2, S. 3, says, "Trip and go, you soused conger."

## I CAN NOT ABIDE.

Hostess says, "I can not abide swaggerers." Dekker, in Wonders of a Kingdom, says, "I can not abide, sir, to see a woman wronged, not I."

## AN EARLY STIRRER.

K. Henry says, "For our bad neighbors makes us early stirrers." Shallow says, "An early stirrer by the road." Dekker, in Satiro-mastix, A. 1, S. 1, says, "She's an early stirrer, ah sirrah."

## AN ARRANT.

Fluellen says, "What an arrant, rascally, beggarly, lousy knave it is." Dekker, in 2 H. W., A. 2, S. 1, says, "It's an arrant grandee, a churl and as damned a cut-throat."

## AND SO CLAP HANDS.

K. Henry says, "In faith do; and so clap hands and a bargain." Dekker, in Satiro, says, "Come, friends, clap hands, 'tis a bargain."

## TO SACK A CITY.

Falstaff says, "Ay, Hal; 'tis hot, 'tis hot; there's that will sack a city"; and in 1 H. 6th, A. 3, S. 2, L. 10, the First Soldier says, "Our sacks shall be a mean to sack the city"; while Dekker, in *Honest Whore*, page 160, says, "Here's ordnance able to sack a city."

## FLESHED THY MAIDEN SWORD.

P. Henry says, "Come, brother John, full bravely hast thou fleshed thy maiden sword." Dekker, in the *Virgin Martyr* (speaking of Antoninus), says, "So well hath fleshed his maiden sword."

Another most remarkable coincidence is found in Act 3, Scene 3, 1st Henry the Fourth, where Bardolph says to Falstaff, "Why, you are so fat, Sir John, that you must needs be out of compass; out of all reasonable compass, Sir John," and Falstaff answers, "Do thou amend thy face and I'll amend my life: Thou art our admiral; thou bearest the lantern in the poop,—but 'tis the nose of thee; thou art the knight of the burning lamp."

Compare the above with the following from *The Wonderful Year of 1603* of Dekker. Speaking about noses, he says, "Richly garnished with rubies, crysolites and carbuncles, which glistered so oriently that the Hamburgers offered I know not how many dollars for his company in an East India voyage to have stood a night in the poop of their admiral, only to save the charge of candles."

An examination of the first scene of the first act of *First Henry the Fourth* would lead to the opinion that Drayton wrote the scene, if in the fifth line the proper word is "Erinnys" instead of "entrance," as claimed by

Mason, Steevens, and others. It is a Draytonian word, used by Drayton in *Idea*, sonnet 39, thus:

“Spiteful Erinnys frights me with her looks;  
My manhood dares not with foul Ate mell.”

However that may be, in addition to the similarity in style, there is a remarkable coincidence in words and also in accent between the writer of this scene and Drayton. Westmoreland says:

“This is his uncle’s teaching, this is Worcester,  
Malevolent to you in all *aspects*.”

The writer puts the accent on the second syllable of the word “*aspect*.” Now, notice the following from Drayton’s *Owl*:

“For to the proud malevolent *aspect*.”

Both wrongly accent the word “*aspect*” and both couple the adjective “*malevolent*” with it. *Aspect* is also wrongly accented in the *Comedy of Errors*, A. 2, S. 2; *Love’s Labor’s Lost*, A. 4, S. 3; *Merchant of Venice*, A. 1, S. 1; *As You Like It*, A. 4, S. 3; *Twelfth Night*, A. 1, S. 4; *Winter’s Tale*, A. 2, S. 1; *King John*, A. 2, S. 1; *Richard Third*, A. 1, S. 2, and *Henry the Eighth*, A. 3, S. 2.

In 1st *Henry IV*, A. 2, S. 2, Falstaff says, “I would your grace would take me with you. What means your grace?” while Drayton, in the *Merry Devil of Edmonton*, says, “Take me with you, good Sir John.” In the first scene of the third act, Glendower says, “I can call spirits from the *vasty deep*.” In the *Ninth Nymphal*, Drayton says, “Thence down to Neptune’s *vasty deep*”: while in

De La Poole to Queen Margaret, Drayton says, "And let them call the spirits from hell again." Hotspur says, "See how this river comes me cranking in"; while in Pol. 2, p. 133, Drayton says, "As cranking Manyfold, the first that lends him force." Hotspur says, "And here the smug and silver Trent shall run"; while in Barons' Wars, C. 2, S. 14, Drayton says, "At whose fair foot the silver Trent doth slide." Hostpur says, "'Tis the next way to turn tailor or be red-breast teacher"; while in the Owl, Drayton says, "The little red-breast teacheth charity."

In this scene the following peculiar words used once only in the plays are also used by Drayton: "Cranking, cressets, moldwarp, tripartite." The word "candle" is also used by Drayton. Hotspur's allusion to ballad-mongers as mincing poetry, is directly in Drayton's vein. He satirizes ballad-makers repeatedly. In his Elegy to Reynolds, he exclaims:

"I scorned your ballad then, though it were done,  
And had for *finis* William Elderton."

Passing to the second part of Henry the Fourth, I think that the inference from the following facts should be that the first scene of the first act is decidedly Draytonian. Bardolph says, "As good as heart can wish"; while Drayton, in Barons' Wars, C. 3, S. 13, says, "As heart could wish, when everything was fit." Bardolph says, "Prince Harry slain outright," while in Pol. 1, p. 16, Drayton says, "Six hundred slew outright through his peculiar strength." Travers says:

"And bending forward, struck his armed heels  
Against the panting sides of his poor jade  
Up to the rowel head."

while in Agincourt, Drayton says, "They struck their rowels to the bleeding sides of their fierce steeds."

Northumberland says, "So looks the Strond, whereon the imperious flood," while in Pol. 3, p. 160, Drayton says, "The North's imperious flood." In 2d Henry, A. 4, S. 2, Falstaff says, "I'll tickle your catastrophe," while Drayton, in the Merry Devil, says, "O, it tickles our catastrophe."

In Henry the Fifth, the style of the scene and the reference to Saint Crispin's day points to Drayton as the author of that scene. The king says:

"He that outlives this day and comes safe home,  
Will stand a tiptoe when the day is named."

Drayton, in Owen Tudor, says, "Nor stand on tip-toe"; and again in Pol. 1, p. 108, he says, "On lofty tip-toes then began to look about"; and on page 173, "On tip-toes set aloft, this proudly uttereth he."

King Henry says, "That fought with us on Saint Crispin's day," while in Agincourt, Drayton says:

"Upon Saint Crispin's day,  
Fought was this noble fray."

York says:

"My lord, most humbly on my knee I beg,  
The leading of the vaward."

while Drayton, in Agincourt, says:

"The Duke of York so dread,  
The eager vaward led."

An examination of the *Merry Wives of Windsor* leads me to the belief that Thomas Dekker was one of the original makers of this play. I trace him therein by means of the exclamations, single words, and phrases common to Dekker and one of the writers of the play. I give examples under each head. Among the exclamations are, "Ay, forsooth; Bear witness; Believe it; By my troth; Come cut and long tail; Fie, fie; My hearts; Nay, by the mass; Out, alas; Out upon't; Save you; Take heed; Trust me; Well, go to." Single words of a remarkable character are as follows: "Cataian, catamountain, cornuto, latten, Machiavel, Mephistophiles, preposterously, pizzle, tricking, unconfunable." It is noticeable as to the word "peevish" used in this play, that it means "foolish." In A. 1, S. 4, line 11, Mrs. Quickly says, "His worst fault is, that he is given to prayer, he is something *peevish* that way." Malone argues, as to this word, that this was a blunder of Mrs. Quickly and that "peevish" meant "precise," but it is used by Dekker in the *Virgin Martyr* as meaning "foolish." Thus Harfax says, "Before that *peevish* lady had to do with you." It is also so used by Drayton.

The phrases used in the play and also used by Dekker are in part as follows:

"And thou deservest it; Attired in a robe of white; Be content; Be ruled; For all the 'orld; Have a care; I am undone; I can not abide; I had rather than a thousand pound; I'll sauce them; My heart misgives me; Panderly rascals; Serve your turn; Sweating and blowing; There is no remedy; Trudge; Twelve score; Vanish like hailstones; Would I were hanged."

In Act 4, S. 2, Mrs. Page, breaking into rhyme, says:

"We do not act that often jest and laugh,  
'Tis old but true, Still swine eat all the draff."



In the Raven's Almanac, Dekker says, "The still sow eats up all the draff."

In the *Merry Wives*, Drayton appears in the fifth scene of the fifth act, where the fairies enter.

If Drayton wrote the *Merry Devil of Edmonton*, a play with which he is credited by good evidence, he created therein the character of Mine Host Blague, of the George at Waltham, who served the good Duke of Norfolk, the very same kind of a Host who makes his appearance in Drayton's portion of *Sir John Oldcastle*, and who is re-created in the *Merry Wives of Windsor* as "Mine Host of the Garter Inn." The resemblance is very striking.

