

# Shakespeariana

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*PORTIA AND THE OFFICE OF WOMAN*  
*IN THE SERIOUS COMEDIES.\**



SHAKESPEARE, it is often said, was not remarkable for his power of inventing incident. His facility in the creation of character was unbounded; but, having found a situation which interested his imagination or was successful on the stage, he recurs to it again and again. Yet it would be difficult to prove that the great dramatist was not in this, as in most other things, acting wisely. He well knew that outward circumstances have no meaning in themselves, that it is the characters that give significance to a situation, and therefore he perceived the advantage of occasionally placing in the same position, beings of widely different natures, in order that, by noting the various courses they would pursue from the common starting-point, he might the more readily compare them, and estimate the relative importance of each, as factors in that grand problem of humanity, which no mere man ever grasped and solved, as he did.

Nor does such a method involve any danger of monotony. We have only to observe a few of the many variations cited by Mr. Dowden, of the 'incident of a trick, or fraud practised upon one who is a self-lover,'—to mark the consequences which respectively follow Maria's deception of Malvolio, the ensnaring and disgrace of the boastful Parolles by his fellow-soldiers, the painful discovery, by the craft of the Duke, of Angelo the self-deceiver, to the eyes of others, and to his own heart,—to be convinced that, given Shakespeare's power, the same incident may be repeated indefinitely, with new, and ever changing results.

\* Read before the Montreal Shakespeare Club, Dec. 13, 1886.

Another course sometimes adopted by Shakespeare is the assignment of the same, or a similar duty, to very different individuals, and, by allowing each to accomplish the task in his own way, to gain once more an opportunity for the observation and comparison of nice distinctions of character.

This latter plan is one, among others, of which he makes use in his analysis of woman ; and, accordingly, its consideration brings us naturally to the study of one of his early, but, at the same time, one of his most charming creations—Portia.

Let us note her carefully, for a few moments.

As she goes, all hearts do duty  
     Unto her beauty ;  
 And, enamored do wish, so they might  
     But enjoy such a sight,  
 That they still were to run by her side  
 Through swords, through seas, whither she would ride.

Do but look on her eyes, they do light  
     All that Love's world compriseth !  
 Do but look on her hair, it is bright  
     As Love's star, when it riseth !  
 Do but mark, her forehead's smoother  
     Than words that soothe her :  
 And from her arched brows, such a grace  
     Sheds itself through the face,  
 As alone there triumphs to the life  
 All the gain, all the good of the elements' strife.

How well do Jonson's inimitable lines revive the impression produced by the Lady of Belmont, with her dainty, lissome, airy form, whose beauty, great though it be, is surpassed by that yet rarer and finer beauty of heart and mind, that sheds itself through the face, and gives to the smooth forehead and arched brows the grace which makes 'The Hyrcanian deserts, and the vasty wilds of wide Arabia' to be counted but as 'thoroughfares for princes to come view fair Portia.'

Indeed, were I to compress into one word, my estimate of this lady, that word would, I think, be *beauty*: beauty which because of its completeness, includes, while it far exceeds mere external loveli-

ness. There is a passage in the *Poetics* which if I recollect aright, is to the effect that '*the beautiful*' consist in *order*, or,—as we might paraphrase it,—in harmony and due proportion.

Whether this definition be in accord with modern ideas or no, it may assuredly be predicated of the beauty of Portia. Her fair form is but the goodly temple that is inhabited by many a bright priestess. Yet many though they be, they dwell together in the most perfect amity and concord. And hence results that exquisite poise, which imparts to Portia much of her strength of character, and which enables her to endure, almost without flinching, the trials of a situation that to many a woman would prove well nigh unbearable. For with all her wealth, and strength, and beauty, she has her trials too. Before ever our eyes beheld her, her eyes had looked upon Bassanio. And she still remembers him, and, praise him as we may, she remembers him worthy of our praise. Yet what avails this admiration? She is left by the will of a dead father, a veritable prize in a lottery, and is liable to be carried off in triumph by any one of a dozen or more suitors, whose very names are odious to her. Nor is the situation rendered any the less trying to the sensitive, spirited woman, by the notoriety she has gained through being, as it were, advertised as a popinjay at which any princely adventurer, whatever his qualifications, may tilt, with as good a hope as the best of hitting the mark and making his fortune.

Her depression and anxiety are apparent at the outset, when she enters with the words, 'By my troth, Nerissa, my little body is a-weary of this great world;' and her, seemingly, rather heartless exclamations, after the unsuccessful attempts of the prince of Morocco and the prince of Arragon, are, in reality, nothing but the perfectly natural expression of the relief she feels, when the tension is over in which she had remained, pending the decision of those worthies—a relief so keen and delightful, that, for the time, it completely obliterates every other sensation.

But in the interview with Bassanio, before he essays his fortune with the caskets, the suspense in which she is held becomes still more strongly apparent, and she pleads with her lover to delay a little

longer, lest, if he choose amiss, she should lose him forever; while, during the time that he occupies in actually making his choice, she regards him in silence, with an anxiety that is absolutely breathless.

Yet, despite the load she has constantly to bear about with her, so perfectly does she control herself, so bright and cheery is she, so kind, gracious, and thoughtful in her treatment of those who are around her, that, were it not for the few moments when she is alone with Nerissa, or with Bassanio, we should hardly be conscious that she had a load to carry. Indeed, it is not until the suspense finally and forever passes away, when Bassanio is successful, having chosen the leaden casket, that we learn from her excessive joy and delight the full measure of the torment to which she was formerly subjected.

How all the other passions fleet to air,  
 As doubtful thoughts, and rash-embraced despair,  
 And shudd'ring fear, and green-eyed jealousy!  
 O love, be moderate; allay thy ecstasy;  
 In measure rein thy joy; scant this excess.  
 I feel too much thy blessing: make it less,  
 For fear I surfeit!

—III, ii, 108.

Such an outburst from the usually reserved Portia proves more eloquently than much argument how strong the revulsion of feeling has been. But, once again, her remarkable power of self-control asserts itself, and almost before her lover has time to claim her for his own, she has regained her equilibrium, and proceeds, in the most exquisitely tender and modest language, to surrender not merely herself, but her house, her servants, and all that she possesses to him, 'to be directed, as from her lord, her governor, her king.'

Portia does nothing by halves. When she loves, she loves with her whole being; when she ridicules, she does so unsparingly; and, remembering the charming episode in which she wins from her lord the ring that she had made him swear he would never part with, and the use to which she puts the ring when won, we may well admit that, even in the matter of a jest, she is no less whole-hearted, while, at the same time, she is too true a lady to carry her sport far enough to wound the most sensitive feelings.

There is, however, another trait of Portia's character, and that, too, perhaps the most obvious one of all. I mean, of course, her brilliant powers of intellect. I say the most obvious, but this does not necessarily imply that her intellect is her dominant quality. A true woman, it will be readily admitted, is always ruled more from the heart than from the head; and herein lies, in great measure, her difference from man, who is guided rather by his reason than by his feelings. Portia is every inch a woman, and her heart is her true ruler, but she is endowed with a quick and ready wit, and with a comprehensive, logical mind that fit her for the part she fills, while they compel our admiration at every turn.

Nor has nature alone been lavish with Portia, art and training have done their utmost for her as well; while the ultimate result of this interworking of art and nature, is the production of that which is rare in even the most gifted and accomplished women—a truly reflective and philosophic temperament. This is apparent on many occasions, and seems, once or twice, to be carried almost to the point of sententiousness. For example:—

If to do were as easy as to know what were good to do, chapels had been churches, and poor men's cottages princes' palaces. It is a good divine that follows his own instructions: I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching. The brain may devise laws for the blood, but a hot temper leaps o'er a cold decree.

—I, ii, 13.

A speech which sounds very like an assemblage of proverbs.

But Portia usually assumes a much loftier tone than this, as witness the following, besides very many others that might be adduced:—

I never did repent for doing good,  
Nor shall not now : for in companions  
That do converse and waste the time together,  
Whose souls do bear an equal yoke of love,  
There must be needs a like proportion  
Of lineaments, of manners and of spirit.

—III, iv, 10.

And again :

*Portia.* How far that little candle throws his beams!  
So shines a good deed in a naughty world.

*Nerissa.* When the moon shone we did not see the candle ;

*Portia.* So doth the greater glory dim the less :  
 A substitute shines brightly as a king  
 Until a king be by, and then his state  
 Empties itself, as doth an inland brook  
 Into the main of waters.

—V, i, 90.

‘Fair sentences, and well pronounced,’ which serve not merely to show how readily the simplest natural objects suggest to Portia the profound thoughts with which she is so familiar, but also to reveal to us those high powers of imagination that invest with grace and beauty all the coinage of her brain.

Yet it is at the trial that we must see Portia, if we would see her at her best. In it, all her qualities of heart unite and shine resplendent : in it, too, we have the most complete evidence of the powers of her mind, and of the thorough training to which that mind has been subjected.

She has a double object in view : the voiding of Shylock’s claim to the pound of flesh, by proving that to carry out the letter of the bond is an impossibility ; and the punishment of the Jew’s cruelty by showing that he has been plotting against Antonio’s life, and is therefore liable to death, with confiscation of property.

In this latter task lies her only difficulty, and to this she first addresses herself. It is characteristic of Portia that she approaches all things from above. And she now begins with that eloquent appeal to Shylock’s better nature, that noble eulogy upon ‘the quality of mercy’ which, powerless as she expected it to be, and as it is, to touch the hard Jewish heart, nevertheless stirs her own generous nature to the very depths. She tries him next by his love of money, and, in the end, completely unmasks his true design, as she draws forth the refusal to allow even the assistance of a surgeon to prevent Antonio’s death from loss of blood. Having thus convicted Shylock, out of his own mouth, of the crime of plotting against the life of a citizen, she quickly, on technical grounds, disposes of his claim to the pound of flesh, and then proceeds to mete out to him that justice which has been his constant plea, but which, to his surprise, makes his own life, not



Antonio's, dependent upon the mercy to whose voice he had so recently turned a deaf ear. This is an outline of the purely intellectual side of the trial. Yet its very statement is an injustice to Portia, leaving out of account, as it does, the constant exhibitions of generosity and lofty purpose that give warmth and life to the whole scene, and make it one of the most attractive in the play.

Why Portia should have been at such pains to conduct the trial herself, rather than leave it in the hands of Bellario, whose advice she took the precaution to ask, in order to guard against possible mistake, is, I think, easily explained. Several motives were present. Reluctance to lose sight of her love, when he had just been gained, the desire of rendering him a service, and the conviction, too, that to render him such a service could not fail to raise her, however high she stood already, still higher in his love and esteem. But, besides all this, we must remember that the mere exercise of her mental powers was in itself a positive delight to Portia; while her love of adventure, and the necessity of assuming a part, in order to the fulfilment of her plan, would but have added to the desire to put it into execution. Whatever may have been her motives, the upshot of the whole matter was that the tragedy which must infallibly have resulted from the errors of judgement and other mistakes of Bassanio and his friend, was, through the wisdom and discernment of this brilliant woman, converted into happiness and prosperity.

This brings us to the consideration of the office or duty which Portia and other heroines perform in not a few of Shakespeare's plays.

*The Merchant of Venice*, though an early production, contains at least one point of resemblance to work of six or eight years later, and even to two of Shakespeare's very last compositions. I refer more particularly to *Measure for Measure*, *A Winter's Tale*, and *Cymbeline*; and the resemblance lies in the office of woman in them all.

