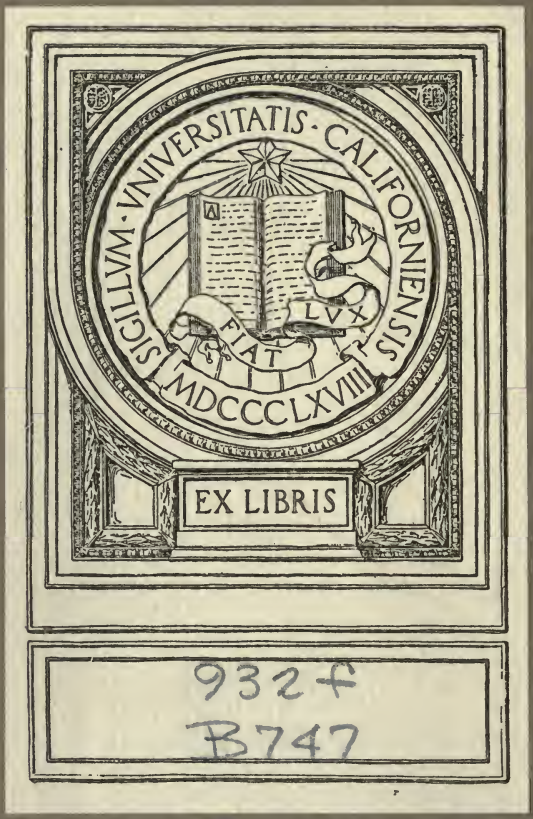
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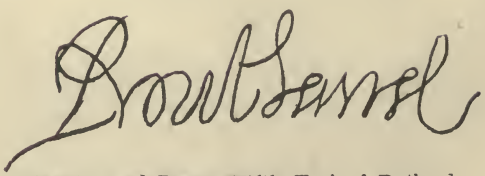

Signature of Roger, Fifth Earl of Rutland.

RUTLAND

A CHRONOLOGICALLY ARRANGED OUTLINE OF THE LIFE OF

ROGER MANNERS

FIFTH EARL OF RUTLAND

AUTHOR OF THE WORKS ISSUED IN FOLIO IN 1623 UNDER THE NOM DE PLUME

"SHAKE-SPEARE"

PROFUSELY ILLUSTRATED

ALSO A

DRAMA

SHOWING THE MODUS OPERANDI OF THE ENGAGEMENT OF

WILLIAM SHAXPER

OF STRATFORD-ON-AVON

(SECOND EDITION)

AS DUMMY AND STRAWMAN FOR THE EARL-AUTHOR
AMENDED AND GREATLY AUGMENTED

AND

THE BIRTH OF THE FOLIO

SHOWING HOW THE GREAT FOLIO OF 1623 CAME INTO EXISTENCE

BY

LEWIS F. BOSTELMANN

PUBLISHED BY THE
RUTLAND PUBLISHING COMPANY
NEW YORK
1911

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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

TO THE READER.

Since the issue of the first edition of "Rutland" two years ago, so many additional facts have been discovered unerringly pointing to the identity of Roger Manners, 5th Earl of Rutland, with the immortal "Shakepeare," that this second amended and augmented edition is not only justified but its publication at the present time is considered by the author as the fulfilment of a duty not only to the large and ever-growing number of Stratfordian controversialists, but also to the larger number of students of history and literature not yet so credulous as to accept the wilfull misstatements, or fall into the unpardonable errors, of the orthodox Stratfordian biographers of William Shakespeare of Stratford on Avon.

The Stratford swindle must be stopped; the fraudulent likeness of "Fallstaff-Shaksper" must be turned to the wall; the accumulation of humbuggery in the Stratford museums must be swept away and common sense must, by legislation, if necessary, compel ordinary decency by the suppression of the Stratfordian propagation of that colossal fraud. There is a surfeit of evidence and documentary proof that William Shaksper of Stratford on Avon did NOT write the Shake-spearian plays and poems, while there is the strongest evidence, supported by common sense and logic, that Roger Manners, 5th Earl of Rutland, did write these plays and poems using the nom de plume "Shake-Speare". Docu-

mentary evidence supporting this contention is in existence and will be produced when demanded by proper authority.

During the past quarter century all that was ever published and available regarding the Shake-Speare authorship controversy has been carefully read by the author with the result that the logical conclusion reached is that Roger Manners, 5th Earl of Rutland, wrote the plays, sonnets and poems known to the world as the works of Shakespeare; that William Shaksper or Shaxper of Stratford-on-Avon acted as dummy or straw-man for that unique genius of the ancient house of Manners.

The author has freely used whatever data was serviceable in the published books of all writers upon this subject and here makes due acknowledgment to any and all of these, who, on reading this book, discover traces of their own work.

The drama "Rutland" was written merely to show the *modus operandi* of the creation of the Shake-Speare mystery. Anachronisms in this drama were unavoidable and will be understood by readers familiar with the subject. Stratford-on-Avon has long since ceased to be the Mecca of lovers of literature acquainted with the Shake-Speareian era and that this book may be instrumental in forever setting at rest all controversy over this vexed question is the hope and wish of

THE AUTHOR.

New York, July, 1911.

POUR Y PARVENIR.

Pallas Athene, halt! Shake not thy Speare!
My secret fails, when keen analysis
Balks Ariels edict—(whispered in my ear)
"My name be buried where my body is"

(*Sonnet* 72.)

Thy wisdom, Pallas, shielded me from fame,
Three centuries have frayed my "noted weed"
"That every word doth almost tell my name"
"Showing their birth and where they did proceed."

(*Sonnet* 76.)

* * * *

"Here the Anthem doth commence:
Love and constancy is dead;
Phoenix and the turtle fled
In a mutual flame from hence."

Leaving no posterity:—
'Twas not their infirmity,
It was married chastity.

(*Phoenix and Turtle.*)

A Chronological Outline
of the life of
ROGER MANNERS, 5TH EARL OF RUTLAND
(1576————1612)
His Intimate Connection with the Works of
WILLIAM "SHAKE-SPEARE"
Also
The Publication of the Folio of 1623
and
Certain Events Subsequent to the Death of
Rutland Unerringly Pointing to the
MYSTERY OF HIS LIFE.

1576

Roger was born October 6th, 1576. When he reached the age of six years, he was placed under the instruction and guidance of able tutors; he was amply prepared to take his place in Queen's College, Cambridge, in March, 1588; his father having died February 21st of this year, Roger suc-

ceeded as 5th Earl of Rutland on that date.

On his journey to Cambridge, Rutland stopped at London to be presented to Queen Elizabeth, who complimented him upon his precocity and intelligence
1588 and praised the memory of his father, saying that she knew him as a good and honest man.

Rutland, being a minor, became a ward of the State under the immediate control of Lord Treasurer Burleigh who deputed his nephew, *Francis Bacon,* to act as guide, philosopher and friend to the young Earl.

At Cambridge, Rutland became intimate with Henry Wriothesly, Earl of Southampton, who was completing his studies at St. John's College, where he
1589 received his degree M.A. in June the following year. Rutland had been transferred from Queen's to Corpus Christi College to be under the direct supervision of John Jegon, afterwards Bishop of Norwich. Southampton was born on the same day of the month Rutland was born, *October* 6; but was three years Rutland's senior, having been born in 1573.

The unparalleled intimacy that grew out of their daily association led to a proposal that Southampton marry Rutland's sister, Lady Bridget Manners. Rutland was heart and soul for the match and when, in June, 1589, Southampton left Cambridge, the more than friendship now engendered was nursed and yet more strengthened by an almost uninterrupted correspondence and frequent visits between London and Cam-
1593 bridge. This intimacy continued until 1593, when Rutland sent to his friend the "first heir of his invention" *Venus* and *Adonis,* dedicating the poem to Southampton in words that bear the stamp of their intimacy as above related. This poem was signed "WILLIAM SHAKE-SPEARE" a nom de plume that Rutland had assumed as was later recognized by the College paper entitled the "Polimenteia" published by Legate. The nom de plume was evolved out of *Pallas Athene*—which name is defined in the L. & S. Latin Dictionary as

a *"Shaker or Brandisher of Spears."*

Southampton was so well pleased with his young friend's attempt at the Muses that he instructed their mutual friend, Francis Bacon, to have *Venus* and *Adonis* published forthwith. Bacon engaged one Richard Field, a Warwickshire man who had bought Vetrollier's Printing Establishment in the Blackfriars district in London. It was here that Bacon first met William Shaksper, who had also come from Warwickshire some time before.

The similarity of the names and Rutland's desire to maintain his secret authorship led to Bacon's proposing the engagement of this Shaksper to act as living pseudonym for Rutland—Shaksper was instructed to neither admit nor deny his connection with anything that Rutland might thereafter wish to publish.

The following year, Rutland repeated his first attempt to please his friend, Southampton, and dedicated to him his *"Rape of Lucrece"* in a letter, warmer
1594 if anything than that which accompanied his *"Venus and Adonis."* A careful reading of those two letters cannot fail to discover the source whence they sprang and the conditions and circumstances under which they were penned.

The *"Polimenteia,"* a Cambridge College Publication, was printed in 1595 and on the margin of one of the pages *"Sweet" "Shake-Speare"* — also
1595 *"Wanton Adonis"* — and *"Lucrece"* appear. While the *Nom de Plume "Shake-Speare"* was known at Cambridge, Rutland's connection with it remained a secret.

In December of this year Rutland received his M.A. degree.

Early in January of the following year, Rutland goes abroad to travel in France, Switzerland, Italy, Germany, etc.

1596 The celebrated Earl of Essex was Rutland's warm friend; he gave Rutland a long letter of advice and instructions for his guidance upon his

travels. (A draft of this letter has since been found in the Tenison Papers, Lambeth Palace, and is in the handwriting of Francis Bacon.)

This letter is important in establishing Rutland's intimate connection with all the acknowledged plays, dramas and poems of "Shake-Speare" as almost all the injunctions and advice with the philosophy governing them, were utilized word for word or by paraphrase here and there, throughout these monumental works.

Rutland also took with him on his travels a large bundle of old manuscripts left by his father, the 4th Earl of Rutland. Among these Mss. of about eighteen old plays, was the "Taming of A Shrew" which had been produced by the Earl of Pembroke's servants in the early nineties and was piratically printed for Peter Short in 1594. The scene of action in this old play was laid in *Athens;* but Rutland in re-writing it at *Padua* changed the location to that city, as we now have it, and he changed the title to "Taming of The Shrew."

In the Induction to this comedy, Rutland satirizes his dummy, Shakesper—who had applied for a Coat of Arms—dreaming that he was now a *"great lord"*—at least *gentleman.*

Rutland also inserted in this Induction a *"thumb print"* which furnishes irrefragable proof of his authorship of this comedy. He mentions Correggio's great painting of *Jupiter and Io,* which was at that time (1596), unknown in England. This painting Rutland had seen when visiting Leoni's palace at Milan, when on his journey to Padua. Rutland was so much impressed with this painting that he caused a sketch of it to be made, from which he afterwards had a fresco painted on the ceiling of the Elizabeth Salon in his ancestral Castle of Belvoir in Leicestershire, where Io may be admired to this day. On entering the University of Padua, Rutland made the acquaintance of two Scandinavian gentlemen who were studying there, named respectively Rosencrans and Guilderstern. We

can judge as to the character of these gentlemen from the use Rutland made of them in his Hamlet some years afterwards.

At Mantua Rutland visited Vincenzo Gonzago who had been the patron of Tasso then recently dead. From this nobleman Rutland got the tale "in choice Italian" which he afterwards called the "Mouse Trap" in the interlude in *"Hamlet."*

At the University, Rutland studied under Galileo Galelei, and also the then celebrated Jurist Ottonello Delcalzio whom he characterized in the "Merchant of Venice" as Portia's relative Bellario the great Padua Jurist. Rutland, about this time, fell seriously ill of a fever; but soon recovered, and traveled all over Italy while convalescing. At Mantua, he admired the works of Julio Romano, the great painter-sculptor whom he in after years mentions in his *"Winter's Tale."*

At Verona Rutland re-wrote the old Romeo and Juliet he found among his father's Mss., and fitted this drama to cover incidents in his friend Southampton's love affairs. He changed Romeo's family name *"Montecchi"* to *"Montague,"* which was Southampton's Mother's name. In fact, Rutland scattered *"thumb prints"* throughout all his works.

At Verona Rutland outlined the *"Two Gentlemen of Verona,"* accurately depicting Southampton's fickleness in his love affairs with Lady Vernon by means of the characters Proteus and Julia. Rutland also alludes to his own willingness to resign his lady to Southampton—a few years later. In this comedy Rutland also leaves an unmistakable "thumb print" in telling the Bandits in Act IV., Scene I., that he had sojourned in Italy some *"Sixteen Months"* which *was* the exact time Rutland remained in that Sunny Clime, and during which time he gathered data and local color for all his other Italian plays.

He returned to England the following year in time

to join Essex on his expedition to the Azores. A tempest scattered the fleet and Rutland's ship was
1597 driven back to shore. Before re-embarking Rutland was ordered to join the Duke of Northumberland at his headquarters in Holland. During these activities Rutland became familiar with nautical and army life, and his Pistols, Bardolphs and Parolles were undoubtedly sketched from nature.

Rutland returning from the Low Countries, entered Gray's Inn the next year, where he augmented his Knowledge of the Law, imbibed at Cambridge
1598 and Padua. At Gray's Inn Rutland was known as the *"clever student of Padua."* The justice of this appellation is sufficiently evidenced throughout Shake-Speare's works—especially as to law.

Up to this time Rutland had re-written or only amended from the old Mss. *"King Richard II.;" "King Richard III.;" "Romeo and Juliet;" "Loves Labor Lost;" "Taming of The Shrew"* and *"Two Gentlemen of Verona."*

The Earl of Essex had married the widow of Sir Philip Sidney in 1590, and both he and the Queen as well as all the members of the respective families were conspiring to marry Rutland to Lady Elizabeth Sidney, only child and daughter of the celebrated Sir Philip, and now the step-daughter of Essex. Rutland,
1599 however, did not wish to marry anybody, he was not thinking of marriage at all; but the forces against him proved too strong, and Rutland married the young lady early in March. He gives an exact review of this momentous episode in his life in his comedy of *"Much Ado About Nothing,"* wherein he again leaves an unerring finger mark by mentioning the *very* date of his engagement to marry in Act I., Scene I., where Don Pedro says, *"The sixth of July your loving friend Benedict."* It will be seen that this remark has nothing whatever to do with the play and was put in to serve as a "thumb mark" for future identification.

Immediately after the wedding Rutland *goes to the wars,* joining Essex on his ill-fated expedition to Ireland as Colonel of a Foot Regiment. This incident he describes in his comedy "All's Well that Ends Well," in which "Bertrand" leaves "Helena" in the same manner.

In his *"Much Ado About Nothing"* Rutland also describes Southampton's treatment of Lady Vernon, which episode in that fickle lord's life is further enlarged upon by Rutland in his *"Measure for Measure."*

History tells of Rutland's recall from Ireland and Southampton's sufferings under Queen Elizabeth's displeasure; and last but not least of poor Essex's disgrace. All three were back in London the latter part of 1599. Essex, under arrest in the Lord Keeper's House and Rutland and Southampton—to quote from a letter of Rowland White to Sir Robert Sidney—now among the Sidney papers—"Lords Rutland and Southampton come not to court; they spend all their time at the theatres;" another letter in the same bundle, written by Herbert Gray, a Kinsman of Sidney's, states that he "overheard the actor Shaksper complain to my lord Rutland of the difficulty in procuring good actors for the female parts." (Men actors played female parts in those days.)

Rutland received various distinguished honors from Queen Elizabeth and remains much at his castle in Leicestershire, occupied by amending old plays and writing new ones. Most of his plays were performed soon after he completed them; but in no instance did he allow them to be printed. Piratical publishers, however, by bribery or otherwise procured prompt book copies and rushed them into print. This accounts for the *"divers stolen and surreptitious quartos, maimed and deformed by frauds and stealths of injurious imposters that exposed them"* mentioned in Address to Readers prefacing the Folio of 1623.

1600

Rutland dared not protest, and dared not allow his

dummy, Shaksper, to do anything, as any move on their part would jeopardize their secret, which had to be maintained, as Rutland stated in his Sonnet No. 72:

"My name be buried where my body is."

It is beyond doubt that dummy Shaksper showed his thrift in supplying these pirate printers with copy. Rutland was helpless and could only vent his feelings in painting Shaksper's true character in the various plays he wrote. For instance:—The Stratford man's character is delineated in Falstaff, a cunning roysterer, jovial, dishonest, debauched and *fat.*

In Sir Toby Belch, a similar character, but more stupid.

In Christopher Sly, a tavern sot who wished to be a lord.

In Parolles, a creature who betrays his master.

In Autolicus, a knave without a conscience.

In Merchant of Venice, "Gratiano" as to garrulity and bonhommie.

In As You Like It, "Martext" describes the disreputable Shaksper marriage. (?)

In Tempest, "Stephano" portrays Shaksper to the life, especially when he tries to steal Prospero's cloak (authorship?).

By the end of 1600, Rutland had completed "King Henry IV." part 1 and part 2; "King Henry V.;" "Merchant of Venice;" "Titus Andronicus;" "Mid-Summer Night's Dream" (Rutland's own wedding rhapsodie); "Much Ado About Nothing;" "As You Like It;" "All's Well that Ends Well;" "Comedy of Errors" and "Measure for Measure."

The Earl of Essex had rebelled under the harsh treatment of Queen Elizabeth and had formed a conspiracy to free the court of his enemies. At the first alarm Rutland rushed to the side of his friend who now stood in danger of his life. On Saturday, February 7, 1601, Essex ordered the play of "King Richard II." to be performed at the Globe, and Rutland had inserted the dethronement scene for this especial

THE COUNTESS OF RUTLAND,
daughter of Sir Philip Sidney,
at
BELVOIR CASTLE.

1601 occasion. The performance took place but the conspirators were much disappointed to find that the populace were not stirred up as much as they had hoped, for when the Essex Cli que broke out in open revolt on Sunday, February 8th, they found the streets almost deserted. The upshot was—the Earl of Essex was beheaded; some other conspirators hanged; Southampton who was also in the fray, was sent to the Tower for life; two of Rutland's brothers got away almost without a scratch, but Rutland himself, thanks to Francis Bacon giving the Queen a hint as to the Authorship of "King Richard II.," was first fined £30,000; then all his ancestral estates were confiscated, and to crown all he was condemned to imprisonment in the Tower for life. This is what Rutland got for writing "King Richard II.;" *for being "Shake-Speare"* while his dummy Shaksper of Stratford-on-Avon was unmolested and drank his beer in peace in the "Liberty of the Clink," where he lodged.

Rutland had written many Sonnets in the past as testified to by Francis Meres in his Paladis Tamia published in 1598. These early Sonnets were in manuscript, circulating among private friends. Meres also mentions a number of plays which had at that time not been printed, these also he saw in the manuscript. Meres ascribes them to *"Shake-Speare."* It is here interesting to note that this Francis Meres was a brother-in-law of Resolute John Florio who acted as Southampton's literary man and private secretary. Rutland, when in London always made Drury House (Southampton's residence) his home. Rutland became intimate with the Resolute Secretary, John Florio, helped that Italian Language master in his translation of the Essays of Montaigne, and was in familiar intercourse with him. When Francis Meres visited his brother-in-law, Florio, the latter let him see some of these Sonnets and plays in order to have them mentioned in his forthcoming book "Paladis Tamia" (Wits Treasury); but Florio did not inform him as to Rutland's identity with *"Shake-*

Speare" for obvious reasons.

Now, Rutland, to while away tedious hours in his gloomy cell in the Tower, wrote and re-wrote his old Sonnets from memory. In them he apostrophized his "genius" as a lovely and beautiful youth.

He dared not write plays—and none were written during 1601 and 1603 while he was in the Tower.

In marrying Lady Sidney, Rutland got possession of all the books, letters and manuscripts of her celebrated father, Sir Philip. It has been generally admitted that all the Shake-Speareian Sonnets were so much in the Sidney spirit and style that Sir Philip had written like "Shake-Speare" even before "Shake-Speare" wrote at all. Some of the "Shake-Speareian" Sonnets are paraphrases of those written by Sidney to Stella. The "Black Lady" of the Sonnets is Rutland's erratic and tyrannical "Muse" that plays with his genius.

To think that these Sonnets (excepting a few) were written to a living person would brand Shake-Speare's character as licencious and obscene. One exception is No. 81 addressed to William Herbert, Earl of Pembrooke, who was Rutland's cousin and became his literary executor when Rutland died. The six last lines of this Sonnet No. 81 are written upon parchment and were pasted on the back of a portrait of Lord Pembroke, and this picture hangs to this day in the Double Cube Room of Wilton House, near Salisbury.

Rutland, prisoner in Tower, occupied as above set forth.

At this point it would be advisable to read these Sonnets from the point of view here outlined and to note particularly how perfectly natural and rational they are. Also note how Rutland continually harps upon death. Sudden death—as he afterwards continues to do in "Hamlet" and when these outlines of
1602 his career are concluded you will find that Rutland was true to his instinctive premonition by dying very suddenly, by suicide—driven thereto by persecution or by deliberately planned murder by one

who had every interest in getting Rutland out of the way. What adds to this mystery is the fact that Lady Rutland, at the age of only 27, died *suddenly* only a few days later.

The dark clouds that have been hovering over Rutland for the past two years are beginning to show a silver lining, perhaps a refraction from the shroud of Queen Elizabeth who was dying. On March 24th she expired and James of Scotland was at once notified. Before the new Sovereign started for London, he sent advance couriers to the Tower to liberate Southampton and Rutland and James requested the latter to proceed forthwith to his castle, Belvoir, and act as host to the King upon his arrival there enroute for London. On April 23rd, Rutland receives King James I. at Belvoir, who at once reinstates the young lord in honor and estates and also heaps further honors upon him. The King further, as a special mark of his regard appoints Rutland as his personal Ambassador to King Christian IV. of Denmark, to invest the Dansker King with the Order of the Garter and also to stand sponsor for King James at the Christening of a baby prince.

1603

The *old play of Hamlet* had been repeatedly performed before this time, but this year it was put in print by some piratical publisher who stated on the title page that he was acting for one *"John Trundell."* In the absence of any contemporary of that name in the literary circles of that day, it is more than likely that the publisher suspecting Rutland's Authorship, purposely made an *imperfect* anagram of *John Rutland,* 4th Earl of that name, Rutland's father. This pirate publisher did not dare go so far as to plainly spell the fictitious name *"Trundal"* which would make his allusion all too plain.

On June 28th Rutland sailed from Gravesend for Elsinore where he arrived on the 7th of July. Among the first to greet him at King Christian's Court were his old fellow students at Padua University—our old

familiars—Rosencrans and Guilderstern. He also was received by State Counsellor *Romelius* who in conjunction with the Swedish Representative named *Ploenies,* furnished Rutland with a new name for old *Carambis* of the first "Hamlet"—and Rutland in re-writing his Hamlet names this character *"Polonius."*

On July 14th, Rutland gave a banquet to King Christian and the Danish Court, and on the 28th King Christian escorted Rutland aboard his vessel. A terrific storm broke loose soon after leaving port and although the vessel was pointing for Gravesend the party were buffetted about on the North Sea for fourteen days, and finally were blown some 200 miles out of their course, landing at Scarboro on August 11th. On September 20th Rutland made his report to King James at Theobalds. The King was so delighted with Rutland's management of his Embassage that he invested him with the Garter and appointed him Lord Lieutenant of Lincoln County and other honorable posts. Rutland being no courtier in any sense of the word, retired from the court as soon as he could conveniently do so. He spent the next two months in retirement at Drury House in London, and at Cambridge, and to this leisure do we owe the perfect "Hamlet" we now have.

On December 2, 1603, King James visited the Earl of Pembroke at Wilton House near Salisbury, where Rutland joined the Court for a few days. Lady Pembroke had arranged to have Burbage's Company of Actors come to Wilton to perform *"As You Like It"* before the King. When the actors arrived at Wilton House the King's party had not yet returned from an excursion to Stonehenge. Lady Pembroke sent a messenger to her son, Lord Pembroke, with a letter stating that the players had arrived and that *"that man,* Shaksper" was with them. This letter is still in existence.

Lady Pembroke was the sister of the chivalrous Sir Philip Sidney and was herself considered to be about the acme of all that was refined and noble. She knew

ROGER MANNERS,
5th Earl of Rutland,
at
BELVOIR CASTLE.

that Shaksper was but her nephew Rutland's dummy and naturally evinced some curiosity to see him. The tone of her letter proves very well that she knew the Stratford man was *not* the great dramatist. She patronized poor authors, Massinger lived at Wilton House for some time, so did Samuel Daniel, and Rare Ben Jonson received a pension of £20 per annum from the Pembrokes. Under these circumstances it was altogether fitting that Lady Pembroke should refer to Shaksper as *"that man"* knowing him to be Rutland's dummy and his model for Falstaff and a number of other disreputable characters in his plays. Even Lady Southampton referred to Shaksper as "Falstaff" in a letter to her lord when he was in Ireland with Essex in 1599. Sir Toby Matthews also in a letter to Francis Bacon refers to Shaksper as Falstaff.

John Manningham in his diary, now in the British Musuem made entry of an anecdote discreditable to Shaksper, completing the entry by the words, *"Shaksper's name William."*

This Manningham was a Middle Temple barrister, a man about town and was certainly familiar with the Shake-Speareian plays that had appeared up to the date of his diary entry, which was March 13, 1601-2, but even *he* did not recognize the great dramatist in the disreputable actor Shaksper—the remark his "name William" proves that much.

Rutland spent almost the whole of the year 1604 in absolute retirement dividing his sojournings between Drury House, London, his apartments at Cam-
1604 bridge and his Castle of Belvoir in Leicestershire according to season and predelections as to change of scene and air. Lady Rutland was his constant companion, only remaining at home when her lord went upon some special mission or excursion.

The year 1605 was another span of almost uninterrupted leisure for Rutland, and, with the exception of a few weeks stay at Court and accompanying
1605 King James to Oxford, Rutland devoted all

of his leisure moments to amending old plays and planning and writing new ones.

By the end of 1605 Rutland had added to his list of plays the *"Merry Wives of Windsor,"* completed early in 1601, just before the Essex Revolt, and this play was piratically printed while Rutland was prisoner in the Tower in 1602; but was later on amended and augmented and in its new form was not again printed during Rutland's lifetime. The Folio of 1623 first brought the perfect *"Merry Wives"* to view.

"Hamlet" was the next play which Rutland completed after his visit to Elsinore when he grasped the opportunity of giving that perfect local color to his great tragedy.

This tragedy was chosen by the Elder Rutland as a conveyance for his well-founded suspicion that the Earl of Leicester, the Queen's favorite, had poisoned the First Earl of Essex, to marry the widow, the mother of the celebrated Essex, Rutland's friend and kinsman.

Rutland also completed his *"King Henry VIII."* during this year. This History was written principally to immortalize his never-to-be-forgotten friend, the (as Rutland thought) martyred Essex. If in this drama Robert, Second Earl of Essex were substituted for the Duke of Buckingham and Queen Elizabeth for King Henry it would be almost true to actual occurrences.

In Act I., Scene 2, King Henry speaks to the Queen of Buckingham's intellect and great qualifications, contrasting same with the blackness of his crime. He also speaks of his intimate associate, the Surveyor.

Just so spoke Queen Elizabeth of Essex and Francis Bacon after the revolt in 1601. Again in Act II., Scene 1, the fragmentary speech of Buckingham coming from his arraignment is a perfect paraphrase of Essex's remarks before execution. Thus did Rutland relieve the pressure upon his heart by writing down the sad memories that occasioned it.

"Troilus and Cressida" was also completed in 1605,

but was not printed until the pirate publisher got the manuscript from the "grand possessors" who were loth to part with it as is plainly stated in the preface to this nondescript production.

"Twelfth Night" or *"What You Will"* was also written this year and in it Rutland plays with the characters of Rare Ben Jonson and his whilom boon companion Shaksper. Sir Andrew Aguecheek (Ben Jonson) wants to possess Sir Toby Belch's (Shaksper) niece, Olivia, i. e., Shaksper's secret regarding his dummyship for Rutland.

Ben Jonson told Drummond of Hawthornden in 1619 that Rutland had given him to understand that his (Jonson's) presence at Lady Rutland's receptions to other literary men were not desired. Rutland suspected Ben was trying to unravel the mystery of his (Rutland's) authorship—which in all truth Ben was doing. In later years Jonson became convinced and it required a pension of £20 per annum to keep his mouth shut.

"Cymbeline" was another conveyance for Essex reminiscences and in the character of Belario he pictures Essex as having weaned Southampton (Guiderius) and himself (Rutland) as Aviragus from the Court of Queen Elizabeth. This fact is established by the true parallel of these incidents and by the character painting—portraits—of this inseparable triumvirate of true and never dying friendship.

"Timon of Athens" furnished Rutland with the frame work upon which he could fill in Essex's sad experiences, especially the ingratitude of erstwhile friends, Raleigh, Cecil, Howard and not to forget the "Et tu Brute" Francis Bacon, upon hearing whose speech of condemnation at his trial in 1601, Essex wrapped his mantle around him and prepared for the block. It was Francis Bacon who ground the axe that severed the head of Essex from the body.

The year 1606 gave Rutland eleven months of uninterrupted leisure for literary work. The month from July 15th to August 15th saw Rutland at Court.

King James had placed him in charge of the
1606 reception of King Christian IV. of Denmark. Rutland accompanied the King to Gravesend on the 16th and they were obliged to wait there until next day as the royal Dansker fleet was expected at any moment.

On the 17th, the fleet hove in sight and King James and Rutland took a boat to meet it. In due time they boarded the royal vessel and had breakfast. Later in the day Rutland gave both his royal friends a banquet at Deptford; but during the subsequent days of Christian's stay Rutland remained much in the background as the disgraceful carryings on at Court, drunken orgies participated in by certain Court ladies and other unmentionable occurrences were gall and wormwood to the soul of Rutland who sighed to get back to his life-work, his literary labors, his works of *"Shake-Speare."* Some days before King Christian departed for Denmark, Rutland had retired to Cambridge, his favorite workshop, and by the end of this year he added *"King John;" "Macbeth;" "Othello;"* and the triology of "King Henry VI." to his previous list of plays.

"King John" was written to commemorate his own participation with the *"Fireie voluntaries"* opposing papist dictation, his Azores expedition in 1597. In *"Macbeth"* Rutland felt he would give King James a pleasure in tracing his descent through *"Banquo."*

"Othello" was a fond recollection of his Venetian days and was completed from the sketch he there made; but in the triology of King Henry VI., Rutland gave full vent to his just family pride, for he was a Plantagenet, George Manners, Knight, having married a daughter of Anne St. Leger, sister of King Edward IV. and Richard III. This triology he found among the old Mss. his father left him entitled the "Contention of Lancaster and York," and the "True History of Richard, Duke of York."

As in "King Richard II." Rutland describes the

treason of Aumerle, Earl of Rutland, as a parallel to his own treason of 1601, and in "King Henry V." he eulogises this same Aumerle (now become Duke of York) so in the third part of "King Henry VI." he weeps bitter tears over the murder of that lovable young Rutland who was slain by Clifford at Sandal Castle in 1460, and the agony of the Duke of York when he was so brutally murdered after the battle of Wakefield in that same year.

The three great Roman tragedies were the product of the year 1607, and Rutland had ample leisure to give these masterpieces the full benefit of his genius.

1607 The history of Coriolanus furnished Rutland with an almost perfect parallel to Essex's bravery at Cadiz in 1596, where, like the Roman hero, the fearless Essex drove the rabble off the market place—single-handed—"*Alone I did it, boy!*" (Coriolanus.)

"Julius Caesar" rehearses the Essex conspiracy and while he assigns the character of "Cassius" to Essex, Rutland gave a likeness of himself in "Brutus." It must be remembered that although Rutland's love for Essex was sincere, he was not totally blind to that many-sided man's faults. Queen Elizabeth is the "Caesar" and although she was not slaughtered at the foot of Pompey's statue, it was believed by many people of those times and even by many good men of today that good Queen Bess was assisted over the border by a gentle (?) pressure on her royal windpipe March 24, 1603.

"Anthony and Cleopatra" gave Rutland data for an object lesson—showing how self will and stubbornness is nothing but vanity or false pride. Vanity was the Cleopatra that caused Essex to lose his head, as even Antony lost his. Essex was free to ask pardon of the Queen and was sure of preserving his life.

Had Anthony gone to Octavius, he too would have been forgiven. History, Philosophy and Logic vouch for this.

The harvest of Rutland's literary production during 1608 was rich in quality, if somewhat low in quantity. That masterpiece "King Lear" was completed this year, and as the stories of ancient Kings with three
1608 daughters acting under similar circumstances in like manner are told in various countries we must look to *Gloster, Edgar, Edmund* and *Kent* for Rutland's motive in devoting so much attention to this tragedy. The pearls of Philosophy scattered through this drama would seem to have furnished Rutland with ample motive for writing it; but *"injustice"* experienced by Essex—whose very memory haunted Rutland's brain—will, when all is told, be found to be at the root of all this drama contains. On April 23rd of this year, Rutland entertained King James at Belvoir, at which time his majesty knighted Rutland's younger brother, Oliver.

This incident was the only disturbance of Rutland's leisure, this year of which any record has thus far been discovered, and he found ample time to go over the work of previous years, besides amending the old *"Pericles"* which after several performances was piratically published in 1609, but was for some reason, not included in the Folio of 1623, and was not included in the subsequent editions of the Folio until that of 1664. The following year King James heaps further honors upon his recluse of Belvoir by appointing him Steward of the Honor of Bennington and Steward of Mansfield, County Notts, on June 24th.