The reader has heretofore taken note that Meres applies to Drayton the exclamation of Falstaff that "there is nothing but roguery to be found in villainous man."

In the examination of these plays I have not considered the questions raised as to priority of composition, nor as to the substitution of Falstaff for Oldcastle. Neither have I regarded it as very important to define the status of Mrs. Quickly. It appears that in the *First Part of Henry the Fourth*, she was married to the Host of the Boar's Head. In the *Second Part*, she appears as a poor widow of Eastcheap. In *Henry the Fifth*, she appears as the wife of Pistol; and in the *Merry Wives*, she is Mistress Quickly, seemingly a stranger to the fat Knight. We certainly know that Dekker paid no attention whatever to the unities, and we also know that he was a reviser and dresser of plays; that the original comedy of the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, printed in January 1601-2, was amended, corrected, and revised, and, as such, acted before King James in 1604.

The historical and philosophical parts of the Falstaff plays, grouped together under the Shakespeare title, are very pleasing and very instructive; but to the mass of the reading public the Falstaffian quips, quirks, and sallies of wit bear the palm of excellence. Who but Dekker could have said, "Go thy ways, old Jack; die when thou wilt, if manhood, good manhood be not forgot upon the face of the earth, then am I a shotten herring. There live not three good men unchanged in England; and one of them is fat and grows old"? Who but Dekker could have put it into the mouth of Prince Henry, acting in the role of his father, to say to himself, "Why dost thou converse with that trunk of humors, that bolting hutch of beastliness, that swoln parcel of dropsies, that huge bombard of sack, that stuffed cloak-bag of guts, that roasted Manning-tree ox with the pudding in his belly, that reverend vice, that grey iniquity, that father ruffian, that vanity in years, that villainous, abominable misleader of youth, Falstaff, that old white-bearded Satan?" And who but Dekker could have made Falstaff answer, "My lord, the man I know, but to say I know more harm in him than in myself, were to say more than I know. That he is old (the more the pity) his white hairs do witness it. If sack and sugar be a fault, God help the wicked! If to be old and merry be a sin, then many an old host that I know is damned: if to be fat be to be hated, then Pharaoh's lean kine are to be loved. No, my good lord; banish Peto, banish Bardolph, banish Poins, but for sweet Jack Falstaff, kind Jack Falstaff, true Jack Falstaff, valiant Jack Falstaff, and therefore more valiant, being, as he is, old Jack Falstaff, banish not him thy Harry's company; banish plump Jack, and banish all the world."

It was not in the style or vein of either Bacon or Drayton to use such phrases as Falstaff and his associates used in these three plays, however witty or waggish they were.

Who amended, revised, and made additions to the *Merry Wives of Windsor*? As it appeared in the Folio of 1623, it contains nearly twice the number of lines that the quarto of 1602 contained. The speeches of the several characters are greatly lengthened and elaborated and new distinctive features are given to them. This augmentation and revision, if performed by one of the original composers, would naturally be the work of Michael Drayton. It is either to him or to Francis Bacon that the credit of such revision and addition must be awarded. What I claim is, that in the play, as revised and added to, the handiwork of Dekker and Drayton is shown.

Whoever will read the *Comedy of Errors* carefully will be struck with the incongruities and anachronisms which abound in it. He will find a Nunnery established in the old city of Ephesus, presided over by a lady Abbess. The Syracusan Antipholus calls himself a Christian. The money used consists of ducats, marks, and guilders. Modern States of Europe and also America are lugged in. There is a probable allusion to Henry the Fourth of France, and mention is made of Lapland sorcerers, Turkish tapestry, a rapier, and a striking clock. As Knight well says as to the allusion to America, "This is certainly one of the boldest anachronisms of Shakespeare, for although the period of the action of the *Comedy of Errors* may include a range of from four to five centuries, it must certainly be placed before the occupation of the city by the Mohammedans, and therefore some centuries before the discovery of America."

It does not seem probable that Francis Bacon, if he had originally written a play with such a title, would have been guilty of such incongruities and anachronisms. He would have been careful and accurate, if he was the original composer, as to his allusions to customs, countries, or periods.

But contrariwise, Thomas Dekker, in the making of a play, as heretofore shown, was careless and reckless as to the place, time, person, or current event. For instance, in *Satiromastix*, Dekker transfers Horace to England and describes William Rufus, a rude and ignorant soldier-king, as "Learning's true Mæcenas, poesy's King." It is also a circumstance to be considered that Dekker takes the pains in his writings to bring in allusions to this play. Thus, in Chapter six of "A Knight's Conjuring," he says, "only cause of this Comedy of Errors"; and in *Satiromastix*, he prepared an address *ad lectorem* in which he says, "Instead of the trumpets sounding thrice before the play begins, it shall not be amiss for him that will read, first to behold this short Comedy of Errors." Prior to its publication in the Folio of 1623 (although this play was acted as early as 1604) it is, so far as is known, mentioned only by Meres in his "Palladis Tamia" in 1598; that is to say, if by the description "errors," he meant the Comedy of Errors. I can find no reference whatever to it in Henslowe's Diary. The writer, whoever he was, used the incidents of the *Mænæchmi*, a story of Plautus, and the play, apparently, is the work of collaborators. The tests applied indicate to me that Thomas Dekker was one of the collaborators. The exclamations point to him; as for instance, "Avoid thee, fiend; By my troth; How now, a madman; In brief; Now as I am a Christian; Now, trust me; Thou villain."

The phrases point the same way. I give a few of them, Antipholus says, "A mere anatomy, a mountebank," while Dekker, in *Knight's Conjuring*, Chap. 3, says, "A miserable anatomy." Dromio E. says, "Am I so round with you as you with me," while Dekker, in the dedication of *Satiro-mastix* to the world, says, "World, I was once resolved to be round with thee, because I know 'tis thy fashion to be round with everybody." Dromio S. says, "And here she comes in the habit of a light wench"; while Dekker, in *2d H. W.*, A. 4, S. 2, says, "Light wenches are no idle freight." Dromio S. says, "But I guess it stood in her chin by the salt rheum that ran between France and it." Dekker, in *2d H. W.*, A. 2, S. 1, says, "Am troubled with a whoreson salt rheum." The Duke says, "Saw'st thou him enter at the abbey here?" Dekker, in *S. Hol.*, A. 2, S. 4, says, "Speak, saw'st thou him?" *Ægeon* says, "Why look you strange on me?" Dekker, in *Patient Grissel*, says, "Look you so strange."

The *Syracusan Dromio's* description of a bailiff, when *Adriana* asks him, "Where is thy master, Dromio, is he well?" could only have been coined by Dekker. Dromio replies:

"No, he's in Tartar limbo, worse than hell.  
 A devil in an everlasting garment hath him.  
 One whose hard heart is buttoned up with steel;  
 A fiend, a fairy, pitiless and rough;  
 A wolf, nay worse, a fellow all in buff;  
 A back friend, a shoulder clapper, one that counter-  
 mands  
 The passages of alleys, creeks and narrow lands;  
 A hound that runs counter, and yet draws dry foot  
 well;  
 One that before judgment, carries poor souls to hell."

Dekker's life shows that he was often in the hands of the officers of the law, and very often confined either in the Counter or the King's Bench Prison. Henslowe's Diary records two of the arrests—one on page 118 and the other on page 143. He was familiar with courts and law terms and practice. I have already adverted to his legal knowledge. In the play of "If this be not a good play," he says, "Proceed with your chancery suit. I have begun your bill, humbly complaining"; and in *Britannia's Honor*, he says, "The Lord Mayor's house is a Chancery. He is the Chancellor to mitigate the fury of the law. He, the moderator between the griping rich and the wrangling poor."

The only contemporary writer whom I could fit in as an aid to Dekker in the composition of this play would be Henry Porter, who wrote the "Two Angry Women of Abingdon." A notable peculiarity of Porter was the frequent use of proverbs. The long doggerel lines such as are found in the first scene of the third act are precisely in the style of Porter, while Dekker also occasionally indulges in just such long lines.

That I am not singular in my suggestion as to the style of Henry Porter, I refer the reader to his play of the *Two Angry Women of Abingdon* just cited; and as to his capability, I quote what Charles Lamb said of him. After setting out some extracts from the play, Lamb adds the following: "The pleasant comedy from which these extracts are taken is contemporary with some of the earliest of Shakespeare's and is in no whit inferior to either the *Comedy of Errors* or the *Taming of the Shrew*, for instance. It is full of business humor and merry malice. Its night scenes are peculiarly sprightly and wakeful; the

versification unencumbered and rich with compound epithets.”

But this play of the Comedy of Errors must have been revised and shaped into a connected and complete play, adapted both to popular audiences and to the Court, by Francis Bacon. I am of that opinion because both Dekker and Porter wrote hastily and carelessly, and the speech of Ægeon in the first scene of the first act contains phrases which could only have originated with the author of the Venus and Adonis.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

### HAMLET AND THE WINTER'S TALE CONSIDERED.

*“Cudgel thy brains no more about it.”*

—Hamlet, v, 1.