In *The Merchant of Venice* there may be said to exist two leading motives. The Portia-motive and the Shylock-motive. Bassanio, through his love for Portia, and his friendship for Antonio, serves to bring these two mainsprings of action into connection, and causes them

to operate upon each other. Now, the Shylock-motive is inherently what may, with no great license, be called a tragic motive, and this, too, without reference to the estimate we may have formed of Shylock as a man. Both Antonio and Bassanio committed a terrible mistake: the one, in offering as security for the loan of a sum of money that which transcended all money in value—his life; the other, in allowing his friend to give such security for his sake. Further, they utterly failed in their attempt to fathom the character of Shylock, and the result of their blunders could, in itself, have led to nothing less than the death of Antonio, and the total destruction of Bassanio's happiness.

But the action is not allowed to proceed thus uninterrupted. Portia crosses the paths of the unfortunates, and, in a moment, all is changed. Wrong and oppression steal discomfited away, peace and happiness return, and harmless jests, and the sounds of mirth, and the strains of sweet music, gently efface all thoughts of tragedy from our minds.

The case stands much the same in *Measure for Measure*. There, Isabella, solely by her own efforts, saves her brother from death, herself from shame, and, ultimately, pleads for and saves the life of even Angelo, who had wronged her. In *A Winter's Tale*, too, it is to the character of Hermione, and of her assistant, Paulina, that we must look for the restoration of happiness. While in *Cymbeline*, although it is primarily a man (the servant of Posthumus) who defeats the purpose of the jealous husband, in reality the catastrophe is averted by Imogen's noble bearing in the presence of her intending executioner, which makes it impossible for him to obey his master's commands to put her to death. Moreover, throughout the scene of reconciliation, Imogen is certainly the central figure.

In the great tragedies, the issue is the result of the weakness, folly, ambition, or malignant cruelty of man, and involves innocent as well as guilty in the universal ruin. But it is noticeable, to say the least, that these dramas nowhere exhibit woman in her highest excellence. Woman in the tragedies is either wicked or (comparatively, at all events) weak; she is not the equal of man either intellectually or in strength of character.

On the other hand, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Measure for Measure*, *A Winter's Tale*, and *Cymbeline* all afford what are apparently tragic

opportunities in so far as man is concerned. There are the same errors of heart and of judgment. We find men to whom action is as distasteful as it is to Hamlet, men as jealous as Othello, but instead of an Ophelia and a Desdemona, we see associated with them a Portia and an Isabella, a Hermione and an Imogen—women crowned with all the most tender and exquisite feminine virtues, yet endowed with an exalted character and a strength of purpose that enable them to exert a real influence upon the action of the drama. No mere satellites these, as are their weaker sisters of the tragedies! Their orbit is not the narrow round of daily duties and simple attendance upon their lords. They move in larger circles, and they shine with no reflected light. Their lustre is their own: it comes from within and sheds its beams upon all who approach, brightening their every step with its gentle radiance.

Can we imagine the play of *Hamlet* with Ophelia replaced by Portia? Would Othello's deed have been possible if Imogen had been the wife instead of Desdemona? I think not. And the reason has been already anticipated. Although the situations, both in the tragedies and in these comedies that we have been discussing, are, at the outset, fraught with equally grave possibilities to all concerned, there are at work in the comedies beings of a higher intelligence and a finer fibre than in the tragedies. We find that the women of the comedies, unlike their tragic compeers, possess a power of thinking and acting as from themselves, which without rendering them in the slightest degree unfeminine, enables them to become, in the strictest sense of the word, companions and helpmeets of man; the equals, nay, rather the superiors of man in all but physical strength. And hence it arises that, as an offset to the four great tragedies, in which we see woman, in common with man, brought to irretrievable suffering and death, through the action of man, we have these four comedies, or romances, where we find the exact converse,—man, in common with woman, saved from ruin and death, through the endurance, the affection, and the deep, true wisdom of woman.

This, then, I conceive, is the office which Shakespeare in these serious comedies assigns to woman; the task of righting wrongs, of avert-

ing misfortune, of ushering in peace, contentment, happiness. A noble office truly! A part which he seldom, if ever, permits man to assume! But it is one, perhaps the chief one, among many other duties, for which he shows woman's special fitness.

It is no small honor, surely, to gain admission to the glorious sisterhood which claims among its members Hermione and Imogen; and it is, perhaps, the best of all the good things that may justly be affirmed about the subject of this paper, that she, too, is a member of that sisterhood, and that, as we record their names, the first, if not the brightest to be inscribed, is that of Portia.

C. H. GOULD.

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THE EDITORS OF SHAKESPEARE.

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XV. JAMES BOSWELL.

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JAMES BOSWELL, the subject of the present sketch, was born in 1779, in England. His father was the James Boswell who has acquired such celebrity as the biographer of Dr. Johnson. The son was educated at Westminster, and afterwards at Brasenose College. He read law and was called to the Bar, and was afterwards a Commissioner of Bankruptcy. He died on February 24, 1822, and was buried in the Temple Churchyard, London.

He was selected by Edmond Malone to act as his literary executor, and to edit the edition of Shakespeare which the former did not live to see published. This was a delicate and laborious undertaking, and occupied him for some time. It was published, in 1821, in twenty-one volumes octavo, and has long been known as *The Variorum*. The title-page of Volume I reads:—

The Plays and Poems of William Shakspeare, with the Corrections and Illustrations of Various Commentators: Comprehending a Life of the Poet, and an enlarged History of the Stage, by the late Edmond Malone. With a new Glossarial Index.

ΤΗΣ ΦΥΣΕΩΣ ΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΕΥΣ ΗΝ, ΤΟΝ ΚΑΛΑΜΟΝ ΑΠΟΒΡΕΧΩΝ ΕΙΣ ΝΟΥΝ.—*Vet. Auct apud. Suidam.*

Vol. I. London : Printed for F. C. and J. Rivington ; T. Egerton ; J. Cuthell ; Scatcherd and Letterman ; Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown ; Cadell and Davies ; Lackington and Co. ; J. Booker ; Black and Co. ; J. Booth ; J. Richardson ; J. M. Richardson ; J. Murray ; J. Harding ; R. H. Evans ; J. Mawman ; R. Schaley ; T. Earle ; J. Bohn ; C. Brown ; Gray and Son ; R. Pheney ; Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy ; Newman and Co. ; Ogles, Duncan, and Co. ; T. Hamilton ; W. Wood ; J. Sheldon ; E. Edwards ; Whitmore and Fenn ; W. Mason ; G. and W. B. Whittaker ; Simpkin and Marshall ; R. Saunders ; J. Deighton and Sons, Cambridge ; Wilson and Son, York ; and Stirling and Slade, Fairbairn and Anderson, and D. Brown, Edinburgh. 1821.

In the preface Boswell refers to the long and intimate friendship which had existed between his father and Malone, and of his own subsequent acquaintance with the latter. After referring to the fact of his having been chosen by Malone to edit the materials which the latter had accumulated for an edition of Shakespeare, Boswell continues as follows:—

I am far from pretending to say that, with all the advantages I enjoyed, I can hope to remedy the many imperfections which must unavoidably occur, when the mind which collected information can no longer superintend its disclosure ; and in some of the most important parts of his investigations, a chasm must be left which I am unable to supply ; yet still I can, with confidence, assert, that enough will remain to justify the publick expectation, and gratify the admirers of our greatest poet. Whatever may be the defects that shall be discovered in that portion of the work which has devolved upon me, which, I am aware, are many, and fear that more may be found, yet I trust to the candour of the reader, that he will keep in his recollection the circumstances which I have stated, [*i. e.* the fact that Malone left his voluminous notes in much confusion, on scraps of paper, and often adopting a species of short hand,] and will not consider me as having thrust myself upon this employment from any over-weening confidence in my own abilities ; but as having undertaken it as a task in compliance with the last wishes of an ever dear friend.

He further states that in some cases he does not agree with the opinions expressed in the work, but that he felt bound to give Malone's and not his own, and that only in a few instances has he recorded the latter. Next he defends the great care he has taken in the collation of the text, and shows how Steevens was often very careless in this respect. He then tells of the great superiority of the

First Folio to the Second, which Steevens had adopted as his authority, while Malone rightly preferred the former. The remainder of the preface treats of various matters.

Following the preface Boswell printed an excellent biographical memoir—excellent in composition but giving few facts of Malone's life; and then gave the prefaces of Pope, Theobald, Hanmer, Warburton, Dr. Johnson, Capell, Steevens, Malone and Reed, besides Dr. Farmer's Essay on the Learning of Shakespeare, Malone's Essay on Shakespeare, Ford and Johnson, Rowe's Life of Shakespeare, commendatory poems on the poet, and an Essay on Phraseology and Metre. All the above are contained in the first volume. The second commences with Malone's history of the stage, which occupies 528 pages. Following this are articles on Shakespeare's coat of arms, the conveyance from Walker to the poet, his mortgage, declaration of trust, Shakespeare's will, extracts from the Stratford Register, entries on the Stationer's books, list of early editions of Shakespeare, dedication and preface of the First Folio, modern editions, plays ascribed to and altered from Shakespeare, etc. The third volume embraces Malone's history of the stage, additions from Henslowe's Register, additions by Steevens, appendix from Malone's papers, Chalmer's account of the stage, etc. The fourth volume commences with the plays, which are printed in what Malone considered their chronological order to be. Following the plays are printed the poems, memoirs of Lord Southampton, *Pericles*, *Titus Andronicus*, and an index.

The notes are printed at the bottom of the page, and are by all the commentators and editors. They are very voluminous though Boswell added comparatively very few of his own. He improved the text however, and is entitled to great credit for the careful manner in which he performed his duty. His was not a task which many would have cared to undertake, but the world of letters owes him much for giving it in such a complete form the vast stores collected by Malone.

J. PARKER NORRIS.

# A School of Shakespeare.

---

For his bounty,  
There was no winter in't; an autumn 'twas  
That grew the more by reaping.

—*Antony & Cleopatra*, V, ii, 86.

---

## KING RICHARD II.

---



HIS royal throne of kings, this scepter'd isle,  
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,  
This other Eden, demi-paradise,  
This fortress built by Nature for herself  
Against infection and the hand of war,  
This happy breed of men, this little world,  
This precious stone set in the silver sea,  
Which serves it in the office of a wall  
Or as a moat defensive to a house,  
Against the envy of less happier lands,  
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England,  
This nurse, this teeming womb of royal kings,  
Fear'd by their breed and famous by their birth,  
Renowned for their deeds as far from home,  
For Christian service and true chivalry,  
As is the sepulchre in stubborn Jewry  
Of the world's ransom, blessed Mary's Son,  
This land of such dear souls, this dear dear land,  
Dear for her reputation through the world,  
Is now leased out, I die pronouncing it,  
Like to a tenement or pelting farm :  
England, bound in with the triumphant sea,  
Whose rocky shore beats back the envious siege  
Of watery Neptune, is now bound in with shame,  
With inky blots and rotten parchment bonds :  
That England, that was wont to conquer others,  
Hath made a shameful conquest of itself.  
Ah, would the scandal vanish with my life,  
How happy then were my ensuing death!—II, i, 40–68.