This year, Rutland was greatly surprised by the publication of his Sonnets which one Thomas Thorpe had somehow gotten into his hands and which this
1609 pirate could fearlessly publish as there was no one to raise protest. Rutland dared not avow them and Shaksper, his dummy, knew nothing about them.

Troilus and Cressida also appeared in print early this year, with a preface proclaiming the *escape* this play had from the hands of certain *"grand possessors"*

who, evidently, in spite of all their grandeur dared make no protest. Knowing full well that *a protest* was the very thing the publishers were waiting for in order to solve the mystery as to the identity of *"Shake-Speare."*

Dividing his time between Belvoir, Cambridge, and London without, however, emerging from his seclusion wherever he might be, Rutland occupied himself with his literary work until early in June the following year, when he came to London at the express wish of King James, to assist at the installation of Prince Henry as Prince of Wales, on June 10th, after which ceremony, Rutland returned to Cambridge in order

1610 to devote himself to his books and literary work from which seclusion he did not emerge until the news of his sudden death astounded his family and intimate friends (two years later.) During this nineteen months of uninterrupted leisure, Rutland completed his drama, *"Winter's Tale,"* in which his

1611 caleidoscopic fancy revelled, skipping about from one era of the world's history to another, mingling fact and fancy and reviewing his work in the character of the Sicilian gentleman *"Rogero"* (the only instance throughout his works where Rutland actually gives the world his baptismal name, Roger). As Rutland so often expressed in his Sonnets, it seems that this year he had a premonition of death, and, acting upon this impulse he founded a Free School and also a Hospital in the village of Bottesford, in the vale of Belvoir, in Leicestershire, where most of his ancestors lie entombed. In spite of this example which Rutland set his dummy, William Shaksper of Stratford-on-Avon, to follow, as far as the latter's means would allow, the dun swan preferred to paint his own unmistakable likeness in the last thing he ever did, i. e., by interlining in his infamous "Will and Testament" the legacy to the poor woman, thought by all to be his wife, Ann Hathaway, of *his "second best bed and its furniture,"* which, by the way, Anna, knowing no *wedding* had ever bound her to the *actor, William Shaksper,* took shortly after

the latter's death to the habitation of one Richard James whom she *did* marry, and, as whose widow she died according to the Stratford Church records existing to this day.

Within the first half of this lamentable year lies buried the climax and termination of the life of Roger, 5th Earl of Rutland. What time he had to spare before his *"Ariel"* clamored for release, and before this representative of the *soul* of Rutland was to take flight, the master mind of past and present ages devoted to his *"Autobiography."* True to his determination, as expressed in his Sonnet No. 72 that *"My name be buried where my body is"* he threw a veil around this last and most wonderful of his works, *"The Tempest."*

1612

Rutland was not vindictive, and charitably hid the crimes of his brother, Francis, under the mask of *"Antonio."* This Francis was a rank papist; believed in witchcraft to the extent of burning some poor women alive, and brazingly announcing the fact upon his nausiatingly elaborate tomb at Bottesford, in imperishable marble. It was this Francis who first banished *"Prospero"* and finally drove his brother, Roger, directly or by indirection, to an untimely grave, where *"Miranda,"* in the duo-creation of his daughter, *Muse,* and wife followed him within a few days.

When "Prospero" had finished writing his memoirs, which, however, covered only the latter part of his life over which the heavy and dark clouds of melancholy had hovered so oppressingly, he "broke his staff" and "drowned his book," he released his "Ariel" and Roger of Rutland *died, suddenly* and *mysteriously,* on the 26th day of June, 1612, which fell upon a Friday, the blackest Friday in the World of Literature.

His body was conveyed from Cambridge secretly to Bottesford Church where his tomb had been hurriedly prepared for its reception. Its arrival had been timed for the *night*—July 20th—and the body was *secretly* laid

within the tomb. It was upon a *Monday* when the church would be closed for a week to allow time to remove all indications of interior disturbance, and it was not until two days after this mysterious burial, that informal funeral services were held at Belvoir Castle in the presence of the immediate family. Lady Rutland, his devoted wife, daughter of Sir Philip Sidney, expired within a few days, aged twenty-seven years, and was laid to rest beside her gifted husband. She also had died *suddenly,* and the mystery surrounding these two sad events point unerringly to suicide or murder, either of which conclusions would be sufficient to account for the position taken by the present (1911) representative of the Rutland Family, his refusal to move in the matter, and his statement in a letter to the writer that he felt disinclined to enter further into the subject—"regrets that he cannot move in the matter."

1613 In March, 1613, William Shaksper of Stratford-on-Avon, was living over a wigmaker's shop on Mugwell Street in London, and was involved in some unsavory litigation, records of which were recently discovered and printed in full in the *New Shakesperiana of recent issue* (1910).

On the 31st of this month, the ex-dummy, Shaksper, collected from Francis, Sixth Earl of Rutland (brother and successor of Roger) the sum of 44 shillings (about $85 of our money, today) balance owing the Stratford man as dummy. The entry in the account book of the Belvoir Steward says this payment was for writing a *"motto"* for the new Earl. (Was this motto "Silence is golden"?)

1623 The Great First Folio was published this year by the Pembroke brothers (cousins of Rutland) who employed Rare Ben Jonson to write the *"Dedication"* to themselves, as well as the *"Address to a Variety of Readers."* Also the lines to the composite "Figure" purporting to be a *likeness* of the *Author* and the seventy laudatory lines of undisguised ambiguity prefacing the Folio; but the unvarnished

astonishment expressed in the lines signed I. M. by the Earl of Montgomery, cousin of Rutland, points unerringly to Rutland's identity with *"Shake-Speare"* and to the sad and sudden end of that unapproachable genius. They commence:

"We *wondered* (Shakespeare) that thou *went'st so soon."*

Montgomery's wondering indicates that Rutland's death was *unexpected;* the word *"went'st"* would indicate *"going,"* deliberately leaving this existence and "so soon" points forcibly to an *early death*—the death of a young man at the prime of his life—36-37 years, the age Rutland attained but hardly applicable to the death of a man at 53 the age of dummy Shaksper of Stratford when that usurer drank himself to death.

On the 17th day of December, 1632, Francis, Sixth Earl of Rutland, died at an Inn at Bishop Stortford (Hertfordshire); many of his family were at his bedside before he passed away. The Belvoir Papers
1632 contain a memorandum written at the time by one of those present, purporting to be the words of *"A curious speech"* which the dying Earl made to his family. In view of past discoveries this "curious speech" could be cleared of considerable mystery. A guilty conscience often assumes the character of "vision" to a semi-delirious brain. Now, whether Francis had such a vision, either of the poor women he had burned as witches, or, more likely of his murdered brother Roger,—murdered by Roger's own hand, or by, or through, the machinations of Francis, the present representative of the Rutland Family, refuses to move in the unravelling of this tangled mystery although he could easily do so by producing the paper above referred to which *now is* among the Belvoir Papers. The present family evidently decline to redeem the pawned crown of "Shake-Speare" and put it upon the brow of its rightful owner and illustrious kinsman at the expense of a fancied blot upon their escutcheon. Lord knows it is sufficiently marred by the delightful Richard

FRANCIS MANNERS,
Brother and Successor
to Roger, 5th Earl of Rutland.

BELVOIR CASTLE
in Rutland's time.

of Gloster, whose sister, Anna, infused royal blood into the Rutland Family. In this prosaic age of Fact, Historical Discovery and Reason, especially when fighting under the banner of Truth, under the leadership of Logic, family pride should be laid aside or smothered and the entire world would thereby reap the benefit by the solution of a vexed problem and the establishment of the rightful chief of the realm of Literature.

During the year 1635, Cuthbert Burbage, brother of Richard Burbage, late proprietor of the Globe and Blackfriars theatres and fellow actor of William Shaksper, addressed a long petition to the Earl of
1635 Pembroke (Rutland's cousin) then Chamberlain to the Royal Household, pleading for increased liberties in their vocation as players. In this petition, Cuthbert mentions the fact that such *"deserving men* and *fellow actors* as his brother Richard and William Shaksper of Stratford had in years past been identified with the present Company of Actors."

Logic now compels the question "would it not have immeasurably strengthened this petition had Cuthbert Burbage mentioned the fact that this William Shaksper was the great Dramatist, the *"Swan of Avon,"* the *'Picture that thou see's here put'?"*

But Cuthbert could not, *dared not*—make such a break for the simple reason that (1), he had known this mediocre actor, William Shaksper of Stratford, for many years during which time he met and conversed with him almost daily, which consequent intimacy convinced Cuthbert and his fellow actors that he was *not a writer of anything,* but that he was a straw man for some unknown nobleman. (2),Cuthbert also knew that the Earl of Pembroke who had published the great Folio "Shake-Speare's" works in 1623, *knew very well* who the mysterious author was, and would have treated Cuthbert Burbage with deserved contempt, and have consigned the cherished petition to the scrap heap.

FURTHER UNDENIABLE FACTS ELUCIDATING THE FOREGOING OUTLINES.

1. *Southampton*: Much as has been said about this patron of literature, and of his giving William Shaksper of Stratford £1000, the plain, unvarnished Truth is, that *never* by *word* or *deed,* did this nobleman *ever recognize* this Stratford man. The story was at best, first circulated at third hand, and even then with considerable hesitation. *Some one* had told Nicholas Rowe, in 1708-1714 that there was *a tradition* that *William Davenant* had told *somebody* that at *some time* the Earl of Southampton had given Shaksper a thousand pounds, etc.

Now, this story has *not one* leg to stand upon, not one record, not one line or word of this or of Southampton's acknowledgment to Shaksper for alleged dedications by the latter of the two poems, *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece.*

The facts, however, are that Southampton, after Rutland's death, was so much preoccupied by Court and State matters that he was obliged to leave the labors occasioned by the publication of the First Folio in 1623 entirely to Rutland's literary executors, the Pembroke brothers, who, also being Rutland's cousins, were considered by Southampton to be entitled to that great honor. That Southampton insisted upon sharing the expense cannot be doubted by anyone having studied the character of this nobleman, who died the following year (1624), at Bergen-op-Zoom, of a fever brought on (as supposed at that time) by poison administered by agents of the villainous Duke of Buckingham, whose enmity the Earl of Southampton had provoked.

2. All the old plays which Rutland found among his father's Mss., and which were performed at all, were acted by the Earl of "Pembroke Servants," long before the Company, of which William Shaksper was a third

rate player, produced any of them.

The Pembroke and Rutland Families were closely related, and, only after Shaksper's engagement to act as dummy for Rutland, were any of the "Shake-Speareian " plays produced by the Burbage Company to which Shaksper belonged.

3. In the "Elizabeth Salon" at Belvoir Castle, *stand to this day,* occupying a prominent place at either end of the room, the oil painting portraits, full length and life size (painted by Van Somer in 1616) of Roger, 5th Earl of Rutland, and of Elizabeth, his wife. These portraits are elaborately framed and swing upon hinged easels. This would seem to prove the particular veneration of the Rutland Family for these two mysterious members of that ancient family, especially as all the other ancestors are represented in the Gallery as is customary in Great Houses of England and elsewhere.

There can be but little doubt that an injunction for maintaining the secret of the "Shake-Speare" identity was handed down to each succeeding head of the family ever since the Secret was a Secret.

4. Both father and son, the 4th and 5th Earls of Rutland (1550 to 1612) had devoted all the years of their mature life to literature, but not one line of their Mss. has as yet come to light. Lady Rutland had also written much as is testified to by Ben Jonson, Francis Beaumont, John Fletcher and others of the most eminent literary men of that time. These have written long poems to her literary genius and personal charms, also requiem epistles of many lines upon her sad and sudden death. Not one line of this brilliant writer's hand has yet been discovered unless we discover in the exquisite feminine touch given some of the female characters in the works of "Shake-Speare," the delicious charm of Lady Rutland's handiwork.

5. The writer knows where documentary evidence in support of the foregoing facts is *now* securely resting. This will be revealed at the proper time in the presence

of reliable persons with authority to get at and protect this testimony, and prevent same from becoming the natural prey to Stratfordian Humbugs and Vandals or Baconian Fanatics.

Of all the books written upon the subject of the Shake-Speare controversy, the "Shakespeare Problem Restated" by George G. Greenwood, M.P., recently issued, gives the most able, lucid and convincing argument. Mr. Greenwood proves beyond all cavil that the Stratford rustic Shaksper could not have written the plays and poems ascribed to Shake-Speare; but refrains from even suggesting the name of the mysterious author. It is more than gratifying to state in this place that the portrait of the real author drawn by Mr. Greenwood is a perfect likeness of the subject of this book—Roger Manners, 5th Earl of Rutland.

Canon Beeching's nimble feats in argumentative acrobatics, on the contrary, are a fair example of Stratfordian tactics in combatting Truth, Logic and Facts.

NOTEWORTHY OPINIONS RE SHAKSPER.

JOSEPH C. HART (U. S. Consul): "It is a fraud upon the world to thrust his surreptitious fame upon us."

LORD PENZANCE: "It is hard, nay, impossible, to believe that this uninstructed, untutored youth, as he came from Stratford, should have written these plays."

S. T. COLERIDGE: "What! Are we to have miracles in sport? Does God choose idiots by whom to convey divine truths to man?"

HENRY HALLAM: "Shakespeare is but a name. Licentious amours and drunken frolics don't tell us who wrote Lear."

LORD PALMERSTON: "Rejoiced in the 'explosion of (contra Stratford) the Shakespearian illusions.' "

ROBT. M. THEOBALD: "Would make it a case of law against Stratford claims and is sure of Shakspere being beaten."

WM. H. FURNESS (Father of the Variorum Editor): "I cannot bring Wm. Shaksper and the plays within a planetary distance of each other."

CHARLES DICKENS: "The life of Shakespeare is a fine mystery. I tremble every day that something should turn up."

GEO. JAMES: "To believe that Wm. Shakespeare (Stratford) wrote these (plays) is to violate every principle of common sense and be blind to truths plain as beacon lights for our guidance."

PROF. F. W. NEWMAN: "Are the devotees of Shakespeare determined to make him a miracle?"

JOHN BRIGHT, Statesman: "Any man who believes that Wm. Shaksper of Stratford wrote 'Hamlet' or 'Lear' is a fool!"

WALT WHITMAN: "I am firmly convinced that Shaksper of Stratford could not have been the author."

WM. THEOBALD: "Shakspere's name suggests a pseudonym and the actor would be very willing to act as sponsor for another man's plays."

JOSIAH P. QUINCY: "Deplores that anti-Stratfordians are not answered by the boomers of the Stratford deer-stealer." (They cannot answer without falling deeper and deeper into their error.)

HENRY LABOUCHERE: "Believes Shakspere fathered some one's plays."

FRANCES E. WILLARD: "Does not think that the Stratford man wrote the plays."

CARDINAL NEWMAN: "Is he much more than a name?"

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL: "Nobody believes any longer that immediate inspiration is possible in modern times."

A. F. GEFROERER, late Librarian at Stuttgardt, Germany: "It was impossible that the historical Shaksper should have composed the Shake-Speareian dramas."

CHAMBERS EDINBURGH JOURNAL (Mr. Jameson): "What was to hinder Shaksper * * * from *keeping a poet?*"

JOHN G. WHITTIER, Poet: "I am quite sure the man Shakspere (of Stratford) neither did or could"—write the plays.

R. W. EMERSON: "Shakespeare is a voice merely; who and what he was we know not. He (the Stratford man) led an obscure and profane life * * * I cannot marry this fact to his verse."

W. E. GLADSTONE (The Shakespeare Authorship Question): "I have always regarded your discussion as one perfectly serious and to be respected."

A. W. VON SCHLEGEL: "The life of the *man* Shakspere, 'a *blind,* extravagant error.' "

LORD BYRON: "What is really his * * * what is not?"

BENJ. DISRAELI: "Did he ever write a single or whole play? I doubt it."

DESCRIPTION OF

STRATFORD-ON-AVON

Partially Gleaned from EDWIN REED'S *Account*

When William Shaxper was born somewhere in or near Stratford-on-Avon, in Warwickshire (no record shows the date or place) the town of Stratford **1564** was an agglomeration of mud houses with thatched roofs, excepting one or two houses used for public purposes, which were built of stone and timber. The lanes, (there were no paved streets) were crude paths, almost impassible on account of the refuse, muck and houseslops which it was customary to deposit before the houses in the lane or road and allowed to accumulate there until the statutory limit was reached for size and time to remove some of it—never all. Especially in rainy weather was it almost impossible to use these so-called streets, and the records show that Shaxper's father allowed his particular addition to plague-enticing muck heaps to accumulate until compelled by a fine imposed by the "council" to remove it. Upon or near such a heap of filth was this William reared or raised and "educated." Around another such a heap was most of the courting done by bashful Anne Hathaway, aged twenty-six, when she allowed Willie age eighteen, to steal her coy heart.

The conditions then prevailing in Stratford had not materially changed when the renowned actor David Garrick visited this now well known pantheon of Deceit and Fraud in 1769. Even Shaxper's acquisition of New Place and the mythical improvements he made upon this "mansion" did not lift it or Stratford out of its habitual mire and homespun affection for dirt and filth.

The fact that Henrietta Maria, Queen of Charles I. made her headquarters at New Place while Cromwell was making Charlie dance a quickstep in the middle

shires speaks but little in favor of better conditions then prevailing, as above described, for two reasons: first, because there were no means or incentive for improvement, second, Henrietta Maria was accustomed to just such conditions—conditions she was fated to enjoy until her death in France owing to the loving neglect of her nephew, the Grand Monarche. It was about the middle of the eighteenth century that Shake-Speare idolators, in their fanaticism fell upon innocent and dirty Stratford with the fixed purpose to create a "birth-place" for the immortal bard, whom in their blindness they mixed up with the ex-butcher boy who was reared on some Henley Street Dunghill.

The commission visited three different "houses" neither one of which quite suited their purpose. A charitable townsman tore down one of these three mud huts,—which reduced the Commission's difficulty by thirty-three and one-third per cent. When the debate upon the authenticity of the remaining two houses brought out the fact that the rear window of one of them overlooked a cemetery the odds were as high as eight to two in its favor, owing to the legend that the "bard of our admiration" got his "atmosphere" for the Gravedigger scene in Hamlet, by quaffing his small beer when sitting at just that window at midnight, when he was in a contemplative mood. But when the backers and barkers for the Henley Street House produced an ancient ballad about the "devine Poet" especially visiting Westminster Church yard at midnight to work up enthusiasm for Ophelia's funeral, there was a panic and the odds changed to nine to one in favor of Henley Street in a twinkling and the house with the muck heap went under the wire with flying colors.

The house was now "a fact" and next step was to select the room in which the immortal bard was "born." As "below stairs" was a butcher-shop and "above-stairs" was the attic, the question of deciding upon "the very room in which the greatest of all poets was born" was soon settled when the most logical member of the Com-

mission clinched his argument with the fact that the attic was at least seven feet nearer heaven. All this happened about 205 years after the Stratford actor drank himself to death. The absence of records was convenient for the Commission as the "fact" which they had now established was not likely to suffer as did the "New Facts" of John Paine Collier's manufacture. This notorious forger, first "fabricated" "ancient" Mss. containing Shakespeare allusions and then carefully "planted" the same for future "accidental" discovery. Collier came to a cropper at the "Ingleby Hurdle."

When the Auctioneer knocked down the "new birthplace premises" to the highest bidder on September 16, 1847, he closed with a benediction and casting his eyes skyward through the thatched roof over the attic, cried with a quivering voice that all doubts as to the authenticity of the hallowed spot being the actual birthplace of the immortal bard were, to say the least, blasphemous and sacrilegious (fact!).

For the next sixty-three years these enthusiastic Stratfordian fanatics dug and delved for authentic mementoes—things that the heavenly poet wore, touched, lay or sat at, upon, or under—anything, in fact —even if it wasn't authentic—their saying so was stronger proof than any possible denial or refutation.

Ever since the great Jubilee in 1769, curiosity fakirs had been hard at work manufacturing and planting "authentic mementoes" for future discovery and sale to a happy congregation of gullible Stratfordian fanatics.

A Mrs. Hornby started the ball arolling soon after Garrick's visit to Stratford and her successors, duly sworn to the task of being loyal to the Fraud, succeeded in collecting quite a museum of "indisputable" relics of the great Bard. Sometime in the seventies of the past century, the notorious Yankee showman, P. T. Barnum, threatened to pack all this junk upon a steamer specially chartered for the purpose and transport the entire cargo, house and all to the land of

promise and enterprise—America. The howl that then went up was sublime, as Artemus Ward would have described it. Not until the Stratfordian Commission in turn, threatened to put up another birthplace, birthroom, relics and all, every bit as authentic as the one now shown to pilgrims—more so, if anything—did Barnum give up his praiseworthy scheme, fearing that a continued reduplication of authentic birthplaces and relics of the great bard might stale his bargain and lessen his honorable renown for humbuggery.

Barnum dealt only in honest, plain, everyday, humbug—the Stratford swindle had only lies and forgery to support it. Barnum knew the American public loved to be humbugged by a good joke; but that they would not stand for a downright lie—"Why," he is reported to have said, "I can get up a better birthplace and more authentic relics than they have over there without half trying, and my public would never call me a liar; but would applaud my enterprise and superior gall."

Even the ablest of Stratfordian manufacturers of fraudulent "Biographies of Shakespeare," Halliwell Phillipps, says: "Stratford-on-Avon * * * has become the seat of Shakespearean Charlatanry." Now, when thieves fall out, the truth is likely to assert itself.

Not to forget that arch prevaricator, Solomon Lazarus Levy (Sidney Lee), who *teaches* his students to accept the latest "planted" find of a *genuine* portrait of Shaxper—the original painting from which Droeshout made his Folio engraving. This "portrait" has been proven a "fraud" but Levy-Lee still holds to *his* fraud.

While there is not *one* authentic *relic* of actor Shaxper at Stratford, the present custodian still points with pride to a chair, oak chest, carved bedstead, iron deed box, sword, lantern, *card* and *dice* case, a table cloth embroidered by Queen Elizabeth, Anne Hathaway's shoes, *drinking* cup, writing table, gold ring (this ring was found near the church, 194 years after Shaxper's death in 1616!).

Mr. R. B. Wheeler, Historian of Stratford, denounced

all the above as absolute frauds (Hist. & Descript. Acct. Stratford, 1824). Even the Album which a gullible American presented to the *Musuem* in 1812 was at once filled with names of renowned men, kings, princes, noblemen, etc., who never were at Stratford. This fraudulent book sold at auction on June 4, 1896, for £130, 18/-! when the *Museum* was immediately supplied with another "authentic" book, also a school desk at which Shaxper "studied" (cards and dice?). See Washington Irving's Sketch Book. Richard Grant White was disgusted, and Joseph Skipsey, late custodian at Stratford Musuem left in disgust at the *fraud* his employers commanded him to put upon an innocent public. Skipsey died in 1903 and left a statement of his reason for leaving his position, ending: "the Museum was a stench in his nostrils."

ANN HATHAWAY COTTAGE.

Rowe was the first biographer of Shaxper who ever even mentions the person of Ann Hathaway—in 1709. The Hathaway Cottage was unknown in 1760, the Jubilee year—Garrick knew it not—but Ireland, Senior (father of the great forger, Ireland) had it pointed out to him by another "relic" manufacturer named Jordan in 1795 (213 years after Ann's *"courtship"*). Even Halliwell Phillipps denounces this fraud—cottage, room, window, bed, chair and all—even the old kinsman, who showed him around.

But Ward's Guide Book even at this late and enlightened day swears *to the authenticity of all these relics!*

As late as 1790 Chapel Lane, through which Shaxper walked to enter New Place, was the filthiest path in all Stratford where filth was the order of the day.

Most of the "relics" cut from the Mulberry tree which Shaxper was supposed to have planted, but never did—turned out to be made of "maple."

Such are the props upon which the Stratfordians hope to support their lies, forgeries and misrepresenta-

tions of facts—which "facts," if properly laid before the public would at once establish the truth of the whole matter. *The truth* is that Wiliam Shaxper, poacher, third class player, drinker and usurer never could read or write more than perhaps some disconnected words, and that he had not the capacity required to produce any "plays" whatever.

Professor Wallace, University of Nebraska, discovered another signature of this paltry buffoon (1910). The Stratford actor had signed a legal statement—*testimony*—merely as "Willin Shack"—the more such evidence discovered by Professor Wallace, the more jubilant these fanatic Stratfordians become—forgetting that every "find" thus far made by Wallace has further proved the case against this Shaxper and his "authorship of 'Shake-Speare's' works."

If the reader is interested in real relics of Shake-Speare let him go to Corpus Christi College, Cambridge; Wilton House near Salisbury; Bottesford in Leicestershire and Belvoir near Grantham—and he will find not only authentic portraits for which the great author actually posed, but letters, books, arms and sundry other "relics" which he personally handled and described in his plays between 1576 and 1612.

A PROPHECY FROM "WINTER'S TALE."

"Ha, ha! what a fool honesty is! and trust is his sworn brother, a very simple gentleman! I have sold all my trumpery; not a counterfeit stone, not a riband, glass, promander, brooch, table-book, ballad, knife, tape, glove, shoe-tie, bracelet, horn-ring to keep my pack from fasting; they throng who would buy first; as if my trinkets had been hallowed and brought a benediction to the buyer. * * * " *Antolycus.*

Here Rutland describes the character of his dummy, William Shaxper of Stratford-on-Avon, selling prompt-book copies of plays to pirate-publishers.

BELVOIR CASTLE

RUTLAND'S BIRTHPLACE

The castle that stood on the site of the present majestic pile, and in which Roger Manners, 5th Earl of Rutland, was born on October 6th, 1576, was founded by Robert de Todeni, standard bearer to William I, the Conquerer, who died in 1088, who left the estate much as it is to this date. The castle stood upon a abrupt elevation of red gritstone covered with grass and shrubbery varied into terraces.

Its location is so near to the junction of Leicestershire and Lincolnshire, that part of the estate lay in both counties in Roger's time.

After the death of Todeni, Belvoir fell to the Albeneius—(Albany), which prompted Rutland to give that name to the gentle husband of Goneril, the wicked daughter of King Lear. The Albanis greatly enlarged the fortress and left it as one of the strongest defences in that part of the Kingdom. Belvoir was granted to Ranulph, Earl of Chester, by King Henry II who found that this estate had been taken by the Crown in the reign of King Stephen; but Albani regained possession in 1155.

William de Albani III accompanied King Richard I, Coeur de Leon, to Palestine, and was one of the signatories at Runnemede when King John was forced to sign the Magna Charta. This Albani died in 1236 and his statue is now in the Church at Bottesford, a few miles from Belvoir.

Isabel de Albani married Robert de Ros, Baron Hamlake, who died in 1285.

Belvoir was in the possession of the Ros Family from that date. William Ros, fourth of that name, died in 1431. His infant son, Edmund, succeeded and later fought in the Wars of the Roses. Edmund was attainted and his entire estates parcelled out by King Edward IV in 1461. Belvoir falling to Hastings, the

notorious Court corruptionist. Ros fought to recover his castle and Hastings bringing a large force, detroyed it. Ros, however, recovered possession of the estate in 1481, and did much to repair the castle. He died in 1508, leaving all his estates to his three sisters. Belvoir fell to Elinore, the eldest, who married Sir Robert de Manneris, and from that date, the estate has remained in the Manners family to this date. George Manners, son of Sir Robert succeeded. He had married Anne St. Leger, daughter of Anne, sister of King Edward IV and Richard III.

From this union with the royal house of York, sprang Thomas, Lord Ross, who succeeded and was created First Earl of Rutland by King Henry VIII, the first man to be so distinguished outside of the Tudor blood royal. In fact, Lord Thomas was as much of the blood royal as was bluff King Hal.

The first Earl of Rutland now restored Belvoir, and his son, Henry, the 2nd Earl of Rutland, enlarged and beautified the Castle and grounds.

Lord Henry was, in 1556, appointed Captain General of the Forces and Commander of the Fleet by Queen Mary and Spanish Philip, in the French Campaign. Henry had a younger brother named John Manners, who eloped with the beautiful and celebrated Lady Dorothy Vernon, daughter of the irascible Sir George, "King of the Peak," master of Haddon Hall. This Dorothy is the ancestress of the present Manners Family and is celebrated in song and story. Dorothy's grandson, John, however, did not succeed until Henry's own sons had succeeded one after the other. Edward, the eldest, became 3rd Earl of Rutland. He was a profound lawyer and writer, and he held his title until 1587, when Belvoir succeeded to John Manners, Esq., his younger brother who was born in 1550.

This John Manners devoted his entire life to literature and to him the world owes its gratitude for launching his son Roger into the position of first place in the literature of the world, "Shake-Speare." John did not

enjoy his title as 4th Earl of Rutland for many days, for he died on February 21, 1588 in the 38th year of his age.

The history of Belvoir under Roger, 5th Earl of Rutland is given in detail in the life of this greatest of all men of genius, which will appear at an early date. When Roger died suddenly in 1612, his brother Francis, succeeded as 6th Earl. He had an only daughter, Catherine, who married the notorious Duke of Buckingham, who was stabbed by Felton at Portsmouth. Francis had also two sons; but they both died in infancy—"by practice and sorcery," as Lord Francis maintained. Upon the death of Francis in 1632, his younger brother, George, succeeded. He dying childless, his cousin, John Manners, the grandson of beautiful Dorothy Vernon, succeeded and from this John, the 8th Earl of Rutland, the present family of Manners, Dukes of Rutland, are descended in male line unbroken to the family of the present occupants of Belvoir.

John, the 8th Earl of Rutland, joined the parliamentarians and in 1642 Belvoir was attacked by Sir Gervase Lucas.

On August 5, 1645, King Charles I slept at the Castle, and in 1648, Lord John regained full possession of Belvoir. In 1649, Parliament ordered the Castle demolished; but indemnified Lord John in the sum of £1,500 ($60,000 of our money at the present time) as compensation, and Lord John resided at Haddon Hall until 1663, when he rebuilt Belvoir, adding many gardens. A model of this building made of wood, is at present in the Castle.

In 1801, the 5th Duke of Rutland erected another castle; but fire consumed the northeast and northwest fronts in 1816, and in the following year, Belvoir was rebuilt and completed in the majestic splendor in which we now behold it.

Passing through the Guard Room and up to the Earls

Gallery on the Main Story one sees the portraits of the eight Earls and that of the Duke of Buckingham. But, in the gorgeous Elizabeth Saloon, at either end stand the full length, life-size portraits of Roger, 5th Earl of Rutland and that of his Countess, the "Daughter of Sidney," enclosed in a heavy frame swung in a hinged easel. The particular "Rutland" who caused these two portraits to be placed there conspicuously—alone—knew it was the portrait of "Shake-Speare" and his "Muse."

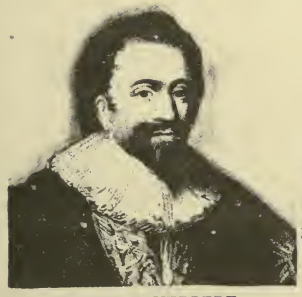
A LETTER WRITTEN BY "SHAKE-SPEARE"

"1601, May 16. At the Tower

The greatness of my misfortunes have made me more silent than I would have been, because I should be sorry to add my grief to my friends in the remembrance of my mishaps * * * that I should live to give cause of discomfort to my best friends and hazard a stain upon my house * * * my estate is like to be much meaner than it was, which, I thank God, I greatly esteem not. * * [To] my doom, which was Thirty thousand pounds, I humbly submit myself. * * * "

Thus wrote Roger Manners, 5th Earl of Rutland, to his uncle at Haddon Hall, after three months' incarceration in the Tower.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY.



WILLIAM HERBERT,
Earl of Penbroke.

PHILIP HERBERT,
Earl of Montgomery.

WILTON HOUSE,
Pembroke's seat.

BOTTESFORD

(RUTLAND'S TOMB)

The little village of Bottesford lies on the romantic river Deven, in the beautiful Vale of Belvoir, about four miles north of Belvoir Castle, close to the junction of Leicestershire, Lincoln and Notts. The actual point is called "Three Shire Bush." The ancient Church is of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, but was founded much earlier, antiquarians say two centuries or more, in the reign of Henry II., 1154-1189— A crocketed spire surmounts it to a height of about 220 feet. The octagonal pillars of the isle; heraldic shields, rich and curious carvings are very impressive.

In this church are the tombs of most of the ancestors of the Rutland family. The small statue of marble on the north wall was long regarded as that of the founder of Belvoir, Robert de Todeni, but in the latter years antiquarians have decided that this marble figure represents the chivalrous crusader, William de Albani III. who died in 1236.

There are the tombs of the de Ros Family with recumbent figures cut in marble, north of the altar.

The tomb of Thomas, the First Earl and his countess, entirely of alabaster, is in the chancel. His son and successor, Henry, is effigied, fully armoured, kneeling before an open book. Henry's tomb stands near with effigies of himself, wife and children. It is dated 1563.

Edward, the 3rd Earl, rests in a tomb in the Italian style to the south of the chancel. The recumbent figures beneath the arcades on the north wall are the effigies of that John Manners, who made "Shake-Speare" possible, and his countess, the mother of the master mind of all ages past and present, Roger Manners, 5th Earl of Rutland, whose modest tomb containing his remains and that of his countess, "the daughter of Sidney," stands near.

Now, "look upon this picture and on this:" First, the quiet grandeur of the tomb of the man who under the nom de plume "Shake-Speare" has instructed, enlightened and entertained the intellectual world for upwards of three centuries, then turn and behold the nauseatingly gorgeous conglomeration of outraged marble erected by that brother whom "Prospero" describes to "Miranda," that bigotted, weak but cruel Francis, the 6th earl, who came into the title somewhat earlier, by directly or indirectly hastening the death of his brother, Roger and his beautiful countess, daughter of the National poet and hero, Sir Philip Sidney.