In the year 1602, a book called “The Revenge of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, as it was lately acted by the Lord Chamberlain’s servants,” was printed by James Roberts. No copy of this edition has as yet been found. No author’s name was affixed to it, so far as the entry in the Stationers’ Register shows.

In the following year, 1603, a play called “The tragical history of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, by William Shake-speare, as it hath been divers times acted by his Highness’ servants in the City of London; as also in the two Universities of Cambridge and Oxford and elsewhere,” was printed for Nicholas Ling and John Trundell. Nothing was known as to the time when this play was put upon the stage until the year 1790, when Henslowe’s Diary was found. The following entry was discovered therein, at page 35 of Collier’s reprint: “9 of June 1594, R’d at Hamlet VIII s.” The play of Hamlet, therefore, is traced back to the year 1594. Malone guessed that the play printed by Roberts was composed by Thomas Kyd, but he gave no authority or reason for the conjecture.

A pamphlet of Nash, or rather an epistle of his, prefixed to Greene’s Menaphon, printed in 1589, contains the following passage: “It is a common practice now-a-daies amongst a sort of shifting companions, that runne through every arte and thrive by none to leave the trade of *Noverint*



wherein they were borne and busie themselves with the indevours of art, that could scarcely latinize their necke-verse if they should have neede; yet English Seneca read by candle light yields manyie good sentences, as Bloud is a beggar and so forth; and if you intreate him faire in a frostie morning, he will affoord you whole Hamlets, I should say handfulls of tragical speeches." This shows, at the least, that Hamlet had been acted before 1589.

Again, in 1596, Dr. Lodge published a pamphlet called "Wit's Miserie," which calls one of the devils described in it "a foule lubber, and looks as pale as the visard of ye ghost which cried so miserably at ye theator like an oyster wife, *Hamlet* revenge."

Steevens, in his *Variorum* of 1773, says, "I have seen a copy of Speght's edition of Chaucer, which formerly belonged to Dr. Gabriel Harvey (the antagonist of Nash), who, in his own handwriting, has set down the play as a performance with which he was well acquainted in the year 1598. His words are these: 'The younger sort take much delight in Shakespeare's Venus and Adonis, but his Lucrece and his tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, have it in them to please the wiser sort, 1598.'"

In 1602 Dekker, in his play of *Satiro-mastix*, alludes to Hamlet when he makes Tucca say, "No, Fyest, my name's Hamlet's revenge; thou hast been at Paris Garden, hast not?"

Who now was meant by the William Shake-speare of the edition of 1603? If the Venus and Adonis and the Tarquin and Lucrece were written by Francis Bacon, as the examination which I have given to the two poems would seem to show; and if Gabriel Harvey in 1598 was a reliable man and knew who the real author was, then the

disinterested reader would have the right to conclude that Francis Bacon was the author or reviser at least of the play of Hamlet. His opinion would also be strengthened by the allusion of Nash to the person who "left the trade of *Noverint*, whereto they were born," since Bacon was a lawyer.

And here I might be content to leave the whole matter, were it not that the reader is entitled to all the facts that can be gathered from the text of the play. In examining the text of 1603 and 1623, it would seem that Michael Drayton had a part in the composition, either of the original play or of the revised play. In the 1603 play, in Act 1, Scene 1, Horatio says, "But see the sun in russet mantle clad," and in the 1623 edition he says, "But look, the morn in russet mantle clad"; while Drayton, in Pol. 2, p. 120, says, "Himself, a palmer poor, in homely russet clad." In the second scene, Hamlet says, "Frailty, thy name is woman," repeated in 1623, while Drayton makes Rosamond say to King Henry, "Why on my woman frailty should'st thou lay?" In the same scene Hamlet says, in the play of 1603, "I'll speak to it if hell itself should gap," and Drayton, in Pol. 2, p. 269, says, "Where wounds gap'd wide as hell."

In the fifth scene of the 1603 play, the Ghost says:

"O, I find thee apt and duller shouldst thou be  
Than the fat weed which rots itself in ease  
On Lethe wharf."

Drayton says, in Heroical Epistles, p. 166:

"Or those black weeds on Lethe bank below."

In the fourth scene of the third act, of 1623, Hamlet says, "And batten on the moor"; while Drayton, in Pol.

3, p. 90, says, "That Somerset may say her battening moors do scorn." The sentence does not occur in the 1603 edition. In the 1623 play (and not appearing in that of 1603) Hamlet says, "The important acting of your dread command," while Drayton, in *Pol.* 2, p. 121, says, "For this great action fit; by whose most dread command." Hamlet says:

"For 'tis the sport to have the engineer  
Hoist with his own petard."

while in *Agincourt*, Drayton says:

"The engineer providing the petard  
To break the strong portcullis."

In Act 4, Scene 3, the Queen says, "Pulled the poor wretch from her melodious lay"; while Drayton, in *Pol.* 3, p. 18, says, "By the enticing strains of his melodious lay." In Act 5, Scene 1, Hamlet says, "Whose phrase of sorrow conjures the wandering stars," while Drayton, in *Idea*, 43, says, "So doth the plowman gaze the wandering star."

Much difficulty has been experienced by the commentators and critics in interpreting and explaining the word "Esile," as printed in the Folio of 1623. The words are, "Woul't drink up Esile? eat a crocodile." Furness, in the *Variorum*, Vol. 1, p. 405, says, "With the exception of 'the dram of eale,' no word or phrase of this tragedy has occasioned more discussion than this *Esill* or *Esile*, which, as it stands, represents nothing in the heavens above or the earth beneath, or the waters under the earth, if from the last we exclude the *vessels* of the Quarto." But I believe that there is no difficulty whatever about

the word or its interpretation, and my belief is based on the following matter of fact, namely, that a river exists in England called the Isell, which Drayton, in the twenty-fourth song of Polyolbion, thus alludes to:

“The one o'er Isell's banks, the ancient Saxons taught,  
At Over Isell rests.”

Stowe, the chronicler, twice refers to it at page 725, thus: “It standeth a good distance from the river Isell, but hath a sponce on Isell of incredible strength.”

I cite other identical expressions, as follows: “Most humbly do I take my leave; But soft, methinks; That's not my meaning; My honored lord; And dare scarce; For to the noble mind; heavenly powers; in the mean time; to your clemency; But to the matter; Mine own good lord; for the nonce; will he, nill he; most ingenious; in respect of; not a whit; my cause aright.”

Among the words found once only in the plays and in Hamlet, and also used by Drayton, are: “A-work, bet, bilboes, brainish, compost, croaking, drossy, dumb-shows, encumbered, enviously, fatness, hatchment, loudly, occur-rent, o'erweigh, pester, portraiture, prosperously, repulsed, savior, shove, shrill-sounding, solidity, stiffly, suiting, tetter, transports, tricked, unction, unknowing, unmixed.”

There are two words to which I invite the particular attention of the reader. In the third scene of the third act (folio), Hamlet says, “Up sword and know thou a more horrid hent.” This word “hent” is a puzzler to the commentators. Theobald says, “we must either restore *bent* or *hint*.” Warburton says, “The true word is plainly *hest*, command.” Capell adopts *hint*. But why adopt any other word than *hent*, since Drayton uses it in Polyol-

bion, Vol. 3, p. 226, in connection with the reign of Queen Elizabeth, thus: "Elizabeth, the next, this falling sceptre hent." This shows that as a noun the word means "grasp," and as a verb it means "to grasp," or, as used by Drayton, "grasped."

The reader's attention is also called to the word "drossy," used only once in the plays and in the fifth act, second scene. Hamlet says, "Thus has he and many more of the same bevy that I know the drossy age dotes on." In the *Barons' Wars*, Canto 1, Stanza 21, Drayton says:

"That had no mixture of the drossy earth,  
But all compact of perfect heavenly fire."

These two words, which may be termed very unusual words, are not found in the Quarto of 1603; and as they are found in Drayton's writings, that fact, coupled with the strangeness of the words, is a circumstance to be considered in connection with the theory of a revision of the original play by Michael Drayton.

There are other words used twice and thrice only in the plays and also used by Drayton which should be pointed out, as for instance, "Addicted, attractive, combination, extinct, lank, nighted, o'ertop, ponderous, retrograde, robustious, russet, scanned, struggling, trippingly, unworthiest, yesty."