The vehement, despairing patriotism of dying Lancaster, 'gaunt for the grave,' fasting for 'his children's looks,' writhing before the shameful degradation of his shameless nephew-king, is, like the closing cry of the Bastard Faulconbridge, (*King John*, V, vii), another trumpet-note of honor to England, prelude to the splendid song of her praise in *Henry V*. Indeed, England is hardly less the theme of *Richard II.* than of *King John*. We pardon and commend Bolingbroke's deposition of Richard, his lawful sovereign, because we feel that he is therein the protector of society, 'plucking away the caterpillars of the commonwealth;' and when we do sympathize with Richard finally, it is as a suffering fellow-creature rather than as a dis-crowned king. Throughout the play runs the idea of the obligation of unselfish patriotism, a duty incumbent upon all citizens, the more incumbent upon a king than upon others in that he is the representative of all others. (See Tennyson's *Love thou thy land*,\* and the fiercely patriotic spirit of Dante's *Inferno*, and of *Piers the Plowman*). The indignation which men who could remember Poitiers and had served with the Black Prince, felt at the unkingly conduct of Richard must have been very great, and with that feeling Shakespeare was in hearty accord; we of to-day indeed find ourselves strongly moved by the story of Cressy and Poitiers, and sympathize with the good knight Sir Roger de Coverley, as, with his hand upon the pommel of Edward the Third's sword, he gives us the story of the Black Prince (see *The Spectator*, No. 329); and so, too, we sympathize with the indignant shame of time-honored Lancaster that England should be 'leased out like to a tenement or pelting farm' to feed the extravagant waste of 'light vanity, insatiate cormorant.' Between the characters of Richard II. and John there are points of resemblance, but the England of Richard was quite another country than the England of John. 'The thirteenth century,' says Mr. Freeman (*General Sketch*, p. 183), 'was a time of great changes; a time, so to speak, of beginnings and endings

\*According to the *London Academy*, (March, 1881), these lines, as well as 'Of old sat Freedom on the heights,' and 'You ask me why tho' ill at ease' (also, I think) were due to the suggestion, direct or indirect, of Mr. James Spedding, the editor of Bacon, who was the friend and college-mate of Tennyson at Cambridge. See 'To J. S.' and 'On a Mourner.' All these pieces are printed in the last Macmillan edition of Tennyson as forming a series apparently.



throughout the world; . . . the Constitution of England began to put on the shape which it has kept ever since.' Thus the Barons and the clergy compel John to sign Magna Charta; Richard II. is deposed by his Parliament, which includes the Barons and the clergy, but is not composed exclusively of them. Whence and what is this Parliament? To answer this question we should read English history from John to Richard II. (See Green's *Short History of the English People*, chap. III., sec. v. to chap. V., sec. vi., and Hallam's *Middle Ages*, chap. VIII., sec. iii.); and, through the struggles of Earl Simon de Montfort for the freedom of the Magna Charta; through the law-giving reign of Edward I.; the weakness and disorder of Edward II.; the long glory and suffering of Edward III.; and of the minority of Richard II.; we should follow the story of the amalgamation of the Norman and the Saxon into a great people, of the rise of the splendid English speech, and of the birth and gradual growth of what was to become the greatest deliberative and legislative body that the world has yet seen—the English House of Commons. Freedom had found her sanctuary, none the less a sanctuary because sometimes violated; thence slowly 'broadening down from precedent to precedent,' her sweet influences were in future times in an undiscovered country beyond unknown seas to infuse themselves into the life-blood of another great nation sprung from English loins. This history of the struggle for parliamentary government under the three Edwards, under Richard II. and his successors, is the ancestral history of us Americans of to-day; we are engaged to-day in this same struggle for free, enlightened parliamentary government; and therefore should we learn and take to heart the lesson of patriotism taught by Shakespeare and by the history of England. (See Tennyson's *England and America in 1782*.)

'There is not,' says Hume, 'a reign, among those of the ancient English monarchs, which deserves more to be studied than that of Edward III., nor one where the domestic transactions will better discover the true genius of that kind of mixed government, which was then established in England.' (Hume's *History of England*, chap. XVI.) From the fifth century to the thirteenth 'society contained,' says Guizot, 'all that I have already found and described as belong-

ing to it—kings, a lay aristocracy, a clergy, citizens, husbandmen, civil and religious authorities; the germs, in short, of everything necessary to form a nation and a government; and yet there was no government, no nation. . . . Let us, on the other hand, survey Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. We everywhere see two great objects make their appearance on the stage of the world,—the government and the people. . . . This, if I am not deceived, is the essential feature which distinguishes Modern Europe from the Europe of the early ages; and this was the change which was accomplished between the thirteenth and the sixteenth century.’ (Guizot’s *History of Civilization*, VII., p. 175.) In this process of change the fourteenth century bore a most conspicuous part, and for England its influence was decisive as to the essentials of nationality. The Hundred Years’ War with France, begun by Edward III., would, even if unsuccessful, have had important consequences; the great and decisive victory at Cressy was a revelation of the English people to themselves as a people, stirring to its profoundest depths their patriotism and their nationality. Their heroic Black Prince won his people’s spurs as well as his own on that fateful 26th of August, 1346. ‘The fall of France,’ says Green, ‘was hardly so sudden or so incomprehensible then as the fall of Chivalry. The lesson which England had learned at Bannockburn she taught the world at Cressy. The whole social and political fabric of the Middle Ages rested on a military base, and its base was suddenly withdrawn. The churl had struck down the noble; the bondsman proved more than a match, in sheer hard fighting, for the knight. From the day of Cressy feudalism tottered slowly, but surely to its grave.’ (Green’s *Short History*, p. 244.) ‘The first instance of the use of artillery in field warfare’ was at Cressy, (Green, p. 243), a statement the full import of which it is hard for us to realize, even as we think of Balaklava and the Charge of the Light Brigade. (See ‘The Musket as a Social Force,’ *Popular Science Monthly*, Feb. 1886; Creasy’s *Decisive Battles of the World*.)

The history of the Church will help us to form some idea of the difference between the time of John and of Richard II. At the beginning of the thirteenth century, Innocent III., with the terrible weapon of the Interdict in his hands, forces Philip Augustus, in

France, and John, in England, to submit to his sway. At the beginning of the fourteenth century both Philip the Fair, of France, and Edward I., in England, are too strong separately for Boniface VIII., in spite of interdict and excommunication; then the Papal See is removed to Avignon, in France, a scandal for three quarters of a century; then, when Richard II. comes to the throne, there are elected, more scandalous still, two Popes, one at Avignon, one in Rome, each recognized in part, each rejected in part, both ready to excommunicate; whereat Chaucer, representing his age, laughs and, rolling the morsel under his tongue, makes his Summoner say (*Prologue to Canterbury Tales*) that a man need not mind excommunication unless his soul be in his purse, and then, with virtuous innocence, he scolds his Summoner for saying so; while Langley in *Piers the Plowman*, representing also his age, lifts a deep voice from the bosom of the people against the licentiousness of the priesthood and the untruth of the Church; and John Wiclif, also representing his age, from his professor's chair at Oxford thunders against fundamental doctrines and, worse still, teaches the people to appeal from the Church to Conscience by putting into their unclerical hands the Bible translated into their own English tongue. Evidently we are far from the time when John, the King, could kneel before the legate of the Pope, could swear to be his man, and thus consent to hold his kingdom as the vassal of an Italian over-lord. See Guizot, *History of Civilization*, Lectures VIII. and X.; Hallam, *Middle Ages*, Chap. VII.; Green, *Short History*, Chap. V., Section III.; Freeman, *Outline Sketch*, Chap. XII.

As to the progress of the people themselves, see, for the Rise of Cities and the Growth of Commerce, Guizot, *History of Civilization*, Lecture VII.; Hallam, *Middle Ages*, Chap. III. Part II., Chap. VIII. Part III., Chap. IX. Part II.; Green, *Short History*, Chap. IV., Section IV.; for the English farmers and peasantry see also Green, *Short History*, Chap. V., Sections IV. and V.; Mackintosh's *History of England*; for the King and the Baronage, Green, Chap. IV., Sect. V., and Chap. V., Sect. V.

As to the Condition of Contemporary Europe, see Hallam, Guizot, Freeman, and Gibbon.

For Manners, Customs, Learning, see Hallam, Chap. IX.; *Early English Meals and Manners* (ed. by Mr. Furnivall for *Early English Text Society*); also Chaucer; and *Piers the Plowman*; Froissart's *Chronicles*.

For the English Language, see Lounsbury's *English Language*; Marsh's *Origin and History of English Language*; and the discussions of Chaucer by Green and Hallam.

For Contemporary and Related Literature, see Green, Chap. V., Sections I., III. and V., and the authorities there cited; see also sketches and lives of Chaucer, Langley (or Langland) and Wiclif in the encyclopedias, in the handbooks of English Literature, in Morley's *English Writers*, in Taine's *English Literature*, in Brooke's *Primer of English Literature*, in *English Men of Letters* (Chaucer); see Gilman's *Chaucer*; Skeat's edition of *Piers the Plowman*, Morris's *Prologue and Knightes Tale*, Skeat's *Man of Lawes Tale* and *Prioresses Tale*—all in the *Clarendon Press Series* (Macmillan). The Preface and Notes of these editions are of very great value. See Lounsbury's *Parlament of Foules*.

It would be idle here to attempt to throw any light upon the illustrious name of Geoffrey Chaucer. Let those who are sceptical about him as a poet get Dr. Morris's edition of the *Prologue* and read—without disturbing themselves too much over the forms of his words—Chaucer's description of his pilgrims on that famous Canterbury journey.

Dante, as one of Chaucer's masters, belongs here, and also Petrarch and Boccaccio. Barbour's *Bruce* is the work of a contemporary; see Scott's *Lord of the Isles*; Aguilar's *The Days of Bruce*; Porter's *Scottish Chiefs*; Gray's *Bard*; see also Scott's *Fair Maid of Perth*, and *Castle Dangerous*; Bulwer's *Rienzi*; Byron's *Marino Faliero*; the Drama of *Edward III.*, sometimes attributed to Shakespeare; *Edward II.*, and Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (Clarendon Press Series, edited with valuable Introductions and Notes); and see Green's section on Roger Bacon in the *Short History*, Chap. III., Sect. IV. The origin of the unexplained quarrel between Bolingbroke and Mowbray, with which the play of *Richard II.* opens, is happily treated of by Mr. Hudson in *Shakespeare's Life, Art and*

*Characters* and in the Introduction of his school edition of this play. See also Hallam, *Middle Ages*, Chap. VIII., Part III.; Dowden's *Shakespeare: His Mind and Art*.

For the *Characters* in the Play see the historians already referred to; also Miss Strickland's *Queens of England*, the Notes in the editions of the play, the encyclopedias, and the genealogical tables prefixed to the histories.

To Chancer, as to some other matters, we shall recur again in connection with *Henry IV*.

It may be of assistance, perhaps, to some of our fellow-students to give a brief summary of the reading of *Richard II*. by our little Hollins Shakespeare Club, particularly if, like ourselves, they are reading more for general information and amusement than with any very serious student aims.

*First Meeting*: Act I. read—Discussion of the *Characters* as historical persons (Duchess of York and Wife of Bath matrimonially considered); Hudson's account of the quarrel between Bolingbroke and Norfolk read aloud. *Second Meeting*: Acts II. and III. read—Discussion of Condition of the Peasantry; Origin of English Towns; Universities. *Third Meeting*: Acts IV. and V. read—Discussion of Origin and Growth of Papal Power; Condition of Church in Richard II.'s time; Friars; Monks and Monasteries; Wiclif; The Inquisition. *Fourth Meeting*: English Parliament; Introductory Chapter to Gilman's *Chaucer* read aloud; Extracts from Chaucer read: *The Lady Prioress*; *The Wife of Bath*; Wife of Bath's *Prologue and Story*; The Ale-house in *Piers the Plowman*, Part V.