This heap of marbled infamy is built into the southeast wall. There lies his marble effigy and that of his two wives, and those of his two baby boys who, he claimed were put to death by sorcery, and for which supposed crime, this miserable fanatic had two innocent women burnt at the stake, and published a pamphlet at the time recounting the crime of these poor, friendless women, and the horror of these executions!

This was not enough for this weakminded papist fanatic—no! He actually caused a large tablet to be erected recounting every detail of his ignorance, cruelty and scoundrelism in bold letters.

Was it a wonder "Prospero" released his Ariel so suddenly?

It was not necessary for Francis to stick a knife into his brother—no! to a mind as sensitive as that of the author of Hamlet and Lear, the greedy impatience that bulged from the hungry eyes of his brother Francis, could accomplish the purpose of this fratricide.

No wonder his family could not understand his words when he was dying in a tavern at Bishop-Stortford on December 17, 1632! Was the spirit of his brother hovering over his bed? Had "Prspero" sent his "Ariel" to witness the last hour of cruel Francis, and report? Was the dying man's message, that none standing by could understand, addressed to "Ariel"? Perhaps! The words Francis spoke were written down; but the cus-

todians of this telltale piece of paper prefer to withhold it. Why?

The modest tomb of Roger, 5th Earl of Rutland is however overshadowed by one far more impressive—in the village where stand the school and hospital endowed by the author of Hamlet and Lear, both in useful activity to this day—and oh, the irony of fate, in the school erected by "Shake-Speare"; the children are to this day taught to honor and love the pot-house "Swan" of Stratford, the hero of "the second best bed and its furniture"! But calmly lie the remains of Rutland-Shakes-Speare within the tomb, seeing all, but—*"the rest is silence."*

TO THE MEMORY OF M. W. SHAKESPEARE

"We wonder'd (Shakespeare) that thou went'st so soon
From the world's stage to the grave's tiring room.
We thought thee dead, but this thy printed worth
Tells thy spectators that thou went'st but forth
To enter with applause." * * * I. M.

The Earl of Montgomery thus apostrophised his cousin Roger, 5th Earl of Rutland, and had the lines printed in the Folio of 1623, which was dedicated to his brother, the Earl of Pembroke and himself.

Note Montgomery's *"wondered"* and *"went's"* and *"so soon"* as well as putting Rutland's nom de plume in parenthesis.

RANDOM NOTES.

Many "Shake-Speare" admirers say: "We have the works; what difference does it make who wrote them?"

Let Sir Francis Bacon make reply: "The inquiry of truth, which is the lovemaking or wooing of it; the knowledge of truth, which is the presence of it; the belief of truth, which is the enjoying of it—*is the sovereign good of human nature.*"

Schlegel says: "A meteor appears, disappears and leaves no trace behind. * * * Astronomers *will never rest* * * * for the sake of investigating."

Edmond Malone, the great Shakespeareian commentator, says: "There must have been another author preceding (Shaxper of Stratford) to account for the earlier plays, i. e., "Henry VI.," "John," etc." There was, and his name was John Manners, the father of Roger, 5th Earl of Rutland.

William Hazlitt, essayist, expressed the wish that he could convince himself that Shaxper of Stratford had been approached by some young nobleman who wished to see his plays performed without the necessity of revealing the fact that he was a dramatist.

Hazlitt was on the right track; had he known of Rutland his wish would have been gratified.

Dr. Jameson, in the Edinburgh Review, says Shaxper *"kept a poet."*

Dr. Jameson was right; the Stratford man did *"keep a poet,"* and was well paid for keeping him out of the limelight of publicity. The poet thus "kept" was Rutland.

Professor Halpin, of Dublin University, says that he has "proof" that "Shake-Speare" had attended several universities. Dr. Halpin knew that Rutland was a Cambridge and Oxford M. A., a Padua University man and a Gray's Inn member.

The Hon. John Bright is on record as saying that any one who believed Shaxper of Stratford to be the author of "Shake-Speare's Works," was a fool. Mr. Bright might have added that some Stratfordian biographers were criminally active to establish the dun "Swan" of Stratford as the author of these incomparable works, resorting to forgery, mutilation of records, "planting" spurious documents among ancient mss. archives, and lying, as has been proved against one Samuel Ireland, William Davenant, J. P. Collier and the late Halliwell Phillips. —Mr. Sidney Lee's career is not yet closed and one must wait until his ears grow still longer than they are, before we nail them to the pillory of public opinion for wilfully leading his fellowmen into error.

In Belvoir Castle now stands a full length portrait of the Earl of Southampton and also of his wife Elizabeth (Vernon), both painted by Cornelius Jansen. These paintings are near the entrance to the Regents Gallery.

In the Belvoir Library is a Moor's Head Ornament, "Othello" with Turban (dated 1510).

The library contains many of the old books Rutland used in his work, and there is one volume of miscellaneous letters from 1564 to 1661.

Carl Elze, in his lecture on the "Merchant of Venice," speaks of the importance of the lines where Shylock is sentenced to turn Christian and be baptized, a most horrible fate to any man of deep religious convictions, whatever they are. Neither a devout Catholic or Protestant would have penned these lines. This is another proof of Rutland's perfectly free stand in the matter of religion. His soul was too great, his vision too clear, and his thoughts too advanced to be tied to any sect or creed. The God of the Universe was good enough for him!

Sir William Davenant, who claimed Shaxper as father, regardless of his mother's reputation, in later life had his nose cut off by the angry spouse of a negro woman with whom Davenant was too intimate. This Davenant was the only source from which Shaxperites got the idea that Southampton had given Shaxper £1,000, and all that Davenant ever said was that he *"thought"* so. The same importance was given to Davenant's *"thought"* that King James had *"once"* written a letter—by his own hand—to Shaxper. Of course, *the letter was lost!*

Leonard Digges, who wrote the lines in the 1623 Folio, about the dissolution of the Stratford Monument, was, at the time a *"town wit"* who frequented Paul's Walk in hopes of picking up scraps or meeting opportunities of turning his wits into cash by any means then prevalent.

When Ben Jonson got Digges to write some lines eulogistic to be printed in the First Folio, the town wit wrote something quite different from the twenty-two lines now appearing there. These lines Jonson wrote himself and held back the trash Digges brought him. This is what Leonard Digges *did* write:

"Next nature only helped him, for look thorow,
This whole book, thou shalt find he doth not borrow
One phrase from Greeks nor Latines immitate;
Nor once from vulgar languages translate,
Nor plaguery-like from others glean,
Nor, begs he from each witty friend a scene;
To piece his acts with, all that he doth write
Is pure his own, plot, language exquisite."

Now we all know what ridiculous nonsense Digges wrote here and why Jonson refused to put such monstrous lies in the Folio, and the whole thing throws considerable light upon the hocus-pocus tactics pursued in the manufacture of the First Folio, which Pembroke and Montgomery, as executors of their cousin Rutland's literary remains felt necessary in order to preserve the great author's pseudonymity.

The Sixth Stanza of the Passionate Pilgrim, line 5:

"Dowland to thee is dear * * * "

John Dowland, 1536-1626, was a great "lutenist" and composer, and was at Cambridge in 1595 where Rutland received instructions from him in music—lute and virginal. Dowland was "Lutist" to King Christian IV. of Denmark from 1600 to 1604 and was intimate with Rutland when he was in Denmark in 1603 as Embassador for King James I.

Sir Robt. Sidney stood godfather for John Dowland's son, Robert, 1583-1641, and Robert dedicated his "Musical Banquet" to Sir Robert Sidney.

While many believe that Richard Barnfield wrote this sixth stanza and have included it in Barnfield's works, the facts above related showing Rutland's intimacy with Dowland point strongly to Rutland as the author. It makes very little difference either way, but it establishes Rutland's knowledge of Dowland and music, which latter qualification the Stratford boor has never been accused of possessing.

Francis Meres, 1565-1647, M. A. Cambridge, 1591, published his "Wits Treasury," in which he mentions several of "Shake-Speare's" works in 1598, was a fellow student of Rutland at Cambridge during 1588 when Rutland entered Queen's College until 1591 when Meres obtained his M. A. While he knew Rutland personally, he did not necessarily know that he was writing under the nom de plume of "Shake-Speare"; but as Meres was a brother-in-law of Resolute John Florio, who was Lord Southampton's secretary, we know where Meres saw the "sugared sonnets among private friends" alluded to in the "Wits Treasury."

Florio had dedicated his English-Italian Dictionary to Rutland and Southampton.

Philip Henslow's Diary ran from 1591 to 1609, and never once mentions William Shaxper's name. As these dates cover practically all of William Shaxper's activities in London, this omission is proof that the Stratford man was dummy for some moneyed man, and required no broker or manager to buy his plays. But Shaxper came to London poor and left it rich, and Henslow was the *only* man at that time to pay poets and dramatists money for their work!

In the Church at Bakewell, two miles from Haddon Hall in Derbyshire, there is the tomb of Roger Manners, a grandson of John Manners and Dorothy Vernon, and a cousin of Roger, 5th Earl of Rutland. He died in 1650.

Upon this tombstone is an inscription, which reads:

"By the Grace of God
I AM THAT I AM."

In Sonnet No. 121 written by Rutland-Shake-Speare in the Tower of London between 1601 and 1603 will be found this line quoted, i.e.:

"I AM THAT I AM."

In the middle room of the Beauchamp Tower, on the western wall of the Tower of London, and on the right of the window jamb, there is an inscription in Italian,

"O MISER HUOM CHE PENSI OD ESSER"

"O, UNHAPPY MAN THAT I THINK MYSELF TO BE."

As the thought here expressed runs through many of Rutland's Sonnets, and as he occupied this room, it is immaterial to us whether Rutland found the inscription there and that it thus influenced his muse, or that he cut those very words in the gray stones, himself.

Whichever way we look at this piece of evidence, strengthened by the fact that Rutland was an Italian scholar, this link connects him with the Sonnets. The records fail to show any Italian State prisoner in the Beauchamp Tower from beginning to date, although these records are very complete. Read Rutland's Sonnets: Nos. 25-28-29-30-34-37-43-50-66-98—these all breathe the spirit of that Italian inscription—*"I'm not so badly off—after all!"*

Samuel Taylor Coleridge says: (Biographia Literaria, 1817, Vol. II., p. 15) referring to Venus and Adonis:

"It is throughout as if a superior spirit, more intuitive, more intimately conscious, even than the characters themselves * * * were placing the whole before our view, himself, meanwhile unparticipating in the passions * * * Even then the great instinct which impelled the poet to the drama was secretly working in him. * * * The utter aloofness of the poet's own feelings from those of which he is at once the painter and analyst."

Coleridge also refers to Richard Ayton's Essays and Sketches of Character—a paper on hare hunting, in which Ayton graphically describes the movements of a hare running from a pursuing pack of hounds and Coleridge points out the perfect analogy of Ayton's description to Shake-Speares.

Note: Rutland was physically impotent—having been born with a physical defect in his genital organs. That would testify to the correctness of Coleridge's remarks upon the

poet's personal aloofness.

The Stratford man would know little or nothing about a hare hunt, with dogs especially, as a poacher must be secret—and snare or trap his game quietly at night.

The young Earl of Rutland did in his boyhood days often follow the hounds on hare and fox hunts—hence his correct description *"We regard the 'Venus and Adonis" as the production of a very young man.'* Rutland was going on eighteen years of age when he wrote it (1593). The Stratford man was 29-30—without any record of participation in *hunts* or classical learning, both of which came natural to Rutland who had his Ovid by heart at 16 and often followed the hounds before he wrote Venus and Adonis—the "first heir of his invention." (Other examples of youthful poets, Byron, Chatterton; writers, De Quincey.)

LOVE'S LABORS LOST: The "finished representation of colloquial excellence" in the beginning of the Fifth Act is an imitation of a passage in Sidney's "Arcadia," first printed in 1590.—*Note*: Rutland had all Sidney's Mss. while the Stratford man was holding horses. Coleridge speaks of this as a juvenile comedy. (Rutland was 22 in 1598 and the Stratford man was 34!) "The characters impersonated out of such people as a schoolboy's observation might supply."

Rutland was brought up amongst such characters as the noblemen and ladies described in the Comedy and had many opportunities to meet the meaner sort. Shaxper of Stratford never knew "high life" and the vocabulary used in court circles. Coleridge says, "written by one conversant with the Courts of Love," met with in the circles Rutland moved in—whereas the low actor from Stratford lived in the stews in the Liberty of the Clink!

Say thus: "Coleridge: 'The happy employment of Ancient Mythology' applies to the young classical student Rutland—and not to the ignorant Stratford actor."

George Chapman, who was "Shake-Speare's" chief contemporary speaks thus of the Stratford man whom he thought to be a dummy for some nobleman:

> "Wealth fawns on fools; virtues are meat for vices;
> Good gifts are often given to men past good
> And noblesse stoops sometimes beneath his blood."

In his preface to the translation of the Iliad, Chapman calls Shaxper a "windsucker" and a "kestrel" (a falcon kite) referring to the fraudulent Coat of Arms Shaxper was using upon which appears a Falcon holding a spear.

Between the years 1597 and 1601 appeared three anonymous comedies which were acted by the students of St. John's

College, Cambridge. The first was "Pilgrimage to Parnassus"; the second, "Return from Parnassus," in two parts and the third, "The Scourge of Simony." The first was acted in December, 1597; the second in December, 1601 and again in 1602 in January. These Comedies were printed in 1606 and from the inner evidence of allusions in the "Return from Parnassus" it is plain that this comedy was written by a collegian who at least believed in Shaksper's dummyship and perhaps knew more than we think about their collegians', Rutland's and Southampton's connection with the "Shake-Spearean plays and especially the poems "Venus and Adonis" and the "Rape of Lucrece."

The "Return from Parnassus" was again acted on November 2, 1602. Note this passage:

"Why, is't not strange to see a ragged clerk,
Some Stamel weaver, or some butcher's son
That scrubbed o'late within a sleeveless gown;
When the Commencement like a Morris dance,
Hath put a bell or two about his legs,
Created him a sweet clean gentleman.
How then he 'gins to follow fashions,
He, whose thin Sire dwells in a smoky roof
Must take tobacco and must wear a lock.
His thirsty dad drinks in a wooden bowl
But his sweet self is served in silver plate
His hungry Sire will scrape you twenty legs

* * * * *

Else with his tongue he'll thunderbolt the world
And shake each peasant by his deafman's ear."

* * * * *

While Rutland could hardly be accused of thus turning on his dummy Shaxper, it is more than probable that his fellow collegian and friend Southampton, who knew the facts, either gave the author of the "Parnassus" comedies a hint or that he wrote these lines himself.

Commentators refer with pride to the Shaxper allusions in the play "Return from Parnassus" and are blind to the fact that they ridicule the actor "Shaxper" and poke fun at their late fellow collegian Rutland—(Avon). In this play one actor says:

"How is it possible that such monkeys of the stage dare patronize men of learning (Venus and Adonis and Lucrece). Miserable world that honors such clowns and demeans real poets. Clods that recently arrived with a bundle on their shoulders, now ride horseback, in silk and velvet accompanied by a page. With verses born in other brains, they buy estates and Coats of Arms."

"With mouthing words that better wits have framed
They purchase lands, and now esquires are made."

In another play, called Ratsie's Ghost (1601), a character says: "When thou feelest thy purse well lined, buy thee some place of lordship in the Country, that, growing weary of playing, thy money may there bring thee to high dignity and reputation * * * for I have heard, indeed, of some that have gone to London very meanly, and have come in time to be exceeding wealthy."

When the pirate-publishers were beating the bush in their endeavor to drive "poor Wat," the mysterious author, from his burrow, they stated on the title page of the original Hamlet of 1603, that it was printed for a Mr. J. Trundell. As there was no contemporary publisher by that name we are justified in presuming that "Trundell" is an anagram of "Rutland." They merely disguised the last syllable "dal" by making it read "ell"; but they got the initial "J." correct, i. e. *John* Manners, *Fourth* Earl of Rutland.

In the following year, they tried the same game; but only on part of the edition of 1604, did they print upon the title page of the new "Hamlet," printed for Mr. N. Landure," which in the absence of any contemporary of that unique name can safely be accepted as an anagram of "Rutland," again, however, masking the final syllable "dure" by ending it with an "e" instead of a "t."

Other copies of this edition were printed for N. L. Nathaniel Ling, one of the pirate publishers. We do not put any faith whatever in acrostics or anagrams as evidence to establish Rutland's authorship, feeling that his genius was altogether too great to stoop to such a subterfuge to secretly immortalize his name. Rutland had much better methods for leaving his private indelible marks on all he wrote—as for instance, the Correggio painting of *Jupiter and Io,* in his Taming of the Shrew induction; his *"July 6th, your loving friend, Benedick"* in "Much Ado"; the *"16 months'* sojourn in Italy," in "Two Gentlemen of Verona," his *"Gobbo"* in "Merchant of Venice"; his "murder of Gonzaga" and "Bonny Sweet Robin" in "Hamlet" and in the paraphrases throughout his dramas of the famous letter Essex wrote him on going to travel in foreign parts, a letter that Shaxper of Stratford could not get hold of, or succeeding in this, could not even read, or understand if read to ceeding in this, could not even read, or understand if read to him. The above instances are only a few of the private marks Rutland stamped upon his writings; marks that it was impossible to forge by any one, and especially not by his dummy, the dun Swan of Stratford—the Falstaff—the Bottom—the Aguecheck and the low down wretches conforming to Shaxper's character throughout Rutland's plays.

Taming of the Shrew. In the induction, Scene 1, read:

"1st Player: I think 'twas Soto that your honor means."

In the 1623 Folio, instead of *"1st player"* we find *"Sinclo,"* the name of the actor playing that part which proves that this comedy was also printed in the Folio from a prompt book—and disproves Heminge and Condell's assertion that the Folio was printed from original Mss.

Merry Wives of Windsor, Act III, Scene 3, Enter Falstaff.

Falstaff: "Have I caught thee, my Heavenly Jewel?"

This is the first line of a song in Sir Philip Sidney's "Astrophel and Stella."—Rutland had all of Sidney's Mss., he being his son-in-law.

Measure for Measure: Act III, Scene 1.

Claudio: "That Prenzie, Angelo?"

Not one commentator to date has discovered the meaning of the word *"Prenzie,,* and "precice" has been generally adopted.

The word Rutland used is from the French word "preux." The Folio printers merely mistook his "u" for an "n." The word means a cavalierly hero, knight, chivalrous and honorable gentleman, heroic nobleman, etc., and Rutland wrote "PREUZIE," which is his meaning in that place.

Two Gentlemen of Verona: Act III, Scene 1.

Duke: "There is a lady, sir in *Milan* here."

The Folio has *"Verona"* and again in Act V, Scene 4.

Val. "Milan shall not behold thee," whereas the Folio has it "Verona." As this Comedy was written by Rutland while upon his excursions in Northern Italy, the error he made in not naming the cities correctly is natural, seeing that he wrote one scene in one city and another while at another city. Rutland never wasted time and wrote whenever opportunity and leisure offered.

Latest discoveries (1910) by Prof. Charles Wm. Wallace, University of Nebraska, prove that the Stratford actor, Shaxper lodged at a wigmaker's house on the corner of Silver and Mugwell (now Monkwell) Streets until after 1613. The wigmaker's name was Christopher Montjoye, whose daughter Mary married her father's apprentice, Stephen Belott, through Shaxper's connivance as is proved by records of a lawsuit found by Dr. Wallace.

The more the Stratfordites discover about Wm. Shaxper, actor, of Stratford on Avon, the more impossible do they make their task of fitting that ignorant boor into the cloak of the author of Hamlet or Lear!

Always something discreditable is found! While living at this wigmaker's house, Shaxper dunned the brother of Rutland for balance of wages due Shaxper as dummy, and received

forty-four (44) shillings per entry in account among Belvoir Mss.

Francis, 6th Earl, quarrels with Earl Montgomery, Roger's executor in Sept. 1612.

The King stops the quarrel.

Then Francis quarrels with Lord Davers, and again the quarrel was compromised.

Note: Montgomery and Davers were Roger's intimate friends and despised Francis who, in their opinion had caused Roger's death the preceding June.

Mrs. Pott, in her book, "The Promus of Bacon" says, "The supposition that Bacon and 'Shakespeare' may have borrowed from each other, will prove that they had close intercourse, or that they made specific critical study of each others writings, borrowing equally the same kind of things from each other, so that not only opinions and ideas, but similies, terms of expression and words which the one introduced, appeared shortly afterwards in the writings of the other, causing their style to alter definitely and in the same respects, and at the same time of their literary lives."

We have always contended that Bacon cribbed the brightest pearls of his philosophy from Rutland's manuscripts which he, as Rutland's "man of all work," saw before any other man.

Just as Newton first got his idea of the laws of gravitation from "Shakes-Speare" and Dr. Harvey his discovery of the circulation of the blood, that Rutland referred to years before Harvey thought of it.

One proof of Bacon's "cribbing" from Shakes-Speare is, irrefragable. In Troilus and Cressida, Hector says: Act II, Scene 2 (near end), "Paris and Troilus, you have both said well; and on the cause and question now in hand have gloz'd—but superficially; not much unlike young men, whom Aristotle thought unfit to hear *Moral philosophy*: * * "

Rutland wrote these lines in 1604, but Sir Francis Bacon in his "Advancement of Learning" 1605, makes the same reflection on the benefits accruing to young men from the study of *Moral* philosophy, accepting Rutland's purposely altered quotation from Aristotle who had said it was *Political* philosophy young men should avoid studying. Now, nothing could be plainer than that! Wherever Bacon's philosophy is sound, it will be found better expressed in "Shakes-Speare." Most of Bacon's own philosophy can be easily recognized by its leaning towards humbuggery. Wherever it is sound, it is the philosophy of Hamlet, Lear, Jacques and other offspring of the mind of Roger, 5th Earl of Rutland, student of Galileo Galilei, Gaspard Waser, Giordano Bruno, Francesco Boromeo, Van Helmont, Scaliger and *all the* other masterminds of and before his time.

Montaigne Rutland had at his finger ends, and he gave Resolute John Florio many useful hints in his masterful translation of the works of the great French Philosopher.

It was for that reason that Bacon later in life, engaged Latin scholars (Jonson among others), to translate all his works into Latin in order that in the retranslation into English or other modern languages the expressions bearing the unmistakable stamp and trademark of Rutland assume a different appearance without altering the sense.

Bacon, of course, gave out that his works should be immortalized in a language that never changes; be that as it may, the fact remains that all that is worth reading and remembering in the works of Sir Francis Bacon can be found in "Shake-Speare's" works in a much more agreeable garb.

All Bacon's life was a humbug and he never allowed an opportunity to slip by to impress this fact upon all who knew him in life and all who knew his works after he was dead.

In Spedding's, "Life of Sir Francis Bacon," he says, regarding resemblance of phrases, thoughts and metaphors found in Shakes-Speare's work and Bacon's,—"if these Essays of Bacon had been contained in *earlier* editions, than Shake-Speare's, it would have made him (Spedding) suspect Shake-Speare had read Bacon; but as Bacon's work was later, of course, *Shake-Speare could not have seen them.*"

We now know that anything contained in the works of Sir Francis Bacon, that is worth remembering is all to be found in Shake-Speare—and much better expressed—Bacon, as Rutland's "searcher and helper"—under pay, had, of course, first sight of Rutland's work.

Malone—the most prominent of the early Shaxper biographers, claims that there must have been *some author* before the Stratford Shaxper to account for the early plays.

There certainly was, and his name was John Manners, father of Rutland who found the Mss. of these early plays among his father's papers—after the death of his father in 1588.

Timon of Athens, was also one of these early plays and John Manner's version was based upon Lucian's Greek "Timon" which was not translated until many years after Rutland's time.

John Manners did not succeed his brother Edward as 4th Earl of Rutland, until a few months before he himself died, on Feb. 21, 1588, and had spent all his life in literary pursuits. But not a line of *his* works are extant except such as are represented by the early plays which Rutland amended, augmented and rewrote and are now known as part of the work of William Shake-Speare."

In "Timon" we trace Sophocles, Euripides, Plato, Virgil,

Ovid, Horace, Seneca, Tacitus and others, all of which works are still to be found in the Belvoir Library.

(*Note*: After most careful search *no books* were found under Shaxper's second best bed or elsewhere about his house or usual haunts!)

Rutland gives a good description of his brother Francis (who succeeded him) in the character of "Antonio," Act I, Scene 2, of "Tempest" fully set forth elsewhere. If this miserable man did not murder his brother, he surely drove him to suicide.

In 1618-19, this Francis, personally prosecuted the poor women whom he accused of killing his two sons by witchcraft and sorcery—and he had these women burned at the stake—and, further, gloried in this dastardly deed by inscribing the details of this crime on a tablet on his monument, erected before his death in the Bottesford Church where it may be read to this day. That he personally erected this tablet is proved by the omission of the date of his death in inscription—(February 20th, 1632).

This Francis had trouble with his cousin, the son of the Earl of Exeter, who claimed part of the Rutland Estates by virtue of descent from Edward, the 3rd Earl of Rutland.

King James decided against Lord Ross and sent him on a mission to Spain. From Spain, Ross went to Naples, and vowed he would not rest until he got satisfaction. Shortly after this he died of poison and this Francis, 6th Earl of Rutland was called upon to explain.

A writ of inquiry was issued against Lord Francis and the matter was smoothed over by giving his daughter, Catherine, to George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, to wife—a man whom Francis utterly despised as a low born scullion.

In view of the above it is conceivable how a noble minded man like our Rutland—Prospero—could be driven to let his "Ariel" have his liberty, when but thirty-six year's old. Rutland was no ordinary man,—he welcomed death when he felt his brother wished for it—; but from the deathbed of this Francis, comes an echo of "words" he uttered that none present could understand.

We can understand very well what they should have been if the dying man saw in his imagination the figure of his brother Roger at the foot of the bed—!

While it would seem hardly necessary to reiterate the fact that Sidney Lee author of a fabulistic "Life" of the Stratford player is utterly untrustworthy in his conclusions, it may be of interest to scholars to know that this Lee himself, establishes

ESSEX HOUSE,
where Rutland was arrested
on February 8, 1601.

the truth of his criminality in perverting facts. Lee's account of the Stratford poacher in the National Dictionary of Biography actually refutes statements in his "Life" of the ex-poacher and player. Lee's "scholarly habits" have led him into methods alike dishonest and dishonorable all of which seems to come natural to a creature who disowns the name his honored father gave him as well as the patronimic bestowed upon his family by a race that cannot but feel highly honored by the desertion of this soulless humbug. Under the respectable name of "Solomon Lazarus Levy" this euphonistic "Sidney Lee" failed with all his "Scholarly habits" to get his degree at Oxford and in his chagrin found it congenial employment to emulate the zeal of the arch forger *John Payne Collier* in the nefarious attempt to clothe the disreputable ex-poacher, William Shaxper of Stratford-on-Avon, with the incomparable genius of Shake-Speare.

A detailed analysis of this Sidney Lee's "Life of Shakespeare" will appear in a forthcoming biography of Roger Manners, 5th Earl of Rutland.

BEN JONSON'S EPIGRAM TO THE HONORED COUNTESS OF RUTLAND

The wisdom, madam, of your private life,
Wherewith this while you live a widowed wife.
And the right ways you take unto the right
To conquer rumor and triumph on spite
Not only shunning by your act to do
Aught that is ill, but the suspicion too,
Is of so brave example, as he were
No friend to virtue, could be silent here;
The rather when the vices of the time
Are grown so fruitful and false pleasures climb
By all oblique degrees, that killing height
From whence they fall, cast down with their own weight.
And though all praise bring nothing to your name
Who (herein studying conscience and not fame)
Are in yourself rewarded; yet 'twill be
A cheerful work to all good eyes to see
Among the daily ruins that fall foul
Of state, of fame, of body and of soul,
So great a virtue, stand upright to view,
As makes Penelope's old fable true.
Whil'st your Ulysses hath ta'en leave to go
Countries and climes, manners and men to know.
Only your tune you better entertain,
Than the great Homer's wit for her could feign;
For you admit no company but good
And when you want those friends, or near in blood,
Or your allies, you make your books your friends,

And study them unto the noblest ends.
Searching for knowledge, and to keep your mind
The same it was inspired, rich and refined.
These graces, when the rest of ladies view,
Not boasted in your life, but practised true,
As they are hard for them to make their own,
So are they profitable to be known:
For when they find so many meet in one,
It will be shame for them if they have none.

Ben Jonson's Epigram on Rutland after the Earl had objected to Ben's prowling around.

"To one that desires me not to name him:

"Be safe, nor fear thyself so good a fame
That any way my book shall speak thy name
For, if thou shame ranked with my friends to go
I'm more ashamed to have thee thought my foe."

LINES TO WILLIAM, EARL OF PEMBROKE.

By Ben Jonson.

"I do but name thee Pembroke, and I find
It is an epigram on all mankind
Against the bad, but of, and to the good
Both which are asked, to have thee understood;
Nor could the age have missed thee in this strife
Of vice and virtue wherein all great life
Almost is exercised and scarce one knows
To which, yet of the sides himself he owes.
They follow virtue for reward today;
Tomorrow vice, if she give better pay
And are so good, and bad, just at a price,
As nothing else discerns the virtue or vice.
But thou, whose noblesse keeps one stature still,
And one true posture, though besieged with ill
Of what ambition, faction, pride can raise;
Whose life even they that envy it, must praise;
That art so reverenced, as thy coming in,
But in the view doth interrupt their sin;
Thou must draw more: and they that hope to see
The commonwealth still safe, must study thee."

WILLIAM DRUMMOND'S OPINION OF BEN JONSON WHO VISITED THE SCOTCH POET AT HAWTHORNDEN IN 1619.

January 19, 1619.

"He (Jonson) is a great lover and praiser of himself; a contemner and scorner of others; given rather to lose a friend than a jest; jealous of every word and action of those about him (especially after drink, which is one of the elements in which he

liveth) a dissembler of ill parts which reign in him; a bragger of some good that he wanteth; thinketh nothing well but what either he himself, or some of his friends and countrymen hath said or done. * * * "

This certificate of character can be safely used, as an exhibit in a case at law involving Jonson's real sentiments in respect to his pothouse companion Shaxper, as expressed in his "Discoveries" and his poem prefacing the First Folio—also his remarks to Drummond as recorded by the poet of Hawthornden.

William Dethick, the Garter King at Arms was suspended for crookedness in office—one case was where he allowed a plasterer named Daukin to sport a coat of arms, another was John Shaksper's notorious fraud managed by William, his son.

When Essex was being arrested on February 8, 1601, Dethick was acting as "herald" and Essex ignored him. This was urged against Essex on his trial and he replied, "I saw no 'herald' but that branded fellow whom I took for no 'herald.' "

Contemporary Statesmen agree that the remark made by Essex about the Queen that she was as "crooked without as within," was the real cause of Elizabeth's anger against her former lover. What Essex really said, Rutland reproduces in Act IV, Scene 1, of the "Tempest."

"*Prospero*: And as with age, his body uglier grows, so his mind cankers."

In the "Tempest," Act III, Scene 3, Gonzalo speaks of "Mountaineers, *dewlapped* like bulls." While traveling in the Alps, Rutland observed the frequency of the disease called "Goitre" which is so common in Switzerland.

Is it probable that the Stratford man should be so familiar with this as to incorporate it in a play, or again, in "Midsummer Nights Dream," Act V, Scene 1, near the end, "*Bottom*" asks: "Will it please you to *see* the Epilogue, or to *hear* a Bergomask dance?" What could Stratford Shaxper know of a "Bergomask dance."

It is a dance peculiar to the inhabitants of the territory about Bergamo in Italy, where Rutland spent many days observing the people and especially digging among the musty Mss. then at the Palazzo Veechio at Bergamo.

King Henry IV, part 2. Act II, Scene 4.

Lady Percy: "For his, it stuck upon him as the sun * * * " and the following twenty-seven lines are Rutland's description of the Earl of Essex and these lines were first printed in the Folio of 1623.

King Henry V. Act I, Scene 2.

Exeter: "It follows then the cat must stay at home * * " and the following ten lines are paraphrased from Cicero's "de Re-

publica" (lost, but preserved in the writings of St. Augustine). Even Cicero had adapted his lines from Platos "Republic" from which Rutland's version are almost literally translated. The lines will be found in Plato's 4th Book. All ancient literature was to be found in Rutland's library at Belvoir and none of these had been translated into English in his time, but Rutland knew Greek and Latin perfectly, whereas, the Stratford clown knew—?

Act V. *Chorus*: "How London doth pour out * * " and the following ten lines allude to Essex in Ireland in 1599 whither Rutland had accompanied him as Colonel of Foot. This proves that this history was written after March, 1599, when Essex, Southhampton and Rutland started for Ireland.

Extracts from Ben Jonson's conversations with Wm. Drummond of Hawthornden, 1619, alluding to Rutland-Shake-Speare.

1. "That Shakspeer wanted Arte."

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2. "That Daniels was at jealousies with him."

Note: Jonsen says in a letter to the Countess of Rutland that (Samuel) Daniel envied him, though he bore him no ill will on his part.

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3. "That (Sir Thomas) Overbury was first his friend, then turned his mortal enemy."

Note: Overbury had written his famous poem, "The Wife," and had asked Jonson to read it to the Countess of Rutland when next he attended one of her usual gatherings of literary friends. As Jonson noted that Overbury was in love with the Countess, he declined to meddle further in the matter. Jonson, however, read Overbury's poem to the Countess and the latter pointed to the line:

"He comes too near who comes to be denied."

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4. "Shakspear, in a play, brought in a number of men, saying they had suffered shipwreck in Bohemia, where there is no sea near by some 100 miles."

Note: Jonson criticizing Shakespeare, who, he suspected, was Rutland.