To give the reader an idea of the revision I quote Hamlet's soliloquy as it appeared in 1603, and he can compare it with the version of 1623, as set out in any of the popular editions of the plays:

"To be or not to be, aye, there's the point,  
 To die, to sleep, is that all, aye all;  
 No, to sleep, to dream, aye, many there it goes,  
 For in that dream of death, when we wake,  
 And borne before an everlasting Judge,  
 From whence no passenger ever returned,  
 The undiscovered country, at whose sight  
 The happy smile and the accursed damn'd,  
 But for this, the joyful hope of this,  
 Who'd bear the scorns and flattery of the world,  
 Scorned by the right rich, the rich curs'd of the poor?  
 The widow being oppress'd, the orphan, wrong'd,  
 The taste of hunger or a tyrant's reign,  
 And thousand more calamities besides  
 To grunt and sweat under this weary life,  
 When that he may his full *quietus* make  
 With a bare bodkin. Who would this endure  
 But for a hope of something after death;  
 Which puzzles the brain and doth confound the sense  
 Which makes us rather bear those evils we have  
 Than fly to others that we know not of.  
 Aye, that, O this conscience makes cowards of us all."

This original soliloquy is very much in the style of Thomas Dekker. If he did not imitate, he must then have originated some of the expressions, phrases, and exclamations found in the play. Thus, in Act 1, Scene 2, the King says, "To be contracted in one brow of woe," and in Patient Grissel, Dekker says, "On these, your postures, a contracted brow." In Act 2, Scene 2, Hamlet says, "'Tis not alone my inky cloak"; while in Fort., A. 2, Dekker says, "This inky thread." In Act 1, Scene 3, Polonius says, "For the apparel oft proclaims the man"; while Dekker in *Fortunatus*, A. 5, S. 2, says, "For apparel is but the shadow of a man." In Act 1, Scene 4, Hamlet says, "That thou dead corse again in complete steel";

while Dekker in *Satiro-mastix* says, "First, to arm our wits with complete steel of Judgment." Hamlet says, "And you yourself shall keep the key of it"; while Dekker, in *Northward Hoe*, says, "And your self shall keep the key of it." Hamlet says, "Brief chronicles of the times," and Dekker, in *Knight's Conjuring*, says, "very brief chronicles." Hamlet says, "But I am pigeon-livered and lack gall," and in the *Honest Whore*, Act 1, Scene 5, Dekker says, "Sure he's a pigeon, for he has no gall." Hamlet says, "Or to take arms against a sea of troubles." In *Wonders of a Kingdom*, Dekker says, "In such a sea of trouble that comes rolling." Hamlet says, "This man shall set me packing," while Dekker, in 2 H. W., says, "And send her packing." The King says, "Diseases desperate grown by desperate appliances are relieved"; and in *Match Me in London*, Dekker says, "To desperate wounds, let's apply desperate cure." Hamlet says, "This might be the pate of a politician"; and Dekker, in 1 H. W., Scene 10, says, "Perhaps this shrewd pate was mine enemy's."

The following exclamations, found in Dekker's works, are identical, "By the mass; Can you advise me; Excellent well; Let her be round with him; Like fruit unripe: Mass, I can not tell; perdy; Take heed; Well, God-a-mercy; Will you be ruled by me; Zounds."

Among the unusual words are, "hugger-mugger, jig maker, over-peering, pocky, quiddets, and sweaty."

My opinion, based upon the foregoing facts, is that Michael Drayton and Thomas Dekker participated in the framing of the play of Hamlet for the stage, and that Francis Bacon took the play and made it what it now is. To me it is quite evident that some superior intellect took

the soliloquy which I have quoted, and indeed all of the play, and transformed it into the beautiful and captivating shape in which it appeared in 1623.

The *Winter's Tale* is not referred to in Henslowe's Diary, unless the following entry, which appears at page 167, refers to it: "Lent unto Robert Shaw, the 2 of Aprell 1600, for to by a Robe for Tyme some of XXX s." This may, and probably does, refer to Time, the Chorus who comes upon the stage at the beginning of the fourth act. And if it does, the play must have been written before the spring of 1600. There is an entry on page 29, and the only one in the Diary which might refer to the *Winter's Tale*, and if it did, the comedy must have been written before 1592. The entry is as follows: "R'd at the gelyous comodey the 5 of Janewary 1592 XXXIV s." Henslowe, of course, means the "Jealous Comedy," but he gives no name to the comedy. As the *Winter's Tale* was founded wholly, as all the commentators admit, upon Greene's novel of "Pandosto, or the history of Dorastus and Faunia," which was printed in 1588, it is not improbable that the *Winter's Tale* was the "Jealous Comedy" of Henslowe, and that it originally appeared on the stage before 1594. This suggestion as to the first appearance of the play is supported by the following fact: In *Dido, Queen of Carthage*, by Marlowe and Nash, printed in 1594, a *Winter's Tale* is alluded to in the following lines:

"Who would not undergo all kind of toil  
To be well storied with such a *Winter's Tale*?"

All this, however, as to the true name of the "Jealous Comedy," is merely conjectural, and the reader is not concerned about the question either of identification with



the Jealous Comedy or with the date of the production of the Winter's Tale.

Verplanck shows that the writer or writers of the play not only drew the main plot and incidents from Greene's book, but occasionally used its very language with the same freedom with which he or they employed old Holinshed in the historical plays. "This is done," says Verplanck, "in both cases in such a manner that it is evident that he wrote with the book before him."

I find no traces of Bacon's style or familiar expressions in this play. I can not believe that he originated it, or, if revised, that he revised it. Attention has been called to the words of Perdita in the third scene of the fourth act, beginning thus:

"Out, alas!  
You'd be so lean that blasts of January"

as embodying Bacon's enumeration and description of flowers. But the words of Perdita are directly in line with Drayton's prose and poetical references to flowers, and the poetry of the Winter's Tale tallies exactly with the style of Drayton and Dekker. I will briefly give some examples of similarity in the use of words and phrases, beginning with Drayton.

The following words in this play, the most of which are found only once in the plays, are also peculiar to Drayton. Those occurring but once are first given alphabetically:

"Amazedly, ampler, behind-hand, clipping, fixure, forceful, forewarn, hardened, hornpipes, hovering, industriously, limber, magnificence, missingly, multiply, pomander, pranked-up, reiterate, scanted, singularities, stupid, surpassing, wafting, caparison, cogitation, hent, ponderous,

slackness, sneaping, thwack, tincture, verier." Expressions either identical or almost so are, "And see it instantly; as driven snow: damask roses; fortune speed us; homely shepherd; I conjure thee; in the behalf of; in respect of; it shall scarce boot me; kites and ravens; methinks I see; more straining on; reverse thy doom; she had just cause; stuck in ears; think'st thou; what case stand I in; wolves and bears."

I recognize the hand of Thomas Dekker in this play by the following familiar expressions, used in the *Winter's Tale* and common to him. They are: "And no more ado; aye, prithee; be advised; by this good light; fie, fie; get you hence; go to, go to; hang him; imagine me; in my conscience; lend me thy hand; O'er head and ears."

Words used only once in the plays and also used by Dekker are: "Doxy, ebb'd, fantastical, fooleries, hammered, imprudently, prognostication, and tittle tattling."

Ben Jonson's fling at the writer of the *Winter's Tale*, that "he wanted art and sometimes sense" has been heretofore alluded to, and the reason given by Ben, that the writer pictured Bohemia as having a seacoast, when the sea was not within a hundred miles, certainly fits Dekker very well, for he, of all the writers of plays in that era, was the one who cared least for the unities and proprieties either of place or time.

The reader will notice that in these examinations, I have singled out Michael Drayton and Thomas Dekker as active participants in the composition of some of the so-called Shakespeare plays. Michael Drayton particularly has impressed himself upon me as one of the chief composers of some of the plays, either as an originator or reviser. The fact that he was a scholar, a churchman, a

thorough Protestant, a great lover of his country, a good, careful, and laborious poet, a wag, full of wit and humor and given to coarse merriment, a Warwickshire man, familiar with the Warwickshire dialect, a poetical historian, a trusted associate and protege of courtiers and noblemen, and an admirer and lover of the gentle sex, presents a strong circumstance in behalf of my opinion; and when added to the similarity between his style and that of one of the chief writers of the plays, is very convincing to the impartial mind. Born in the forest of Arden, he causes Arden to say:

“Of all the forests here within this mighty Isle,  
If those old Britons then, we sovereign did instile,  
I needs must be the great'st; for greatness 'tis alone  
That gives our kind the place.”

Drayton had the genius and the ability to create a Rosalind, a Celia, and an Orlando and place them in the forest of Arden. I trace him in *Cymbeline*, in *Antony and Cleopatra*, in *Coriolanus*, and in *Macbeth*.

Thomas Dekker has also impressed me as a careless, witty, and at times eloquent participator in the making of some of the plays, for the reason that his style, as shown in his own plays, can be traced in some of the Shakespeare plays, and for the further reason that, living as he did from hand to mouth, he cared nothing for the question of proprietorship in a play, or if he did, he would cheaply sell the product of his brain. If the reader will, for instance, turn to the play of *Romeo and Juliet*, Act 4, Scene 5, and carefully read what appears there after the words “Enter Peter,” he will find a good illustration of Dekker's style, and not only of Dekker's style, but of his

peculiarities. He was very fond of the phrase "music with her silver sound." This is a quotation from a poem by Richard Edwards, in the "Paradise of Dainty Devices," and is quoted thrice in the scene in *Romeo and Juliet* above referred to. Dekker uses it in *Fortunatus*, thus:

"Yet, I feel nothing here to make me rich;  
Here's no sweet music with her silver sound."