WM. TAYLOR THOM.

# Open Court.

That's a question; how shall we try it?

—*The Comedy of Errors*, V, 1, 421.

In this I'll be impartial; be you judge  
Of your own cause.

—*Measure for Measure*, V, 1, 166.

*Twelfth Night*, III, i, 65 :—

Clown—I will construe to them whence you come; who you are and what you would are *out of my welkin*, I might say 'element,' but the word is *overworn*.



UPON this passage Mr. Aldis Wright, the Clarendon Press editor, notes 'element being sometimes used for "sky"; the Clown makes "welkin" synonymous with it, to avoid the more familiar word. See III. iv. 117.' I think it is possible to go further than this. In these words there is probably an allusion to a well-known scene familiar to all frequenters of the theatre. Let us first pay attention to the dates. *Twelfth Night*, we know from John Manningham's Diary, was acted in February, 1602. *Satiro-mastix*, the first quarto of which bears the date of 1602, had been acted in the previous year (see Mr. Fleay's *Shakespeare and Marston* in SHAKESPEARIANA, I, 106). In *Satiro-mastix* Dekker repeatedly puts the obnoxious expression in the mouth of Horace (Ben Jonson). Speaking of Captain Tucca he says, 'tis *out of his element* to traduce me: I am too well ranked, Asinius, to be stabbed with his dudgeon wit' (Pearson's ed. p. 195). Asinius, Horace's friend, also uses the expression as a favorite one with 'his ningle (*i. e.* Horace): 'Marry, for reading any book, I'll take my death upon't (as my ningle says) 'tis *out of my element*' (p. 196). Lastly, the words are among the things that Horace is forced to abjure (p. 262).

*Sir Vaughan*—Thirdly, and last of all saving one, when your plays are misliked at Court, you shall not . . . say you are glad you write *out of the courtiers' element*.

*Tucca*—Let the *element* alone, 'tis out a thy reach.

If, as seems probable enough, Shakespeare in *Twelfth Night* is alluding to the ridicule bestowed upon the expression in *Satiro-mastix*, additional point is given to the Clown's remark. It is interesting to find the words occurring later on in the mouth of the city gallant, Lipsalve, in Middleton's *Family of Love*: 'Not I, I am too shallow to sound her; she's out of my element' (II. iii. 69, Bullen's edition).

Montreal.

R. W. BOODLE.

## Shakespeare Societies.

Such a holy witch  
That he enchants societies into him;  
Half all men's hearts are his.

—*Cymbeline*, I, vi, 166.



JANUARY MEETING OF THE SHAKESPEARE SOCIETY OF NEW YORK.—The society met on the 27th of January, the President, Appleton Morgan, Esq., in the chair. On motion of W. H. Wyman, Esq., a non-resident member, Mr. Samuel Timmins, of Hill Cottage, Arley, Coventry, England, was elected an honorary member in the room of Dr. C. M. Ingleby, deceased. Mr. A. R. Frey read the paper of the evening, on *The Taming of the Shrew*. Mr. Frey said that two years ago he should not have ventured to declare that the old comedy of *The Taming of a Shrew* was (as Capell had asserted) by William Shakespeare; but that after considerable critical study of both, he certainly was of that opinion now. He believed, moreover, that if the author of *The Taming of a Shrew* was not William Shakespeare, he was a man well acquainted with Stratford-on-Avon, with Wilmecote, with the Sly family, with the tinker himself; that if this author was not Shakespeare, he (Shakespeare) must have pirated an enormous number of lines from some other writer, not (as was Shakespeare's wont), adorning and vivifying what he borrowed, but absolutely purloining the exact material in its exact dress—good, bad, or indifferent. And when he borrowed not only lines and passages, but entire scenes,

it is hardly probable that, surrounded by enemies as Shakespeare was (or at least, by envious rivals, eager always to annoy and accuse him), some of them should not have recognized the piracy, and raised a hue and cry again about the 'upstart crow,' beautified with another's feathers. Again, Busby in 1606-7, sold three plays to Ling, all of which were then recognized as Shakespeare's, and one of them was this older comedy. Neither buyer nor purchaser in this transaction was blind or careless, as we happen to know. They knew very well what they were buying and selling. If the play as it now stands was not written before 1609 and after November 19th, 1607, all the contemporary evidence of Greene, Dekker, Henslowe, Kyd, Beaumont, Fletcher, and Rowlands must be considered as worthless; we must assign an earlier date to *Hamlet* than the one now usually received, and ignore the remarkable circumstance that Southwick bought the old play in 1607 and lent the proprietors of the first folio an improved version of it in 1622 or 1623.

Mr. Frey was aware that these propositions were novel, and (since whatever is once supposed settled about Shakespeare ought reasonably not to be disturbed) perhaps revolutionary; but they were the result of his own convictions, and he respectfully submitted them. That the induction to the present play was by Chettle assisted by Fletcher; the first act by Cyril Tournour assisted by Shakespeare; the second by Marlowe assisted by Dante or the ghost of Hamlet's father, and so on, he did not believe. We must draw the line somewhere, even with the analytical tests which modern criticism has so liberally supplied us, perfectly in hand.

Mr. Reynolds being in the chair, Mr. Price deprecated the tendency to poke fun at the verse tests—the run-on lines, stopped and unstopped endings, etc.—and thought we had better wait a bit before pronouncing upon their entire absurdity. He had been very highly gratified by Mr. Frey's paper, and moved its reference to the Committee on Publication. The motion was seconded and carried. Mr. Morgan was very glad to hear Mr. Price speak as emphatically as he had in favor of the verse tests. He (Mr. Morgan) confessed that he saw nothing in them whatever of practical value; but he recognized the tendency in himself, and in his own methods, of going too far, and he



was glad that in this society each gentleman should feel it his duty to check the other. When in St. Paul, Mr. Ignatius Donnelly said to the speaker, 'Mr. Morgan, there is a cipher in the Shakespeare plays, and I have it' He replied, 'There are two distinct propositions: first, that there is a cipher; and, second, that you have it correctly and exactly.' Just so I answer Professor Price. Doubtless the style of a writer changes by lapse of time; but can we be sure that we know how and on what lines? Take a capital instance. Here is *Locksley Hall*, written by Alfred Tennyson of fifty years ago. Here is *Locksley Hall* written by Baron Tennyson. If Professor Price and I were alive in the year 2100, and I should submit these two to him, would he be able from mere verse tests to say which was written first, and how far apart they were written? The first *Locksley Hall* is much more highly polished, and more accurate in its scansion than the second. In the Shakespeare Plays, the critics seem to think that care and polish betoken maturity. Mr. Price said that the president's question was a subtle one; but that without preparation for debate at this time, he must still adhere to his belief that chronology could be settled by verse tests. Mr. Hibbe, President of the Cleveland Shakespeare Society, who was present as a guest, addressed the chair and hoped that this society would be able to perfect a scheme by which all the societies on this side of the Atlantic might be put into a close correspondence. The chair announced that on the fourth Thursday in February, the society would have the pleasure of listening to a Paper on *Shakespeare's Sonnets: Some New Inferences from Old Facts*, by Mr. W. J. Rolfe, of Cambridge. If he should be able to read his paper in person on that evening due announcement would be made of the fact. The society then adjourned.

LONDON.—NEW SHAKESPEARE.—JAN. 14.—Mr. R. Garnett in the chair. Mr. R. G. Moulton read a paper 'On Shakespeare's *Tempest* as an Illustration of the Theory of Central Ideas.' After pointing out that a central idea must be based not upon the authority of the expounder, nor even on the beauty of the idea itself, but upon the degree in which it associated itself with the details of which the play was made up, Mr. Moulton proceeded to state the central idea in *The*

*Tempest* as the exhibition of enchantment as an engine of personal providence. The chairman assented to Mr. Moulton's view, but thought we ought not to disregard the question of the external circumstances under which the play was written. He believed it to have been written for performance at Court on the occasion of the marriage of the daughter of James I. with the Elector Palatine, the circumstances of the event and the characters and the incidents of the play agreeing in a manner too remarkable to be incidental.

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## The Drama.

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Betwixt mine eye and heart a league is took,  
And each doth good turns now unto the other.

—Sonnet XLVII.

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R. EDWIN BOOTH.—Ay, every inch an actor! As Richard, Macbeth, Iago, Shylock, Hamlet, again this season Booth's royal grasp and ease, the unerring naturalness of his art have swayed familiar audiences as though that ripened mastery were young, and new, and first suspected. His interpretations have such an air of largeness, such an absence of anxiety and effort that the relaxed and free attention follows them as the flow of a majestic mood rather than as the ingenious contortions of a conscious, contriving effectiveness. Content springs up in the mind of the auditor before his judgment has weighed the qualities of this art and pronounced them sufficing. The full stature of an actor born, and made, is evident, and the measure of his height is a question of kind, perhaps, but not of degree.

\* \* \*

In none of his Shakespearian personations is he less the Booth we know and less the Booth of photographs and of cuts in shop-windows than in Shylock. The dark eyes, the mournful mouth, the restrained, almost haunted expression—if one may attempt to define a certain peculiar, personal impression of which his face gives glimpses—are lost in the long-bearded, sordid Jew whose quickness and sensitiveness has

no possible native trait of softness or sensibility that has not hardened into a jealous watchfulness that waits to serve absorbing avarice and revenge.

It is shabby old Jew Booth presents to our eyes. He wears but one sign of wealth and power, a great ruby, which glows upon his clutching finger. He is a savage Shylock, repressed, not fawning, but there is little of the contained and stately, patient though revengeful sufferer who appeals directly to modern sensibilities as the representative and scapegoat of a persecuted race. The wrongs of his people only go so far in this picture as to authorize the dramatic action and to bring out Shylock's own hard and bitter spirit, apt for returning injury with injury, and ready to have it go hard but he shall 'better the instruction.'

\* \* \*

At his very first appearance a mounting of motives in Shylock's crafty mind is indicated in Mr. Booth's representation, of which all the rest of the play is merely an enlargement developed by the events that precipitate the Jew toward his defeated revenge.

The first conjecture of a possible plan shows blindly in his repetition of Antonio's name as the surety Bassanio offers him. Antonio is not to him as good a surety as another man of his wealth; that 'Antonio shall become bound' strikes his humor at once. And that though 'Antonio is a good man, yet his means are in supposition,' that his ventures are 'squandered abroad,' that 'ships are but boards, sailors but men,' that there be pirates, and 'perils of water, winds and rocks,'—the successive thought of all this is the second gleam of a possible purpose that animates the progress of the story. The third glimpse of how ready Shylock will be to avail himself of any advantage chance may yield him is unmistakably revealed in Booth's action of Shylock's first aside. Antonio comes, and the two Christian gentlemen meet and greet apart, while the Jew stands and describes the 'fawning publican,' and gives his reasons for hating him. In the midst of this speech these two lines stand out like pulses on an angry brow :

If I can *catch* him once upon the hip,  
I will *feed* FAT the ancient *grudge* I bear him.

The hand clutches, rigidly as a claw, at the word *catch*, and dashes its prey toward a devouring maw as the idea of *feeding fat* upon it glances into the expression.