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5. "The Countess of Rutland was nothing inferior to her father, Sir Philip Sidney, in poesy. Beaumont wrote that elegy on the death of the Countess of Rutland and in effect of her husband (Roger, 5th Earl of Rutland), wanted the half of his (sic in Ms.) in his travels. Jonson also wrote many lines to this lady among which:—

"With you I know my offering will find grace
For what a sin 'gainst your great father's spirit
Were it to think that you should not inherit
His love unto the muses, when his skill
Almost you have or may have when you will."

The Countess of Rutland was the only child of Sir Philip Sidney; was the wife of the 5th Earl of Rutland, who died in 1612; she herself died shortly after, that same year, issueless.

Note: As this lady brought her husband all the books, letters and Mss. of her celebrated father it is natural that Shake-Speare's Sonnets should "breathe the spirit of Sidney" as Mr. Disraeli puts it, not knowing that Rutland wrote under the nom de plume "Shake-Speare." Ben Jonson thought Lady Rutland was better able to write than even her lord (Rutland).

6. Every first day of the new year he (Jonson) had £20 sent him from the Earl of Pembroke to buy books.

Note: Pembroke pensioned Jonson to engage his pen for the First Folio. Pembroke knew that Jonson had suspicion that Rutland (Pembroke's Cousin) was "Shake-Speare" and Pembroke considered it advisable to shut Ben's mouth by engaging his pen. It is generally admitted that rare Ben Jonson wrote the Dedication and also the "Address to the Variety of Readers" prefatory to the great Folio and signed by the players of Burbage's Company, Heminge and Condell, fellows of Shaxper of Stratford who was acting as dummy for Rutland.

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7. "Ben, one day, being at table with my Lady Rutland, her husband coming in, accused her that she kept table to poets of which she wrote a letter to him (Jonson) which he answered, my lord intercepted the letter, but never challenged him."

Note: Rutland knew that Jonson suspected him to be the mysterious dramatist "Shake-Speare", and he merely wished Lady Rutland to exercise caution with Jonson—for both Beaumont and Fletcher as well as Daniels and Donne were often at Lady Rutland's literary gatherings.

In this connection it furnishes proof that Shaxper, the Stratford player was not the great dramatist but was the dummy representing "Shake-Speare" and in this capacity would not be recieved at Lady Rutland's receptions—*and he never* was permitted to associate with any class higher than his own disreputable station. Ben Jonson, on the other hand, although more or less intimate with Shaxper of Stratford, was highly respected in high society and was a welcome guest at many of the great houses. Jonson told Drummond that. (See memo. 8, 9 and 10).

8. "Pembroke and his lady discoursing, the earl said the women were men's shadows, and she maintained them (the women). Both appealed to Jonson; he affirmed it true, for which my lady gave Jonson a penance to prove it in verse. Hence Jonson's Epigram."

Note: This proves Jonson's status in society as well as Shaxper's lack of any status, who was never known to mingle with great folks.

9. He (Jonson) hath a pastoral entitled "The May Lord" the characters of which include the Countesses of Rutland, Bedford, Suffolk, Pembroke, Lady Howard, Sir Thomas Overbury and Rare Ben Jonson himself as *"Alkin"*.

Note: Ben Jonson's position was rather secure to judge from this, while, per contra, that of his whilom friend Shaxper of Stratford was confined to the "Stews, in the Liberty of the Clink" where he lodged.

10. He (Jonson) said to Prince Charles of Inigo Jones, that "when he wanted words to express the greatest villian in the world, he would call him an Inigo."

Note: This proves Jonson's intimacy with a great prince, Inigo Jones being much in the employ of the Royal family. Shaxper's intimacies lay in quite another direction as is proved by Lady Southampton's letter to her lord identifying the Stratford player with Falstaff, informing her lord that "Sir John" had become the father of a Miller's thumb, all head and very little body. This was in 1599 when Shaxper lodged at "hostess Quickly's" in the stews.

Here add tne fact that Jonson was frequently employed by King James I. whilst Stratfordian biographers seek comfort in a letter supposed to have been written by King James to Shaxper, according to Sir William Davenant, a then notorious liar. It is needless to add that there were many letters addressed by King James to Rutland, also that there is every reason to believe that King James I. knew Rutland to be "Shake-Speare".

FROM "TAMING OF THE SHREW."

Bianca:

"My books and instruments shall be my company
On them to look, and practice by myself."

Baptista:

"Schoolmasters will I keep within my house
Fit to instruct her youth. * * *
I will be very kind and liberal
To mine own children in good bringing up."

Thus wrote Rutland-Shake-Speare while the Stratford usurer, Shaxper, allowed his daughters to grow up in ignorance. Though they lived to be old women they never learned to read or write.

Rutland made valuable donations to his University at Cambridge and founded a Free School at Bottesford in 1612, the year he died.

ROGER OF RUTLAND

A DRAMA IN FIVE ACTS.

[Second Edition Amended and Augmented]

BY

LEWIS F. BOSTELMANN

ACT I.

SCENE I. *Room in Drury House,* EARL SOUTHAMPTON'S *Town House.*

Enter ATTENDANT *with* SIR FRANCIS BACON.

Attendant. The Earl of Rutland hath but now arrived,
Sir Francis, and will be here anon,
My lord Southampton who is with him now
Is overjoyed at the young Earl's arrival.

Bacon. 'Tis well, I'll rest me here awhile.
Your master and the Earl know of my coming,
And will not keep me waiting over long;
But, hark! I hear their voices even now,
And by the sound would judge their near approach.

Attendant. 'Tis they, Sir Francis, now coming up the path.

Enter RUTLAND *and* SOUTHAMPTON.

Rutland. Well met, Sir Francis, did you tarry long?

Bacon. Nay, nay, and if I did, milord, the pleasure
Of anticipation cheers the heart.

Southampton. Well said, good master, so it was with me
These past three weeks seemed but as many days
And, now, since time is precious, let's to work
And see how we can blanket this young scapegrace
Who still insists his muse must issue forth
To startle mankind with its genius.

Rutland. If flattery could affect me, Wriothesly

Unworthy were my muse of thy good words;
For well I know, the heart from which it springs
Must be oblivious to flattery.

Bacon. Well put, fair Rutland, pure must be the heart
To give undying vigor to its speech.
I did peruse your Venus and Adonis
And eke Lucrecia and her woeful plight.

Rutland. (interrupting)
Nay, good, my master, 'twas my first attempt
And though the copy is without a blot
The subject could stand mending,
And I most humbly, Wriothesly, beg pardon
For dedicating such poor stuff to thee,
But, for the fact that 'twas the very best
Within me to bestow, I made it thine,
Feeling thy heart would search the giver—not the gift."

Southampton. Thou knowest, my Rutland, how aught words of thine
On paper or by mouth affect my heart,
But jealous am I of the niggard world
And would advise, to shield thee from its breath,
To have the ancient name of Rutland hid
Behind some serviceable nom de plume.

Bacon. Well have I pondered o'er the matter, good milords
And reck a psuedonym alone will not suffice,
As our philosophers and critics of the day
Would soon uncover such a thin disguise
And fill the author's ears with damning praise,
More apt to suffocate a budding muse
Than nurse development.

Southampton. I did perceive, you rascal, that you have
Signed "William Shake-speare" to your infant lines.
How came you by that hyphenated nomen?

Rutland. 'Tis simple, I took shelter under Pallas
Goddess of Wisdom, and her pointed spear
Is meant to brandish at the eyes of ignorance!

Bacon. 'Tis fortunate you chose that very name
It will assist my plans in your affair.
It now remains to fit this happy pseudonym
To some one living who could answer it
Beside, my lord of Rutland.

Southampton. And such a person, have you one in mind?

Bacon. I have, milord, and fortune favors us.
'Tis though Minerva saw the need we had
And with her spear points out the very man,
In life and action so appropriate
That even milord Rutland's chosen goddess
Has fixed the name he bears to fit our cause.

Rutland. Who may this marvel be, good master Bacon?

Southampton. And how conditioned, has he itch of palm?
Pray, draw a portrait of this paragon.

Bacon. I've met the man from knowing his employer,
In body he is stout, of ample girth.
His hair he shingles over niggard ears
And grows mustachios with a beard to point.
But lately he has run away from home
To 'void attachment for some deer he stalked;
And, having mimic force to some extent
Found shelter at the play house where of late
Burbage and Heminge mount the public play.
They've put the man to work to hold the horses
When such as you, milord, go to the show;
And when a ghost must walk upon the boards
Or Jack's to say, "Milord, the horse is saddled."
They call upon this clod from Warwickshire
To fill the role.

Rutland. A fair description, by my faith, Sir Francis,
A bumpkin such as he to act as father
To any waifs I may in future lay
Into his hands for shelter and protection!

Southampton. Egad, I think myself good master Bacon

'Tis but indifferent timber that you offer
To build a raft to float, my Rutland's muse
But, stay, is there not one redeeming feature?

Bacon. There is, milord, and one I'm sure will win.
The man, though bright, is sans all education;
He has a family at his Stratford home;
His urgent needs make him a bitter master
And love of gold will bend him to your will.

(*to Rutland*). Since first milord Southampton did advise me
Of your necessity, my noble lord,
I fully measured up this rustic lad
And saw the justice of my born suspicion
That he, and no one else, would fill your bill;
And were all else against the man I found
His name alone should order his selection.

Rutland. What virtue may be in the cognomen
Of such a bumpkin as you have described?

Southampton. Bethink you, Bacon, 'tis the name alone
Will couple Stratford to Lord Rutland's muse!

Bacon. His name is William Shaxper!

Rutland. Shaxper!

Southampton. And *William* Shaxper, too?

Bacon. Aye. Shaxper, William Shaxper!
Actor and Hostler at the Globe!

Rutland. How came that country bumpkin by that name?

Southampton. (*mockingly*) Minerva knowing thy necessity
Ages before thy muse was to be born
No doubt affixed the name you chose
To cover your effusions from the world
Upon the ancestor of this poltroon.

Bacon. You jest my lord,
'Twas even so, and if you will allow,
His father once was Councilman at Stratford!

Rutland. 'Tis well and how can we approach this man.

Enter LORD SIDNEY (*unperceived.*)

Sidney (*aside*). Ha, ha, there's something underway! I must have data for my day's report, to entertain the Queen. Fresh gossip in her ears delights her, and is a stepping-stone to place and fortune! (*Hides behind a curtain.*)

Bacon. The day is young, despatch a messenger
To Master Burbage on the Surry side,
Directing him to send this man I named
Here to this house on pretext that some horses
Be led to the theatre 'gainst to-night.

Southampton. [*Calling attendant.*]
This will we do without delay, good Bacon,
And I will write the message in my name.
[*Writing.*]

Bacon. [*To Rutland*] This man, I have no doubt will not delay,
And we'll dispatch this matter here before he leaves
If, that, you have no other business elsewhere
To carry you away before he comes.

Rutland. Nay, good my master, I have nought on hand,
And shall be glad to have this matter settled
Before I have a play, I have completed,
Put on the boards by Burbage and his troupe.

Enter ATTENDANT.

Southampton. Have this dispatched at once to Master Burbage
And have the person mentioned brought me here.

[*Exit Attendant.*

Bacon. Now there appears to me another matter
[*To Rutland*] Of grave import to safer secrecy
In future plays you now propose to write,
To better lead a prying world astray.
Endeavor to inject some silly fault,
Some rank absurdity that must not mar
The beauty and the semblance of your work.
For instance, when you write of Julius Caesar.
Speak of a clock to strike the passing hour;

Some inland Kingdom like Bohemia
Must wash its shores upon the raging sea.

Rutland. And why advise disfiguring my work?

Bacon. Such trifling bulls will shield you better far
Than any other subterfuge can do.
Who would suppose that Roger, Earl of Rutland,
Was unaware that clocks were not invented
When Caesar issued forth to meet his death,
Or that the rockbound Kingdom of Bohemia
Could not be reached by ship from Sicily?

Southampton. Egad! a clever trick, good master Bacon!

Rutland. I marvel, sir, at your sagacity! [*All exit.*

Sidney. [*Coming out from hiding place.*]
So it is true, milord of Rutland's here;
I heard he was about to come to London,
But was not sure enough to make report.
'Tis just as well that now I have the fact
To lay before my sovereign to-night.
She will be jealous of this tactless slight
And, Rutland pretty fellow, he may be;
But, then at court he'll get into my way
And somewhat block the flow of my ambition.
'Tis strange, the Queen should send me to this house
To ask Southampton full particulars
Of the two poems lately put in print,
On Venus and Adonis and Lucrecia,
Both dedicated to milord Southampton,
And causing such a stir amongst the wits
Too bad I could not hear just what they said
But this I learned, my noble lord of Rutland
Is cogitating on a subject which
Must not escape me.
Sidney, look sharp! You have a fertile field.
Plow deep and closely scan the turned up sod.
Burbage, they say, who may this Burbage be?
Ho, ho! Let's see,—the showman at the Globe
Is one Burbage! There is a clue!

CURTAIN.

SCENE II. *Globe Theatre.*

Enter BURBAGE *and* HEMINGE.

Burbage. No, Heminge,
We'll let the thing run on another week;
The house last night was not full occupied
And that for once caused me but small concern.
This play of York and Lancaster seems slow.
It lacks the life and action I would have.

Heminge. Right, Burbage, the "Contention" is but weak
And wants the spirit—well, when all is told,
Its author, whosoe'er the man may be,
Lacks the experience. Would I knew the man.
'Tis awkward to make changes and not know
The chap whose corn we bruise by doing so.

Burbage. The scene where Clifford murders Rutland's boy
Was acted dolefully without all vim
There's Peel, egad, his dismal Clifford act
Did murder by his miserable play
Far better than intentioned by the author,
And to my seeming the young victim died
More from effect of execrable acting
Than by the sword play of that bungler.

Heminge. But 'twas to laugh when Kemp as messenger
Changed clothes to take the part of Somerset,
Not having time to take his part again
I called in our new lad from Warwickshire
To jump into the gap. Did'st notice how
He strutted forth with that fat paunch of his,
And shout as though he drove a yoke of oxen:

My Lords, "Duke" Edward with a mighty power
"Is marching hitherwards to fight with you."

O' 'twas the richest thing I ever saw!

Burbage. That Stratford lad may be an actor yet
But then I'm feared, he'll have to fast a bit

Or chisel down his paunch some other way.
Did'st note Kemp's doublet on this awful back
Split in the seams! But luck would have it
The thing looked natural, and the very part.

Enter CONDELL.

Condell. [*Imitating Shaxper's acting.*]
"My lords King Edward with a mighty power
"Is marching hitherward to fight with you."

Burbage. Ha, ha, well done, Condell, upon my word.

Heminge. The illustration comes in very time
We now were speaking of the Stratford lad.
He'll do in time; but he has too much flesh;
We'll have to diet him 'gainst further use.

Condell. And in the meantime let him walk the ghost,
But squibs aside, he is a likely fellow;
Quick to discern, and, when it comes to that,
His paunch may be the very thing we'll want
When giving Oldcastle this coming week.

Burbage. There certainly would be no danger then
In spilling forth the bag of barley straw;
As once did hap when Pope played the old knight.

Heminge. I well remember, 'twas a comic sight.
The house was almost thrown into convulsions.

Condell. I heard about that droll affair. In that respect
Give me a paunch that's made of flesh;
It's weight will keep the fellow on his pins
Should he grow faint with nerves.

Burbage. Can such a clod have nerves?

Heminge. None, I should think, but it would take
A blackthorn stave to wake them into action.

Condell. But jests aside, the fellow has good parts;
He's quite a man of business by the way;
From minding one horse for some "blood" one night,
He now has charge of twenty at a show,
And, ha, ha, ha, sublets those he can't hold
To boys, reserving him a goodly profit.

Burbage. What does he do when not employed by day?

Perhaps, it would be just as well if we
Kept eye upon this Stratford prodigy
And gave him aught to do, to train his wit.

Heminge. I believe myself the man does like the show,
To judge from the alacrity with which
He squeezed his belly into Kempe's doublet.

Condell. He has some mettle, I'll be bold to say
And rare Ben Jonson tells me, by the way,
The rogue has wit; is good at repartee,
And wants but polish to be made of use.
Let's send for him, and if he is about,
We'll put the screws to this phenomenon
To better judge the manner of the man.
[*Calls*] Ho, boy.

Enter Boy.

Go out about the sheds near by and see
If you can find that Stratford lad about;
Him of the paunch, that dabbles in small fees
That he collects for holding horses, nights,
An if you find him, ask him to come here;
We would have speech with him on his affairs.

Boy. I saw him cross the courtyard even now.
I'll have him with you in a moment's time.

Burbage. Make haste, me boy, I have not long to wait.

[*Exit Boy.*

An that reminds me, I have long intended
To get a man or two of likely mien
To act as roustabout and thus pick up
The manner of our way and so fall to.

Heminge. Beware thee, Burbage, the immensive cost
Of cloth to cover such a swelling bulk.

Condell. Enough of that; the lad may toe our mark.
No jesting, Heminge, for here comes our man.

Enter Shaxper.

Burbage. Step hither, Shaxper, I, and these my friends
Have had some words respecting thy employ—

Heminge. That is, if thy engagements at the sheds
Allow thee time to waste upon our whim.

Condell. Mayhap 'twill be the making of thy fortune,
If time and tide are running to thy taste.

Shax. 'Twould satisfy me greatly, gentlemen,
To enter your employ upon such terms
As tend to hold me harmless of all loss
Respecting income such as I enjoy
Whilst being master of my every movement
Barring the burden of responsibility
I owe to those who pay me.
Fact is, good sirs, I want my keep,
Besides the extra shillings I may earn.

Burbage. Well spoken for a lad so lately come
To this great city here to make thy way
An if it please thee to attend us here
We'll see that terms are made to suit thy case.

Heminge. That is, of course, if our exchequer will
Allow, to cover what your fees now are.

Condell. Hast thou made computation of the sum,
Or else need'st time for more consideration?

Shax. My income has not reached to that amount
But what my fingers well could entertain
To act as compters. Thus, to cut it short,
Furnish me clothing, food and lodging,
And five good shillings of the realm
As weekly stipend for my time and service.
And, to repeat, I want my keep.

Burbage. What say you? Heminge, aye the lad speaks well.

Heminge. We'll make it six per week his manner earned it.

Condell. I'll add a shilling from my private purse
To bring thee luck, my Stratford pioneer!

Shax. Your kindness, gentlemen, takes me by storm.
I'll straight arrange my matters at the sheds,
And relegate my business to the boys
That lately have assisted me o'nights.
[*Aside.*] But I'll reserve a goodly share, no fear

BEN JONSON.

FRANCIS BACON.

SHAXPER OF STRATFORD
as "Falstaff."

RESOLUTE JOHN FLORIO

RICHARD BURBAGE.

To cover extras for my sack and beer.

Burbage. 'Tis well, me lad, and as thou servest us
So will we show appreciation for it.

Heminge. Keep worry from thy mind and have a care
To read somewhat of that I'll send to thee;
A little polish is most needed here
And leads to prompt advancement.

Condell. Then, Shaxper, take this trifle here from me;
[*Hands him purse.*]
'Tis merely an advance upon thy wage.
It may be helpful in thy severance
From old employ.

Burbage. Well done, Condell, I had not thought of it.

Heminge. Nor I, and for this seeming slight,
I do propose that we forget the deed
And may the lad prove worthy of the purse.
Burbage and I will square thee.

Condell. I knew your hearts, my friends, you know I did.

Enter Boy.

What is it, boy?

Boy. A valet here in lace and velvet
Seeks Master Shaxper and would speak with him.

Shax. How, speak with me? then pardon, gentlemen,
Till I enquire what this valet wants.
'Tis well he came upon me even now.
My heart is full, too full for words of thanks
For your most noble generosity!
I will report anon.

[*Boy and Shax Exit.*

Burbage. I like the way the fellow mouths his speech.
He shows appreciation to the full,
An I am taken with the manner of it.

Heminge. With little management upon our part
We'll make him valuable to our needs.
Zounds! Since closer view of his proportions

His size has shrunk somewhat, what say you, Condell?

Condell. 'Twas all imagination on your part;
I liked the lad when first I spoke with him
And feel we all have done the proper thing
To close with him, hsh! here he comes.

Enter SHAXPER.

What now, my lad; thy puzzled look
Betokens interruptions unexpected, speak!

Shax. The Earl Southampton sends to ask my presence.

Enter LORD SIDNEY, (*Stands at a Distance Unobserved.*)
To have some speech with me,
His valet is to bring me on the way.

Burbage. Make haste to go, my lad, I wish thee luck;
But we'd be loth to lose thee e'er we had thee.

Shax. Fear not, good sirs, I'm your's, my word upon it,
Whate'er the message, 'twill not interfere;
I shall return within the next two hours.

[*Exit Shax.*

Sidney. (approaching)
Pardon me, gentlemen, what play to-night?

Burbage. 'Twill be the second part of the Contention.
Have you bespoke your seat?

Sidney. 'Tis well, I and my party will attend.

[*Exit Burbage, Heminge and Condell.*

That is if in the meantime I can make discovery
Of what Southampton wants with that fat man.
Strange goings on, milord, but never fear
The facts will out, and straightway to the Queen.

CURTAIN.

SCENE III.

Room in Drury House

Enter LADY VERNON *and* LADY SIDNEY *with the* EARL OF ESSEX.

Essex. Fair Cousin Vernon, and you, my Lady

Sidney,
Here will we bide until milord return.
Southampton, whom I met at court this morning,
Advised me that young Rutland hath arrived
And makes his stay here in Southampton House,
The while he doth intend to spend in London.

Lady Sid. I'm curious to meet this hero knight,
Essex,
My almost parent, and my heart doth quicken
That now the 'fillment of my wish approaches;
Pitti pat, pitti pat, hear it, my lord?

Lady Ver. You silly girl, to speak so of a man
Whom you have never met, and know
The likelihood of sharing his estates.
Because, forsooth, the Queen is for the match.

Essex. So 'tis resolved, my charming little daughter
And happy will you be with such a man;
Studious and not pedantic; witty sans vulgarity:
A gentleman bred in the bone and with an income
A King might envy!

Lady Sid. La, la, but, an he were not nice—that is—to me
And I should pinch him, what would he do then?

Lady Ver. Tush, Bessie, do not act so skittish.
You are so volatile, you flippant miss;
Be more sedate when first you meet my lord;
For first impressions, sweetheart, always are
So prone to form opinions most unjust.
Don't start with plagueing and then fall to pinching;
I could not act to my Southampton so.
He is too fiery withal and might resent it.

Lady Sidney. I cannot change my nature, mistress Vernon,
I do not care a straw for any man,
Especially this clever Padua student
Who has an answer pat for every question,
According to Lord Essex here, who knows him;
Should my lord Rutland feel my dart;—resent it—
Indeed, dear Bess,—I'd make milord repent it.

Essex. Come ladies, here milords approach:
Lady Sid. Shall I be meek—quote poetry to him
Remember, Bessie, first impressions last.
Or sit and wait until you do present him?
Lady Ver. Be natural, Bessie, do, you silly girl.
Essex. Bessie, come kiss me, now be good, my dear.
I hear some steps approaching.
Lady Sid. 'Tis well, milord; ah, O my heart be still!
For, if you don't, you know I never will.

Enter SOUTHAMPTON *and* RUTLAND.

Southampton. Welcome, fair ladies, here I bring this phoenix
Just risen from the ashes—clip his wing.
Essex. Southampton you look charming, and dear Roger,
Welcome to London. Have you been to court?
Rutland. Just as a formal duty to my queen, milord,
But I shall hope to see you there quite often.
Lady Ver. At least I need no presentation, Rutland,
For we have met before.
Rutland. Of course, but then your marvelous beauty, lady,
Shone at another angle; then I was stunned;
But now I am bewitched.
Southampton. Waste not your words, good Rutland, on my Vernon.
You'll need them all to praise this fairest bud.

(*Presenting* LADY SIDNEY.)

Lady Sid. A rose, milord, and O, so many thorns.
Rutland. Fie, lady Sidney, why do yon remind me.
Now placed in the predicament of Paris
That I might get my fingers sorely pricked.
Lady Ver. O, good milord, do not be harsh upon her.
See she repents. But, is she not a beauty?
Tho my lord Henry leans toward my style.
Essex. Southampton, come, now when is it to be.
The path must be made smooth for milord Rutland.
Southampton. Ha, ha, good Essex, you must ask the Queen

Who carries my affairs with a high hand.

Essex. 'Twill all come right in time, rely on Essex.
Now, ladies, will you join me to the green room?
Milord Southampton and my Rutland here
Are pre-engaged to meet Sir Francis Bacon,
Upon important matters at this hour.

Southampton. We'll follow you as soon as we are through.

Rutland. Fair lady Sidney and milady Vernon
The time will drag until we meet again.
So au revoir—we shall not keep you waiting.

Lady Ver. We haste away so we may sooner meet.

Lady Sid. Your arm, my father, au revoir milords.

[*Exeunt Ladies Vernon, Sidney and Lord Essex.*

Southampton. What think you of milady Sidney, Rutland?
A charming girl and with a mind of gold
The image of Sir Philip, her late father—
Her mother long since marrying Lord Essex
Elizabeth stands very fair to be
The foremost lady at Queen Bess's Court
The Queen adores her and you know you're quite a favorite with her today.

Rutland. I do assure you, my dear Wriothesly
I am bewitched with the young daughter of England's pride, the late Sir Philip Sidney.
Tho this my heart within warns me 'gainst marriage.

Southampton. Tut, tut, my boy, so say they all until—
But, here's Sir Francis now, and someone with him
Discrete now Rutland, we'll not speak thy name.

Enter BACON *with* SHAXPER.

Good morrow, Bacon, an whom have we here?

Bacon. The man we spoke of, out of Warwickshire (to Shaxper.)
This, master Shaxper, is milord Southampton
Who would have speech with thee as you're aware
And this———

Southampton. Is milord Roger who seeks some aid in his affairs;

The rendering of which may carry profit.

Shax. Milords, I fear me that you are too late,
For, as your valet came to fetch me here
My time was preengaged across the river.

Rutland. That will not brook my purpose in the least.
The service that I wish you render me
Requires nor time nor labor on thy part—

Shax. The matter standing thus, you can command me.

Rutland. I wish to put a secret in thy head
And lock thy mouth with golden bars!
The secret is a name unknown to thee,
And must not be divulged on pain of death
In payment for this privilege thou givest,
I will present thee with one thousand pounds,
In such amounts, and at such periods
As we agree upon if now we close.

Shax. An doth my carrying this monstrous load
Endanger life or limb, or——ha!—the Tower?

Rutland. Not if thou keepest counsel with thyself!

Shax. Prepare the oath that I may swear and sign it.

Rutland. Pray walk aside with me, my man.
Pardon, my friends.

[*They go to far corner of room.*

Southampton. A likely fellow, Bacon, what think you?

Bacon. Methinks the man might answer Rutland's purpose:
His speech is fair, his mind seems virgin still
To the allurements of this boisterous city—
'Twere dangerous did the man not hold aloof—

Southampton. We have considered of the matter well,
And Rutland doth agree with me in this;
That, to secure the keeping of the secret,
Allurements other than of jingling coin
Must hold the man we choose in check—
That is the matter now he's laboring with
And I do hope agreement may be met—

Bacon. I have made further inquiry of Burbage,
And he informs me that this Stratford man
Hath some ambition in the way of honors.

Southampton. How honors, what by that would you imply?

Bacon. Perhaps 'twas but the idle dream of fancy
That came to him upon his Stratford straw;
'Twould seem ridiculous in a city bred,
But you, milord, can understand a mind
Fantastic in its nature; fed on dreams
Doth harbor visions.

Southampton. And—

Bacon. He aims to be a "gentleman" by patent.

Southampton. Were he of family that could stand the test,
The matter might be easily arranged—

Bacon. His mother was an Arden, and his father
A Councilman or Alderman at Stratford.

Southampton. A likely soil to set this shrub to sprout
In reasonable time a gentleman.

Bacon. No doubt they're speaking of the matter now
And by appearance of his countenance
'Twould seem the subject hath the wished direction.

Southampton. Upon my word.
He's taking Rutland by the hand!
'Tis well, I like it much, this apt allurement,
'Tis far more potent than a threat or gold!

Rutland. (*approaching.*)
The thing looks well Southampton 'pon my word
I have his oath, by word of mouth as yet,
But 'twill suffice for the preliminary
Parchments in regular order will be signed
Anon, as soon as such can be prepared—

Bacon. An with your leave I will assist the diction.

Southampton. Tell me, in short, to what have you agreed.

Rutland. Primo: Whatever plays I render to be acted

Are to bear signature split by double hyphen
Thus "Shake, (and break), then "speare," hyphen between.
He to allow the public to assume—mark well *assume*—
That he's the author; but not to *claim* that honor
By writ or word of mouth. In fact he is
To weave a shroud of mystery so deftly
That all the world may think him to be author—
No word of his will ever prove it so—
Further: He's under oath to carry
The deception in face of all his actor people—
Become a partner there and furnish plays
With which I shall supply him
And other details as I will have writ.

Southampton. Then you, on your part, do agree——

Rutland. To furnish him first with One Thousand Pounds.
To be so paid to him, and at such times
As the amounts required will be needed
Some one to act the paymaster for me
I placing him in funds.
Then use my influence with good Queen Bess
To press his claim to have a coat of arms.

Southampton. Ha, ha, I thought as much, I understand—

Bacon. 'Twill bind the contract faster than all gold!

Enter LORD SIDNEY.

Southampton. Ha! here is Sidney, wonder what *HE* wants!
His manner likes me not. This coming in
So unannounced smacks of deceit.
How now, my lord, what be your pleasure?

Sidney. Pardon intrusion, good milords I came this way
Thinking to meet Lord Essex hereabouts.

Southampton. You'll find him in the green room I presume,
He went that way some twenty minutes since.

Sidney. With your permission I will seek him there.

Again I beg your pardon for intrusion.

[SIDNEY *Exit.*

Southampton. An uncle of vivacious lady Sidney;
More's the pity; for I do not like the man.
He slavers o'er the foot stool of the Queen
And pushes his ambition in a manner
That creaks upon the back stairs in the dark,
Keyholes are friendly to his enterprise.
We must be careful what we are about
When such as he draws near.
I like him not—but Family! Family—O!

Rutland. Good master Bacon, go you with my man,
And see about the parchment in the library;
Southampton and myself must join the ladies
But I'll be with you in a quarter hour.

[*All Exeunt Severally.*

Re-enter SIDNEY.

Sidney. So Rutland hath much time to give Southampton,
And fifteen minutes but to spare the Queen—
And you my haughty Lord Southampton, poof!
Remember that a Sidney don't forget.
You wish to marry with milady Vernon;
But know not of a certain Willoughby
Who, were he minded so, might jar thy match;
I'll bring the information to thy ears
Without its source appearing.
Let me alone for getting square with thee!
I've still to know about this heavy man
Who seems to interest milords so much.
The Queen must have her gossip, gossip, gossip!

CURTAIN.

SCENE IV. *Globe Theatre.*

Enter Two Stable Boys.

1. *S. B.* We're made, me boy, we'll soon be bloated peers,

If this holds out with Shasper's pretty job
We'll know not what to do with all our money!
2. S. B. I'll know what I'll do, I'll be bound, me honey—
I'll eat six good square meals each blessed day;
Chew calomel between to make more room
I live to eat, just bet I know what's good
What's money good for lest it be for food.
1. S. B. I'll stuff as well, as much as I can stow;
But that's not all, me boy, I'd have you know
The first day that I get my little pile,
I'll to the Mermaid for a good long sleep;
And as I take my room I'll order Boots
To wake me when the clock strikes at sharp six!
2. S. B. Why should you have him get you up so early?
1. S. B. An who said aught about my getting up?
I'd let him call me—but I'd answer him:
"Get out, ye dog; get out, yet scurvy cur!
Why should a man with coin be bothered so?
Get out! I'll throw the bootjack at thy head!"
2. S. B. What good would all that be to ye, ye clown?
1. S. B. To let him know I was a gentleman;
To sleep as long as gentlemen are wont—
To be a gentleman you've got to sleep!
2 S. B. You mean to say that gentlemen don't eat?
1. S. B. But only Thursh eggs and such dainty stuff,
You'd have to eat a peck to get enough!
2. S. B. 'Twas mighty nice that Shaxper threw the job—
1. S. B. An' let us have it as he did. B'Jove!
2. S. B. Who'd think that Warwickshire grew bloods like that!

[*Exeunt Stable Boys.*

Enter SHAXPER.

Shax. Since fate will buckle fortune on my back
To bear the burden without playing for it
I must have patience to endure the load.
Here hath fate stewed a pretty mess for me;

I've sold myself; am tied down hard and fast,
Tho' much enlarged the field of my activity.
I am myself no more. I am another's!
And acting in his name; by oath I'm bound
Not to admit those labors in my name
Nor to deny my compilation!
Tho' I have gained fulfillment of my dreams,
Have wealth to bolster up my sunken fortune,
'Tis dearly bought since I have sold myself
To be the living pen-name of an author
Who by past works hath set the town astir;
To be obliged to face my benefactors;
Give them new plays as though they were mine own;
'Tis a great load to bear.
Sit and make merry with the cities' wits;
Take flattery from them; congratulations;
That sound like hollow mockery to me,
And then be under oath to not admit
The point, nor yet, doing the work
To nourish seeming probability
And to be gay withal!
To strictly guard the scrawl of my fat hand
That prying eyes get not to know it—
This is a burden that would break the back
Of any ordinary mortal!
The deed is done and I have made my bed
Tho stuffed with downs, unutterably hard!
Then in the waking moments, ere sleep comes,
The gloat of that curst master wit above me
Weaving fantastic dreams!
My word is given, under oath, and signed
And, ha, I had almost forgot the wierdest clause:
That at the first infringement of my word,
Myself—my flesh and bones will disappear
As if by magic—
Kidnapped or murdered in cold blood!
In manner that no living man may know
My miserable fate—!
Three separate plays have I for the approval

Of my most dear and newly gotten friends.
How to suggest the matter and explain
How I came by them—still requires invention.
Fate brought me fortune—then let fate devise
The means by which to hold it!