He uses it again in the same comedy and also in *Satiromastix*.

Another peculiarity of Dekker's, that of leaving out the preposition, is noticeable in *Fortunatus*, Act 4, Scene 1. There Dekker says, "Doom me some easier death"; while in *Romeo and Juliet*, Act 3, Scene 1, Benvolio says, "Stand not amazed—the prince will doom thee death."

I have not undertaken to add to the tracings by the Baconians of Bacon's hand in the plays, either as a reviser or originator, because that field has been well cultivated, and what I have suggested may lead to greater cultivation. Neither have I troubled myself with what Ben Jonson has written on the subject, for, as to him, I have adopted the opinion which Drummond gave to the world when he said that Jonson was "a great lover and praiser of himself, a contemner and scorner of others; given rather to lose a friend than a jest; jealous of every word and action of those about him, especially after drink, which is one of the elements in which he lived and a dissembler of the parts which reigned in him."

If what I have written will help to throw light upon the authorship of the Shakespeare plays, I shall be abundantly repaid for my labor, recognizing, as I do, that it is imperfect and incomplete.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

### THE DRAMATIC ROMANCE OF CYMBELINE.

*“More particulars must justify my knowledge.”*

—Cymbeline, ii, 4.

So far as is now known, the play of Cymbeline did not appear in print until 1623. It is really not a tragedy, but rather, as Hazlitt terms it, a dramatic romance. The studious reader will notice that the writer or writers paid little or no attention to antiquarian or historical accuracy. Dr. Johnson finds fault with “the folly of the fiction and the absurdity of the conduct” as well as “the confusion of names and manners of different periods.” Malone notices that the writer has peopled Rome, not with real Romans, but with modern Italians, such for instance as Philario and Iachimo, while another critic calls attention to the writer’s mistake in using the expression “three thousand pounds” of tribute. Such absurdity and carelessness would indicate that the writer or writers wrote hastily and as if they were not in the habit of analyzing every character and every country. The first thought in the mind of the student who is at all familiar with any of the plays of Thomas Dekker, as for instance his *Satiro-mastix*, will be that such confusion and such anachronisms as are displayed in Cymbeline indicate that Thomas Dekker had a hand in its composition. They certainly indicate that Francis Bacon, had he originally composed a play founded on the name and reign of an ancient English king, would have been careful as to descriptions, whether of name,

costume, household appliances, or manners. Bacon never would have caused Imogen to say:

“And if thou canst awake by four o’ the clock,  
I pray thee, call me.”

Neither would he have permitted Iachimo to introduce a clock into a Roman mansion, as one of the writers thus does in Act 5, Scene 5:

“Upon a time (unhappy was the clock  
That struck the hour!) it was in Rome (accurs’d  
The mansion where).”

But Dekker, as his readers know, would not hesitate to violate any or all of the unities of time or place or circumstance.

We have one reliable means of fixing a time anterior to which this play must have been written; and the diary, not of Philip Henslowe, but that of the noted astrologer Dr. Simon Forman, enables us to do so. He notes the fact that he heard the play in 1610. It does not appear in Henslowe’s Diary, unless called by a name not easily recognizable. Who composed the play? I trace at least two original composers in it. One of them was Michael Drayton and another was Thomas Dekker.

In addition to the general resemblance in style, I call attention to a few peculiarities in the use of words and phrases which serve to identify the two dramatists above named as composers in part at least of this play.

What dramatist of the time besides Drayton used the word “whenas”? I can find no other. In the Barons’ Wars he used the word twelve times. In the third canto, “whenas” is the initial word of stanzas 2, 3, and 4. The

editor of this poem, printed in Morley's Universal Library, commenting on this word, says, "note the not unfrequent use (especially in the Barons' Wars) of 'when' where we should now write 'then' in passing from one incident of a story to the next. Also the use of the word 'and' where we should now write 'also.'" The use of this word is notable in the book or document which Posthumus picks up and reads thus, in Act 4, Scene 5:

"Whenas a lion's whelp shall to himself unknown, without seeking find, and be embraced by a piece of tender air; and when from a stately cedar shall be lopped branches, which being dead many years shall after revive, be joined to the old stock and freshly grow; then shall Posthumus end his miseries, Britain be fortunate and flourish in peace and plenty."

This is repeated toward the close of the play in the last scene of Act 5.

But there are other striking resemblances. The word "azure," used once only in the plays, is used thus by Iachimo in describing the eyes of Imogen:

"White and azure, lac'd with blue of heaven's own tint."

Drayton, in an ode to his coy love, says:

"With azure rivers branch'd."

The word "azured," used twice only in the plays, is used by Arviragus thus:

"Nor the azur'd harebell, like thy veins."

The same word is used by Drayton in the letter of King Edward to Mrs. Shore.

The word "commix" is used once only in the plays. In Act 4, Scene 2, Arviragus says:

"To commix  
With winds that sailors rail at."

Drayton, in Pol. 1, page 135, says:

"To commix with frail mortality."

"Foreshowed" is another word used once only in the plays. The soothsayer, in Act 5, Scene 2, says:

"Which foreshowed our princely eagle."

In the Barons' Wars, C. 5, S. 61, Drayton says:

"His fainting spirit foreshowing danger nigh."

The word "paled" is used once only in the plays and by the Queen in Act 3, Scene 1, thus:

"As Neptune's park, ribb'd and paled in."

While in Eleanor to Duke Humphrey, Drayton says:

"And made the moon pause in her paled sphere."

"Satiated" is found once only in the plays, and in Act 1, Scene 7, Iachimo is made to say:

"That satiate yet unsatisfied desire."

Drayton, in Idea, says:

"And every drudge doth dull our satiate ear."



The word "sluggish," found once only in the plays, appears in *Cymbeline* in Act 4, Scene 2. Belarius, believing Imogen to be dead, exclaims:

"O, melancholy!  
Whoever yet could sound thy bottom? find  
The ooze to show what coast thy sluggish crare  
Might easily harbor in?"

The word is a Draytonian word, used thus in *Pol.* 2, p. 430:

"Rousing the sluggish villages from sleep."

The reader will note also the word "crare" printed in the original as care. But a crare or craier is a small vessel or boat, and the word which is used by Drayton fits the sense.

The apostrophe to melancholy is also directly in Drayton's vein. His readers will recall his "O, spectacle," "O, bloody age," "O, misery" as found in his writings, especially in his *Barons' Wars*. Posthumus, in Act 5, Scene 3, uses the same Draytonian expression, "O, noble misery."

The word "workmanship," occurring but once in the plays, appears in Act 2, Scene 4. Iachimo says:

"So bravely done, so rich that it did strive  
In workmanship and value."

In the *Quest of Cynthia*, Drayton says:

"The curious workmanship to see."

and in *Pol.* 1, Song 6, he says:

"The workmanship so rare."

The word "amplify" is found only twice in the plays. In Act 1, Scene 6, the Queen says:

"Is't not meet  
That I did amplify my judgment in."

and Drayton, in *Pol. 2*, p. 184, says:

"To amplify her dower."

Other like examples can be cited, as crystalline, dishonestly, eglantine, fanes, mutation, o'erborne, resumed, rosy, sluttery, and verier.

The reader's attention is especially directed to the phrase similarities in scenes six and seven of Act 1.

In the first-named scene the following occur:

The Queen says:

"His fortunes all lie speechless."

Drayton, in *Divorcee*, says:

"Passion speechless lies."

The Queen also says:

"And his name  
Is at last gasp."

while Drayton, in *Barons' Wars*, C. 5, S. 64, says:

"Could any strength afford to his last gasp."

He uses the same phrase in his *Divorcee*. The Queen says:

“It is an earnest of a further good,”

while in *Shore to King Edward*, Drayton says:

“In earnest of a greater good we owe.”

Again the Queen says:

“Tell thy mistress how  
The case stands with her.”

In *Idea*, S. 24, Drayton says:

“So stands the case with me.”

Cornelius says, “I humbly take my leave”; and in his *Dedication to Harmony*, Drayton uses the same expression.

In the seventh scene of the same act the resemblances are also very striking. Iachimo says, “She is alone the Arabian bird.” In *King John to Matilda*, Drayton says, “The Arabian bird that never is but one.”

Iachimo says, “To know if your affiance were deeply rooted.” In *Barons’ Wars*, C. 2, S. 2, Drayton says, “For deadly hate, so long and deeply rooted.”

Iachimo says, “Be not angry, most mighty princess”; in *Queen Margaret to Suffolk*, Drayton says, “Yet be not angry that I warn thee thus.”