Later, his triumph, that Antonio breaks his custom neither to 'lend nor borrow upon advantage,' calms him and leads him to a kind of speculation on the nature of usury, from which he is roused by Antonio's contemptuous hit of the devil's citing 'Scripture for his purpose.' Booth's face responds at once, and shows how this rankles,—again while the two Venetians are not heeding him,—and disposes him to launch out into that vehement summary of past slights now gratified by the fact that Antonio has come to him for help. The expression of all this is rounded out in these words, whose every accent, modulation, and pause, on Booth's skillful lips, are weighty with significance:—

What should I say to you? Should I not say  
 'Hath a *DOG money?* Is it possible .  
 A *CUR* can lend *three thousand ducats?*' Or  
 Shall I bend low and in a bondman's key,  
 With bated breath and whispering humbleness,  
 Say this :  
 'Fair sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last ;  
 You spurned me such a day ; another time  
 You call'd me dog ; and for these *COURTESIES*  
 I'll lend you thus much moneys?'—I. iii. 121.

No sooner does Antonio reply in defiance and bid him lend this money, not to his friend, but to his enemy, than Shylock's plan flowers, the climax of his purpose is reached, the horrible possibility of the power he will come to wield is realized in his thought and passes silently over his face like a flash of lightning. Then, directly he is ready to make the possibility feasible and plausible; his manner changes swiftly, and with such craft, that one scarcely need think Antonio utterly silly, as well as headlong, to seal his single bond to this chuckling man's 'merry sport,' but only an impetuous friend so reckless of so mean a thing as a Jewish usurer, and a powerful merchant so used to being truckled to if he but nod disdainfully, that he can be easily gulled by Shylock's show of friendliness, and go skipping

to his fate with the words which Shylock must take as the last touch of insult and insolence—

This Hebrew will turn Christian, he grows kind—

while Bassanio's better sense, which likes not 'fair terms and a villain's mind,' lets itself run to waste with mere protesting.

As for the play, as a whole, little good can be said of this representation. The company, perhaps, is a shade or two better than Mr. Booth's support for several years past has been, but the picture and expression of this comedy of ruth and laughter, full of rich contrasts, and of close-worked action whose every stroke drives it on to Belmont and to that matchless lady who is the inspiration of it all, is so much larger and sweeter than this garbled piece, bereft, moreover, as usual, of the fifth act, that it is hard to do Booth's part in it the justice it has a right to demand.

Yet it is a magical bit of acting in itself, which Mr. Booth gives in the Trial scene, during Portia's appeal to him for mercy, and more magical in the subtlety of its reflex power upon the pitifully inadequate characterization of Portia.

Portia, impersonating Dr. Bellario's representative has asked Antonio if he confessed the bond, and at his answer that he does, has turned to Shylock with her first alternative, 'Then must the Jew be merciful,' and on his inquiry, 'On what compulsion must I?' she goes closer to him and addresses her benignant plea for mercy to him especially. He stands square about, facing the audience, motionless, regardless it seems of her and her sweet words, waiting, merely, like one whose mind is long ago made up, for this flow of speech to run its course, patient of it, meanwhile, only so far as to refrain from stopping it, till it stop itself, and let the deeper current of his revenge have way. So he stands, stolid, his eyes closed, every muscle still, in a quietude as fixed as stone and as impenetrable. He does not attend, except to know the end, it seems at first, when suddenly it is borne in upon you that after all he is listening intently, as one would listen to a half-remembered strain of music calling from a long way off. He is not the less unmoved, but he seems for an instant less unmovable. That instant is thick with spiritual possibilities for

a settled will and an abused heart. The voice stops. There is a pause. Then Shylock stirs, shakes his head free from the spell, and in the same breath, decides—‘My deeds upon my head! I crave the *Law*.’

But in these words a just passed consideration of a contrary decision is implied. Wonderful dramatic art—wonderful Shakespeare! ‘Harsh Jew; can no prayers pierce thee?’—Gratiano had asked him just before Portia came, and Shylock, stooping to whet his knife upon his shoe, had answered—‘No, none that thou hast wit enough to make,’ with so much point in the retort that the audience had laughed. And a moment later Shakespeare does not let him go till he has given him a chance to hear one whose prayers have wit enough to pierce him. It is Booth’s crowning glory in this part that he does not let it go, either, without thus, by the lightest touch, revealing that this appeal to the best of ‘a damned inexecrable Jew’ has stirred him dimly within, and almost reached his case-hardened outside. C. P.

THE TAMING OF THE SHREW.—The revival of this play by Mr. Daly has scored a great success during the past month, far greater than his excellent presentation of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* last year, and, nightly, people crowd to see a performance in many respects admirable. It is seldom, to-day, that a chance is afforded of seeing a representation of this play which is in anyway complete, or does justice to its merits. David Garrick’s version, *Katharine and Petruchio*, presents only the main theme, and gives no chance for a display of the skillful arrangement of plot and counterplot for which the work is remarkable. The masterly handling of the several intrigues, of different nature but closely related, and the weaving and interweaving of incident which preserves the unity of the play, render it extremely difficult to give a partial version which will be in any degree satisfactory. We fear Mr. Daly’s long habit of adapting has led him to take a few unnecessary liberties with the text, omissions and changes which are not altogether improvements. It must be said, however, that, for the most part the alterations add to the smoothness of the action. That thorough harmony which always characterizes the work of Mr. Daly’s excellent company, together with a very elaborate and hand-

some stage setting, is the secret of its attraction. The play runs with the utmost smoothness, but individually there are numerous weaknesses. While we commend the conscientious efforts of the several actors, the symmetry of the whole performance, and the expense and pains to which Mr. Daly has put himself to insure its success, we are forced to say that there are members of his company who lack skill in handling Shakespeare language, and others have failed to fully grasp the nature of their characters. Mr. Skinner as Lucentio, while graceful always, does not show to advantage in Shakespeare, for his language does not appear as born of the thought, but as spoken lines; and even Mr. Drew, excellent as his portrayal of Petruchio is in some respects, renders an occasional line stiffly, and his performance of some scenes is extremely tame. We expect here the usual comment—'Mr. Drew's Petruchio is at any rate a gentleman.' This leads us to say that if Shakespeare's Petruchio, body and mind, should be lifted out of the past and placed in our nineteenth century society to play his pranks, we doubt very much his reception as a gentleman; while Mr. Drew does well as a portraiture of a mild—we might say nineteenth century Petruchio—as Shakespeare's Petruchio he is tame. Mr. Booth is frequently seen in *Katharine and Petruchio*, and has been this season, and he is too frequently criticized as offering too coarse a rendering, but a little thought will show that Mr. Booth manifests here as always his intelligent study of character. In the first place Garrick's very much garbled version, entitled *Katharine and Petruchio*, calls into play for the most part only the coarser and assumed side of Petruchio's character and hence does him little justice. This assumption of coarseness and roughness must be, however, borne out to the full, else we lose the whole sense and understanding of some scenes. Hence Mr. Booth's interpretation is correct. His is a Petruchio indeed to tame a shrew and one we can understand. If the coarseness of Petruchio's behavior jars on the over-refined sensibilities of some auditors, it is not Mr. Booth's fault. There, we say, is Petruchio and anything come short of that is tame. It is almost equal to asking for a refined interpretation of Falstaff. Miss Rehan's *Katharine* is also a little wanting in spirit, and allows herself to be tamed somewhat rapidly for one of her repute. The general uniformity of excellence

of the performance renders the above criticisms apparently severe but just nevertheless, for these two most prominent characters are extreme types and, falling a little short in the portrayal, leave unexplained the far fame of 'Kate the curst,' and the excessive fear of Hortensio who 'would not wed her for a mine of gold,' when simply a little boorishness wins the day. But on the other hand both characters being pitched in an equally lower key, the symmetry of the whole does not suffer, for if Katharine be less shrewish, Petruchio may be tamer. The induction is admirably rendered, particularly on the part of Mr. Gilbert, whose Christopher Sly displays his droll humor at its best. Of the other characters Mr. Lewis as Grumio is excellent, as he always is, and Mr. Bond is particularly noticeable for the easy and natural delivery of the lines of Tranio. Mr. Daly, influenced possibly by tradition, possibly by the necessity of providing for Mrs. Gilbert, has assigned her to the part of Curtis, although the eminent editors agree in considering Curtis a man. We have referred generally to the excellence of the setting, but cannot close without particular notice of the great beauty of scenery, costumes and grouping of the last scene—a really master work of art by Hoyt. On the whole it is an entirely enjoyable performance and well deserves its success.

New York.

W. D. M.

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*SHAKESPEARIAN RECREATIONS.*

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Unchain your spirits now with spelling charms.—*King Henry VI.*—

Most gratefully inscribed to Henry Irving, Shakespeare's great expounder.

I.

Sweet singer of the past, still oftenest sung!  
 Great bard, philosopher, and actor—all!  
 First dramatist of earth, whose fancy flung  
 O'er life a relish and o'er death a pall!  
 To thee we turn when weary of the din  
 And dire confusion of this sorry sphere  
 We seek to taste enjoyment without sin,  
 To smile at wit, with pathos shed a tear.



## II.

When lost in love—and who is not so cursed  
With mystic madness when the moon is high?—  
We challenge Romeo to do his worst  
At kneeling, ogling, heaving deepest sigh;  
Pleasant it is by proxy thus to woo  
While lolling lazily in cushioned chair,  
For then a suitor feels by far less blue  
And gentle Juliet is always fair.

## III.

If morbid and to vapors given o'er  
With Hamlet, scorning sleep, we haunt the night  
Instead of harrowing friends with bootless bore  
Until the foul fiend, routed, wings its flight;  
Or haply have a joke with jovial Puck,  
With sprightly Ariel soar above the cloud,  
Like Bottom please Titania if in luck,  
Or sup with Banquo in his bloody shroud.

## IV.

What forest is so free from insect sting  
As cool Ardenues where Rosalind abides,  
And wronged Orlando makes the welkin ring,  
And Jaques is bilions whatsoe'er betides?  
Delightful thus to revel in the shade  
With merry music 'neath the greenwood tree,  
To roam in fancy over grass and glade,  
And gaily chant a madrigal or glee.

## V.

If prone to humor, blatant Falstaff's lacked,  
The corpulent creator of rare fun,  
That arrant knave who never city sacked,  
Of sack sackful, too pursy e'en to run;  
Away on Gadshill Poins and Pistol shout  
For shillings good Dame Quickly's score to pay;  
Stout English Hal has given the Welsh the rout  
And conquering chanticleer crows loud to-day.

## VI.

If tragic, here the green-eyed monster hies  
From charnel caverns full of foul intent;  
Iago whispers, Desdemona dies,  
Othello falls upon his sword unbent:

Coriolanus, Roman to the bone,  
 With mad Mark Antony strides arm in arm,  
 While Cæsar stalks, imperial, alone,  
 By Brutus dogged to do him mortal harm.

## VII.

If jilted, brave the storm with aged Lear,  
 Or scoff with Benedick at womankind ;  
 With Timon snarl a covert cynic's sneer,  
 Or like the bland Malvolio go it blind ;  
 If reckless, doughty Don Armado slight,  
 Or romp with Jaquenetta on the green ;  
 With Philip Faulconbridge engage in fight,  
 Or on the fiery Hotspur vent our spleen.

## VIII.

If vengeful, scowling Gloucester has the grasp  
 To drag us bodily to Bosworth Field,  
 Or Shylock whets his knife (a common clasp)  
 And bids us up a pound of sirloin yield ;  
 With Wolsey moralize on weal and woe,  
 Or plot with red Macbeth to steal a crown  
 Try taming shrews with bold Petruchio,  
 Or chaff poor Touchstone, honest, motley clown.