Enter PEMBROKE.

This gentleman was at Southampton House
When last I came away. Good morrow, sir.

Pemb. Good morrow master Shaxper and well met—
Milord Southampton fears that you may find
Some difficulty in the presentation
Of your first manuscript in such a manner
As to allay suspicion.
Where can I find good master Burbage now?
I would have speech with him.

Shax. He's in the house, milord, I'll go an fetch him—

Pemb. I will arrange that Burbage asks no question,
When you present your manuscripts,
And when you do present them, act so so;
Using but simple speech—
Say, "there is somewhat that perchance
"May interest you. Master Burbage, read it
"An if it suit you and your theatre
"Produce it—without recompense to me.
"I owe you much and I am happy, sir,
"That thus I can requite it"—Say no more.

Shax. An when he doth reply?

Pemb. Retort in commonplace. Go now and fetch him,
But do not thou return——we'll meet anon.

[*Exit Shax.*

An if suspicion chance to fall on me
To be the author, 'twill be a simple matter to deny!
The word of Pembroke never will be doubted.

Enter BURBAGE.

Ha, master Burbage, sir I wish you well!
And beg the privilege of some words with you.

Burbage. Milord of Pembroke, sir, you do me honor

To favor such as me with your commands.

Pemb. 'Tis but to-day report made known to me
You have one Shaxper here in your employ.
He comes from Stratford up in Warwickshire.
And I have heard that he doth carry
A very weighty matter in his head.
He is a genius of peculiar order,
And will not trust himself to loose his mouth.
I ask thee, as a patron of your house,
To not be taken with astonishment
If this same man to further *his* ambition
Doth put *thee* on the road to fortune—
Whatever he may have to say to you,
Pry not into the working of his mind—
'Twould likely cause a hemorrhage, even death.

Burbage. 'Tis strange, I felt, since first I saw the man,
That there was somewhat back of that great bulk.

Pemb. Well, to be short, 'tis so!
Then, further, Master Burbage, so instruct
Thy partners, Masters Heminge and Condell,
To act upon the hint I've given thee.
A failure on thy part, good Master Burbage
To follow instructions to the word
Would cause me sorrow.

Burbage. O, rest content, commands of milord Pembroke
Are law to me and also to my partners!

Pemb. Farewell then, that was all I had to say.
[*Exit Pembroke.*

Burbage. I always felt a strange effect come o'er me
When this fat Stratford man gave me his eye.

Enter HEMINGE.

Milord of Pembroke hath just left me, Heminge,
And told me things that will surprise thee much:
This lad from Warwickshire may prove a mine
If we but let the follow have free rein.

Heminge. I've felt so ever since I spoke with him
And build great hopes upon him; but what now?

Burbage. There's something queer about him milord tells me—
He'll stand no prying into his affairs.
And then his lordship further cautioned me,
And you and Condell also are included,
To look upon his actions and his words
As natural output of his eccentricity.
Be guarded therefore in thy speech with him
An above all, ask him no idle questions,
And we must not omit instructing Condell.

Heminge. 'Tis well, hsh! here comes Shaxper now.

Shax. Pray, gentlemen, a moment of your time
I have here somewhat that perchance may please you
Read it an if it please, make use of it
Without a thought of recompense to me.
(*Gives Burbage Mss.*)
Much do I owe you and this opportunity
Gives me the greatest pleasure I can feel
To, in a measure, make up for your goodness!

Burbage. Why, Master Shaxper, an what have we here—
Some verses written on some pretty lady?

Heminge. Or something we can put upon the boards?

Shax. Read it, kind gentlemen, an when you've done
Judge if the manner of my thanks run straight.
I must away to meet my good friend Jonson,
Who waiteth my arrival at the inn.
[*Exit Shax.*

Burbage. Strange fellow that! what think you, Heminge?

Heminge. Let's see, what have we here that he has left.

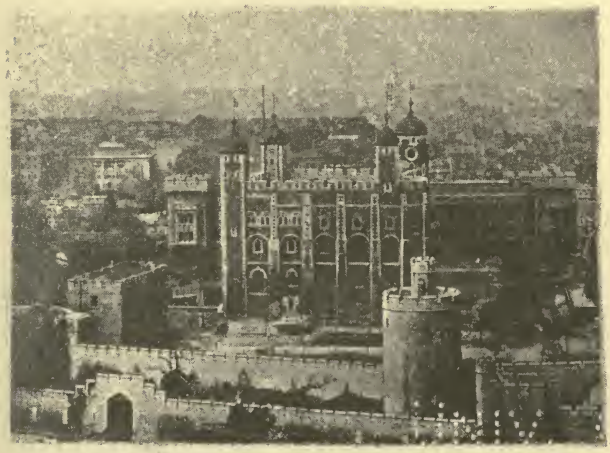
Burbage. (opening bundle Mss.)
Phew! "A history of our gracious King
Henry the Fourth, containing also
The antics of one Falstaff.'

Heminge. That sounds well—How is it arranged?

Burbage. We'll presently look into this new play.
Now what is this "The Merry Wives of

KING JAMES I.

QUEEN ELIZABETH.



THE TOWER OF LONDON.

Windsor, or Falstaff when in love.

Heminge. Another play, B' Jove! what next, I wonder?

Burbage. Then here is one entitled
"The History of King Henry the Fifth.
The death of Falstaff."

Heminge. An if these plays are good we've struck a mine
Let us examine them more closely in our closet
Where Condell is now working on some play.

Burbage. Strange things come out of Warwickshire, good Heminge!

Heminge. Strange, strange——

[*Both Exit.*

Enter PEMBROKE *and* SHAXPER.

Pemb. As I was saying, Master Shaxper, mark me:
Things go as merry as a village wedding!
'Tis well I met thee going forth just now—
For I had something in my doublet here
That I forgot to give thee here before.
(hands him Mss.)

Shax. Am I to read this or just turn it over
To my good masters at the playhouse here?

Pemb. 'Tis meant for them; but then there is no reason
Why thou shouldst not peruse it at thy leisure.
That is, of course, if thou hast learned to read
Take best care of it—I must away.

[*Exit Pemb.*

Shax. (Putting Mss. in breast of doublet)
Another one! They're coming rather fast
But then, I'm in for it, so let them come!
The more the merrier, say I, good milords!
But I must study at my alphabet
For reading is important to me now.

Enter SIDNEY.

Holloh! you here again? What may *he* want,

Sidney. My man, hast seen lord Pembroke hereabouts?

Shax. That were for me to know, but not to say!
Sidney. How now, sirrah! Make answer
Shax. I'll go within—an see if he is there
(aside) an this rough ape can wait till I return
——— to-morrow!

[*Exit Shax.*

Sidney. Now what could Pembroke want around this place
I saw him coming forth—I must discover!
I've put a flea in good Queen Bessie's ear;
An that flea feedeth more than I can serve
Voracious rascal that!
That bumpkin returneth not—perhaps he won't—
All right—my man—another for my book!

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE I. *Room in Drury House.*
Enter ESSEX *and* SOUTHAMPTON.

Essex. Whoever brought you such a monstrous tale
Deserves to have the hide stripped from his carcass,
An, I for one, shall never bend my ear
To idle gossip that involves a lady!
Southampton. Nor am I prone to stoop to such a thing,
Dishonorable alike to one who hears and believes
Without enlightenment or evidence,—as the supposed offender!
Essex. Dismiss the matter from your mind, Southampton,
It is unseemly in a gentleman
To harbor thoughts offending Lady Vernon.

Milord, give me the name of the informant
An as I am an Essex, the dog dies!
Southampton. In that I do agree with noble Essex.
Find me the cur an I, myself, would kill him!
'Twere but to free the world of such a pest;
The coward cur hath placed a scurvy note
Where 'twould not fail to meet my jealous eye!
Essex. Unsigned, of course, the traitor! show the script;
Perchance I know the manner of the hand.
Southampton. I pinned it on the point of my Toledo,
And cast it in the fire—
Considering its source I had dispelled
All thought
Until to-day I met with Willoughby
Who, by his manner, making enquiry
Of the well-being of my Lady Vernon,
Aroused anew suspicion in my heart.
Essex. Of course, we can't blame Willoughby in this
Not knowing your relations with milady!
Enter RUTLAND, LADY VERNON *and* LADY SIDNEY.
Rutland. 'Tis vile, Southampton, that you so forget
That which you owe yourself and this fair lady!
Anonymous at that—'Tis simply monstrous!
Lady Ver. Forbear, dear Rutland, my poor heart is cracked
Do not upbraid, my lord, for unkind words
Will shatter all to fragments—Oh, forbear.
Lady Sid. Fair cousin heed him not. Why should, forsooth
A guiltless conscience give you needless pain;
We all, thy truest friends, love thee the more!
Southampton. O, What care I!
The slightest breath of scandal overwhelms me!
Rutland. The best of us can't guard against such curs.
The traiterous backstairs coward!
Essex. Southampton, if thou havest faith in me,
Record my oath that I will right this thing!

Rutland. An I'll devote my life to the discovery—
Lady Ver. Milord forbear!
Lady Sid. Come, cousin, walk with me.
[*Exit Both Ladies.*
Southampton. Rutland and Essex, you—you fully believe
That I should be the last to think it true
That Willoughby hath sinned against milady.
'Tis the suspicion undeserved that knocks
And time alone will even up my temper;
You, Rutland, should not have brought in the ladies—
My state of mind was unprepared to meet them.
Rutland. Southampton, as you are, of all my friends,
The one I cherish most. Do this for me,
Ay for thyself, thy honor, say one kind word
To lady Vernon e're she leaves—
Essex. It would be gracious on thy part Southampton.
Southampton. I'll walk without, an if I meet the ladies,
My heart dictates to follow your advice,
And meet we not,——we'll meet some other time.
[*Exit Southampton.*
Rutland. Bear with him, he's so devilish fiery,
As needs cool air to square him with himself.
Essex. Rutland, thou'rt right—thou too hast temper,
And I myself am well bestowed with it;
Three heads like ours must bend to but one purpose,
Rutland. And that should be——?
Essex. Uproot the weeds that fester 'round the throne,
And lay them prone at good Queen Bessie's feet!
This stab at our poor friend is meant for me,
An emanates from our good Queen herself,
Who loveth gossip, an would play upon me.
—I do not like that Sidney near the throne
Although as yet I've nothing much against him.
Rutland. I like me not his sinister expression,
And that for one makes me somewhat lukewarm

In giving thought to marriage with milady.

Essex. Though of one family, Rutland, this remember
Milady Sidney is so far removed
In person, thought and temperament from this man—
That you need never meet.

Rutland. Of that am I aware—Yet—I am young;
Milady scarce fifteen, there's time enough.

Enter LADY SIDNEY.

Essex. How now, my sweet, an have the lovers met?

Lady Sid. They have, an may success attend them!
'Tis monstrous, is it not, O, that there be
Such villains loose to scatter worse than death!

Rutland. We'll yet discover who the villain is!

Essex. An there will be a funeral in London!

Lady Sid. Oh, how you talk of taking life away
I'd say the villain should be soundly whipped.
An shown to all the world for what he is;
That all may know him and avoid the cur.
To kill the man and put him out of sight,
Would never end so foul a practice.
The living semblance of so vile a traitor
Should *ever* be paraded before men!
'Twould curb the tongue of the next novice at
So devilish a game!

Rutland. Thy heart is noble as thyself, sweet lady;
Thy head sits squarer on thy lovely shoulders
Than that on mine or Essex—
I shall refrain from blood, if possible,
If it were but to meet thy trend of thought—

Essex. But whipped he shall be, an, if that his life
Escapes so foul a shell in the proceeding;
The lovely daughter of Sir Philip Sidney
Will grant a pardon with those cherry lips.

Enter SOUTHAMPTON *and* LADY VERNON.

Southampton. Milord of Essex, and you my sweet Lord Rutland,
Allow me to present milady Vernon,
An if you are my friend, as I do think,

We will agree to banish the affair
Now from our thoughts.

Lady Sid. After the storm the calm, an all's serene!

Essex. 'Twas but a little squall—let us forget it—

Rutland. And be as though the thing hath ne'er occurred!

(aside) I'll write a play upon it well disguised;
You'll find it in the title I've invented:
"Much Ado About Nothing,"
And in this comedy I shall insert
The pert intrigue my friends have entered on
To nurse the wit combats between myself
And sharp Beatrice, as I call my Bessie,
Into a match; but I'll be on my guard;
The Queen insists—but I rebel at marriage;
I was not cut out for a Benedick—!

Enter BACON.

Essex. Here is our coming chancellor, Lord Bacon!

Rutland. The queen might go some distance e're she find
A head more steady for the honored place—

Southampton. But 'ware lord Cecil, Bacon, and that Coke!

Bacon. Your lordship's please to jest—it is but fair
That such as I receive the long sought honor,
An if my path be cleared, 'tis well I know
To whom I am indebted for my fortune!

Lady Sid. You have my best wishes, dear Sir Francis!

Lady Ver. An mine won't grow, dear master, by rehearsal!

Bacon. My heartfelt thanks, miladies I assure you
'Twill add another obligation still;
But gladly borne.

Lady Ver. Altho my sovereign, with me, is vexed,
The clouds will pass away e're many moons,
An the reaction may work blessings for us all;
Come, lady Sidney, let us walk without,
And leave these gentlemen to their concerns.

Lady Sid. And don't forget us altogether now;
For well I know when men of weight like you
Do put your heads together, it were vain
To think you gave a thought to our poor selves!

[*Exit Both Ladies and Essex.*

Bacon. As you suggested to me, milord Rutland
I've had that Shaxper at my house to-day.

Rutland. An' did you find him of receptive mind?

Southampton. Why hast thou lost all faith in power of gold?

Bacon. Milord, 'twas not we feared his willingness,
To further the intent of our affairs,
That I thought well to give him some advice,
And milord Rutland did agree with me,
That just a touch of schooling in deportment
Would arm the man to ward off petty thrusts
Of prying wits with whom he's bound to meet;
There's Jonson, rare Ben Jonson, for example,
Who hath an eye that pierces walls of stone!
'Gainst him, I wish to arm our Stratford lad.

Rutland. An what success thus far have you obtained?

Bacon. He takes my method as a duck does water
An as a mimic, cannot be approached
So when I show him how to ward off Jonson
And other wits that he is bound to meet,
He does the thing far better than myself:—
Thus does he put it when their praise assails him:
"'Tis nothing, my good master, I assure ye
"These lines come to me in a natural way
"The while I lie upon my couch and day-dream"
An in this manner doth he carry it,
Without receding from the truth a whit!
In my philosophy, you know, my lords,
Truth—harnessed to the broadest lie
Will drag a weight of Error through this world
As great as huge Olympus!

Southampton. The lines *do* seek him in a natural manner;

But whilst he lies upon his couch he lies,
And lies like this will cause a world of trouble,
In after years when History endeavors
To point toward the man, whose fertile mind
Will be a monument to all mankind!
Our dummy speaks a necessary lie
To shield our phoenix from the public eye.

Rutland. What should we do without you, master Bacon
A mastermind alone could thus devise!
A lie that's plausible an hitched to Truth
Will carry all before it!

Bacon. Another matter I have thought upon—
To so protect your claim to authorship
When centuries have washed away the error
That, were you then to rise from out your grave
An say "I am the man" could prove no more!

Southampton. Thy finger marks, good master Bacon, needs then
Must so appear upon the evidence.

Rutland. An proud I am that through the channel
Of thy bright mind my pathway will be smoothed
Plain facts shall thus assail a wondering world
As will perforce down counter arguments—
Speak on—

Bacon. Inject in all your plays a circumstance
That will fit you alone, still be unknown
To any other.
Disguise it by the very bluntness of
Thy statement in the drama that you write.
Make use of names in giving birth to characters
That do exist and known alone to you,
Thus the ambassadors in the sketch of Hamlet—
Two fellow students of your own at Padua,
Of Danish birth, now at the Dansker court.
As also your "Polonius," who I see
You've modelled after your poor servant, me.

Rutland. An excellent idea! for facts don't lie
An I bethought me of another thing.

In the last play I've sent unto my dummy
"The Taming of the Shrew." I've changed location
From Athens where of old the story lived
To Padua—for I wrote the thing while there.
Since coming here and meeting with this Shaxper.
I've changed the wording of the old Induction,
To give a semblance of this man's employ.
How tinker Sly was made to think himself
A highborn lord, devoted to the arts.
But in my version he does not wake up,
Because, my purpose is to have him think
The greatness he enjoys at my connivance
Agreeable to his now prosperous state.
Thus would I keep him till he doth awake.

Southampton. You can't offend this clout with such a dig
For, even should he recognize himself
He'll be more apt to feel a silly pride
That will push all offense he feels, aside.

Rutland. However that may fall, Old Sly must stand
I've got my dummy, Shaxper, well in hand.
I have implanted in his soul a fear
That will shut out my secret from the ear
Of any prying pen that pesters him
I'm safe enough—indulging in this whim.

Bacon. I catch thy meaning, good, milord of Rutland—
'Twas that you plainly pointed out the fact
That your live pen-name—thus disguised as Sly
Makes plain the Truth when centuries go by;
When the ingenious mask will rot and fall,
And Shake-Speare-Rutland may be known to all!

Rutland. The very point I dwelt upon in this,
An therefore have instructed that this Sly
Enact his part before the Shrew begins.

Southampton. Marvelously it is devised, my Rutland!

Rutland. Again, by noting the enormous bulk

Of my fat dummy out of Warwickshire,
I've taken model of him for Sir John
My boisterous Falstaff, playtoy of Prince Hal;
This name I took from Shaxper's coat of arms,
Of which he showed me the device he made—
A falling spear, or lance in act of falling
From off the shield, he wishes to adopt.
I call the thing a staff and say it falls
Whenever Shaxper misbehaves or palls!

Bacon. You've struck a portrait of this man, my lord
That cannot be mistaken on the boards.

Southampton. His paunch; his witty repartee, and all
By Jove, I'll have it painted for my hall
And you, my Roger, you shall be there too!
For in Prince Hal, I recognize—why—you!

Bacon. Falstaff, a falling staff, unless held up
By strict obedience to the master here
The only danger is the tavern cup;
The element he lives in—sack and beer.
We must beware of Jonson, for, rare Ben
Will die to know the owner of a pen,
That in the least approaches his in worth,
In the esteem of others of this earth.

Rutland. In taking care of Ben by indirection,
A small annuity will hold him in.
My cousin Pembroke will get Ben's affection,
At twenty pounds per annum for this whim.
The man is poor, and will let out his pen,
In prose or verse to all his fellowmen;
He'll put your purport in the finest rhymes
And make you proud to think you wrote the lines;
He is the only man I know who can
Ambiguously befuddle god and man!

Southampton. Egad, my lord, you've got rare Ben down pat;
But there is lots of wit beneath his hat.
He'll get your secret from your dummy when

They meet anon, and when they meet again!

Rutland. An, if he does, I'll stop his mouth with gold!

Bacon. You're right, my lord, Ben can be bought—*not sold.*

Rutland. I've found another character to serve;
That's Dr. Caius of old Gonville Hall.
He struts the boards in "Merry Wives of Windsor."

Bacon. Ah! well I do remember this same man
In actual life, his hatred of the Welsh.
At Gonville Hall. He was professor there—
In character and name, you've hit him true.

Southampton. Why, yes, I do remember talk of Caius.

Rutland. While at it, good my lords, let me recite
My private marks, that is, a few of them,
Which will be proof when centuries roll by,
That dummy Shaxper, could not know that I
Had purposely inserted secret marks,
'Gainst pirate publishers and soulless sharks.

Bacon. Say on, my Lord of Rutland, we are all attention.

Southampton. Aye, Roger, tell us how thou hast devised.

Rutland. Then, first, the letter my lord Essex wrote me
When I embarked for sunny Italy.

Bacon. I drew that letter up myself, my lord,
Acting as scribe for noble Devereux.

Rutland. Thanks to that fact, I drew Polonius!
I've kept the letter safe from every eye
None but myself has seen what's written there!
Throughout my plays I've paraphrazed this script:
Advice Polonius gives unto Laertes;
Instructions to Raynaldo to act spy,
And all the precepts in that famous letter
Are deftly interwoven in my work!
In "Much Ado," I mention pert "Beatrice,"
The very name my lady Sidney took
When I adopted "Benedick" for mine

For use in wit combats and repartee!
I've called attention to the very day,
When, through intrigue, poor I was brought to bay
Now, how could Shaxper know why that was done?
In my "Two Gentlemen of old Verona,"
I tell the outlaws that I sojourned there
Some *sixteen months*—referring to the time
The whilst I tarried in the sunny clime!
In my induction to "Petrucio,"
I name Correggio's, Jupiter and Io;
'Twas at Leoni's Studio at Milan,
This masterpiece, by me was looked upon!
Montecchi, I have changed to *Montague*
My lord Southampton's mother's maiden name.
For Romeo is Wriothesly to you
And Juliet brings lady Vernon fame!
Then my two kinsmen of the House of York.
Aumerle, in "*Richard two*," and "Henry Fifth."
Young Rutland also, murdered by base Clifford
In third part *Henry VI*, Act I, Scene 3,
In "Merry Wives," I mention names and places
Connected with my dummy's early life;
His poaching feats and other paltry cases
In "Sly" I've also drawn him to the life.
These things I did to strengthen his position
As acting dummy for my future work.
And, thus, throughout my every play to date
I've nailed the lying pirate printer's fate!
These men, I see, are printing my plays now
Without authority, and I avow
I cannot openly protest this theft
For then naught of my secret would be left!

Southampton. Too true! we have no means to stop these men
Who steal their liivng from another's pen!

Bacon. Your private marks, however, will remain,
And claims to *authorship* will all prove vain!

(*Sidney enters unobserved—he looks about and retreats without speaking.*)

Rutland. Thus may I safely launch on my career
As writer of vile dramas and still keep
The secret from the world that plays t'amuse
The rabble (and the groundlings in the stews),
Were born within the brain of him you know
As Rogers Manners-Shake-Speare, Earl of Rutland!

CURTAIN.

SCENE II. *Blackfriars Theatre.*
Enter SHAXPER.

Shax. The plot doth thicken—I must keep awake!
The slightest slip will cause misfortune—
Pembroke hath served me well with my employers.
They do not quiz me, leaving me free play.
But Jonson, O, that Jonson, the pointed arrows
He doth hurl at me, stick so in my hide!
Thus far I've carried off the matter well;
But that sardonic smile upon his face
Doth trouble me.
An what can this my dread employer mean
(pulling out Mss. of "Shrew")
This fore-play of this beer besotted "Sly"?
To be cajoled and made to feel and b'lieve
He were a lord of high degree?
How marvelous the semblance—still 'tis true!
In this am I consoled—'Twill be a secret
To all the world but me and my tormentor!
Who poureth balm upon my bleeding wounds
By furnishing the means of my advance—
Already are the papers under way
For the procurement of a coat-of-arms.
An e're the present moon hath run her course
I'll be a full fledged gentleman! heigh-ho!
Further an agent whom I have employed
Is making progress with my Stratford plans,
The finest house in that forsaken borough
Will soon protect the family I deserted—
Would they could read or write and thus enjoy

The marvelous wit that bringeth me this wealth!
But, that alas, is never to be hoped—!
An if they could decipher word for word
The kernel of the nut would have no taste
Within the brains myself let go to waste!
An, well it is, perhaps, they cannot read!
And see how from my silly recitation
Of piccadillos in my days of youth
Culled from my boyhood days, are intertwined
By this magician of my new found fortunes.
The reference to Sir Lucy makes me smile
But glad I am that I can see through this!
An O, the trick he plays with this fat Falstaff
So like myself in stature and in manner.
How far, I wonder, will this schemer go,
In rendering a likeness of his slave!

Enter BURBAGE.

Burbage. 'Tis well, good master Shaxper that I find you
A proposition that I have in mind,
(And well considered by my partners both)
May strike you in a favorable light.

Shax. Your kindness overwhelms me, master Burbage,
(An master Heminge and Condell as well)
Have touched upon the mainspring of my heart!

Burbage. And mighty glad we are of the adventure
Of your bold enterprise to seek your fortune,
That brought you to our door!
Since our arrangement of the other day,
I and my partners, after consultation,
Have made decision to include yourself
As partner of our business here in Surry.

Shax. Then happy I, the patent's under way
That will entitle me to be of you ——
My family, on my mother's side—the Ardens——
Entitle me to have a coat-of-arms,
And e're the middle of the coming month
I sign my name by patent *"gentleman"*

And as for capital, I should inform you
That if a matter of some paltry pounds
Would serve to widen out our sphere of action!
'Tis at your service, for I have the coin!

Burbage. How, do I understand the thing correctly?
Hath Fortune smiled upon you at the sheds?
Why then, old Plutus sent his messenger
To the correct address—
I do congratulate you, Shaxper, with all my heart!
Those plays, the manuscripts of which you gave me,
Are such as never we have had before.
But feared I am the public of this day
Will fail to see the pearls thus cast before them.

Shax. The plays can all stand clipping and still leave
The subject presentable on our stage.

Burbage. A little daily practice on the boards
Will remedy this point, I fear me not.

Shax. Ah, time will tell—we all hope for the best.
[*Aside*] (I hope he may no further push the test!)

Enter MESSENGER.

Mess. Is there one William Shaxper hereabouts?

Shax. This way, my lad, I am the man you seek,
What have you there?

Mess. A package—'twas a gentleman who met me
Upon the other side of Thames, who bade me
Carry it according to direction.

Shax. 'Tis well, me lad, take this [*handing him coin*],
and thanks.

[*Exit Mess.*

Burbage. I must away, so leave you with your business
We'll meet again before the day is run.

[*Exit Burbage.*

Shax. Another manuscript—and still they come!
Those that have gone before will serve awhile,
I'll take the present writing to my room,
And give it study, that the run of it
May glibbly pass my lips upon occasion—
Let see, what is the title of this thing—
O, would I could but read the script

As well as tavern signs here in the Stews!
My master's writing here is plain as print
Let's puzzle over it, and see what's in't.
"Much 'do 'bout Nothing" does he name the thing—
Ah! he's attached the story of the play:
[*Reads*]"A lady of unblemished reputation,
"Engaged to marry with a gentleman,
"Is sore maligned;
"Her lover breaks with her thereon;
"His friend one Benedick berates him
"For lending ear to scurrilous inuendoes,
"That dare not bear the name of the indictor,
"This friend, one Benedick by name, doth void
"The pressure of his friends, to marry
"A charming girl, Beatrice, by name.
"But by conspiracy they bring the thing about
And also prove the falsehood of the slander
"Against the lady that hath been maligned
"And thus, and thus———"
In fact it is well named for such a theme;
There doth appear to be "Much Ado About Nothing"—

Enter BEN JOHNSON.

Ha! here is my friend Jonson come upon me,
These papers must not meet his watchful eye!
[*Tucks them away in his doublet*]
Well met, good master Jonson, how's't with thee?

Jonson. Ha, ha, you rogue, you're not quite sly enough!

Let see the latest offspring of thy brain,
Now bulging in thy bosom. Come, own up!

Shax. 'Tis not quite ready for the public eye.

Jonson. But I am not the public—What, thy friend?
An can no friendly eye have some advantage?

Shax. Nay, nay, good Jonson, that would not be fair—
What would good master Burbage say to that?

Jonson. Well, let it pass, I'll hold my curious vein
In check until I see it on the boards.

Enter BURBAGE, HEMINGE *and* CONDELL.

Ha! here come the purveyors of ideas!

BEAUCHAMP TOWER.

CELL IN BEAUCHAMP TOWER.

INSCRIPTION IN RUTLAND'S,
Cell in Tower of London.

Good morrow, gentlemen, an how d'ye do?

Burbage. Holloa, friend Jonson, how is it with thee?

Heminge. I have a message of ill omen, Jonson—

Condell. 'Tis not as bad as that—be not afeared!

Burbage. Nor do we know at present but it will
Add to your favor and advertisement.

Jonson. How, now, what's in the wind—I hope—

Heminge. 'Tis nought but that we must postpone presenting
Your "Every Man in's Humor" for a week.

Jonson. How, why—I have your promise, gentlemen.

Heminge. But not made definite as you'll admit—

Condell. Conditioned on the run of that now going—

Burbage. An then, sir, in a business such as ours
All promises, perforce must be contingent.

Heminge. Since last we met and talked about your play,
We've made arrangements with another partner,
Whose voice, as well as ours must be considered.

Jonson. An who may this new partner be, my friends?
I trust for your sakes you have made good choice?

Burbage. You see him before you—master Shaxper!

Shax. Your servant, Master Jonson, well I know
You wish me well in my new undertaking—
[*Aside*] He's turning green with envy even now.

Jonson. Well, well I wish you luck, good master Shaxper!

Burbage. You see, good Jonson, how it stands
Our partner, Mr. Shaxper, here hath brought
Us two new plays that must take precedence
The time and season for their presentation
Just suits the times and temper of the public—

Heminge. On whom we must rely for our returns—

Condell. While the production of your masterpiece
Will stand the pressure of all days and time—
[*Aside*] I know rare Ben, he's fond of flattery!

Jonson. Ah, flatterer, well then, of course, we wait
An see what new perfection goes before.

What is the manner of the play you have
That must perforce take precedence of mine?

Burbage. "Perforce" is well adapted to the truth.
The play's put on by order of the Queen—
Who fancying the Falstaff in King Hal,
Desires to see the Knight in throes of love.

Jonson. Why, then of course, old Ben must bide his time—

Heminge. What harm is there, the season's young as yet.

Enter SIDNEY.

Burbage. Good day, milord, in what can such as we
Be serviceable to your gracious self.

Sidney. I am commissioned by the sovereign queen
To give thee notice, master Burbage, that,
Before presenting the new play you have,
Wherein one well fed Falstaff falls in love,
You have the author come along with me,
To read the play before her majesty—

Burbage. [*Undecided how to act*] hm! hm!
Your order, good sir Sidney, shall be met
Will you walk with me to the inner chamber

[*Shaxper—exit on hint of Burbage.*

An there await arrangement of your wish—

Sidney. Lead on, but do not keep me long, good Burbage.

[*Exit Burbage and Sidney.*

Jonson. P-h-e-w! Your partner struck it rich me-seems, good Heminge.

Condell. So it would seem.

Jonson. Good luck to you in your new partnership,
My Thespian conductors of the play!
I'll to the Mermaid where I'll drink a glass
To all your healths and your prosperity!

Heminge. Farewell, good master, were it not so late
I'd join you on the way, and drink with you.

Condell. An if you tarry there, we all may meet,
For we intend to celebrate tonight.

[*All Exit—Severally.*

Re-enter Shaxper.

[*Tieing on a new neck frill*]

Shax. Confound the thing—the button will not in!
'Tis always thus when time is niggardly;
An well it is I had my wardrobe stocked
To meet occasion unexpectedly!
Now this ordeal—to look upon the queen!
With eyes not mine—and read to her
Words of another with these very lips,
Sold forth and bartered to the very man
Familiar at the court and weary of it!
We have not—an we want—an when we have it
We care not—!
Long has it been my dream to see the queen!
An would have run my legs off for that pleasure
And now my wish fulfilled—I like it not!
To view my sovereign through the glasses of
A man who's weary of the tinsel show.
And know the queen doth thus command me
Because she thinks I've written to her liking!
Ah! 'Tis a bitter pill, but it must down!
An if she bluntly asks when I did write it,
I must reply "it comes to me 'o nights
By sources natural, unwearying to my brain"—
An thus I speak the Truth—in lying words!
But then what would you—there's one thousand pounds!
An patent making me a *"gentleman!"*

Enter SIDNEY *Unobserved.*

Sidney. [*Aside*[(Here's opportunity to pump this fellow
And rare the chance is for a fair success.)
[*Aloud*]When you are ready, sir, let us be gone
And don't forget the manuscript, my man.

[*Exit Sid. and Shax.*

CURTAIN.

SCENE III. *Street Scene* (*Old London.*)

(*People walking about and some groups standing remarking upon the Queen's boxing Essex's ears.*)

1st Citizen. An mark me word, he will not stand for it!
A man of temper such as Essex is
Will sure resent a box upon the ears.

2nd Citizen. Didst hear, he drew his sword upon the Queen?

3rd Citizen. He did not pull it forth from out the sheath—

4th Citizen. But might as well for the appearance of it—

1st Citizen. An now he's placed in honorable arrest—

2nd Citizen. To keep the house and———

3rd Citizen. What never to go forth?—'Twill kill him!

4th Citizen. I like this Essex, an if he wants men, I know of some will help in this affair!

1st Citizen. An so do I—just count on me!

2nd Citizen. An I shan't fall behind—

3rd Citizen. Let's stone the windows of old Cecil's house!

4th Citizen. I an my fellows will waylay old Coke! And thrash him soundly!—Essex for me!

1st Citizen. Here come Lord Rutland and Southampton;
Stop your shouting or they may tickle thy ribs—
Are they for Essex?

2nd Citizen. Rutland is Essex's friend—

3rd Citizen. An so's Southampton!

4th Citizen. An both these lords are rarely seen at Court.
But go to see the play most every night.

Enter RUTLAND *and* SOUTHAMPTON.

Rutland. What have we here—you men,
What's all this shouting?

Southampton. And is it seemly? Why 'tis insurrection!

Don't shout the name Essex quite so loud!
[*Aside to first Cit.*] How many are you that will side with Essex?

1st Cit. Me an my friends will number to some sixty.

Southampton. Come to me quietly then to my house
I would have further speech with thee.

Rutland. [*To 2nd Cit.*] Your shout just now for Robert, Earl of Essex,
Would betoken that you are for and with him.

2nd Citizen. An that I am!—A box upon the ear!
I feel it tingling an it were my own!