Iachimo says, “That I have adventured to try your taking of a false report.” In his *dedication to the Muses’ Elysium*, Drayton says, “I have often adventured upon desperate untrodden ways”; and he uses the same expression in *Pol. 2*, p. 264; and in *Heroical Epistles*, page 173, he says, “Had I adventured thus.”

"Cannot choose but" is used by Iachimo in this scene, and it is also used in Act 2, Scene 3. Drayton uses it in King Edward to Shore.

"Noble friend" is used in this scene and also in the fifth scene of the same act; and Drayton begins his Epistle to Jeffreys thus, "My noble friend, you challenge me to write."

In Act 2, Scene 2, Iachimo says, "As slippery as the Gordian knot was hard." In Howard to Geraldine, Drayton says, "And Gordian knots do curiously entwine."

In the fourth scene of the same act, Posthumus says:

"It is a basilisk unto mine eye;  
Kills me to look on't."

In Matilda, Drayton says, "Whose eye seemed as the basilisk to kill."

In Act 5, Scene 4, the words are, "That could stand up his parallel." In Pol. 3, p. 14, Drayton says, "A parallel may stand."

Jupiter says, in the same scene, "This tablet lay upon his breast." In Duke Robert, Drayton says, "On her fair breast, she two broad tablets bore."

I call attention also to the expressions "not a whit, how deeply, to run the country base and be not angry." All of them are used in the plays and by Drayton.

The Warwickshire words used in this play may be properly attributed to Drayton, who was a native of that county.

When Imogen, known as Fidele to the two brothers, is carried as dead in the arms of Arviragus, and the brothers indulge in lamentation over the body of the supposed pretty boy, Arviragus says:

"With fairest flowers,  
 Whilst summer lasts, and I live here, Fidele,  
 I'll sweeten thy sad grave: Thou shalt not lack  
 The flower, that's like thy face, pale primrose; nor  
 The azur'd harebell like thy veins; no, nor  
 The leaf of eglantine, whom not to slander,  
 Out-sweetened not thy breath: the ruddock would  
 With charitable bill (O bill sore shaming .  
 Those rich-left heirs, that let their fathers lie  
 Without a monument!) bring thee all this;  
 Yea, and furr'd moss besides, when flowers are none,  
 To winter-ground thy corse."

Any one who has read Drayton's poems, lyrical and pastoral, carefully, will recognize, I think, the hand and style of Drayton in the foregoing beautiful and touching lamentation. The reader will recall these words of Drayton, "Covering with moss the dead's unclosed eye, The red-breast teacheth charity."

Some commentators have called attention to the lamentations of Cornelia in the *Vittoria Corombona* of John Webster as being an imitation of it, but Webster never was an imitator of any one. Cornelia's lamentation mainly brings in animals—the ant, the field mouse, the mole, and the wolf: while that of Arviragus chiefly specifies flowers, and the favorite flowers, too, with which Drayton loved to embellish and beautify his poems.

Dekker, I think, shows himself very conspicuously as a participant in the composition of this long play in act two, scene one, and also in the first part of scene three of the same act.

A short example from the beginning of each scene will show the reader the Dekkerian style very clearly. In the first scene, Cloten enters and says:

“Was there ever man had such luck!  
 When I kissed the Jack upon an up-cast, to be hit  
 away!  
 I had a hundred pound on't: And then a whoreson  
 Jackanapes must take me up for swearing; as if  
 I borrowed mine oaths from him, and might not  
 Spend them at my pleasure.”

In this scene the writer uses Dekker's coarse expressions, as for instance, “a whoreson Jackanapes,” “whoreson dog,” “a pox on't.” The writer also makes the second Lord describe the Queen as a “woman, that bears all down with her brain”—an expression peculiarly the coinage of Dekker, who wrote a play called “Bear a brain.”

The third scene begins thus:

“Your lordship is the most patient man in loss, the most coldest that ever turned up ace.

*Cloten.* It would make any man cold to lose.

1 *Lord.* But not every man patient after the noble temper of your lordship; you are most hot and furious when you win!”

In both these scenes there is a special reference to gambling, and in the second one to gambling by cards.

It was characteristic of Dekker in his hasty writing of plays and parts of plays to introduce card words and phrases.

Cloten says, “I am advised to give her music of mornings.” Dekker, in the Shoemakers' Holiday, Act 3, Scene 1, says, “I am advised that what I speak is true.”

Attention has heretofore been called to the fact, showing two writers at least of this play, that the words Posthumus and Arviragus are each accented in the plays in different ways.

One of the writers of this play also makes a mistake, heretofore adverted to, as to the meaning of the word "exorcist." Thus, Guiderius says, "No exorciser harm thee." This was a blunder which Bacon would not have made; but which Dekker would and did make. In his dedication of *Satiro-mastix*, he writes, "Neither should this ghost of *Tucca* have walked up and down Paul's Churchyard, but that he was raised up by new exorcisms."

This play has received both commendation and condemnation from the learned commentators. Von Schlegel, who believed that *Sir John Oldcastle*, a play composed in part by Drayton, was one of the very best of the Shakespeare plays, pronounced *Cymbeline* to be "one of Shakespeare's most wonderful compositions." On the other hand, Dr. Johnson, one of the most learned and competent critics, derided and ridiculed the play, as heretofore stated, for the improbability of the plot, the folly of the fiction, and the confusion of the names and manners.

When several persons in Shaksper's time engaged in the composition of a play in consideration of such petty sums as Henslowe and other managers paid—a play which generally had to be finished in a certain time and perhaps to please a capricious audience, a play so composed, unless revised very thoroughly by a competent and scholarly dramatist, would justly be subject to such severe criticism as Dr. Johnson pronounced upon *Cymbeline*.

An example of such haste, such meagerness of compensation and untrue designation of the author, is here cited.

In the Stationers' Register, under date of September 9, 1653, long before Henslowe's Diary was discovered at Dulwich College, a play called "the famous wars of Henry

the first and the Prince of Wales" was entered as the composition of R. Davenport and William Shakespeare, when in fact, as shown at page 120 of the Diary, Manager Henslowe paid Drayton, Dekker, and Chettle for the play in full payment the paltry sum of four pounds and five shillings. Collier, in a note, says, "perhaps Davenport only revised and altered this piece, which Henslowe assigns to Drayton, Dekker, and Chettle."

But whether Collier's guess is right or not, it is certain that Drayton, Dekker, and Chettle wrote a play which as late as 1653 went under the name of Shakespeare.



## CHAPTER XXXIX.

JOHN WEBSTER FOUND IN THE PLAYS.

*"I shall tell you a pretty tale."*

—*Coriolanus*, i, 1.

The men who have been brought by me prominently before the reader as participants either in the composition or revision of the Shakespeare plays, have been Michael Drayton, Thomas Dekker, Henry Porter, Henry Chettle, Thomas Heywood, Anthony Monday, and Francis Bacon. I have left to others who may have the opportunity and the inclination the task of tracing the other original composers of parts of the plays. Among them will be found, I think, Thomas Middleton and John Fletcher.

But it would be hardly fair to the memory of John Webster if I should fail to give him credit, even if very briefly, for a share in the composition of some of them.

Little, very little, is known of Webster, except through his works. He is known to have been the author, among others, of the following plays: *The White Devil*, or the Tragedy of Vittoria Corombona, the Duchess of Malfy, the Devil's Law-case, *Appius and Virginia*, and the Thracian Wonder. He also wrote the Induction to Marston's *Malcontent*—a writing which attests his skill in composition and his adaptation to the demands of a promiscuous audience at the theatre. He was, as I have already shown, a participant in the composition of the *Fall of Julius Cæsar*, in company with Monday, Drayton, and Middleton; and the *Diary of Henslowe* proves that he was the author of the *Guise*, the entry being as follows, at page 202:

“Lent unto William Jube, the 3 of Novmbr 1901 to bye stamell clothe for a clocke for the Gwisse 11s Webster”; and on the next page Henslowe made an entry that he had paid “the littell tayller upon his bell for mackynge of sewtes for the Gwesse the some of XX s.”

The times of his birth and his death are unknown. He was Clerk of the parish of St. Andrew, Holborn, and a member of the Merchant Tailors' Company. He was married on July 25, 1590, at St. Leonard's Church, Shoreditch, to Isabel Sutton. It is evident that he was very greatly esteemed by his contemporary poets.

Like Dekker, he paid very little attention to the unities. Froude, in the prologue to his play of the Duchess of Malfy, says:

“The rude old bard, if critic laws he knew,  
From a too warm imagination drew,  
And scorning rule should his free soul confine,  
Nor time nor place observ'd in his design.”

It is a pity that no special search has been made by scholars for letters or papers of Webster, Drayton, and Dekker. They were great poets, whose worth has never been properly appreciated.

Webster appears, I think, in *Coriolanus*, in the very first act and first scene.