## IX.

Manly Mercutio ! Sweet Cordelia chaste,  
 Thy virtues shed a sunshine in the mind !  
 Shorn of such beauty life were but a waste  
 For qualities like thine 'tis hard to find.  
 These images of Shakespeare are not forced,  
 In memory, gracious, grateful, are they pressed ;  
 As incense from a censer lightly tossed  
 They rain refulgence on the reader blest.

## X.

In scenes of sorrow thence fresh fountains spring  
 Of faith in frail humanity's great heart ;  
 In hours of happiness such balm they bring  
 As no Elysian nectar can impart.  
 That ideal realm is far more real than this  
 For it abides a boundless precious mine,  
 While ours with dreary trials, transient bliss,  
 Buds, blossoms, fruits, and falls, yet leaves no sign.

# Reviews.

Observations,  
Which with experimental seal doth warrant  
The tenour of my book.

—*Much Ado About Nothing*, IV, i, 167.

## THE AUTHORSHIP OF SHAKESPEARE.



JUDGE NATHANIEL HOLMES is not the author of the theory that Bacon wrote the plays attributed to Shakespeare, but he is its most conspicuous advocate and his work the most painstaking and complete summary of the Baconian argument. The latest edition of his book\* published nearly a year ago has been prevented, by one mischance or another, from receiving in these pages, the attention to which it was entitled. This however does not matter much, as the first edition was presented to the public twenty years ago. It has been reviewed again, and again, as the various editions have appeared and a summary of its contents is unnecessary for they are familiar to the entire class of Shakespeare readers. Its arguments may therefore be met point by point, without reproducing them.

To a close reader the most noticeable feature of Judge Holmes's book is the evidence which it bears on its face that its author had no confirmed faith in the theory which it advocates, nor in the reasons on which the theory is based. He nowhere asserts that more than a strong probability exists that the theory is founded on truth. In his 'theorem' published in Mr. Wyman's excellent *Bibliography of the Bacon-Shakespeare Controversy*, he says that his book 'undertakes to demonstrate' that Shakespeare did not and that Bacon did write the plays. It gives, he says, facts and circumstances 'which are strongly suggestive' of Bacon as the real author. 'It gives some extensive proof that Bacon was a poet,' and 'it gives some evidence that Bacon

\* *The Authorship of Shakespeare*. By Nathaniel Holmes. New and enlarged edition. In two vols. Crown 8vo; (\$4.00) Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin & Co.

was known to be the author by some of his contemporaries.' The volumes of the work are filled with similar conjectural arguments. On page 109 it is said that 'there is nothing remarkable in the fact that a barrister should be a poet'—as if the fact that a barrister might write poetry was proof that Bacon, a lawyer, did write the poetry of Shakespeare! On the next page we are told that 'we may safely imagine' Bacon's object in concealing the fact that he had written poetry and plays. But the truth is, that Bacon, did not conceal the fact that he had written poetry, nor that he had written masques and revels, which are a form of the drama. This certainly demolishes the entire flimsy fabric of inference and presumption based on the passage in Bacon's letter to Davis, relating to 'all concealed poets.' Bacon could not have referred to himself, for he was an avowed, not a concealed, poet. The Baconians also answer this argument themselves when, as one of their reasons for believing that Bacon wrote the plays, they allege that he was the author of poetry and of the light dramatic creations performed at the Court festivals. Of this more hereafter. 'We need not be surprised to learn,' 'it is easy to see,' 'there is nothing improbable in the supposition,' 'there is satisfactory evidence,' (without producing it), and so on to the end—scattered in lavish profusion on the successive pages of the book—are the forms of phraseology in which he clothes what he calls the 'circumstantial evidence' that is 'strongly suggestive' of the correctness of his conclusions.

The weakness of the Baconian theory in all its parts is not only that it rests solely on circumstantial evidence of this nebulous character, but that it rests on circumstantial evidence at all. The nature and availability of circumstantial evidence is well understood. It can be used to establish a conclusion when positive evidence of the facts is absent. But it cannot be used to disprove a fact established by positive evidence, nor to prove an allegation disproved by positive evidence. If a person is found with stolen money in his pockets it will go hard with him in case proof to convict the actual thief cannot be produced. But if there is credible, positive testimony to identify the real thief and to prove that he stole the money, he cannot be acquitted on the circumstances that in some way, by accident or conspiracy the

stolen money had been found on an innocent person. In the case of Shakespeare the direct evidence is abundant and unimpeachable. Ben Jonson, Francis Meres, Leonard Digges, the two actors Heminge and Condell, who published the 1623 edition of Shakespeare's works, these, to go no further, are direct, positive, unequivocal, witnesses of the highest credibility who testify that Shakespeare wrote the plays. Circumstantial evidence as voluminous as the subterfuges and fallacies of those who advocate the Baconian theory cannot cancel nor cloud with doubt a scintilla of this direct proof, nor the great fact it establishes.

But even if circumstantial evidence were available to prove the Baconian theory, that which is produced for the purpose is remarkable alone for its weakness. It is said that the dates when the plays were produced correspond to that portion of Bacon's life in which we can most easily suppose them to have been written by him, being the period of thirty-one years between the time of his coming to the bar, in 1582, and his elevation to the principal law office of the crown, in 1613. It is difficult to say in what terms this absurdity should be characterized. It is gross and palpable. Shakespeare was about the age of Bacon. The period described is that during which he also was in the prime of his powers—when his genius had arrived at its grand maturity and before its brightness had become dimmed by age. He was in daily sight of the world and all that it contained. The book of nature and of mankind was open to his clairvoyant vision. He was an actor and nurtured to the drama. He was an owner of theatres. He was as able and thrifty a man of business as he was gifted in literary capacity. He was profoundly interested in having his stage supplied with the best dramatic productions. It was a period when circumstances, his ambition, and even his necessities, called for the exercise of every power of his transcendent mind to sustain the business enterprises in which he had engaged. On the other hand, during this period Bacon was a studious, hard-working, mercenary lawyer, hunting for cases and fees, intriguing for political preferment, fighting ambitious rivals, occupied by pursuits in every way disconnected from the stage. If there is anything in circumstantial evidence on the

subject, it appears here to prove that Bacon did not write, and that Shakespeare did write the plays.

Again, on page 137 it is said 'there is nothing improbable in the supposition' that Bacon produced the plays 'for the edification of the Virgin Queen,' using for the purpose Shakespeare's theatre, 'which received the royal countenance and protection.' Whatever the 'improbabilities' of the case may be, it is far more probable that Shakespeare himself produced the plays in his own theatre, not only for the edification of the Virgin Queen, but for that of the profitable audiences that gathered to witness them.

On page 166, it is said that 'it is scarcely credible' that Ben Jonson should not have recognized Bacon's hand and genius in Shakespeare's plays. What shall be said to casuistry so feeble and so utterly unfounded as this? In many ways Ben Jonson says that Shakespeare wrote the plays. At intervals for twenty years after Shakespeare's death he reiterated his averment of the fact. He must have been the most prodigious liar and cheat in the history of literary crime if he told this story with damnable iteration, knowing all the time that Bacon was their author. But in making Ben Jonson an unconscious witness to the Baconian theory, the author of the work under review has at least introduced a new feature in the production of 'circumstantial evidence.' It is to first declare that a witness is a prodigy of craft and mendacity, and then to put him on the stand to prove the other side of the case.

As to the Baconian argument of 'parallelisms.' In most cases the alleged parallelisms are purely imaginary. In others they have but the faintest color of accidental similarity. In other cases they are mere commonplaces in use among all the authors of the age. In others they are such resemblances merely as might occur to contemplative minds, in pursuing such universal subjects of thought as the works of nature, the problems of life, the checkered contrariety of human vicissitudes, and the mystery of death. Most funeral sermons resemble each other in thought and language, but it would be as absurd to say that they were all produced by the same preacher who 'borrowed from himself' where inevitable resemblances occur between them, as to say that parallel, but shadowy lines of thought between

two great contemporary students of humanity and philosophy prove that the productions attributed to their different pens must have had but one and the same authorship.

In the section commencing on page 179 Judge Holmes gives the cause, or one of the causes, which he supposes made Bacon protect, as a dangerous or threatening secret, his alleged authorship of the Shakespearian plays. 'The low reputation of a play-writer in that age, and the mean condition of poor poets,' are said to have been the reasons why Bacon concealed his supposed authorship. The hypothesis is bad in every way. Play-writers, at least good play-writers, were not then held in low repute. Referring back again to page 137 it is there said that Shakespeare's theatres, for which, at least nominally Shakespeare provided the plays, were patronized and protected by royalty. One of the best authenticated of the Shakespearian traditions is to the effect that the *Merry Wives of Windsor* was written by command of Queen Elizabeth. Spenser, the poet, was a prime favorite of Elizabeth, and her uncommissioned laureate. Ben Jonson was so highly esteemed that the regular officer of poet laureate was created for his use, with a munificent salary, considering the value of money at that time. A generation after Shakespeare's death, when the frown of puritanism had driven the dramatic stage from England, Milton, the puritan poet, said of Shakespeare he,—

—so sepulchred in such pomp doth lie,  
That kings for such a tomb would wish to die.

Neither were poets, even 'poor poets,' in that age held in disrepute. Bacon himself wrote very poor poetry, and published it with ostentation. His rhymed paraphrase of the Psalms of David would, but for its devout spirit, be regarded as ridiculous travesty. Some other shambling verses are attributed to his pen. The list of accepted English poets contains none poorer than Bacon. Yet he rose to the highest official rank and honor. To say that he hid his suppositious authorship of the Shakespearian plays and poems because he was afraid that an avowal of the fact would impair his reputation and hinder his political preferment, is contrary to every fact and circumstance of the case.

Such an hypothesis is also ludicrously inconsistent with another portion, and an important portion, of the same argument. In this theory, as in Gonzalo's Commonwealth, 'the latter end forgets the beginning,' (*Tempest*, II, ii.) It is intimated on page 138 that Bacon produced the play of *Henry VIII.*, with its magnificent tribute to the dead Elizabeth and to her successor, James I., for the purpose of procuring royal favor and advancement in office. The demands of the Baconian theory are contradictory and inexorable. On one page it tells us that Bacon held himself in ambush as the author of the plays because if the fact were known, it would bring him into discredit and defeat the objects of his ambition. On another page it tells us that he wrote one of the plays and produced it on Shakespeare's stage, for the purpose of gaining credit with royalty, and to procure an office which his ambition coveted.

The additional argument that Bacon guarded his alleged authorship of the plays as a secret pregnant with danger to himself, while injecting into them separate scenes, 'parallelisms' from his avowed works, answers itself and covers the whole theory with confusion. Bacon's books were to be procured everywhere. Shakespeare's plays were mouthed to crowded audiences every night at the theatre. If there are parallel passages in the works and in the plays so evident as to betray to this generation the secret that their authorship belongs to the same person, its discovery by his contemporaries would have been inevitable. He had written a book on cyphers, and had explained their interpretation. He had hinted that there were other practicable forms of crypto-grammatic art. He had pointed out to every political rival, to every angry suitor whom he had betrayed for a bribe, to every enemy of whatever character, to every curious critic and ingenious gossip the plain way by which, if the shallow charade existed, it was to be explained. If there was a secret about the authorship of the plays it would have been 'unfolded' by those around him, and would not have been preserved from the search of scholars and critics of every degree for two hundred and forty years.