Rutland. How many friends have you that feel your way?

2nd Citizen. I cannot count them up off hand, milord;
But know of near a hundred good stout hearts
Would do and die for Essex!

Rutland. 'Tis well ,meet me to-night at Drury House
Almost adjoining Lincoln's Inn, near Strand,
I've somewhat that may bring you fair employ.
Take this as a reminder of my meaning [*handing coin*],
An fail not in your being there betimes.

Southampton. [*To 1st Cit.*] Pass on now, walk away and show me how many of this rabble follow thee,
[*Aside to Rut.*] When he has gone with those who follow him,
Do you the same with that man you approached.

[*1st Cit. exit with some of the rabble.*

Rutland. [*To 2nd Cit.*] Now walk you down the street and see how many mark thy going and will follow.

Southampton. I counted over ten go with my man.

Rutland. There now goes my new recruit like a magnet
Drawing away some twenty men of steel—!

Southampton. The scheme looks well. Let us report to Essex.
Our cry at all times must be "For the Queen!"

[*Exit South. and Rut.*

Re-enter SOUTH. *and* RUT. *Bringing in* PEMBROKE *and* MONTGOMERY.

Pemb. An as I passed the street I heard them talk
Of Rutland and Southampton rather loud—
Mont.—I cautioned them to make their speed more quiet
And they did mind me to a man.
Rutland. You see, milords, these men do so despise
The haughty manner of the gold laced crowd,
That hang about the Court and fester there.
E'en you, Southampton, know a friendly word,
Will bring an army of these men to us.
Where your accustomed bearing with high hand
May draw their persons; but without their hearts!
Pemb. That's the whole kernel of the nut, Southampton;
Be gentle with the rabble during life,
And when you need them, they'll be there,
And every man a soldier!
Mont. 'Tis thus we ever have been taught—So now,
When brother Pembroke and myself go forth,
The rabble hail us as we pass along.
Southampton. I never could do that—but see the point.
Would I had done so e're this weary day—
Let us adjourn to Drury house for the night
We've much to settle e're we visit Essex!
Rutland. Poor Essex can't come forth to join us there
So we must act for him in this affair.
Pemb. On then, milords, we'll meet you there anon.
Mont. 'Twould look suspicious to see us together
Perambulating Paul yard arm in arm.
Southampton: 'Tis well—within the hour we meet again.

[*Exit All Severally.*

Enter SIDNEY.

Sidney. Had I but dared to come within their hearing,

I'd read their faces for my day's report.
Enough to know—and what I've seen here now
Will interest the queen, I doubt me not—
Halloa! What have we here?
That fat man drunk! [*Exit.*

Enter JONSON *and* SHAXPER (*Both Worse for Wine.*)

Jonson. You take the wall my Shaxper, I'm not drunk,
Whilst you might slip and fall into the kennel!

Shax. O, mind not me, good brother toper, Ben,
My paunch can stow away a goodly lot,
And (hic) I feel as fresh and sober now
As when I (hic) was reading to the Queen.

Jonson. Now, how in hades, did you get that command,
How was it I knew naught of it before,
Dost spill thy brain on paper—? Tell me Shak.

Shax The thing comes natural to me—
Without an effort—
(aside) (In that at least I do not tell a lie)
And when I lie alone within my lodgings
My muse comes into me—and there you are!
(aside) (He was with me this morning, O, thou Muse
In silk and velvet, daintily perfumed.)

Jonson. How come you on the characters you invent;
They seem so natural and full of life
That 'tis no compliment to say, My Shakebag.

Shax. Cut that! Don't call me Shakebag sir—you know—

Jonson. Ha, ha! I never noted what I said.
I was about to say, my Shakescene wit
That Falstaff looks———

Shax. I'd have you (hic) understand my
Name's not Shake (hic) Scene!
An am entitled to the wall I hold
'Gainst such as you or any other
I am a (hic) gentleman, I'd have thee know!

Jonson. And will the Falcon lose thee, Master Shaxper, gent?
(coughts derisively)
Shax. See here me man (hic) I'd further have thee know, the wine the Mermaid sells,
Hath been adulterated (hic)
Jonson. What was the host to do when you come on
To drain what stock he has.
What troubles me is (hic) what
The fellow takes to swell his stock. (hic)
Shax. Whatever 'tis—'tis rotten, master Jonson,
An I'll no more of it from this day on!
Jonson. I've heard that tune before, (hic)
An I myself have sung it! (hic)
And when I lost the words of the refrain
I always found them coming forth again:
O, at the Mermaid! (hic)
Ho, for the Mermaid! (hic)
Shax. (singing) The mermaid forever! (hic)
Jonson. Now tell me truly master Shaxper, do;
For we were interrupted in the thing,
How come your characters to be so true
So full of life, so real, and so superb?
Shax. Ah there you touch upon a tender spot.
(aside) (Indeed he does—and I must find an answer.)
Jonson. Come do enlighten me on this, my Shak;
I fain would know the manner of it, come!
Shax. Well, then, 'tis this way master Jonson, sir,
The characters you see so well depicted,
They are no manikins as in your plays;
But real live people whom I know do live.
Jonson. Then who's this Falstaff whom our Sovereign Queen
Hath fallen in love with? O, that braggart lout!
Shax. You would not believe me, Jonson, if I told you.
Jonson. I will, indeed, if you'll but tell me true!
Shax. Jack Falstaff is a picture of myself!
I paint him so—just for my own amusement,

I want to hold the middle of the stage;
Thus far I have succeeded—think you not?

Jonson. If that's the scheme, you are a witty fellow
And do succeed where other people fail!
And who's Prince Hal who caught thee at thy lies
About Gadshill and all those buckram robbers?

Shax. That is a friend of mine, a noble lord
(aside) (Who acts the part e'en now unto perfection.)

Jonson. Now, that's a point, I've never given thought—
To take live people that we know in life
And put them on the boards in different garb.
I thank thee Shaxper for this hint of thine.

Enter Two Stable Boys.

Shax. Here son (gives a coin), take this an walk with me a bit
You know my lodging house down in the stews?
I am a little tired out—with drink,
So lead me, boy, a bit toward the Clink.
Me boy it will not take thee long (hic).
And while we walk, I'll sing a song (hic)
"The old leather bottle, Oho, Oho,
For I am the author of Lear!"

1. Stab. Boy. Come on me fairy—steady—lead the way!

[*Shax and Boy Exit Right.*

Jonson. Farewell good master take advice an sleep—'twill sober thee!
An thou hast told me that which does me good.
I'll mark the thing and follow up the point.
Come on, me boy, an steady me a bit!

2. Stab. Boy. Whereto, good master Jonson, see, I know you.

Jonson. An who don't know Ben Jonson———
—Rare Ben Jonson—I'll warrant ye!
My lodgings are too far for me to-day. (hic)

Back to the Mermaid—(hic)
Ho, for the Mermaid! (hic)

[*Jonson and 2 St. B. Exit Left.*

CURTAIN.

SCENE IV. *Southampton House.*

Enter RUTLAND.

Rutland. Thus am I then embarked upon my scheme!
A dozen plays, that I had long in making,
Are ready for the boards when called upon.
An excellent thing it was in Master Bacon
To put me on the track to so arrange
That Roger Earl of Rutland never will
Appear as author of a common play
Enacted thus before the city's rabble!
These plays will hold attention of mankind
As long as words have meaning in this world!
But should the name of Rutland once be known,
The Queen would soon cut short my business,
And much that still I have to write upon
Would thus be lost to this benighted world!
So well, I think, I have my secret guarded,
That naught but treason in the ones I love
Will bare it to the world this generation!
There is my second self, Southampton, first;
Then Pembroke and Montgomery and Essex,
Who each would give their lives before the facts;
And as for Shaxper,—why, he is secure.
His word would never hold against my own—
And there are matters passed between us two
That so entangle that fat dummy's fate,
No word of his will ever breath my name—
He feels too well the danger hanging o'er him.
First—Sudden disappearance—if he slip—
And if not that, the gray walls of the Tower,
Are ample warning—
But there's milady Sidney! that sweet girl,
Is far too shrewd to not have got a hint,

And tho, I love her tenderly, God knows,
There's that that bars me from her lovely hand.
Essex doth push me to make up the match;
Southampton and his lady too insist—
Whereas the Queen, from her high throne, commands!
But God on high hath put this mark on me!
Despite this curse, it is in self defense
I take milady Sidney to the Altar—
The die is cast! I marry on the morrow!

Enter SOUTHAMPTON.

Southampton. Ha, Rutland I am glad to see thee here!
The storm is gathering and our loyalty
Is put upon the test.
There's Essex under honorable arrest,
Hath made arrangement with lord Robert Cecil
And had permission from the angry queen
To issue forth to walk an take the air.
He will be here anon.

Rutland. I and my vast estates are at his back
I'd lay my head upon the block for him!
The word of Rutland lasts till very death
And Essex knows it!
At no time was I e'er so fit as now
To bare my breast before the enemy!

[*Southampton Goes to a Window Looking out Upon Strand.*

(aside) (Before me is a life far worse than death
And worse than that for my Elizabeth
I feel the spirit of her father now
He knows what's working neath my fevered brow!
Sir Philip, from his place on high doth see
The misery in store for her and me—
O, let thy genius, good Sir Philip, guide
Thy loving children now, whate'er betide!

Southampton. Hello there, Rutland, here comes Pembroke now;
Fresh from Whitehall, I wonder what's the row!

Rutland. Is not my coz, Mongomery, with my lord?

Southampton. He is, they're coming up the staircase now
Why, here they are, what news bring you, my lords?

Enter PEMBROKE *and* MONTGOMERY.

Pemb. I met milord of Essex at Whitehall;
He could not gain admittance and feels sore
That such as Cecil could or should so bar him.

Mont. But we have managed fairly well with him,
Tho he defied old Coke unto his face,
Thought better of the thing and came with us.

Rutland. Where did you leave milord of Essex then?

Southampton. Why not have carried him directly here?

Pemb. He spoke of papers left at Essex house
That were in danger of a false direction.

Southamapton. Of what import do you suppose, Lord Pembroke?

Pemb. His correspondence with the Scottish King!

Rutland. 'Twould cost his head to have that fact discovered.

Mont. I am afeared, his temper, lest it cools
Will yet bring that to pass, milord—I fear—

Pemb. And all of us—unless we're resolute—

Rutland. We're in it now—and must abide results!

Southampton. Our pass word still is "For the Queen! the Queen!"

Rutland. And for the Queen it is and always was!

Enter ESSEX.

Essex. Aye "For the Queen!" to clear her royal throne
Of all that vermin which infects it now!
But the unkindest cut in the affair
Is the position master Bacon takes.
I saw him at my house where he was waiting,
When he fell on his knees to beg of me,
To not go further in this sorry matter
He swore I'd lose my head if I persisted,
And counseled quiet and forgetfulness.

Pemb. The man is not far wrong, an tho I'm with you
Through thick and thin in this affair of thine,
I too would counsel reconsideration!

Rutland. No man would ever dare to call me coward,
And I would lose this very head for thee!
But this I say that if there still be time
To alter the direction of our minds—
Make not another step! Thus do I feel.

Mont. Unless success falls to our share, my lords,
Our lot spells ruin—Tower—axe; the block!

Essex. Who is there doubts success when we are right?

Southampton. An so say I—On with the game! I say!

Enter LADY SIDNEY *and* LADY VERNON.

Ha, ladies 'tis not well that you are here.
The matters we've in hand will not permit
The presence of fair ladies on the scene—
The clouds are gathering—there's a storm a-brewing!

Lady Ver. Then get from under e're it is too late!
O, Henry think of me an what you do!

Lady Sid. Milord of Essex,—you my second father,
Pray think of me e're you proceed in this!

Rutland. Be not afeared my gentle lady Sidney,
The sun still shines, and all may yet be well.

Lady Ver. The reason we intruded here upon you
Is that Lord Sidney is without—and we—

Lady Sid. We held our uncle long in conversation
Until good master Bacon came upon us—

Lady Ver. So catching at the opportunity,
Ran off to warn you of this man's approach.

Pemb. 'Tis well you did—this Robert Sidney, friends,
Is much too near the Queen to suit our case.

Mont. Too fond of gossip and I know not what
So I avoid him, have no use for him.

Essex. Confound that man and well it was that you

Were happening there to bar that gossip's way—

Southampton. He would have come upon us unawares.

Rutland. That seems to be a paltry trick of his.

Essex. Southampton, do *you* go get rid of Sidney,
And when you do, bring Bacon here to us.

Southampton. Ladies come with me I may need you two
To work dismissal of this paltry knight!

[*Exit South. and Ladies.*

Essex. The strange position Bacon finds him in,
Is that he seeks preferment from the Queen,
And hangs between the throne and my affairs;
The time being short for parley he is racked;
He must let go but does not know just where
His feet must land—for profit or advantage!

Rutland. Bacon is poor—that is the riddle of it—

Pemb. I thought it was for Power he played alone.

Mont. Both are the answer of the present case,

Essex. 'Twas but a year ago that I presented
Him with a small estate to help him out.

Rutland. An that was generous indeed milord—
But still to look upon the present case
'Tis hard for such as he to see all fall—

Pemb. Whichever way he jumps—he'll be hard hit—

Mont. An therefore, really, I do pity him—

Essex. That's idle talk an if he were a man,
He'd say to me: "I cannot go your way—
But here he comes—so hear him speak himself.

Enter BACON.

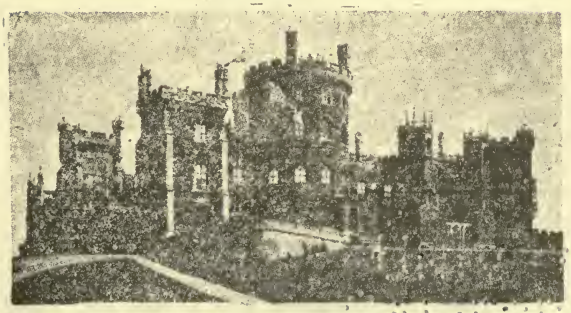
How now good Bacon, is there any more,
I thought you said your say at Essex House.

Bacon. Your servant, gentlemen, an by your leave
I'll put the case without the least adornment.

Essex. Speak on and if thy counsel be of value,
In such a mess as we are tumbled in
Perchance there is a way to lead us out.

Bacon. Then, plainly put, the case is this my lord:—
If you make open war upon the men

ROGER, 5th EARL OF RUTLAND,
from a painting by Van Somer.



BELVOIR CASTLE,
Leicestershire.

The Queen doth smile upon, you'll lose the fight.

Essex. An if we win the fight—what then, good Bacon?

"For the Queen!" D'ye hear, sir, "For the Queen!"

Bacon. An if you win the fight there'll be more war!
A war that must stir up one-half this Kingdom!
Brother, 'gainst Brother—Blood will flow, unchecked,
And when all's done an you have won the day
My lord of Essex will have had his way!

Essex. An if we lose? Speak on we're not afeared—

Bacon. Then all spells Tower and Block! You know full well
My love for you, milords, (each one of you!)
Speaks for submission!
Forgetfulness and within six months' time
Milord of Essex will regain his place!

Essex. Place without honor never was for Essex—!

Bacon. Milord, as Counsel for the Crown and State,
I warn thee that, calamity befalling,
I too have place and honor to support.

Essex. What then?

Bacon. Why I must speak against you in the case—

Essex. Then do thy duty, Bacon, by all means,
And when I lay my head upon the block,
I'll think on Bacon!

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

SCENE *I. Mermaid Tavern (left) and Street.*

Enter SHAXPER.

Shax. My loss is such as cannot be repaired.
The wielder of my fortunes is arrested:
In the affair of Essex's insurrection.

Southampton too may suffer on the block.
Confound it all!—an I a gentleman!
And clever was the trick that got the patent.
So here I am to-day
With means curtailed to keep me, as a gent—
With house just bought and coat-of-arms;
And my investment in the theatre—
The balance will but meet the Mermaid Score!
An how will I now face the world—an Jonson—
Ah, here he comes, that rare Ben Jonson now—

Enter JONSON.

I've waited for you here the past half hour
And being dry I quenched my thirst without thee—

Jonson. 'Tis well you did just that, gentle Shaxper,
The world is topsey turvey it would seem,
An if the thing goes on as it's begun,
There'll be no shows for want of public soon.

Shax. Gran mercy, what in heaven can have happened?

Jonson. O, nothing much except hot headed Essex,
With Rutland an Southampton an some others,
With rabble at their back rushed forth, on Strand
Armed cap-a-pie to murder all at Court!
The Queen sent forces to oppose these fools
An they drove Essex back to Essex House,
With Pembroke an Montgomery in the train
Who joined the other lords when sore beset!

Shax. O, Demmit, man, that means the Tower and—block!

Jonson. An no one left to come an see our show!

Shax. (aside) An no one left to write my plays for me!)

Jonson. 'Tis a mad world, my masters! I'll be sworn,
When courtiers will, to venge a slight insult
Committed by the hand of good Queen Bess
A simple box upon the ears, forsooth,
Draw sword upon their fellows at the throne!
And void their patronage at our nightly show!

Shax. These lords were our most regular supporters;
They an their company would fill our house,
An now it is the Tower—maybe the block!

Jonson. Most likely, though I'm sorry for young Rutland!
Ha, what comes here—?

Enter Lady Southampton *and* Lady Rutland.

Lady South. O, cousin Bessie, there's that great fat man,
For all the world like Falstaff in the play!
Shall we enquire of him as to our lords?

Lady Rut. I saw the man late at Southampton house;
It might be safe to have some speech with him,
But ward thee—'tis the Mermaid where they are
An spirits may have made him troublesome.

Lady South. We'll risk it—there's another standing there,
He won't permit offense against two ladies.
(walking over to S. and J.)
Come, we shall ask them did they see our lords.
Pardon us, gentlemen, have you seen pass by
Milord Southampton and the Earl of Rutland?

Shax. Fair ladies, we've not seen the one nor t'other—

Jonson. An if we had—what should we know them by?

Shax. O, I would know them very well miladies,
But, I assure you, they've not passed this way—

Lady Rut. Then thank ye, gentlemen—an God be with ye.

Lady South. A thousand thanks—then we must hasten on—

[*Both Ladies Exit.*

Jonson. Two likely ladies that will soon be widows!

Shax. Poor souls, they have no inkling of it yet.
Aye, may the Lord protect them, the poor souls!
Hush what comes here———

Enter a Rabble Shouting.

Rabble. Chorus: Essex found guilty, and must lose

his head!
Essex is lost! The valiant Essex!
The generous Essex! The axe!
The bloody axe!—The block!

[*Crosses Stage and Exit.*

Enter Citizen and a Few Followers.

Johnson. An now how is it with this mad cap Essex,
An have they locked him up in Essex House?

Cit. That's what they did an Essex from that house
And from the windows where he stood bareheaded
He launched forth curses upon those he hated
And swore he'd die before he would give up!

Shax. Hoi there! An are they at it yet, my man?

Cit. Oh no, *"my man"* yourself an who art thou
That thou shouldst cry "my man" unto thy betters,
Zounds?

Shax. I'd have thee, fellow, plainly understand
That I am William Shaxper, gentleman—

Jonson. Ho, not so fast, sweet William, for you say
The patent hath not issued yet— now has it?

Shax. An what is that to thee, my master Jonson,
My speech is with this man an not with thee;
An 'tis not requisite to be o'er nice—!

Cit. "Gentleman!" ha, ha! Who would a thought it!
Was't thou a gentleman before thy father?
A sorry clout to be a gentleman!

Jonson. Those words require correction, master Shak!
At him—revenge thyself; thou art insulted!
Thy honor, friend, compells thee! at him Shak!

Shax. What! 'pon compulsion—?

Jonson. How like thy Falstaff—that was true to nature!

Cit. Upon compulsion or any other way—I care not!
I'll not be "thou'd" by any such as he;
I'll "thou" my intimates my friends and cronies
But when a stranger "thous" it is offensive!
Unless it be some great man to a clout—

Remember that, thou William Shaxper, gent!
Whose patent for that name may still hang fire!
Shax. (aside) Another blow, an if that man spake true
An my high backer gets the block, good bye!
Good Bye to all my greatness! Ah, good Ben!
Thus go the well laid schemes of mice and men!
Jonson. How now, are we reciting the new play—?
Shax. Nay, nay, good Jonson, 'twas a fancy passed
This moment through my aching, throbbing brain
An as I live the thing may yet transpire!
Cit. Ah, here they come? The sheriff at their head!
Shax. Ye gods! The axe! with edge towards my lords!
Jonson. Why that means death! the bloody axe, my God!
Shax. Angels an ministers of grace defend us!
The axe! ye gods! that's death! where are my dreams
Of wealth, and title, O, it is too hard!

Enter Ladies, SOUTH. *and* RUT. *(left)*

Lady South. O, gentlemen, O, mercy, have you seen them—?
Lady Rut. We failed to intercept them as we wished—
O, heavens may milord have taken cue
In time to save his friends— as well's himself—!
Lady South. Too late I fear—O, heavens, Bess, look yonder
That dread procession all in black down there!
Lady Rut. What can that mean— and soldiers all about—?
Cit. Ladies, stand back, ye might be hurt—step hither!
I believe that the procession comes this way!
Shax. What are they halting for, good Ben, I wonder.
Jonson. Fast, far too rapid, O, my gentle Shaxper!
Is a proceeding that leads to the block!
Lady South. What is it gentlemen—Some prisoners?

Lady Rut. An he spoke of the Block! what does it mean?

Lady South. I dare not speak my thoughts, it is too dreadful!
O, Henry, Henry, O milord Southampton!

Lady Rut. Hush! Do not speak his name so openly.
O, Rutland, Rutland! Whither are we going?

Shax. Ladies, step this way, 'twill be dangerous there
When all that crowd of men comes up this way!

Jonson. Do. ladies, I beseech you! back! back! back!!!

Lady South. I will not budge a step an they run o'er me.
I must see whom they have! O, woe is me!

Cit. Stand here then—out of reach of all those men!
Quick, ladies, here they come! or you'll be hurt!

Lady Rut. Do, cousin, stand up here—'tmay be all well.

Shax. (aside) Ah, would to heaven, 'twere and like the play,
Turn out to be "Much Ado about Nothing!"

Jonson. An canst thou still rehearse thy silly plays
When mortal men are marching to the block?
Look, Shaxper,
As I live! The axe—with edge
Towards the prisoners, doomed to lose their heads!

Cit. The axe! Ah, that means Tower and Death!

Ladies. (repeating excitedly) Mercy, they come! Hold fast my hand—stand thus!
Oh! Oh! Oh! May heaven above preserve our lords!

Enter Procession, Sheriff at Head, With Axe Towards Prisoners.

ESSEX, SOUTHAMPTON, RUTLAND *and Soldiers and Rabble Following.*

Lady Rut. (Breaks away and rushes on Rutland)
They shall not take thee forth my husband! No!

Rutland. Fear not, sweet Bess; an all may yet be well!

Lady South. (also rushes to her husband, Southampton.)
My Henry, O, milord, milord, milord! take me with *you!*
They shall not tear me from my husband's arms!
Not while I live or my Southampton breathes!
Back, Sheriff, turn thy axe the other way,
For Wriothesly will have another day!
Southampton. Sweet wife, rush back to Drury House at once;
Quick save my papers, and my very life!
Rutland. An you my darling wife, haste, haste, with her!
Back with thy cousin to Southampton's house.
In my scritoire—my papers—haste thee quick,
My life is safe when you accomplish this!
Essex. Ladies, the fault is mine an if they call
For blood my head sufficeth to wipe out
All guilt of your good husbands—mine's the fault
And I will show them how an Essex dies!

[*Ladies Embrace Husbands and Exit.*

Procession Moves on to Left Exit.

SHAX., JONSON *and* CIT. *Exit into Mermaid Inn.*

Enter Sidney.

Sidney. I went too far in my reports of late
An now I cannot save them—O, my God!
My family, and myself!
I'll get the brunt of it when this my work is done!
And to the shame of Princes be it said—
The Queen will do me!
I must await the run of these events,
And if I must— I must— take road to Dover!

Sid. Exit.

Enter SHAXPER.

Shax. Thus have I set me in a goodly mess!
No wonder people sneer, and hiss out "gentle"
They know I got my Coat of Arms by fraud!
The word will stick though the expression dies,
And thus it is men make, "immortal lies!"

With more than fifteen plays not yet produced,
An Rutland drawing deathward to the block!
Now must I calculate the time an manner
In which I issue forth these written plays—
An by judicious alteration mark them,
To fit the signing of my *own* good name
As William Shakspere, gentleman, of Stratford.
But, hold those playing now are signed as Shake-Speare
An with a hyphen for distinguishment
I must await his death at any rate
An Rutland must first die, my course to shape!

CURTAIN.

SCENE II. *Room in Tower of London.*
RUTLAND. *Sitting at Table Writing.*
(Throws Down Pen, Takes Up Mss. and Comes Forward.

I cannot write with this dead weight upon me!
My brain seems caked, the numbers will not come.
Ah, lady Rutland, thou my new wed wife—
To thee my mind turns in my dire extreme!
[*Reads*] "O, for my sake do not with fortune chide:
"The guilty goddess of my harmful deeds,
"That did not better for my life provide,
"Than public means that public manner breeds"—
But yesterday a peer, to-day a pauper,
To labor with my hands for daily food!
For not a farthing will I ever borrow,
To pay for my necessities while here!
My mind is not in trim, I hardly know
The sense of what I write while I am so.
[*Reads*] "Than public means that public manners breeds."
[*Speaks*] Now this last number seems ambiguous;
There's where my mind don't equal my occasion
Tho as I think and feel—it does convey
A joint idea of what I have in mind—
However, as these lines are for no eyes

To seek for mares' nests in a wilderness,
I'll let them stand to-night and dream upon it.
An if they give offense upon the morrow,
I'll kill them off, an say no more of it!
[*Reads*] "Thence comes it that my name receives a brand,
"And almost thence my nature is subdued
"To what it works in, like the dyer's hand.
"Pity me then and wish I was renewed—
"Whilst like a willing patient, I will drink
"Potions of eysell, 'gainst my strong infection—
"No bitterness that I will bitter think
"Nor double penance, to correct correction.
"Pity me then, dear friend, an I assure ye,
"Even that your pity is enough to cure me."
[*Speaks*] Should lines like these fall into strangers' hands,
And know the brain wherein these numbers bred,
'Twould puzzle them to think the Earl of Rutland
Encased a soul benumbed to wail that song—!
Fear not! These lines shall never see the light
But it relieves my soul to write them down—
Who knocks there?

Enter KEEPER *(with keys.)*

Keeper. Milord of Rutland, there's a man arrived,
As there's no prohibition 'gainst his visit
I brought him with me, an he stands without.
Rutland. An if I were not in the mood to see him—
What sort of man is he, my gentle guard?
Keeper. A weighty man of heavy countenance
Who by his looks wants not for nourishment.
Rutland. [*Aside*] Ha! 'Tis my dummy, master Shaxper—, oh!
Ye gods, to note the smallness of some souls!
'Tis like the crow awaiting in the stubble
The dying kick of a decrepit hind;
To feed upon the carcass e're it rot!
But yesterday I had this man in hand;
To-day he has his fingers at my throat!

Such is the world! Admit him, master gaoler!
An I will hear what bringeth him to me.

Enter SHAXPER.

How, master Shaxper, an what brings thee here?

Shax. Pardon, milord, an if I incommode you,
But circumstance is my apology—

Rutland. Cut short thy words, an state the circumstance!

Shax. O'erreading of the parchment of agreement,
I fail to find provision for events
That since befell to alter our conditions—

Rutland. How our conditions—speak it bluntly out!

Shax. Last week milord was master of Belvoir;
To-day I hear the block awaits milord!

Rutland. An thou darest spout that jargon to my face?

Shax. Last week I was but the plain William Shaxper;
To-day, by patent issued—*"Gentleman!"*
I ask accommodation in your manner
An cease from *"thou'ing"* me.

Rutland. Varlet begone! Before my worthy steel
Play digging angleworms within thy paunch.

[*Passes at him with foil, Shax dancing in fear.*]

Shax. Kneeling Pardon, milord, as if I overstepped
The bounds of due respect, 'twas ignorance,
Consider it the fault of my thick skull!
But not the dictates of an honest heart!

Rutland. Profane not honesty with such a gizzard!
Now, that thy mouth's shot off, unburden thee.
What wouldst thou of me?

Shax. [*Still kneeling*] Milord, the various amounts I had of you
Are, in anticipation of continued
Payments, expended and paid out upon
A dwelling that I bought in Stratford town.
New Place 'tis called; and on my partnership
With Burbage and his people at the Globe

So not a shilling cash remains to me.

Rutland. Rise!

And is not property and partnership,

[*Rises.*]

In a profession that doth yield amain,
As good as coin in pouch, or better still—
An doth thy partnership suffice thee not
To keep on nourishing thy bulging paunch?

Shax. Pardon, milord, an if I got excited
To think thy life were drawing to a close,
I did make bold to seek you here to-day
And beg of you provision for the future.

Rutland. [*Flinging a heavy purse at Shaxper's feet*
There, varlet, fill thy hungry crop with that
An get thee from my sight! But hear me first:
And as thou wabblest back to thy abode
Carry this with thee—an forget it not:
Mark me! The least abrasion of thine oath
Mark thou! is death upon discovery!
Thinkst thou, vile stupid ass, I read ye not?
Nor did provide against my being tied?
Avaunt! thou wretch—an tremble day and night
Until I reassure thee once again!

[*Exit Shax.*

Rutland. [*Continuing*] O, England! What a blot upon thy name!
To harbor such a villain in thy realm—.
'Tis like an ulcer on the fairest neck,
That nauseates, and numbs activity!
And such a tool hath Fate put in my way,
To save the house of Rutland from disgrace!
So low a trade as writer for the rabble,
Who hiss or clap their hands as they may list!
In this respect I plainly see correction,
And for the *Future* I record my plays;
For I do know and feel it in my bones
That the theatre and stage play acting
Will be the recognized amusement of the world!
Held high in honor and in good respect

When bigotry shall die of very shame!

[*Goes to the window and looks out*]

My God! there forms the dread procession now,
That leads milord of Essex to the block!
Thy head, O Essex, forfeit to thy temper.
O, rash Southampton, may this lesson serve!
But, as for me, I'm tired of this world,
And if the Queen condemned me to the axe,
I die content—and in a noble cause!

Enter GAOLER.

What now, my sturdy keeper, what's amiss?
Wouldst thou apprize me of my Essex's fate?
Then know, both he and I are well prepared
To meet a sovereign greater than Queen Bess!

Keeper. I came to draw the curtain, milord Rutland;
To hide from view the agonizing scene
About to be enacted on the green.

Rutland. Fear not, my honest man, my heart is brave;
I would to God I might change place with Essex!
Step hither, friend, they are about to move
And they must walk this way to reach the block
That yonder beckons lovingly to me!

Keeper. I cannot trust myself, milord, to witness
So curt a separation from this world;
An like the Scottish King I faint at blood!
Permit me to retire, noble Rutland.

Rutland. Go friend, an peace be with thee! Here they come!

[*Exit Keeper.*

How rapidly the distance is devoured
Altho the pace is slower than a snail.

[*Cries out of window*]

Cheer up my Essex! Fare thee well, milord!
Banish all thought of what shall now prevail.
Bend all thy mind t'ward heaven and be free!

[*Essex voice from without or arrange to have Essex and procession pass in view*]

Farewell, my Rutland, grieve not at my fate;
I've quelled my soul by banishment of hate.

At yonder grate I hear Southampton's voice,—
That you and he are saved, I do rejoice!
Farewell, sweet lord, pass greetings to my wife,
(The mother of thy partner for life!)
This kerchief I'll leave blood soaked on the green
Present it with my greetings to the Queen!

Rutland. An if my fate reserve to me that grace,
I'll throw thy blood soaked token in her face!
Farewell again, I will retire from view
My eyes refuse to see them murder you!

[*Walks up and down, after a minute's pause a thud is heard*]

Hark! There snapped the link that held the life
Of Robert Devereux, the noble Essex;
May God have mercy on his erring soul!
The nobleness of my brave Essex's mind
By contrast loomed so far above the Queen's,
As the most distant star unto the moon!

[*Sits down and writes, after a pause, walks forward*]

Still do the numbers stumble in my brain
Poor willing paper that must bear this strain!
While here, I cannot work upon my plays,
My name would then be known to all the world,
As Shake-Speare, whom my dummy represents;
But I must write, or I shall go insane
Help me, my genius, put me in the vein!
Stir up my muse and I will sing thy praise;
In honeyed Sonnets will I worship thee;
Immortalize thee to the end of days!
I'll picture thee a youth surpassing fair
Outvieing young Adonis. face and air!
I'll ask thee to bear children in my brain,
The counterfeiting which will be in vain;
Thy beauty shall shine forth, the brightest star,
That all the world shall praise thee from afar!
But when thou call'st, and my poor pen refuse,
I'll remedy the fault and chide my Muse!
When melancholy spells o'ercome me now,
I'll call on thee to ease my fevered brow.

My Genius! Sole companion of my cell;
Thou master-mistress of my muse's passion!
I am thy slave—do with me what thou wilt,
And if the world is shocked at our pure love
We'll look aloft for smiles from God above!
These lines [*referring to paper in his hand*] I wrote,
I really don't know why!
Forever thinking of deceased I.
[*Reads*]. "No longer mourn for me when I am dead
"Than you shall hear the surly sullen bell
"Give warning to the world that I am fled—
"From this vile world with vilest worms to dwell.
"Nay, if you read this line remember not
"The hand that writ it; for I love you so
"That I in your sweet thoughts would be forgot,
"If thinking on me then should make you woe.
"O, if (I say) you look upon this verse
"When I perhaps compounded am with clay,
"Do not so much as my poor name rehearse
"But let your love even with my life decay.
"Lest the wise world should look into your moan,
"And mock you with me after I am gone."
[*Speaks*]. Away! Thou silly offspring of my muse!
[*Flings paper away*]
Thy ring's not natural and I know thee not.
Hast visited my Essex in his grave
To see what's left of him decay and rot?
How dare'st thou trouble me awhilst I rave
Of my fond wife, so sudden overcome,
By dire events born on misfortune's wave
Betokening the setting of my sun!
I've been at fault, not proffering better counsel
To both Southampton and dead Devereux.
Remorse, the cruel tyrant of the mind,
Is pressing red hot irons to my soul
I dare not lay me down upon my couch
For fear my mind be shattered by the strain
With slender promise of a rest—that's vain!