The mutinous citizens armed with staves, clubs, and other weapons were inveighing against the patricians when Menenius enters and says, “I shall tell you a pretty tale”; and thereupon he repeats the fable of the revolt of the other members of the body against the belly. As I wish the reader to judge for himself, I will quote a small part of the fable, so that he may notice the style:

“There was a time when all the body’s members  
 Rebelled against the belly; thus accused it:—  
 That only like a gulf it did remain  
 I’ the midst of the body, idle and inactive,  
 Still cupboarding the viands, never bearing  
 Like labor with the rest; where the other instruments  
 Did see and hear, devise, instruct, walk, feel,  
 And mutually participate, did minister  
 Unto the appetite and affection common  
 Of the whole body. The belly answered,—  
 1 *Cit.* Well, sir, what answer made the belly?”

Turning now to the second act of *Vittoria Corombona*, Webster causes Francisco De Medicis to interrogate Camillo thus:

“*F. de Med.* Have you any children?

*Cam.* None, my Lord.

*F. de Med.* You are the happier: I’ll tell you a tale.

*Cam.* Pray, my Lord.

*F. de Med.* An old tale.

Upon a time, Phœbus, the god of light,  
 Of him, we call the sun, would needs be married;  
 The gods gave their consent, and Mercury  
 Was sent to voice it to the general world.  
 But what a piteous cry there straight arose  
 Amongst smiths and felt-makers, brewers and cooks,  
 Reapers and butter-women, amongst fishmongers  
 And thousand other trades, which are annoyed  
 By his excessive heat; ’twas lamentable.  
 They come to Jupiter, all in a sweat  
 And do forbid the banns.”

Farther on, in act four of the same play, Webster indulges in another tale-telling. Flamineo, one of the characters, exclaims:

“Stay, my lord: I’ll tell you a tale. The crocodile which lives in the river Nilus, hath a worm breeds in the teeth of it, which puts it to extreme anguish. A little bird, no bigger than a wren, is barber surgeon to this crocodile; flies into the jaws of it, picks out the worm and brings present remedy. The fish, glad of ease, but ungrateful to her that did it, that the bird may not talk largely of her abroad for non-payment, closeth her chops, intending to swallow her, and so put her to perpetual silence.”

I quote these resemblances to assist the reader of the Shakespeare plays in his search for the original composers of this play.

Let us turn now to the tragedy of Macbeth and we find in Lady Macbeth’s sleeping soliloquy the very style and words of Webster. Lady Macbeth enters with a taper, and the Doctor who is watching her says:

“What is it she does now? Look, how she rubs her hands.

*Gent.* It is an accustomed action with her to seem thus washing her hands. I have known her to continue in this a quarter of an hour.

*Lady Mac.* Yet, here’s a spot.

*Doct.* Hark! She speaks. I will set down what comes from her to satisfy my remembrance the more strongly.

*Lady Mac.* Out, damned spot! Out, I say! one; two; why then ’tis time to do’t.—Hell is murky.” And again she says, “Here’s the smell of the blood still; all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. Oh, oh, oh.”

In Vittoria Corombona, the Moor says, “Look you who are yonder,” and then the dialogue continues thus:

“*Cornelia.* O, reach me the flowers.

*Moor.* Her ladyship’s foolish.

*Woman.* Alas, her grief  
 Hath turned her child again.  
*Cornelia.* You're very welcome.  
 There's rosemary for you and rue for you;  
 Heart's ease for you. I pray make much of it,  
 I have left more for myself;"

and a little later on she says:

"Will you make me such a fool?  
 Here's a white hand,  
 Can blood so soon be wash'd out?"

Here we are reminded of the tragedy of Hamlet as well as of Macbeth. Other instances of Webster's handiwork in the Shakespeare plays might be cited, but enough has been shown to put the student on inquiry.

Webster, in publishing the tragedy of Vittoria Corom-bona, gives the reader the reasons why he took liberties with the laws which should govern the composition of a tragedy, and he also presents a very fair idea of the class of auditors who frequented the theatre in the early years of the Sixteenth Century.

"In publishing this tragedy," he says, "I do but challenge to myself that liberty which other men have taken before me; not that I affect praise by it, for *nos haec novimus esse nihil*, only since it was acted in so open and black a theatre that it wanted (that which is the only grace and setting-out of a tragedy) a full and understanding auditory; and that since that day, I have noted most of the people that come to that play-house resemble those ignorant asses who visiting stationers' shops, their use is not to inquire for good books, but new books. I present it to the general view with this confidence.

“*Nec rhoncos metues malignorum  
Nec scombris tunicas dabis molestas.*”

“If it be objected that this is no true dramatic poem, I shall easily confess it; willingly and not ignorantly have I faulted. For, should a man present to such an auditory the most sententious tragedy that ever was written, observing all the critical laws, as height of style and gravity of person; enrich it with the most sententious chorus, and as it were, enliven death, in the passionate and weighty *nuntius*; yet, after all this divine rapture, *O dura messorum ilia*, the breath that comes from the incapable multitude is able to poison it.”

Theobald properly characterizes him when he says that Webster had a strong and impetuous genius.

Some of my readers may think that I am singular in my belief that there is a resemblance between Webster's style and that of the writer or one of the writers of the Shakespeare plays. I find, however, that I have a little support from James Russell Lowell. I say a *little* support, because when he wrote his “Old English Dramatists” he was a believer in Shaksper as the author of the Shakespeare plays. Commenting upon Webster's play of Appius and Virginia, at page 75 of the above-mentioned work, Lowell calls it “a spirited, well-conducted play and as good as any other founded on the Roman story, except Shakespeare's.” A little farther on, at page 76, he says, “It has always interested me to find in Webster more obvious reminiscences of Shakespeare without conscious imitation of him than any other dramatist of the time.” Another critic, Dye, writing of the same play, says “This drama is so remarkable for its simplicity, its deep pathos, its unobtrusive beauties, its singleness of plot, and the

easy, unimpeded march of its story, that perhaps there are readers who will prefer it to any other of our author's productions."

A little reliable and practical knowledge of the man's life, his occupation, his family and business relations would be very entertaining to the reader of English literature. Here was a very learned and excellent poet of whom we know very little, and yet the material ought to be found somewhere in England, by the careful investigator, out of which an interesting biography might be written.

Such an investigation should not be confined to Webster's life-history, but it should extend to a patient tracing of the lives, letters, and manuscripts of Anthony Monday, Michael Drayton, Henry Chettle, Henry Porter, John Fletcher, Thomas Dekker, and Thomas Middleton. The search heretofore has been in the wrong direction. Oldys, Malone, Phillips, Collier, and other scholars have been deluded by the Shaksper *ignis fatuus* and have gone astray in a vain pursuit.

With the ignorant Shaksper abandoned, the pathway of discovery will be clear. The light of truth is beginning to illuminate the road which leads to the true composers and revisers of the Shakespeare plays.

## CHAPTER XL.

### A SHORT SUMMING-UP.

*“The end crowns all,  
And that old common arbitrator, Time,  
Will one day end it.”*

—Troilus and Cressida, iv. 5.

In the single issue first presented and discussed in this volume, while the evidence is mainly circumstantial, it is, in part, direct. The circumstantial evidence rests upon presumptions of fact; or, in other words, the fact that William Shaksper of Stratford-on-Avon did not write the plays is an inference from other facts that have been either admitted or established by proof.

The true rule, both of law and reason, is that when direct evidence of facts can not be supplied, reasonable minds will necessarily form their judgment on circumstances and act upon the probabilities of the proposition under consideration. To apply the words of Lord Mansfield in the Douglas case, “As mathematical or absolute certainty is seldom to be attained in human affairs, reason and public utility require that judges and all mankind, in forming their opinion of the truth of facts, should be regulated by the superior number of probabilities on the one side or the other, whether the amount of these probabilities be expressed in words and arguments or by figures and numbers.” When, therefore, the circumstantial evidence is very strong and sufficient and is also supported and confirmed by direct evidence, then, to use the language of a great law-writer, “human reason can not do other-



wise than adopt the conclusion to which the proof tends." Now, what are the facts which severally raise presumptions in favor of the proposition that Shaksper did not write the plays and poems? As heretofore stated and shown by unimpeachable facts, it is in evidence that Shaksper was never employed to write plays, either singly or in collaboration, by Philip Henslowe, the principal theatre-manager in London and the man who secured the services of the best playwrights of the time for English audiences, and Shaksper's name is not even mentioned in the Diary kept by the manager, as it certainly would have been had Shaksper written plays for the theater. There is no evidence, and none can be adduced, that Shaksper was ever employed by any one to write plays.

It is also in evidence that he commended no contemporary, although it was the custom of the poets and dramatists of his time to furnish commendatory and complimentary lines to accompany the books of brother poets, and during his lifetime no book was issued in his name, either with or without his authorization, in which he was commended by any one, either in prose or poetry.

It is also in evidence that he left no letters, no brief note, no manuscript, no fragment even of a writing of any kind except certain signatures wretchedly written to certain legal documents, to indicate that he was either a scholar or a person habituated to writing. In connection with this remarkable circumstance is the further fact that for nearly three centuries the most minute and exhaustive search has been made by indefatigable admirers of the supposed author in every nook and cranny of England to find some writing in aid of the Shaksper claim, but all in vain.