A crowning absurdity of the Baconian theory is the allegation that Shakespeare's lack of exalted birth, his want of extraordinary culture and the other disadvantages under which he labored in youth render



it improbable that he should have written the plays and poems bearing his name. A single illustration, or 'parallelism' will show the fragility of this part of the argument. The birth and early life of Abraham Lincoln were surrounded with greater obscurity than those of Shakespeare. The parentage of Shakespeare, the time and place of his birth, the period of his school attendance, the fact that he knew 'a little Latin and less Greek' are of established record. The exact time and place of Lincoln's birth are unknown. Whether he was born in lawful wedlock has been disputed. Where he went to school, or whether he went to school at all, is uncertain. He knew nothing of either Latin or Greek. At an age when Shakespeare had entered on the active business and literary pursuits of life in London, Lincoln was splitting rails for meagre day wages in the backwoods of Illinois.

Yet Lincoln, with not a tithe of Shakespeare's early advantages, became a greater lawyer, a greater orator, a greater statesman, and a more astute politician than Bacon, though, of course, not so great a scientist-philosopher. He probably never studied the Inductive Philosophy, but he was a more adroit and skilled inductive reasoner than Bacon. In view of this single instance no casuist can say that Shakespeare's obscured birth and lack of early training render it improbable that he produced the greatest works of dramatic genius in any literature. The history of human greatness since the beginning of time glows on every page with the names of those who, by the force of genius and the power of will, have risen from the lowliest estate to those towering heights on which the sun of fame sheds a flood of everlasting radiance.

But this process is as fatiguing to the mind as kicking against nothing is to the leg so employed. To expose all the fallacies and refute all the assumptions in this work would require a volume of equal or greater size, not that it is difficult to refute them, but because they are as numerous as they are petty. It can only be said that the book does not contain a particle of credible testimony, the record of an authenticated fact nor a plausible argument that casts a cloud on the title of Shakespeare to the authorship of his plays.

There is nothing in the history of the times in which Shakespeare lived, in the eulogies or satires of his contemporaries, in the traditions

of poetry and the stage, in the admitted events of his life, in his own works or the works of others, in what we know of him or do not know of him, that should lead an intelligent mind for a moment to believe that the legend of his authorship is fictitious in any degree or in any sense. There is infinitely less testimony, if less were possible, to prove that Bacon wrote the plays than there is to prove that Shakespeare did not write them. There is absolutely no evidence whatever to prove the truth of the Baconian theory, or of any other theory regarding the Shakespearian plays, except that which attributes their authorship to the illustrious poet of all time in whose name they stand.

E. A. CALKINS.

SHYLOCK, A RACE TYPE.—Take usurers individually and no one of them is that fierce merchant of Venice crying, ‘Go, Tubal, fee me an officer, bespeak him a fortnight before; I will have the heart of him if he forfeit.’ Take all the usurers together, from the crowd of them is evolved a total—Shylock. Sum up usury, you have Shylock. The metaphor of the people, who are never mistaken, confirms unawares the invention of the poet; and while Shakespeare makes Shylock, the popular tongue creates the bloodsucker. Shylock is the embodiment of Jewishness; he is also Judaism—that is to say, his whole nation, the high as well as the low, faith as well as fraud; and it is because he sums up a whole race, such as oppression has made it, that Shylock is great. The Jews are, however, right in saying that none of them—not even the mediæval Jew—is Shylock. . . . Yet—this is the marvel—the type lives. Were it but an abstraction, men would not recognize it, and would allow this shadow to go its way. . . . A lesson which is a man; a myth with a human face so plastic that it looks at you, and that its look is a mirror; a parable which nudges you; a symbol which cries out ‘Beware;’ an idea which is nerve, muscle and flesh—which has a heart to love, bowels to suffer, eyes to weep, and teeth to devour or to laugh; a psychical conception with the relief of actual fact, which, if it be pricked, bleeds red,—such is the type.—V. Hugo’s *Shakespeare*. Anderson’s Translation.

# Literary Notes.

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When comes your book forth?  
Upon the heels of my presentment, sir.

—*Timon of Athens*, I, i, 26.

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THE book Victor Hugo, in 1864, dedicated to England, as a glorification of her poet, and addressed to France, as the introduction to an Academy-ruled public, of 'Shakespeare without a muzzle,' or the *Œuvres Complètes de Shakespeare traduites par François Victor Hugo*, is the most bizarre yet glorious piece of literary hospitality that ever a great man of one nation offered another. His own son invites Shakespeare to France, and Hugo *Père* stands in the doorway nobly eager to do the honors. His open-handed welcome is fine, and his glance full of essential sympathy; though it does ignore details, and his every word reveal the polite host's misapprehensions of the every-day customs of the stranger's home life. The comparatively small number of pages devoted exclusively to Shakespeare's life are brim-full of just such wholesale inaccuracies as the enthusiastic tourist will make his talk of after a few days run in a new country. But when broader considerations are reached, then there are cosmopolitan ground principles where his enthusiasm stands him in good stead. In questions as to the nature of art, and of the great magicians of the ideal; in inspiring declarations of the office of power and beauty to serve the humblest uses of humanity and aid its progress; here, the great Frenchman is truly at home, and the sweep of his realization is prodigious. Who does he not invite to meet the English Dramatist, on the common ground of greatness? What, does he not talk of *Apropos de Shakespeare*. All art and all artists are included in the review.

Professor Anderson brings it all before us again in the very fair and effective translation he has just made;—(*William Shakespeare* by

Victor Hugo, trans. by Melville B. Anderson, 16 mo., pp. xxiv & 424 ; A. C. McClurg & Co. Chicago. 1887. \$2.00.)

No reader should go to this attractive volume to find in it information or guiding advice on Shakespeare, and though here and there are glimpses of insight that make their own mood and show their own fitness, these pages are in the main valuable for their very warm and human ideality. An ideality peculiarly modern, much more intense, and much more democratic in its reach, it may be noted, than was Shakespeare's. In his easy humoring of the populace, and in the fun he never scrupled to poke at the dullness or the stupid rages of the mob there is scarcely anything but a neutral foreshadowing, quite unprophetic, of the ardor for the people which is Hugo's creed.

A concise statement of the sources in legendary record of the Hamlet myth, and of all the traceable links that unite the story of the stalwart hero, who feigned madness for the sake of revenge, with the events of Danish history, together with the legend itself, as Saxo tells it, will be found in a well-printed little pamphlet, *The Legend of Hamlet*, 57 pp., issued by C. H. Kerr & Co., Chicago. (25 cts.) The authorities are not new to the special scholar, but the material for this account was freshly gathered by the late Mr. Hansen during his residence in Elsinore as U. S. Consul, and the account itself may be commended as giving the general reader in cheap and convenient form all the details of interest concerning the old story, which the great Dramatist used mainly as a point of departure.

Part II. of the *Digest Shakespeariana* prepared under the direction of the Shakespeare Society of New York is in press. The completed work will be soon ready for issue, and will form an Index, arranged alphabetically by topics, of English book and pamphlet publications, and magazine papers, on Shakespeare, covering, under certain rules of selection considered advisable, the period from the beginning of interest in the subject of Shakespeare's Life and Work to Jan. 1st, '87. (Paper, Part I, \$1.00 ; Part II, \$2.00—for review of Part I, see SHAKESPEARIANA, Sep. '86, p. 421.) The Society projects furthermore the issue during the year of an addenda of Ger-

man and Foreign Titles, carried to the same date; and thereafter of annual or semi-annual supplementary Indices to all Shakespearian matter appearing, whether English or Foreign. The scheme is large, but perhaps not so difficult of satisfactory attainment as it might at first seem, for the subject-classification of printed matter is a branch of the Science of the Library which the multiplication of books and magazines is pushing toward the summit of convenience and efficiency, so that in many cases the work is already roughly blocked out, and moreover, in the particular field of Shakespearian bibliography, aside from the old helps, and the recent select bibliography in the last volume of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, there is, notably, the excellent summary of contemporary titles, English and Foreign which Mr. Albert Cohn collects for the Weimar Shakespeare Gesellschaft, and for which the Shakespeare world at large cannot be too grateful. This work and project of the most active, at present, of the American Societies has chosen a most useful ground of exercise, and one in which it seems feasible to reach a serviceable measure of completeness.

Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps proposes to publish for private circulation a monograph on 'The Visits of Shakespeare's Company of Actors to the Provincial Cities and Towns of England,' illustrated by 'Extracts gathered from Corporate Records.'

The attention of students of English,—who do not yet know how strong a tool has been beaten into shape for their use, by the joint labor of two of the most accomplished of English Scholars in this Country,—should be called to the Dictionary of Anglo-Saxon words used in Poetry, issued by A. S. Barnes & Co., New York and Chicago. (Price \$3.00.) This work of Professor James A. Harrison, of the Washington and Lee University, and of Professor Wm. Baskervill, of the Vanderbilt University, should be welcome to every student of English to whom Grein's Lexicon is not so available as it would be if it were in English instead of German. Professors Baskervill and Harrison have based their work on Groschop's revise of Grein and have added several new features; an outline of Anglo-Saxon Grammar, and lists of irregular verbs.

The announcement of the publication of a new edition of Dr. Schmidt's Shakespeare-Lexicon should be of the greatest interest to every reader of Shakespeare who has not yet got that indispensable volume of reference on his handiest shelf, and who, moreover, may have found recently that it was not the easiest book to secure. This new issue of his learned work is, as Dr. Schmidt says in his preface, merely a re-impression. 'The first issue being stereotyped, there was scope only for correction of misprints and such small additions as room could be got for by expunging what seemed less important.'

Shakespeare-Lexicon: A Complete Dictionary of all the English words, phrases and constructions in the works of the poet, by Alexander Schmidt, LL.D., Second Edition., Vol. I, A-L, Vol. II, M-Z. Berlin: George Reimer; London: Williams & Norgate; New York: B. Westermann & Co. Paper, 1450 pp., (\$8.80).

A second and enlarged edition of Sir Philip Perring's *Hard Knots in Shakespeare* has been issued by Longmans, Green & Co.

*Old and Middle English*, by T. L. Kingston Oliphant, M.A., of Balliol College, published in 1878 by Macmillan & Co., is followed by *The New English* by the same author.

Illustrations of Shakespeare, from the stage side of his art, are always timely, and Mr. Austin Brereton knows how to collect material for such a volume of descriptive notes on the plays and players from Betterton to Irving, as is *Scenes and Characters of Shakespeare*, furnished with many engravings, and published by Cassell & Co., London and New York.

Shakespeare is the artist's inspirer as well as the actor's and the reader's, and the illustrations our portfolios and books owe to him are always receiving accessions. But no pictures can be more charming—in truth, scarcely any are as good, as redolent of force and life and meaning, of the intelligence and grace of characterization, as a series of photographs taken of Mr. Augustin Daly's Company in the very act, it seems, of playing *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. No better illustrations of this play need be looked for than these vivid photographs.

# Miscellany.

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To knit again

This scattered corn into one mutual sheaf.

—*Titus Andronicus*, V, iii, 70.

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AMONG the extra lectures delivered in the Columbia Library School of New York were two given Jan. 24th and 31st, by Appleton Morgan, President of the New York Shakespeare Society on 'Shakespeare in Libraries.'

Professor C. T. Winchester, of the Wesleyan University, delivered at Norwich, Conn., on the 8th of Feb., as the final lecture of a series which has awakened great interest, a lecture on '*A Midsummer Night's Dream*,' which was full both of quiet pleasantry and scholarly appreciation.

Professor W. M. Baskervill gives his classes at the Vanderbilt University one-half session, three hours a week almost exclusively to the study of Shakespeare. Shakespeare is offered as an elective also in genuine University work.