But I must sleep—if only sleep will come,
[*Lies down on couch*]
And then abide until to-morrow's sun!
(*After Pause*) *Enter* SIDNEY.
Sidney. [*Looking around and discovering Rutland asleep*]
My noble kinsman, has thou fall'n so low;
Hast changed thy happy Belvoir for the Tower?
'Tis thus the seed in rashness thou didst sow,
That tore thee from thy wife's hymenial bower;
O, would I could undo what I have done,
And take my kinsman with me to the Queen.
Who could foretell my idle gossip's run
Would lead him to the block upon the green!
This I will do, and if fate prosper me,
I'll to the Queen at once, the time is rife—
I'll do my utmost to set Rutland free
An failing this, attempt to save his life!
As for Southampton he deserves his lot.
He likes me not, so let that hot-head rot!
CURTAIN.

SCENE *III. Throne Room (Whitehall) With Platform for Players.*
QUEEN ELIZABETH *on Throne, Ladies and Courtiers. Enter* SIDNEY.
Queen. How now, my Sidney, hast thou done my errand?
Sid. [*Falters*] My-gracious-queen,-I-have-but-just-returned—
Queen. Why falterest thou, what would'st thou hide from me,
An hast thou been in time to do my bidding?
Speak! is it meet that I, the Sovereign Queen,
Tear from thee piecemeal that thou come'st to say—
Hath my reprieve for Essex been delivered
An hast thou brought Lord Rutland here to court?
Did'st thou procure Southampton fitter quarters?

Speak! Slowpoke! make immediate report!

Sidney. Essex is dead! and Rutland waits without;
Southampton has been quartered in the Beauchamp.

Queen. Wretch! Essex dead? An thou stand'st idly by
With smirking lips to speak it to my face?
Did'st tarry on the way to void my pardon
To favor thine own personal revenge;
To this, thy idle gossip hath beguiled me,
Thy tender-hearted, broken-hearted Queen.
Arrest Lord Sidney!

[*Courtiers lay hands upon Sidney.*]

Away with him an lodge him in the Tower!
The Bloody Tower where the princes smothered
And see ye lose no time upon the way —
His tarrying before cost Essex's head.
[*Aside*] Oh Robert, O my Robert, dead, dead, dead!

Sidney. [*Being led off*]

[*Aside*] Put not thy faith in Princes, wouldst thou thrive.
Instead of wasting time on Rutland, I must strive
To do some grovelling to save myself!

Queen. Permit him not to speak—Away with him!

[*Exit Sid.—Led off.*

Bring Roger, Earl of Rutland to the throne!
[*Aside*] (We'll test his boast that he despises life.)

Enter RUTLAND.

Queen. Come, Rutland, what have you to say?

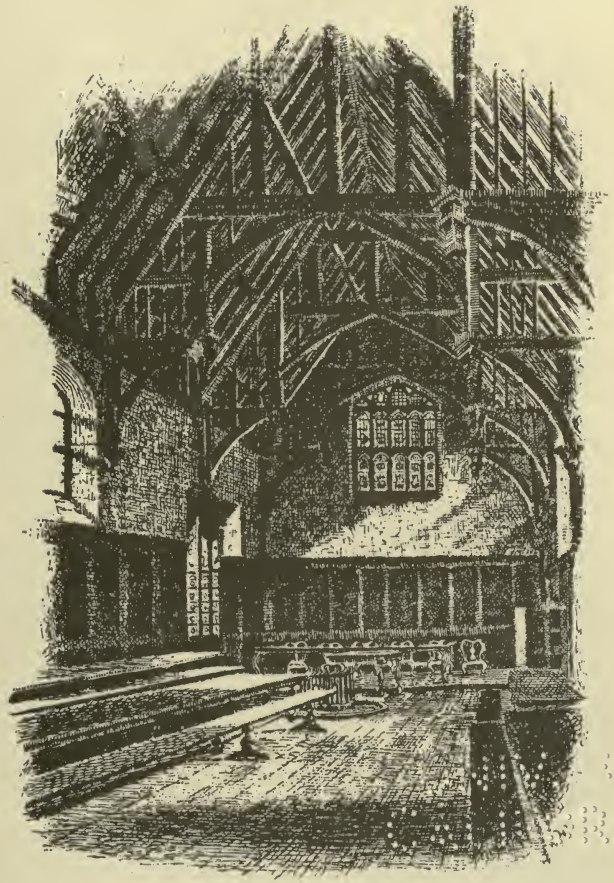
Rutland. Nought that would please my Sovereign's ear to hear!

Queen. How, wouldst thou brave thy Queen upon her throne?
Beware, others have dared, an their poor souls are flown!

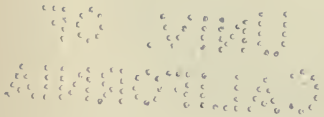
Rutland. It matters little what you do with me.
Bring Essex back to life! Set lord Southampton free!

Queen. Such words to me, milord, beware the block!

Rutland. When Essex fell, my queen, I felt the shock!



GRAY'S INN HALL,
where Rutland frequently attended.



Queen. [*Aside*] (A nobleman! in very truth—I love him!)

[*Aloud*] Would'st thou provoke me then to do my worst?

Rutland. My head is ready, an thy vengeance thirst!

[*to courtiers*]

Take me away, I have no business here;
Back to the Tower to weep on Essex's bier!

[*starts to go away*]

Queen. Hold, lords, arrest him; keep your eyes on him!

I'll make him suffer whilst I take my whim,
To see a play performed e're he be gone.

Courtier. The players are awaiting the command
Of our most gracious Sovereign Queen.

Queen. The show I've ordered set up here to-night,
Is the prelude to "Taming of the Shrew,"
With Master Shaxper as the toping wight.
Have Rutland stay; but keep him well in view!

Enter PLAYERS.

Courtiers Sit Around With RUTLAND *in Center Stage.*

Rutland. [*Aside*] That was a whim to play my skit on Shaxper!
An with my *straw-man* in the title role.
The play describes th' identical position
This dummy Shaxper finds him in to-day
Towards himself, in living in a dream
That promises both fame and wealth in gold.
With all his cunning, yet, ye gods, how shallow!

Queen. When all is ready, let the play begin!

SLY'S DREAM.

SCENE I. *Ale-house* (*left*), *Greensward, etc.*

Enter on Platform Stage, From Inn Door, SLY.

Hostess. A pair of stocks, you rogue!

Sly. You're a baggage, th' Slys are no rogues. Look at the chronicles, the Slys came in with the Conqueror!

Hostess. You'll pay for the glass you've burst!

Sly. No, not a dernier. Go to thy cold bed an warm

thee! (Lies down on the ground and goes asleep.)

Wind Horns—Enter LORD *From Hunting with Train.*

Lord. What's here? One dead or drunk? See, doth he breathe?

1. Hunter. He breathes, milord, were he not warmed with ale,
This were a bed but cold to sleep so soundly.

Lord. O monstrous beast! How like a swine he lies!
Sirs, I will practice on this drunken man.
What think you, if he were convey'd to bed
Wrapped in sweet clothes, rings put upon his fingers
And most delicious banquet by the bed
And brave attendants near him when he wakes
Would not the beggar then forget himself?

2. Hunter. It would seem strange unto him when he wak'd.

Lord. Then take him up, and manage well the jest,
Carry him gently to my fairest chamber
An hang it 'round with all my wanton pictures,
Balm his foul head in warm distilled waters
And burn sweet wood to make the lodging sweet.
Procure me music ready when he wakes
To make a dulcet and a heavenly sound
And if he chance to speak, be ready straight
And with a low submissive reverence
Say "What is it your honor will command?"
Let one attend him with a silver basin
Full of Rosewater bestrewed with flowers,
Another bear the Ewer—the third a diaper
And say "Will't please your lordship cool your hands?"
Someone be ready with a costly suit
And ask him what apparel he will wear
Another tell him of his hounds and horse,
Persuade him that he hath been lunatic
An when he says he is—say that he dreams
For he is nothing but a mighty lord.

1. Hunter. My lord, I warrant you we'll play our part
As he shall think by our true diligence
He is no less than what we say he is.

Lord. Take him up gently and to bed with him
And each one to his office when he wakes.
(Some bear out Sly—Trumpet sounds).

SCENE II. *Bedchamber in the Lord's House.*

(Sly richly appareled in night dress in bed, attendants, etc., per orders of Lord, Scene I).

Sly. [*waking up*] For God sake a pot of small ale.

1. Servant. Will't please your lordship drink a cup of sack?

2. Servant. Will't please your honor taste of these conserves?

3. Servant. What raiment will your honor wear today?

Sly. I am Christopher Sly—Call not me honor or lordship
I never drank sack in my life—Conserves?
Give me conserves of beef—Don't ask about raiment
I have no more doublets than backs, no more stockings than legs.
Nor shoes than feet, ay sometimes more feet than shoes as my toes look through the overleather.

Lord. Heaven cease this idle humor of your honor.
O, that a mighty man of such descent
Of such possessions, and so high esteem
Should be infused with so foul a spirit!

Sly. What, would you make me mad! Am I not Christopher Sly?
Old Sly's son, peddler by birth, by education cord-maker? by transmutation a bear herd, and by present profession a tinker? What. I am not bestraught?

1. Servant. O, 'tis that makes your lady mourn—

2. Servant. O, this is it that makes your servants droop—

Lord. Hence comes it that your kindred shun your house
As beaten hence by your strange lunacy.
O, noble lord bethink you of your birth—
Call home thy ancient thoughts from banishment

And banish hence these abject lowly dreams
Look how thy servants do attend on thee
Each at his office ready at thy beck
Wilt thou have music? hark! Apollo plays.
[*Music plays.*
And twenty caged nightingales do sing
Or, wilt thou sleep? We'll have thee to a couch
Softer and sweeter than the grandest bed
Dost thou love pictures? We will fetch them straight.
Adonis painted by a running brook—;
We'll show thee Io, as she was a maid;
And how she was beguiled and surprised.
Or wilt thou ride? Thy horses shall be trapped
Their harness studded all with gold and pearl.
Thou art a lord and nothing but a lord!

Sly. Am I a lord and have I such a home?
Or do I deram; or have I dreamed till now?
I do not sleep, I see, I hear, I speak,
I smell sweet savours, and I feel soft things—
Upon my life I am a lord indeed
And not a tinker, nor Christopher Sly.
Well bring my kin folk hither to my sight!
And once again—a pot o' the Smallest ale!

2. Servant. Will't please your mightiness to wash your hands?

[*Servants Present Ewer, Basin and Napkin.*

O, how all joy to see your wit restored!
O, that once more you knew but what you are!
These fifteen years you have been in a dream
Or, when you waked, so waked as if you slept.

Sly. These fifteen years? By my fay a goodly nap
But did I never speak of all that time?

1. Servant. O, yes, milord but very idle words
For tho you lay here in this goodly chamber
Yet would you say ye were beaten out of door;
And rail upon the hostess of the house.

Sly. Now, Lord be thanked for my good amends!

All. Amen! Amen! Amen! etc.

Sly. I thank thee thou shalt not lose by it

So I'm a lord, a great and mighty lord!
O, heaven grant I never dream again!
Give me some drink, Boy, drink!

Lord. [*Aside*] Hast put the sleeping potion in?

1. Servant. [*Aside*] Ay, milord, he'll sleep straight way and wake in three hours' time.

Lord. [*Aside*] Then give it him and when he sleeps convey him back to his grassy bed upon the sward—

Sly. Quick with that drink, why keep me waiting here!

[*Servant presents drink.*

Sly. [*Drinks*] Now leave me all—I'm dying for a nap!

Curtain.

Queen. Rutland an how did you enjoy the play—?

Rutland. My mind was with my Essex far away!

Queen. Still harping, and wouldst still defy me, Rutland?
Then know thy doom! Once Roger Earl of Rutland!
We'll call thee "Manners" now
(The name thy fathers bore for years before thee!)
Of all thy titles art thou now bereft
As thou desirest death—thou shalt not suffer't—
But I shall keep thee lingering year by year
Until thy soul escape of its free will
To save all yearning after liberty
I hereby confiscate thy whole estates,
Out of the which I take a heavy fine,
Thirty thousand pounds of English gold!
This fine for writing of a King's dethronement
And had the play performed to rouse my subjects.
I was King Richard, know ye that?
And Essex was to be my Bolingbroke
But by your pen did Richard lose his crown!
Deny it if you dare!

Rutland. What boots denial to my Sovereign?
My life was bound in Essex to the death!
I've done and dared—and Essex, he is slain,

I've naught to wish for—in this life again!
Of worldly goods, estates and all, I'm stripped
And I foresaw my danger ere I tripped.
But, Queen, I'm richer now than ere before;
My Genius will live forever more!
I thank thee gracious Sovereign for thy boon
An cannot reach the tower all too soon!

CURTAIN.

SCENE IV. *Room in Tower (2 Years After.)*
RUTLAND *at Table Writing.*

Rutland. The current of my thoughts do worry me!
They verge to by ways that all end in death.
No steel or sharpened axe doth trouble me;
But sudden, unforeseen, shall still my breath.
And in my dreams one whispers the command
That I end all with my reluctant hand!
No more of this! let's see what I have writ.
[*Rises and Comes Forward.*
An't takes a morbid turn I'll smother it.
My Genius, hearken to my latest wail;
'Tis thee I speak to, o my beauteous boy:
[*Reads*] "O, lest the world should task you to recite,
"What merit lived in one that you should love
"After my death, dear love, forget me quite
"Unless you would devise some virtuous lie
"For you in me can nothing worthy prove,
"To do more for me than mine own desert
"And hang more praise upon deceased I
"That niggard truth would willingly impart.
"O, lest your true love may seem false in this:
"That you for love speak well of me untrue;
"My name be buried where my body is,
"And live no more to shame nor me nor you.
"For I am shamed by that which I bring forth
"And so should you, to love things nothing worth."
[*Speaks*] My lady Rutland, poor forsaken child!
Immured within the walls of old Belvoir,

Forget thy Roger in this dreary Tower,
For fate has warned me of my quick dissolve.
[*Knocking.*
A knock! Ah! who should care to see this gloomy cell
Or thus break in upon my wandering thoughts?
Enter PEMBROKE.
Pembroke! The one man left me in the world,
With mind to grasp the secret of my heart!
[*They embrace.*]
Pemb. I come to bring thee cheer, fair cousin Rutland!
The days of thy annoyance will soon pass.
Tho thy release will come through dire calamity,
Thy happiness I stake 'gainst all the world!
The Queen hath taken ill and now is dying!
Rutland. The Queen is ill? The Queen about to die?
Pemb. 'Tis even so! When I came 'way from Court,
To carry you the news, her mind was wandering!
Rutland. Not half as much as mine I warrant you;
For knew you but the gloomy labyrinth
My mind hath paced in its bewildered state
These last two years I tarried in these walls
Thou'd pity my estate—!
Pemb. What morbid fancies now have seized thy brain?
Rutland. Pembroke, I fear the moon!
[*Pointing to his Forehead.*
Pemb. Rutland, cheer up! The sun now waiting for thee
Will suck these humors like he does the dew,
The gentle rain will freshen up thy mind.
And once without these walls, thou'lt be thyself.
Rutland. Since last I saw thee, several moons now gone,
I eased my mind arranging my affairs.
This task is over and I've hit upon
Two men, the only two upon this earth,
Whom I can trust to manage my estate.

Pemb. Forget you, Rutland, thy estate is void
And has been confiscated to the Crown?

Rutland. Fie, Pembroke, dost thou think me mercenary,
A Rutland put ought value upon gold,
Or vast domains or aught of this vile earth—?
No, Pembroke, mark me well, my loving friend,
[*Pointing to his Forehead.*
I'd have thee play God-father to what's here!
There's somewhat tells me that my dissolution
Is but put off from day to day for me
Until a certain task that breedeth there
[*Pointing at his Forehead*
Shall be performed!

Pemb. An will'st thou state the nature of that task?

Rutland. I cannot, Pembroke, but I'll set it down
In good fair script upon the finest parchment—
I'll seal it on my corpse—here in my breast—
And if the labor prove too much for thee
Provision's made! I've named Montgomery
Thy brother, and my cousin, will assist—

Pemb. [*Aside*] To humor him I undertake the charge.
[*Aloud*] In all things, Roger, mayst rely on me,
An I can answer for Montgomery.

Rutland. I knew thou'lt not refuse thy cousin Rutland
An feel relief in thy security,
And should impediments e'er bar thy way,
Montgomery will order the affair.
Go, Pembroke, stay not in these dreary walls
Give me some leisure to assimilate
The burden of thy ominous report,
The portent of the which will in a measure
Necessitate some alteration—

Pemb. Farewell then, cousin, think upon the days
In store for thee now that the Queen must die.

Rutland. If my remaining here could spare her life
I'd have myself immured within a dungeon,

Where only Death, while bearing her away
Would take me with him for her company.

Pemb. Loyal to the last! Farewell my cousin!

[*Exit.*

Rutland. Elizabeth? an art thou fall'n so low,
That tongue declines to utter thy commands?
Canst thou distinguish now 'twixt friend and foe,
Art seeking refuge at Death's clammy hands?
Long may you live, my Queen! Thy glorious reign
Can ne'er be duplicated here on earth again!

[*Sits Down at Table, Picks up Mss.*

Once more I will peruse these idle lines
To scatter thoughts distracting to my mind.
My Genius, hearken to this doleful song!

[*Reads*] "But be contented—when that fell arrest,
"Without all bail, shall carry me away,
"My life hath in this line some interest
"Which for memorial still with thee shall stay.
"When thou reviewest this, thou dost review
"The very part was consecrate to thee—
"The earth can have but earth, which is his due,
"My spirit is thine—the better part of me.
"So then thou hast but lost the dregs of life,
"The prey of worms—my body being dead;
"The coward conquest of a wretch's knife
"Too base of thee to be remembered.
"The worth of that is that which it contains.
"And that is this—and this with thee remains!"
[*Speaks*] The same dull thought will still pervade my lines;
I must not take my life, my God forbids it!
And that dark fiend within me drives me on!
I must forsake my pen when thus my mind
Unconsciously doth drift into the grave.
I'll write a rondelay if but my muse is kind.
And banish thoughts that of oblivion rave—

[*Sits down to write.*]

Fate is against me, now my quill is spent!
(And I'll not see the gaoler until morn)

Thus fortune wills it that I give full vent
To that dread, doleful topic, I've forsworn!
This proves that a Divinity above us
Shapes all our ends to demonstrate He love us—
For had my brain forged out a rondelay
'Twould be but proof my mind had gone astray!
[*Knocking.*
Another savior knocking at the door
Rutland thou'rt in luck, what would you more?

Enter MONTGOMERY.

Welcome, Montgomery my dear good Coz.,
An how's the world with thee?
Congratulate thyself, for *entre nous,*
You've saved a soul by dropping in on me!

Mont. Happy am I, dear cousin, if I have
Contributed one moment's cheerfulness
To thee in these thy dreary rockbound walls,
I'd suffer anything to see you free—
Forsooth,—remain in these vile walls for thee!

Rutland. Cousin Montgomery I can read thy heart
But words, embryo in my aching breast,
Are not yet born to thank thee as I wish!

Mont. I've news for thee, and all may yet be well!
And hope to see you free within a month,
When Scottish James once issues from his shell
Thy fortune's made!

Rutland. How mean you, cousin, that my fortune's made?

Mont. The Queen hath struck, but she is not yet dead;
The Crown is taking shape of James's head!

Rutland. An could I give my all, my life to boot
To re-imbue Elizabeth with life,
Cousin, I'd do't!

Mont. So speaks a loyal Englishman, dear Roger!
But there are those around the dying Queen,
Now reckoning up their profits on her death!
And those who hate the Scotch the very worst
Are shaping phrases to enchant King James!

Rutland. Cousin, a true heart, e'er despiseth praise
For thoughts engendered by a loving God!
I'd be but like a cur did I not speak
The thoughts implanted with my very life!
Let's change the subject, my Montgomery
For I have weighty words to speak to thee!

Mont. Say on, fair coz, but know before you start
That Pembroke hath informed me of a part,

Rutland. To make it short, the matter's simply this:
The several plays I've written for the stage,
And some of which have played upon the boards,
Are all collected in the manuscript,
And ready for the Stationer's entry.

Mont. I am amazed coz, at thy industry!

Rutland. The labor was but light, the numbers flew
By energy composed by unseen powers;
The seeds I spread upon my parchment grew
As if by magic into fragrant flowers!
Praise not, therefore, my industry or will,
I'm but the medium of One higher still.

[*Pauses—Walks up and down.*

Mont. Pardon the interruption, pray proceed
With the injunction thou would's lay upon me.

Rutland. 'Tis simply this, when all my work is done,
Pembroke and you at once take all control;
Have entry made at Stationer's Hall,
With dedication printed *to you two*—.
Arrange with Burbage, Heminge and Condell
Without producing any manuscript,
To give permission of their several names
To foot the dedication.

Mont. I can and shall procure these signatures.

Rutland. Now mark me well, good coz. Montgomery,
I will that ten full years shall first have flown
Before these manuscripts go into print
And these ten years commencing on the day
When Roger Rutland's body turns to clay—
And should, when these ten years shall have gone by,
Some unforeseen impediment appear,

Fear not delay, for there's no reason why
The matter should not rest another year—

Mont. Rely on Pembroke and myself, dear Coz.
To follow your instructions faithfully.

[*Knocking.*

RUT. *Goes to the Door to Bar Entrance and Door Opens.*

Rutland. What now, I cannot be disturbed; but stay
Who is it, what's his errand?

Gaoler at Door. 'Tis that great hulk, comparisoned as Falstaff.

Rutland. An what knowst thou of Falstaff, good my man?

Gaoler. I saw him at the play the other night,
An recognized his trappings on the spot;
And when I chid him, he made some defense
That burkers robbed his lodgings whilst he slept,
Obliging him to rob the tiring room
For requisite apparel to come here—

Rutland. Montgomery, here is sport! Admit him then!

Mont. All pleases me that drives thy cares away!

Enter SHAXPER *(attired as Falstaff.)*

Rutland. Now, by the Gods, an must these heavy walls
Resound with merriment and laughter?
Ha, ha! an has some fairy hand stretched forth
An placed me on the Globe's resounding boards?

(Mont. also laughts heartily—Shax stands as tho dumbfounded)

Art thou an apparition? Do I dream?
Art thou my William Shaxper, or fat Falstaff?
That I created to amuse Prince Hal?

Shax. Tho in a garb unseemly to my station,
I did consider not the trick of eye—
But hastened to these blood bespotted walls
To bring you tidings of a sad affair!

Rutland. How true the sage remark that the Sublime
Is spaced from Ridicule by but a line!

Mont. Come, cut it short! What is the news thou bringest?

Shax. The Queen is dead!

Rutland. My God!

Mont. You are saved!

CURTAIN.

ACT IV

SCENE I. *Throne Room* (KING JAMES I. *on Throne.*) *Courtiers, Ladies, Pages and Small Platform Stage for Players—Enter* PEMBROKE.

King James. Milord of Pembroke, are arrangements met
For the production of that Falstaff scene
Where pert Prince Hall doth *nail* some monstrous lies?

Pemb. My liege, all is in readiness.

King James. Before we do begin at merry making
Have both the Earls of Rutland and Southampton
And both their ladies brought before me here!

RUTLAND, SOUTHAMPTON, *and* LADIES R. AND S. *also* MONTGOMERY *and* BACON.

King James. Milords, no doubt you've heard of my desire,
That both of you be fully reinstated
To all of that of which you were deprived
By complications in the previous reign—

(They kneel and rise again.)

Rutland. I thank your majesty with all my heart!

Southampton. Words fail me, Sir, but this stout heart of mine
Is yours from this day forth!

Lady South. Your Majesty has caused great happiness—

Lady Rut. That will reflect upon your glorious reign!
King James. An glad I am I've added to my court
Two families, for long the pride of England.
Now, let the play begin, an you milords and ladies,
find places where your view is to advantage.
(General bustle arranging seats and stage for players.)
[*Exit Pembroke and Montgomery.*

GADSHILL SCENE.

SCENE. *Boar's Head Tavern.*
PRINCE HAL *and* POINS *Seated at Table.*
Enter FALSTAFF, GADSHILL, BARDOLPH *and* PETO.

Poins. Welcome, Jack, where hast thou been?
Falstaff. A plague on all cowards, I say, and a vengeance too, marry, and amen!
Give me a cup of sack, boy. [*Boy Brings Drink.*
Ere I lead this life long, I'll sew nethersocks
An mend them, an foot them, too—
A plague of all cowards! Give me a cup of sack.
Rogue—Is there no virtue extant?
(He drinks and then continues)
You rogue, there's lime in this sack too.
There's nothing but roguery to be found in villainous man—
Yet a coward is worse than a cup of sack with lime in it; a villainous coward. Go thy ways,
Old Jack, die when thou wilt. If manhood be not forgot upon earth—then I am a shotten herring.
There live not three good men unhanged in England and one of them is fat and grows old.
I would I were a weaver—I could sing psalms or anything—A plague of all cowards! I say still.

Prince. How now, woolsack, what mutter you?
Falstaff. A King's Son! If I do not beat thee out of thy kingdom with a dagger of lath, and drive all thy subjects afore thee like a flock of wild geese, I'll never wear hair on my face 'more—You Prince of Wales!

Prince. Why, you villainous round man, what's the matter?

THE MURDER OF RUTLAND,
see King Henry VI, part 3.

Falstaff. Are you not a coward? Answer me that—and Poins there?

Poins. Zounds! ye fat paunch, an ye call me coward, I'll stab thee!

Falstaff. I call thee coward? I'll see thee hanged e're I call thee coward;

But I'd give a thousand pounds I could run as fast as thou canst. You are straight enough in the shoulders, you care not who sees your back—Call you that backing of your friends? A plague upon such backing! Give me them that will face me—Give me a cup of sack—I'm a rogue if I drank to-day.

Prince. O, villain! thy lips are scarce wiped since thou drinkest last!

Falstaff. All's one for that (*drinks*) A plague of all cowards, still say I;

Prince. What's the matter?

Falstaff. What's the matter! There be four of us here have taken a thousand pounds this morning!

Prince. Where is it, Jack? Where is it?

Falstaff. Where is it! taken from us it is—a hundred upon poor four of us—

Prince. What, a hundred, man?

Falstaff. I am a rogue if I was not at half sword with a dozen of them two hours together—I have 'scaped by miracle—I am eight times thrust through the doublet; four through the hose; my buckler cut through and through. My sword hacked like a hand saw: Ecce Signum! I never dealt better since I was a man: All would not do—A plague of all cowards! Let them speak (*pointing to Gadshill*). Bardolph—Peto, an if they speak more or less than Truth, they are villains and the sons of darkness.

Prince. Speak, Sirs, how was it?

Gads. We four set upon some dozen—

Falstaff. Sixteen at least, my lord.

Gads. And bound them.

Peto. No, no, they were not bound—

Falstaff. You rogue, they were bound, every man of them.

Gads. As we were sharing—some six or seven fresh men set upon us—

Falstaff. And bound the rest; and then came in the other—

Prince. What, fought ye with them all?

Falstaff. All? I know not what you call all; but if I fought not with fifty of them I am a bunch of radish. If there were not two or three and fifty upon old Jack, then I am no two legged creature!

Prince. Pray, heaven, you have not murdered some of them.

Falstaff. Nay, that's past praying for. I have peppered two of them. Two I am sure I have paid—two rogues in buckram suits. I tell thee what, Hal, if I tell thee a lie, spit in my face and call me a horse. Thou knowest my old ward. Here I lay, and thus I bore my point. Four rogues in buckram let drive at me—

Prince. What! Four? Thou saidst but two even now.

Falstaff. Four, Hal, I told thee four.

Poins. Ay, ay, he said four—

Falstaff. These four came all afront and mainly thrust at me. I made no more ado and took all their seven points in my target thus——

Prince. Seven? Why there were but four even now—

Poins. Ay, four in buckram suits.

Falstaff. Seven by these hilts, or I am a villain else—

Prince. Prithee, let him alone, we shall have more anon—

Falstaff. Dost thou hear me, Hal?

Prince. Ay, and mark thee too, Jack.

Falstaff. Do so, for it is worth the listening to. These nine men in buckram I told thee of—

Prince. So, two more already.

Falstaff. ——their points being broken, began to give ground; but followed me close; came in foot and hand; and, with a thought, seven of the eleven I paid.

Prince. O, monstrous! Eleven buckram men grown out of two!

Falstaff. But three knaves in kendal green came at my back and let drive at me; for it was so dark Hal, that thou couldst not see thy hand.

Prince. These lies are like the father that begets them, gross as a mountain, open, palpable—why, thou clay brained paunch; thou knot pated fool, thou greasy tallow keech—

Falstaff. What! art thou mad? Is not the truth the truth?

Prince. Why how couldst thou know these men in kendal green when it was so dark thou couldst not see thy hand?

Come, tell us your reason? What sayest thou to this?

Poins. Come your reason, Jack, your reason.

Falstaff. What, upon compulsion? No, were I at the Strapado, or all the racks in the world I'd not tell upon compulsion! If reasons were as plentiful as blackberries I would give no man a reason upon compulsion, I.

Prince. I'll be no longer guilty of this sin: this sanguine coward, this horseback breaker; this huge hill of flesh——

Falstaff. Away, you starveling; you eel skin; you dried neat's tongue; you stockfish—O, for breath to utter what is like thee! You tailor's yard; you sheath; you bow case; you vile standing tuck,—

Prince. Well, breathe awhile, and then to it again, and when thou hast tired thyself in base comparisons, hear me speak but this—

Poins. Mark, Jack.

Prince. We two saw you four set on four, you bound them; then did we two set on you four, outfaced you from your prize, and have it—and, Falstaff, you carried your paunch away as nimbly as with quick dexterity and roared for mercy—and still ran and roared as ever I heard bull calf. Ha,

hack thy sword and say it was in fight!

Falstaff. Ha, ha! I knew ye as well as he that made ye—

Why, hear ye my masters, was it for me to kill the heir apparent? Should I turn upon the true prince?

Why thou knowest I am as valiant as Hercules; but beware of instinct.

The lion will not touch the true prince. Instinct is a great matter;

I was a coward on instinct. I shall think the better of myself and thee during my life. I for a valiant lion, and thou for a true prince. But, lads, I am glad you got the money.

Hostess, clap to the doors—watch to-night—pray to-morrow.

Gallants, lads, boys, hearts of gold, all titles of good fellowship come to you! What, shall we be merry?

Shall we have a play extempora?

Prince. Content; and the argument shall be thy running away.

Falstaff. Ah, no more of that. Hal, an thou lovest me.

Curtain.

Re-enter PEMBROKE *and* MONTGOMERY.

Rutland. Cousins, you were delayed, I take it,

An that you have missed the play but now concluded.

Pemb. We were in time to see the latter end—

Mont. But tarried at the door not to intrude.

Lady South. How like the actor Shaxper is that Falstaff!

No need for him to wig and dress the part.

Rutland. That is the secret of the author's art,

In his successfully depicting life!

Southampton. And not resemble pasteboard manikins

Hung upon wires for manipulation!

King James. Milord Montgomery, kindly look without and if the author has not yet departed

Bring him to me, I would have speech with him.

Mont. I will return with Master Shaxper in a minute. [*Exit Mont.*

King James. (to Rutland) "That Falstaff is a character I dote upon, milord Rutland, and on the morrow we shall have the 'The Merry Wives.'"

Rutland. The character, I take it, is played without the blemishes that art would bring.
For to the audiences at the show, as 'mongst his friends at home or on the street the actor and his Falstaff are the same.

Enter SHAXPER *and* MONTGOMERY.

Shax. The King,—the King has sent for me——
(aside) The Lord defend my making any slips.

King James. Step hither, Master Shaxper, thou playst well.
How long a time hast thou devoted to it?

Shax. The part of Falstaff—or the art of playing?

Rutland. (aside) The part of Falstaff played he all his life—

King James. Stage playing as a living; a profession.

Shax. Since ninety-three or thereabouts, I reckon,
An may it please your gracious majesty.

King James. An laborest long and hard at writing plays?
Like an automaton worked by the muses
Produces stuff rythmetical as thine—?

Shax. 'Tis so, my King, the Lord is good to me!

Rutland. (aside) An if the King but knew the lord he meant—

King James. To satisfy a fancy of my mood
I pray you take some paper and a quill,
And write me such an offspring of thy brain
The while we stand and wait upon thy muse!
(*to courtier*) Bring paper, ink and pen without delay!

Rutland. (*aside*) Poor fellow, now indeed I pity him!

(paper, pen and ink are brought—)

Shax. sits at table and muses (near front)—

Shax. (aside) Pray God in Heaven, help me out in this;

I cannot write much more than mine own name
And that resembles more a chicken's scratch
That puts the art of writing to the shame.
Thank God! I have it. 'Tis an epilogue—
I did compose an epilogue unto the "Tempest"
This Master Jonson did write down for me,
When I feigned laziness, when he did ask—
I know the lines by heart. But aye, to write them,
Stumps my ability!
I'll make some scratches to resemble script,
And sign my name as all the world shall know it!
This epilogue were easier to be lipped
Then make a scrawl like this and then to show it!
Here goes! *(feigns writing)*

King James. (to Rutland) It doth appear his muse is not at home
Or is the fellow writing a whole tome?