It is also in evidence that Shaksper had no library. Even his great advocate, Halliwell-Phillips, admits that he possessed no library. And what is a workman worth without the tools of his trade? What is a scholar good for without books, especially when he undertakes to make all knowledge his province?

It is also in evidence that William Shaksper gave his children no education whatever. His daughters were ignorant women who were suffered by him to grow up from childhood in ignorance. This fact is clearly and conclusively established. It is hard, yes, improbable—I should rather say, impossible—to believe that the man who invented a Portia, a Viola, and a Rosalind, would have failed to educate his own children. Yet the Shaksper worshiper must so believe.

And then there is the uncontradicted evidence that Shaksper was utterly indifferent to literary proprieties. Although books were issued which he did not and could not write, yet he neither claimed nor disclaimed the authorship, but stood mute. If he knew that books not written by him were so published, he knowingly permitted a fraud to be practiced, and if he did not know it, his ignorance would suffice to excuse him. In such a case the presumption would be that the indifference could properly be charged to ignorance.

Taken now in connection with what we know of Shaksper's real and traditional life, these facts, severally and jointly, must lead all reasonable and unprejudiced minds to believe in the truth of my proposition that William Shaksper of Stratford-on-Avon did not write the plays and poems which now are published and circulated under a name like his.

But when, allied to all these facts and the presumptions derived therefrom, there is the clear, positive, and direct evidence that Shaksper could not write, the proposition of his inability to compose the plays and poems is unanswerable. When I say that he could not write, I may, without impairing the force of my proposition, so modify the assertion as to declare that he could not write with that facility which was absolutely required of the composer of the plays and poems.

Reader, you have before you the facsimiles of his signatures, the only writings of this man ever found, and if you will carefully study these facsimiles, you must, if disinterested, conclude with me that the maker of them was an uneducated man, hardly able to write his name.

In summing up as to the second proposition, namely, as to who wrote the poems and plays, the reader will bear in mind that I have tried to state facts only, and while giving my own opinion, have left him to form his own opinion on the facts as to authorship.

With Shaksper entirely eliminated, the path of discovery is open to every disinterested searcher, and especially to those who are residents of England, where there are greater opportunities for search than elsewhere, although I believe that German scholars are also very careful, painstaking, and scrutinizing searchers after facts in literature. They are preëminently specialists.

In forming the opinion that Francis Bacon was the author of the *Venus and Adonis*, I was compelled thereto by reason of the facts as they appeared to me. Believing as I do that Pope's familiar lines are exactly descriptive of the wise and learned Bacon, I would have much preferred as author of the poem the sly, waggish, and gifted

Drayton, who was a fellow-countryman of Shaksper, but the peculiarities in the style of the poem irresistibly led to Bacon. I was tempted to believe that the Return from Parnassus identified Dekker as the man who gave Horace the purge which made him bewray his credit, and as therefore the man who was commonly called and known as Shake-speare, but the author of that drama may have erred, and I preferred to be guided as to my opinion by the tests of style.

In the plays which I have examined and hereinbefore enumerated I am of the opinion, upon the facts, that Michael Drayton, Thomas Dekker, Anthony Monday, Henry Chettle, Thomas Heywood, John Webster, Thomas Middleton, and Henry Porter were participants in their original composition. That these plays, or some of them, were not originated by but were polished and reconstructed by Francis Bacon is a conclusion which also forces itself upon my mind, because first, I believe that Bacon, if he originated the plays which I have examined and commented upon, would have observed the unities; and secondly, because his philosophical views and his peculiarities are interwoven in some of them. The reader has the facts before him on which to form his own conclusion.

There is one play which I have not adverted to, neither closely examined, but which bears so striking a resemblance to that of *Like quits Like*, or *Measure for Measure*, that I think it should be credited, at least as an original composition, to Heywood and Chettle. I allude to *All's Well that Ends Well*. It is founded on the basis or plot of substitution. In *Measure for Measure*, Mariana is substituted for Isabella; and in *All's Well that Ends Well*, Helena is substituted for Diana Capilet.

I have only worked in a small part of the field of the plays, but I have worked chiefly in that part of them mentioned by old Meres and where there was evidence of collaboration, so that in the future consideration of such masterpieces as *Romeo and Juliet*, *Othello*, the *Merchant of Venice*, the *Tempest*, and the other great plays not herein considered, the task for the searching student will be more light and easy.

This imperfect study has been the work of hours stolen from active business. At such times it has been a very great source of pleasure to me to have been even for a few hours in company with the neglected poets and dramatists of the Elizabethan and Jacobean eras whom I have named, many of whom are absolutely unknown to the mass of readers of English history and literature. Hooper remarks that Goldsmith in his *Citizen of the World* makes the Chinese philosopher visit Westminster Abbey. "As we walked along to a particular part of the Temple, 'There,' says the guide, pointing with his finger, 'that is the Poets' Corner; there you see the monuments of Shakespeare, Milton, Prior, and Drayton.' 'Drayton,' I replied, 'I never heard of him before, but I have been told of one Pope, is he there?'"

And yet to my mind the pilgrim to Warwickshire would come much nearer to paying respect to one of those who formed and made up the real Shakespeare by visiting Hartshill and the old Grammar School at Atherstone than by worshiping at the false shrine set up for pilgrims at Stratford-on-Avon. I said that I had been with these worthies in those stolen hours. In utilizing those hours I have realized the truth and force of what Robert Elsmere said, when in quoting his Mentor Gray's advice, especially

as to setting up a literary subject, he remarked that "Half the day you will be king of the world: the other half be the slave of something which will take you out of your world into the general world." Yes, I have been with the chivalrous Sidney in his philosophical and metaphysical discussions with Bruno and when he was writing his stern and stinging admonition to the love-sick Elizabeth. I have been with Drayton at Coventry when he visited the house on Mich Parke Street where his fair enchantress, his loved Idea, was born and reared; with him in the Peake when he composed his odes; with him in his search at Edinburgh for an honest publisher; with him in his ambitious and unsuccessful striving for preferment from the disappointing James, and with him in his cosy corner with the friendly Reynolds when they discussed the men and events of their generation. I have been with poor Henry Chettle when he was the slave of Henslowe, borrowing a little money from him as necessity urged, and then hastily turning out plays for the frequenters of the theatre to be credited on account. I have been with the prose Shakespeare, Thomas Heywood, when he bound himself under a penalty of forty pounds as a covenant servant to Philip Henslowe not to play anywhere except in Henslowe's theatre for two years, and I have been with him when he denounced the pedagogue Austin for publishing as his own Heywood's translations from Ovid. I have been with Dekker in his fierce poetical encounter with and discomfiture of the critical Jonson; with him in the prison of the King's Bench when he wrote letters of recommendation to the founder of Dulwich College, with a short gratulatory poem enclosed; and I have been with him in his fierce denunciation and classification of the

rascals who infested London and preyed upon the innocent and unwary. I have been with rare Ben when for forty shillings paid by Henslowe he wrote those magnificent additions to the Spanish Tragedy, which, in my judgment, are remarkably like and certainly equal in power and beauty to the very best parts of Hamlet.

I have been with Francis Bacon when in the ardor and sincerity of his youth he inveighed in the House of Commons against an unjust subsidy, to the ruin of his chances for preferment at the hands of Cecil and to the disgust of the despotic Elizabeth; and I have been with him when, as Lord Chancellor, he declared to the House of Lords that he did plainly and ingenuously confess that he was guilty of corruption by the acceptance of many bribes, sorrowfully stating when asked if he stood by his confession, "My Lords, it is my act, my hand, my heart; I beseech your lordships to be merciful to a broken reed."

And in these hours I gained from my stolen interviews with these poet worthies a knowledge of the personal appearance of the Virgin Queen, such as she was when Dekker in old *Fortunatus* flattered her to her face by calling her *Gloriana*, and the *Eliza* whose land was *Elysium*. Although the following description is not of her attire, but of her person, it will give the reader an accurate idea of the form and features of Elizabeth. I get it from John Hayward, and he had good reason to know how the Queen looked:

"She was," he says, "a lady upon whom nature had bestowed, and well placed many of her fairest favors: of stature mean, slender, straight, and admirably composed; of such state in her carriage, as every motion of her seemed to bear majesty; her hair was inclined to pale

yellow; her forehead large and fair, a seeming set for princely grace; her eyes lively and sweet, but short-sighted; her nose somewhat rising in the midst; the whole compass of her countenance somewhat long, but yet of admirable beauty."

It seems that her sister Mary also was short-sighted, so that she could not read or do anything else without placing her eyes quite close to the object.

These actor-players and writers to whom I shall now say farewell—all of them were cheerful, jolly, companionable fellows. They made their mark in English literature. It is a great pity that more is not known of them, and especially of Drayton, Dekker, Heywood, and Webster, who were valuable contributors to the literary glory of Great Britain.



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