At the Montegale Summer Schools the Shakespeare class has been the most popular, and its 50 to 60 members attest the interest Shakespeare study excites in the educational centres of the South.

By the way, Professor Baskervill himself, in the department of *Literature and Education*, which he conducts in the Nashville *Daily American*, is disposed to claim that the attention given in the South to the study of English is greater than that given it in the East. And he notes that 'in Wulker's celebrated work, giving the names and the works of everyone who has done any work at all in Anglo-Saxon, the name of a Harvard or of a Yale graduate, so far as I have been able to determine, does not appear in the book.' The true study of

English, he continues, had its rise in Randolph Macon College, Va., and its author was Professor T. R. Price, at that time Professor of Greek there, now of Columbia College, New York.

Washington's Birthday for the year of 1887 was to have been celebrated in Chicago by a lecture, at the Central Music Hall, on 'American Politics,' but Mr. Lowell surprised the large audience assembled by shifting to Shakespeare for his subject.

On behalf of the Union League Club, Gen. Geo. W. Smith, introducing Mr. Lowell, explained that the address was the first of an annual series under the auspices of the club, the idea being to inaugurate, if possible, a revival of the general recognition of the birthday of Washington, and create among the people a higher political culture. Mr. Lowell on coming forward was greeted with prolonged applause.

Mr. Lowell said he had prepared an address on politics, but had concluded not to deliver it, as he would stand in a delicate position, the club being composed of members of both political parties, and he speaking by custom his mind pretty strongly. I shall therefore, Mr. Lowell continued, ask you to listen to a few words on Criticism and then apply them to the play of *Richard III.*, and to the absence of certain things in that play which seem to indicate to my mind it is not Shakespeare's work. It appears to me that an examination plainly indicates that it is a play which Shakespeare adapted to the stage, making additions, sometimes longer and sometimes shorter, and toward the end he either grew weary of his work or was pressed for time, and left the older author, whoever he was, pretty much to himself.

To say that the audience was greatly surprised is to put the situation mildly. A few people left the hall, but the address received from the majority of the audience close attention, and at its conclusion Mr. Lowell was loudly applauded.

The Chicago papers sharply criticise this criticism of Mr. Lowell's. The *Journal* says that the same line of reasoning might be used to prove that Mr. Lowell did not write the *Biglow Papers*. Professor David Swing, the noted Chicago liberal preacher, also publishes an article for the purpose of refuting Mr. Lowell's conclusions.



Mr. W. H. Wyman's valuable *Bibliography of the Shakespeare-Bacon Controversy* is almost out of print. Two different fires, in which a large part of the edition was destroyed, have contributed to this result, and the demand for the book has done the rest. We hope that Mr. Wyman will soon get out another edition.

ENGLISH ARTISTS AND SHAKESPEARE'S HEROINES.—A number of leading artists have just accepted commissions from the proprietors of the London *Graphic* to paint an important series of pictures, illustrating the chief female characters of Shakespeare. Each artist has, as far as was possible, selected his own subjects. Sir Frederick Leighton, P.R.A., will paint Desdemona; Sir J. E. Millais, R.A., has chosen Lady Macbeth. Mr. Luke Fildes, A.R.A., and Mr. H. Woods, A.R.A., from this intimate knowledge of and sympathy with everything Venetian, have chosen respectively Jessica and Portia. Ophelia falls to the lot of Mr. Marcus Stone, A.R.A., and Juliet to Mr. P. H. Caldron, R.A. Portia, wife of Brutus, is the choice of Mr. L. Alma-Tadema, R.A., whilst Mr. H. Herkomer, A.R.A. is fortunate in securing Titania.

ANECDOTE ATTRIBUTED TO SHAKESPEARE.—Shakespeare having purchased a quantity of wine, and being remiss in payment, the vintner, after repeated applications which gave him the opportunity of being charmed with his company and conversation, told him he would forgive him the debt provided he satisfactorily answered four interrogatories he would propose. To this Shakespeare readily enough consented, and attended the wine merchant on the following morning, when these four questions were made:—1. What pleases God best? 2. What pleases the Devil best? 3. What pleases the world best? And, 4. What pleases me best? To this Shakespeare immediately replied—

God is best pleas'd when men discard their sin;  
Satan's best pleas'd when they persist therein;  
The world's best pleas'd when you do sell good wine,  
And you're best pleas'd when I do pay for mine.

The merchant being thus fully answered, relinquished all claim to his bill against our Bard.—*Shakespeareana Memoranda*, 16th Oct., 1807, by R. B. Wheler, as given in *Stratford Herald*.

BROWNING ON SHAKESPEARIAN CONTROVERSIES.—In a recent catalogue of autographs is the following from Robert Browning to Mackay:—‘M’ch 2, ’81. My few shelves groan already under the dead weight of books about Shakespeare, mostly unexamined. I can not think of adding yours to the number. Besides, the very name of Shakespeare is made a terror to me by the people who just now are pelting each other under my nose, and calling themselves his disciples all the while!’

WALL STREET AND THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.—A friend in New York sends us the following, which is too good to keep out of print, though it may have been printed somewhere already:

I have just heard the following story, which I think you will appreciate. A young man doing business in Wall Street, and moving in at least what calls itself good society, was overheard saying to his sister: ‘Oh, there was the best play performed the other night. I can’t remember the name of it, or who wrote it, but it was all about an old Jew who wanted to get a pound of flesh. The heroine of the piece acted the part of judge. She was very handsome. I haven’t got the story all straight, but anyhow it was splendid! One of the best things I ever saw!’

Wall Street ought to be better posted on literature in its own special line.—MR. ROLFE’S *Shakespeariana* in *Literary World*.

SHAKESPEARIAN SLANG.—The Rochester *Post-Express* charges up another slang phrase to Shakespeare. It says:—

The 144th sonnet closes with this startling couplet:

Yet this shall I ne'er know, but live in doubt,  
Till my bad angel fire my good one out.

Shakespeare’s use of card table phrases is no less startling in its modern air, and, so far as is remembered, no one has called attention to Gloucester’s speech in 3 *Henry VI.*, v. i. 42:—

Alas! that Warwick had no more forecast,  
But, whiles he thought to steal the single ten,  
The king was slyly fingered from the deck.

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PART III.—PROLEGOMENA ORIGINALLY APPEARING  
IN THE FOLIO OF 1632.

ON WORTHY MASTER SHAKESPEARE  
AND HIS POEMS.



Mind reflecting ages past, whose cleere  
And equall surface can make things appeare  
Distant a Thousand years, and represent  
Them in their lively colours just extent.  
To out run hasty time, retrieve the fates,  
Rowle backe the heavens, blow ope the iron gates  
Of death and Lethe, where (confused) lye  
Great heapes of ruinous mortalitie.  
In that deepe duskie dungeon to discerne  
A royall Ghost from Churles; By art to learne  
The Physiognomie of shades, and give  
Them suddaine birth, wondring how oft they live.  
What story coldly tells, what *Poets* faine  
At second hand, and picture without braine  
Senseless and souleless showes. To give a Stage  
(Ample and true with life) voyce, action, age,  
As *Plato's* yeare and new Scene of the world  
Them unto us, or us to them had hurld.  
To raise our auncient Soveraignes from their herse,  
Make Kings his subjects, by exchanging Verse  
Enlive their pale trunkes, that the present age  
Joys in their joy, and trembles at their rage:  
Yet so to temper passion, that our eares  
Take pleasure in their paine; And eyes in teares  
Both weepe and smile; fearefull at plots so sad,  
Then laughing at our feare; abus'd, and glad  
To be abus'd, affected with that truth  
Which we perceive is false; pleas'd in that ruth  
At which we start; and by elaborate play  
Tortur'd and tickled; by a crab-like way  
Time past made pastime, and in ugly sort  
Disgorging up his ravaine for our sport——  
——while the *Plebian* Impe from lofty throne,  
Creates and rules a world, and workes upon  
Mankind by secret engines; Now to move  
A chilling pittie, then a rigorous love:  
To strike up and stroake down, both joy and ire;  
To steere th' affections; and by heavenly fire  
Mould us anew. Stolne from ourselves——

This and much more which cannot bee exprest,  
 But by himself, his tongue and his owne brest,  
 Was *Shakespeare's* freehold, which his cunning braine  
 Improv'd by favour of the nine fold traine.  
 The busking Muse, the Commicke Queene, the ground  
 And lowder tone of *Clio* ; nimble hand,  
 And nimbler foote of the melodious paire,  
 The Silver voyced Lady ; the most faire  
*Calliope*, whose speaking silence daunts.  
 And she whose prayse the heavenly body chants.

These joyntly woo'd him, envying one another  
 (Obey'd by all as Spouse, but lov'd as brother)  
 And wrought a curious robe of sable grave  
 Fresh greene, and pleasant yellow, red most brave,  
 And constant blew, rich purple, guiltless white  
 The lowly Russet, and the Scarlet bright ;  
 Branch't and embroydred like the painted Spring  
 Each leafe match't with a flower, and each string  
 Of golden wire, each line of silke ; there run  
*Italian* workes whose thred the Sisters spun ;  
 And there did sing, or seeme to sing, the choyce  
 Birds of a forraine note and various voyce.  
 Here hangs a mossey rocke ; there plays a faire  
 But chiding fountaine purled : Not the ayre  
 Nor cloudes nor thunder, but were living drawne  
 Not out of common Tiffany or Lawne.  
 But fine materialls, which the Muses know  
 And onely know the countries where they grow.

Now when they could no longer him enjoy  
 In mortall garments pent ; death may destroy  
 They say his body, but his verse shall live  
 And more than nature takes, our hands shall give.  
 In a lesse volume but more strongly bound  
*Shakespeare* shall breath and speake, with Laurell crown'd  
 Which never fades. Fed with Ambrosian meate  
 n a well-lyned vesture rich and neate.

So with this robe they cloath him, bid him weare it  
 For time shall never staine, nor envy teare it.

The friendly admirer of his  
 endowments,

I. M. S.

UPON THE EFFIGIES OF MY WORTHY  
FRIEND, THE AUTHOR MASTER WILLIAM  
SHAKESPEARE, AND HIS WORKS.



Spectator, this Lifes Shaddow is ; To see  
The truer image and a livelier he  
Turne Reader. But, observe his Comicke vaine,  
Laugh, and proceed next to a Tragicke straine,  
Then weepe ; So when thou find'st two contraries,  
Two different passions from thy rapt soul rise,  
Say, (who alone effect such wonders could)  
Rare *Shake-speare* to the life thou dost behold.

---

AN EPITAPH ON THE ADMIRABLE DRAMATICKE  
POET, W. SHAKESPEARE.



What neede my *Shakespeare* for his honour'd bones,  
The labour of an Age, in piled stones  
Or that his hallow'd Reliques should be hid  
Under a starre-ypointing Pyramid?  
Deare Sonne of Memory, great Heire of *Fame*,  
What needst thou such dull witnessse of thy Name?  
Thou in our wonder and astonishment  
Hast built thy selfe a lasting Monument :  
For whil'st to th' shame of slow-endavouring Art  
Thy easie numbers flow, and that each part,  
Hath from the leaves of thy unvalued Booke,  
Those Delphicke Lines with deepe Impression tooke  
Then thou our fancy of her selfe bereaving,  
Dost make us Marble with too much conceiving,  
And so Sepulcher'd in such pompe dost lie  
That Kings for such a Tombe would wish to die.

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