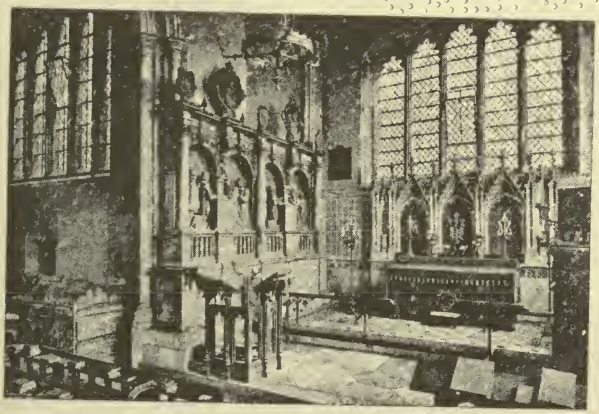
Rutland. Ascribe delaying to his nervousness
(aside) Whate'er he writes is sure to be a mess!

Shax. (rising and holding paper)
I beg my gracious King for his permission
To speak the lines my muse hath brought to me.

King James. Aye, then recite them but give me the script.

Shax. It is an epilogue I had intended
To grace the ending of my latest play.
'Tis of a tempest with much magic blended.
The play and this—will be in print one day.
(Hands Paper to King.)

(Recites)
"Now my charms are all o'erthrown
"And what strength I have's my own
"Which is most faint—now 'tis true
"I must be here confin'd by you
"Or sent to Naples. Let me not
"Since I have my dukedom got
"And pardoned the deceiver, dwell
"In this bare island by your spell
"But release me from my bands



ST. PETER AD VINCULA,
where Essex lies buried
within the Tower Walls.

"With the help of your good hands."

Rutland. (aside) What execrable jargon is this
An must my gold thus be alloyed
With such base metal?

King James. The muse, my good master Shaxper, has not been
Quite as propitious as would be her wont.
I miss the rhythm and the silver ring
As in the plays, where numbers fairly sing!

Shax. Indeed, I'm helpless here in all this glare;
'Tis my indisposition lays me bare!
(*aside*) When will this end—O, I am on the rack!
I hope the King gives me that paper back.

King James. (looking at writing on paper)
In looking at the writing on this sheet
Instead of quill—reminds me of chicken's feet—
God help us, if the plays that thou hast writ
In all your manuscripts resemble it!
For not a word of this can I make out.
Thy labor's difficult without a doubt.
Go, Master Shaxper, at another time
Thou furnish better—both in script and rhyme!

CURTAIN.

SCENE II. *Room in Belvoir Castle.*
Seat of the Earl of Rutland. Nine Years After.
(June 26, 1612.)

Rutland seated at table near a statue of Pallas with Spear.

Rutland. The day has come, and it is none too soon
To carry out what long was in my mind.
Hold Rutland guiltless—blame it on the moon
That shone upon my pact when it was signed!
The plays and other numbers that I've writ
Must never own the author of their birth
The house of Rutland dare not own a wit
Who pandered to the common rabble's mirth.
Of all intention Rutland hath no blame

My muse flowed from an overeager quill
That balked at nothing but at Rutland's name—
Was independent of the writer's will.
(Walks Back and Forth) Takes Mss. From the Table.
An if these lines e'er meet with curious eyes
That cannot fathom their express intent—
'Tis just as well, their portent never dies.
They never could be read as they were meant!
My beauteous boy, my Genius, thee I praise!
Thou sole companion of my Tower days.
To thee, my various sonnets are addressed;
To thee, my Genius, was my love expressed,
To thee, thou Master-Mistress of my passion
Was my devotion thus expressed in song;
To thee, sweet boy, who understood the fashion
To thee, my Genius, does myself belong!
Let vicious and lascivious minds endeavor,
By misinterpretation point to lust;
Degenerate minds will not hold sway forever,
A newborn era will break through their crust!
The several stanzas to my Muse I've penned
Speak plainly—so that all may comprehend.
This dame was fair and curst, inconstant ever
And oft severely hampered my endeavor!
To Pembroke, cousin and executor,
Goes everything my Muse has made me write
'Twas he that recognized my Genius, when
That beauteous boy brought both of us delight!
My Genius 'tis, whom I've immortalized,
In all the glorious children of my brain,
In Hamlet and in Lear he crystallized,
The jewels of his philosophic reign!
Yes, my sweet boy, my Genius, 'tis to thee—
I bring in these lines immortality:—

(reads)

"Not marble—not the gilded monuments
"Of princes shall outlive this powerful rhyme.
"But you shall shine more bright in these contents,
"Than unswept stone besmeared with sluttish time.

"When wasteful war shall statues overturn,
"And broils root out the work of masonry,
"Nor Mars his sword, nor war's quick fire shall burn
"The living record of your memory.
"'Gainst death and all-oblivious enmity
"Shall you pace forth—your praise shall still find room,
"Even in the eyes of all posterity,
"That wear this world out to the ending doom.
"So, till the judgment that yourself arise,
"You live in this, and dwell in lover's eyes."

(speaks)

When ages hence these lines again see light
Their understanding still will hover dark
And philosophic fancy in its flight
May strike these stars and not emit a spark!

Enter LADY RUTLAND.

(Closely observing Rutland, who is walking to and fro whilst speaking Prospero's lines in "Tempest.")

Rutland. "Ye elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes and groves
"And ye that on the sands with printless foot
"Do chase the ebbing Neptune—do not fly him
"When he comes back * * *
"To the dread rattling thunder have I given fire
"And rifted Jove's stout oak with his own bolt * * *
"By my so potent art—
"But this rough magic I here abjure
"And when I have requir'd some heavenly music
"Which even now I do *(soft music)*
"To work my end upon their senses that
"This airy charm is for, I'll break my staff,
"Bury it certain fathoms in the earth
"And, deeper than did ever plummet sound
"I'll drown my book."

Lady Rut. Do still these darksome humors trouble thee?
Forbear, O Roger, thou art killing me.
Cannot I drive thy morbid thoughts away?

Then let thy wife fall likewise to their prey.
These walls tho lined with the brightest gold
Appear, with thee so ill, decayed and old;
Come, Roger, bear thee up and end this strife;
Admit some sunshine in thy dreary life.

Rutland. Elizabeth, thou angel of my soul!
Thinkst thou I am the author of my woe?
No, sweetheart, search where ominous thunders roll,
Or in the ocean's depth where lurks my foe;
Far beyond reach of those soft hands of thine,
And too elusive for the grasp of mine.

Lady Rut. Nay, let us walk about the garden path,
And cull some fragrant flowers growing there.
We'll thus escape thy jealous demon's wrath,
While sucking in the fresh healthgiving air—
Come, Roger, let thy wife not plead in vain.
Invite some sunshine to thy gloomy brain!

Rutland. I'm chained, my love, I cannot stir a step;
Go forth alone and leave me to my doom.
Too late, my darling wife, now for regret
I'm doomed, my wife, to never leave this room.

Lady Rut. Had God but given us a little child,
I feel thy mind would ne'er have been beguiled!
I'll go before, and there prepare a seat,
And you will come to me. Now, won't you, sweet?

Rutland. Go, my Elizabeth, if I have strength
To break the bonds now holding me in check,
My last endeavor may succeed in length
When I will fly to meet thy yearning beck!

Lady Rut. I go, my Roger, keep me not too long.
[*Exit Lady Rut.*

Rutland. Farewell, fair girl, we'll never meet again!
The Demon calleth. All resistance vain!
(takes vial from bosom)
This brings to mind the words young Hamlet spake:
To be or not to be; to sleep, to wake,
To suffer slings and arrows of outrageous fortune
Or to take arms agaist them.
E'en then when Goddess Pallas did dictate

Those lines to me in my receptive state
I felt their drift work through the thick walled Tower.
That this would be my last—my dying hour!
The month of June, when all the world is gay,
Hath been ordained to see me pass away!
Even then my ever beckoning muse did fix
(sits down)
The very day—*to-day! June twenty-six!*
Farewell, Elizabeth, a long farewell!
(drinks from vial)
E'en now I hear *to-morrow's tolling bell!*
(reclines on couch)
At last, thou Demon, thus art thou defied—
Thy triumph came when Rutland Shake-Speare died!
(Dies.)

Enter LADY RUTLAND.

Lady Rut. I could not tarry, Roger,—ah, he sleeps!
(Kisses him)
So still, so soft, so calm—but, O, the dread!
Roger! Wake up! my husband, thou art dead!
What's life to me with Rutland in his grave.
The vial's still half full; I will be brave!
(Drinks) Kneels by Rutland, embracing him.
Thus let us rest whatever may betide,
In close embrace we sleep hence side by side!
(Dies.)

EPILOGUE.

The Statue of Pallas, Spear in Hand, Descends From Pedestal and Comes Forward.

Pallas. Know, I am Pallas, which denoteth "Shake"
And this, my spear, is ever at my side
'Twas I who made the noble Rutland take
My name 'neath which his writings were to hide!
His soul, now fled, hath lodged within my shell
To tarry, whilst I point out with this lance
The Truth, and in Truth's name I speak to tell
'Twas "brandished at the face of ignorance!"
Three hundred years 'tis now the Truth lay dead
Whilst Literature worshipped at another's shrine
Where blind led the blind and ignorance was fed
I, standing by, till now would give no sign!
For every year of Rutland's stay on earth,
Until there stormed a "Tempest" in his brain,
He wrote *One* play of excellence and worth
And our "Prospero" ne'er touched pen again!
The day hath come, and Truth compels my speech:
Our author lies near beautiful Belvoir!
Now let the Owls 'round Stratford churchyard screech,
Whilst Pallas bids the public au revoir!

L'ENVOI

THE BIRTH OF THE FOLIO

Describing how the Works of William Shakes-Speare came to be published in the great Folio of 1623

and

Why a monument and bust were erected in the Church at Stratford-on-Avon, near the grave of WILLIAM SHAXPER, *Dummy and Strawman for* ROGER MANNERS, *5th Earl of Rutland.*

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

PHILIP HERBERT, *Earl of Montgomery*
WILLIAM HERBERT, *Earl of Pembroke* — *Cousins and Literary Executors to Rutland.*

HENRY WRIOTHESLY, *Earl of Southampton*..*Friend and kinsman of Rutland*

BEN JONSON..*Pensioner and Scribe of the Earl of Pembroke*

JOHN HEMINGE, HENRY CONDELL — *Fellow actors of the late Dummy Shaxper, and who signed Jonson's Dedication and Address.*

MARTIN DROESHOUT..*Engraver, who engraved portrait for First Folio*

GERALD JOHNSTON..*Sculptor, who cut bust, now in Stratford Church*

LEONARD DIGGES..*Town wit who sells his signature for eulogy*

SIR FRANCIS BACON..*a day before his conviction as corruptionist*

THE BIRTH OF THE FOLIO.

ACT I, SCENE 1.

9 YEARS AFTER RUTLAND'S DEATH

Room in Barnard's Castle, Town Residence of the Earl of Pembroke.

Pembroke, sitting at a great table upon which is piled a mass of manuscripts which he is assorting.

Pembroke. Tis now nine years since Rutland passed away,
And, in accordance with his last commands,
The plays he wrote shall see the light of day;
The manuscripts put in the printer's hands.
The last he wrote, by all consent, the best,
Shall, in the Folio, lead all the rest.
Because it is his own biography
Writ by himself for all posterity.
The "Tempest" where Prospero with his wand
Had most his Genius, "Ariel" in command;
Who, sighing for his Freedom, flew away,
To let our "Rutland-Shake-Speare" turn to clay.
To order all this precious data here,
Will occupy the best part of a year.
And the completed book we all shall see
In anno Sixteen Hundred, twenty-three!
But there is work before me, and I have
Asked lord Montgomery, who shares my trust,
To see Ben Jonson and engage his pen,
To screen the truth from all our fellowmen.
For Rutland's last injunction was to me
"His name be buried where his body be!"
The banner of his works may be unfurled
If Rutland's name be hidden from the world!
Southampton's help, the King and State debars
In whose defence he is engaged in wars.
But he insists to share in the expense
In publishing the Folio's contents.
Two printers upon whom I now can count.
Are Isaac Jaggard, and one Edward Blount,
And here before me lie the precious plays,

That will outshine the Sun's most brilliant rays!
[*Knocking*] Who knocks there?

Enter ATTENDANT.

Has lord Southampton sent—or is he here?

Attendant. The Earl is here, my lord, may I admit him?

Pembroke. By all means, ask his lordship to come up.
I cannot leave the work I have in hand.

[*Exit Attendant.*

Of all my friends, 'tis him I want to see,
Invaluable may be his help to me.

Enter SOUTHAMPTON.

My hearty thanks, my lord, for finding time
To call on me before you start for Holland.

Southampton. You know, dear Pembroke, I'd not go to sea
Without first calling here to bid good-bye.
I see you're buried in your work to-day
And hope my visit may not interfere.

Pembroke. Quite on the contrary, I'm glad you came
For there is something you can do for me—;
These are the manuscripts of Rutland's plays
The ordering of which I am about.
'Twill take a year or more before I'll be prepared
To turn these papers over to the printers.

Southampton. And what is it that you wish me to do?

Pembroke. You're off for Holland now—when you arrive,
Enquire out one Gerald Johnston for me.
He is a sculptor whom I've known for years,
He frequently has been in London.
You'll no doubt find him somewhere near the Hague.

Southampton. I know the man you mean—and where to find him,
The last I heard, he was in Amsterdam,
What would you with him, when I find the man?

Pembroke. Send him to me, to Barnard's Castle here;
I have some work I want that man to do.
And let him have what money he requires

Which I'll return by him when he is through.

Southampton. 'Tis well, you'll have this Johnston with you
Within, say, fifteen days from now.

Pembroke. My thanks, my lord, you know without rehearsal.
'Tis only fair that I should now inform you
Just why I want that Sculptor Johnston here.
I want a monument set up at Stratford
To lead the world astray on Rutland's works.
His plays will soon be ready for the printer;
Before the book appears, I want to show
That by some monument the name of "Shake-Speare"
Has been recorded for posterity
As Rutland's name must not be known in this
I compromise by going to his dummy—
Where, *near* this Shaxper's grave I do intend
To place a composite of man and master.

Southampton. A composite? what may you mean by that?

Pembroke. A face that's neither Rutland's nor his dummy's
But having features prominent in each.
You see, this Shaxper was but little known;
Now five years dead his features are forgotten.
And Rutland—No one mentions that name more.

Southampton. Alas, poor Roger is now nine years dead!
Pray do not bind his Venus and Adonis,
Nor his Lucrece, within the Folio.
These two are mine, especially presented
To me, when Rutland just began to write.

Pembroke. You're right, Southampton, I will leave these out
As well as all the Sonnets he has writ—
These and the minor poems from his pen
Should be presented in a separate book.

Southampton. Mine were the only two he ever signed,
And therefore held in reverence by me.

How will you manage with the dedication,
And how get odes and poems of respect,
To print before the preface of the Folio?

Pembroke. You'll be amused to hear how I work that.
You know for years I've pensioned rare Ben Jonson
Whose pen is servile to my every wish.
While Jonson knows that Shaxper was but dummy
He but suspects that Rutland was the man
Who used the nom de plume of "William Shake-Speare"
I have a padlock hung on Jonson's lips,
And own the key that frames his lines or speech
On everything pertaining to Shake-Speare.

Southampton. To keep this padlock in good working order
And keep his fingers nimble for the pen
Must cost you somewhat through the year, I wot.

Pembroke. Not much; but twenty pounds a year, at Christmas,
And that much more for special work for me.

Southampton. Farewell, my Pembroke, I must now be gone
I'll send that Holland Sculptor here to you,
As soon as ever I can find the man.

Pembroke. Farewell, Southampton, may good luck attend you
And let me hear from you whene'er you can.

[*Exit Southampton.*

This monument is an idea of mine
To throw the lynx-eyed printers off the track.

Enter Ben Jonson.

Holloa! good master Jonson, how's with thee?

Jonson. True to the minute of my lord's appointment
Do I present myself—prepared for work.

Pembroke. 'Tis well, good Ben,—now hearken to my words,
And then, accommodate your actions to them.
First: I know you have your own suspicions
As to the dramatist who wrote these plays—
My wish is, that, under no circumstance,

You speak the name you have in mind;
To me or anyone you know, upon this subject.
Second: I want you to prepare a poem
So larded with ambiguity
That all who read it may accept,
The praise you give, for dummy Shaxper.
Between the lines, however, of this poem,
I wish it boldly stated that the man
Who wrote the plays of "William Shake-Speare"
Was other than the man from Warwickshire.

Jonson. 'Tis to your interest, I keep up the farce,
'Tis well—Obedience to your orders are
My privilege and delight, my lord of Pembroke,
I will bestir myself and take my leave—I'll warrant!

Pembroke. Remember, Jonson, not one word to me or anyone
Of thy suspicion—I wish that subject dead.

Jonson. Your commands in all things, my lord, are law to me!

Pembroke. 'Tis well, Ben; then there is another thing—
I wish you to draw up a letter,
A letter as ambiguous as the ode I want,
Wherein the Actors Heminge and Condell
Make dedication of the Folio to me, and to my brother.

Jonson. I follow you, my lord.

Pembroke. And yet another writ I want of thee,
Composed upon the model of that letter.
It is to be an "Address to the Public"
And also signed by Heminge and Condell.

Jonson. 'Twill be a paraphrase, my lord, of that.

Pembroke. I have engaged the graver, Martin Droeshout,
To make a picture for the Folio,
To this, I'd wish you write some lines as well.
This picture, mark me, Ben, is composite
Of features of this Shaxper, you remember,
And of the man whose name must be a secret.
I have prepared this portrait with great pains

And when thou see'st it, Ben, thou'llt do it justice.

[*Hands him a purse.*]

Jonson. 'Tis well, my lord, I'll call again to-morrow,
And bring the drafts I shall prepare meantime.

[*Exit Jonson.*

Pembroke. So that is off my mind, and rare Ben Jonson,
Is just the man I want in this affair!
He knows it's Rutland and he knows I know it
But I have curbed all confidence with me.
'Tis time young Droeshout called about the picture,
That I've prepared to front the Folio.
I hear him now, so let's to work upon it.

Enter MARTIN DROESHOUT.

'Tis well you came, young man, for I must off.

Droeshout. I'm prompt, my lord, and shall not keep you long.
Pray, let me see the work that you wish done.

Pembroke. This is the portrait that I want engraved

[*Showing a picture.*]

Droeshout. But that is not a portrait of a man!
That bulging forehead and that wooden stare
Hath nothing human in it, by my trow!
I am afeared, my lord, that I shall fail
To please your worship, with my budding art,
And lose the prestige of your good report.

Pembroke. Fear not, thou sprouting artist, that thy name
Will suffer from aught work thou do'st for me.
For, contrawise thou wilt secure a fame,
That will resound for many a century.
The portrait that I here present to you
Is not of one man—nay, it shows thee two.
Make but a 'graving to resemble it;
The book it decorates, will show the wit.
Dost see that line beneath the right hand chin
Why, that's the mask that covers what's within;
Thy art will shine in what thou mak'st of this,
Then let the world make its analysis.

Take it, young man, and do the best you can,
For in this composite you hide a man
Whom all the literary world engages
To be the Phoenix of succeeding ages!

Droeshout. I go, my lord, and take this hybrid with me,
And bring the plate to you within a month.

[*Exit Droeshout.*

Pembroke. So much accomplished—now to gay Whitehall
Where contrast shows the humor of it all!

Enter MONTGOMERY.

What now, my brother, is it time to go
To dance attendance at the Royal Show?

Montgomery. 'Tis past the time by half an hour now;
Make haste, my lord, the King will miss us,
We'll leave these manuscripts just as they are,
And on the morrow I'll assist you with them.

Pembroke. 'Twill take something to get them straightened out,
But with your help we'll soon accomplish it.

CURTAIN.

SCENE II. *Ben Jonson's Lodgings.*
(*Jonson writing at table, center.*)

Jonson. They all need Ben, when something's to be done,
I'll warrant ye!
Of all God's noblemen, give me rare Ben!
Let them have titles, gold, estates, domains;
They haven't got what Ben has—Brains!
No wonder, when they're up a tree,
They hem and ha' and come to me—
"Good master Ben;" "rare Ben;" "one word,"
And then their whims, are so absurd!
Here's Pembroke, he's my golden goose;
For him I'll do, if Hell breaks loose!
And I just humor this good lord,

To find a welcome at his board—
Just now lord Pembroke needs a pen,
There's none in England save—rare Ben!
He knows it—and his "angels" tell,
By jingling—that Ben does it well!
They know it at the Mermaid too,
That Ben's a master through and through!
There's Shaxper, poof!—now dead five years;
Must now be pulled up by the ears
To have his lunkhead braced to pose
For Rutland's forehead, chin and nose,
To make a life-like counterfeit
Of "Shake-Speare's" Mundane master wit!
Now Pembroke wants ten lines on that,
And fit both heads beneath one hat.
The world to see the Stratford man,
While those who know, can understand
That Roger Rutland wrote while here
Over the nom de plume:—"Shake-Speare!"
This portrait with the wooden stare
Will fright the timid anywhere;
Now let us see what Ben can do
To praise this composite for you—.
Here's what I've writ—Now mark my wit:

[*Reads*] *"The figure that thou here seest put,*
"Was for the gentle Shakespeare cut;"
I call the thing a *"figure"* there,
Because of its inhuman stare!
The *"gentle"* in the line below
Gives that old Stratford man a show.
The name "Shakespeare," the nom-de-plume,
The mystic Rutland did assume.
While at the whole I have my fling—
To both, alike, my praises ring!
[*Reads*] *"Wherein the graver had a strife*
"With Nature, to outdo the life."
In this I chide the poor engraver,
For fighting Nature to enslave her.
[*Reads*] *"O, could he but have drawn his wit,*

"As well in brass as he had hit—his face."
Had Droeshout this ability
'Twould show Shaxper's senility.
" * * * *The print would then surpass,*
"All that was ever writ in brass."
Poor Shaxper's literary coin,
Was always "brass" and fit to join
His frequent tavern repartee,
He oft indulged in when with me.
[*Reads*] *"But since he cannot, Reader look,*
"Not on his picture, but his book."
In this I blame the graver's art,
In that his work does not impart
A knowledge of the look and face
Of this wit-master of our race.
I wonder will lord Pembroke note
The ridicule of what I wrote.
The mind that lets this jewel pass
Must be composed of melted brass!
Ha! I almost forgot—I have an appointment to meet Shaxper's old fellow-actors, Heminge and Condell, here about this time, and get them to sign their names to the letter of dedication and the "Address to the Public" that are to preface the great Folio.
Here they come, I hear their footsteps on the stair.

Enter HEMINGE *and* CONDELL.

Halloa, Heminge, and friend Condell, what cheer?
Ye're prompt, my friends, and here is entertainment.

Heminge. We came, good Ben, to know in what affair
Our slight assistance may be serviceable?

Condell. And to assure you that we'll be delighted
To help you, if we can—What is it, Ben?

Jonson. You both remember Shaxper, don't you, boys?

Heminge. Shaxper? let's see, oh, him from Warwickshire!

Condell. Of course, we do—he's dead about ten years.

Jonson. O, no! but five, Condell; but five short years;
And yet almost forgotten! What a world!

Heminge. But, Ben, what was there about this Shaxper then,
That he should still be troubling our minds?
Condell. He was no actor, when it comes to acting,
And as to money—he held on to that;
But what about this man, that you are after?
Jonson. Don't you remember, when he got his title,
His coat of Arms as "gentleman," by fraud?
And how we called him "gentle" in derision,
Which doubtless those who knew not of the man
Accepted as an emblem of his manner?
Heminge. Indeed, we do, now that you speak of it.
Condell. How "gentle" Shaxper hounded Clayton out of town
For failing payment of a loan for fifteen shillings!
O, yes, indeed—that Shaxper—well, Ben, what of him?
Jonson. Do you remember, how we all had him suspected
Of standing dummy for some nobleman
Who wrote those high class plays we all admired?
Heminge. Of course, but, pshaw! this Shaxper couldn't write
Condell. Why, even his own name, we'd have to trace it—
When he'd sign vouchers for his weekly wages!
Jonson. Well, boys, forgive him,—Mammon was his God!
I saw him on the day before he died—
I was at Stratford then with Michael Dayton
And we drank heavily, I'll warrant ye!
The next day Shak. was dead—we came away—
The thing I've now in hand is simply this:
A friend of the mysterious author "Shake-Speare"
(Which was the nom de plume to which he wrote.)
Has gathered all his plays and comedies
With view to publishing the same next year—
The Earl of Pembroke is the friend I mean—
And he wants you to sign the dedication
And an address unto the general reader,

Both these I have prepared and now are ready
And I would thank you both to sign the same.

Heminge. If that is all, why, let me have thy quill.

Condell. The Earl of Pembroke, Ben, shall have his will!
Don't bother reading o'er the thing to us—

Heminge. Let's have them, we will sign without a fuss.

(they sign the two papers)

Jonson. You two are thoroughbreds, I'll warrant ye!
I thought you'd hem and ha'—or take your time
And see what's in it first before you sign.

Condell. No, Ben, just let the Earl of Pembroke know,
That Heminge and myself are not so slow.

Heminge. And tell him all we ask at his high hands
Is recognition—and his next commands!
I'll bet, Ben, that I know that mystic author,
The nobleman whom Shaxper dummied for.

Condell. And I don't have to guess so very hard—
For oft I've seen the two consult together
Between the acts or when the play was done.

Heminge. Why, yes, I now remember, Herbert Grey,
A distant kinsman of Sir Robert Sidney,
Has tried to pump me as to Shaxper's standing
With us, that is our Company at the Globe.

Condell. And why my lord of Rutland came so often,
With Lord Southampton just to see the play—
And what was Shaxper bothering Rutland for—
Yes, yes, the thing is clear as day to me!

Heminge. By Jove! I never thought so at the time;
But now I'm sure that Rutland was the author!

Jonson. Ye may be right, boys, but just keep it mum,
And you'll oblige Montgomery and Pembroke
And Lord Southampton too, will not forget ye!
Ye would not gain, by blabbing forth a secret
Held close by noble gentlemen like these.

Keep mum, I say, and do as I have done,
I knew it all along—and I've kept mum.
Heminge. My hand upon it, Ben, no sign from me!
Condell. And mine, good Ben, I'll not by word or sign
Make known a secret of my lord of Pembroke!
Jonson. Ye're thoroughbreds, I'll warrant ye, my friends!

[*Exit Heminge and Condell.*

Such are God's noblemen—no thought of self!
The difference between these men and Shaxper,
That Stratford usurer would have sucked the blood
From Pembroke, with a secret such as this!
Now Leonard Digges is due about this hour;
I want his name signed to our eulogy,
I'll get *his* name by jingling my "angels"
That Pembroke gave me to secure his pen.
Digges is a town wit, hanging out at Paul's;
I meet him in Paul's walk most every day.
Why Pembroke wants an eulogy from him
To front the Folio, I cannot say.
Ah, here he comes, now note a different man.

Enter Leonard Digges.

Hello, well-met, friend Digges, how goes the world?
Digges. So, so, I say, good master Jonson, are you flush?
I want an angel for a day or so.
I shame to ask you, but you know the rush,
Parnassus as a boarding-house is slow.
Jonson. I'll help you Digges, if you will sign your name—
Digges. A thousand times, if that will make you game!
I need an angel badly—just to-day,
Mine hostess at the Falcon wants her pay.
Jonson. Tis well, just sign your name to these few lines,
And if you ever see them in a book
Don't brag about them, for they are by me

Or you'll oblige me then to trouble thee!
Here is thy angel—Sign thy name right here.

[*Digges signs.*]

Digges. Thanks, master Jonson, nothing more today?

Jonson. Not that I know of—

Digges. Well, then I'll away!

[*Exit Digges.*

Jonson. Here is a man for you—but he's still young,
But London is just full of wits like this;
He is an Oxford man, and glib of tongue,
An angel buys him for applause or hiss!
There's Chapman, Daniel, Donne and men like these;
Sir Francis Bacon, Sandy's, Michael Drayton—
The latter was with me "in at the death"
Of that poltroon in Stratford on the Avon.
These men have shed no tear when Shaxper died;
I cannot ask their praise—to be denied!
My case is different, for my wit is lent
To screen a name until the veil is rent!
If Rutland's name must not be known as yet
I'll not proclaim it from a minoret.

CURTAIN.

SCENE III. ROOM IN BARNARD'S CASTLE.

PEMBROKE *reading a letter.*

Pembroke. This letter from my lord Southampton says
That he has found the sculptor I was after
And packed him off—so that he will arrive
At Barnards by the time this letter comes to hand.

Enter MONTGOMERY.

Well, brother, have you seen the printer?

Montgomery. I have, and pre-engaged his presses
Exclusively for our great Folio.

Pembroke. That's well, here comes my man from Holland;
The sculptor, Gerald Johnston, whom I've sent for

The "Make-shift Figure" of
"SHAKE-SPEARE,"
by Martin Droeshout.

To carve a marble composite for me.

Montgomery. Then I'll arrange the proper sequences of plays—

Whilst you are busy with this sculptor Johnston.

Enter GERALD JOHNSTON.

Pembroke. Thou'rt prompt, my man, did'st have a pleasant journey?

Johnston. I have, my lord, and came to town this morning,

As lord Southampton urged me to be prompt
I came directly here from aboard o'ship.

Pembroke. 'Tis well, good Johnston, now be seated, pray,

And I will tell thee just what I want done.
I need your skill to carve a monument—
The figure of a well proportioned man
In pert array, between a gentleman and poet,
Somewhat like this sketch—I show thee here—
[*Handing sketch to Johnston.*]
It matters not if thou dost miss the likeness;
As very few shall recognize from it,
The man it represents where 'twill be placed.

Johnston. If that's the case, my lord, I would suggest

That I look round amongst your local cutters,
And pick out something partially prepared—
'Twill save us time and also cut expense.

Pembroke. Expense, I care not, Johnston, but the time,

That thy suggestion promises to save
Prompts me to have thee look about thee,
With sketch in hand—and see what thou can'st find—
And, when thou dost succeed, I further want
A cavity cut deep enough to hold a scroll like this:
[*Showing scroll about ten inches long by three inches diameter.*]
And when the manikin thou cut'st is finished,
With this receptical cut smoothly in;
Mix marble dust with durable cement

With which to close the cavity when 'tis filled.
Then get a marble slab and 'grave upon it
The words thou'lt find upon this parchment here.
Now get thee lodgings suitable for thee,
So that thy work is near to where thou livest.
Inform me when thou hast arranged for this,
And take this purse to cover thine expense.

Johnston. I fully comprehend, my lord, your orders,
And I'll report to you within a week.

[*Exit Johnston.*

Montgomery. What is the purport of that cavity
That Johnston is to cut within the bust?

Pembroke. There will I place the proof and evidence
Of Shaxper's standing dummy for our Rutland.
There it will rest where neither time, decay,
Nor fire, nor wars, nor earthquakes can destroy it!

Montgomery. An excellent idea, my worthy brother,
For centuries that scroll will be secure
As even moisture will not enter there;
And mind of man will hardly think on this!
What hast thou ordered 'graved upon the tablet?

Pembroke. Two lines of latin that fit Rutland only!
And underneath, six lines in good plain English
To those who know our secret of our Roger.
That he alone is meant in these our lines.
But, 'tis so worded that the public may
Imagine it refers to Rutland's dummy!

Montgomery. Read me these lines in English, my brother.

Pembroke [*reads*] *"Stay, passenger, why goest thou by so fast?"*
You see, my brother, that I toll a warning
To all who read, to stop and think a bit.
[*Reads*] "Read, if thou cans't whom envious death hath placed
"Within this monument, SHAKESPEARE * * * * * "
In these, I challenge the observant reader
To get my meaning, if he *can* but *read,*

And, as the dummy lies some feet away,
Beneath the paltry curse inscribed slab,
I clip our Rutland's pen-name just a bit
By cutting out the "E" completing "Shake"
To draw the reader's mind towards the dummy
Who does not *lie within* our monument.
[*Reads*] "(Shake-Speare)" * * * with whom
"Quick nature died, whose name doth deck this tomb,
"Far more than cost, since all that he has writ
"Leaves living art but page to serve his wit."
You see, good brother, this refers to Rutland.

Montgomery. Rutland alone—to us who know the man!

But ar't not feared, contemporary poets
Will soon discover our thin veiled intent?

Pembroke. I've guarded even against this, my brother!

For I have added Shaxper's age at death.
And date of his demise in April
The twenty-third, in sixteen, sixteen.
This last line, all alone, refers to Shaxper,
The paltry usurer, and Rutland's dummy!
[*Reads*] *"obit. ano. doi. 1616 aetatis 53, die 23 ap."*

Montgomery. This date alone's a sop to Stratfordites!

Pembroke. And Stratford's blind fanatic satellites!
Besides, my brother, we need never fear
That living poets ever will come near
To Stratford to beflower Shaxper's grave.
For they all knew him as a paltry knave!

Montgomery. And how have you arranged for placing it,
The bust and tablet, in the Stratford Church?

Pembroke. The good Bishop of Worcester's my friend,
And his authority will serve my end—
Within a month the thing will be in place,
To fool fanatics of the coming race
While we may sing aloud where all may hear

Our praise of Rutland and the world's "Shake-Speare!"

Enter ATTENDANT

How now? Hath master Bacon yet arrived?

Attendant. Sir Francis is below, my lord.

Pembroke. Then show him up, we'll see Sir Francis here.

[*Exit Attendant.*

I knew this Bacon for a very knave
Before his treachery towards Lord Essex.

Montgomery. As water seeks its level—he sought his;
But, hush, he comes, let us be lenient.

Enter SIR FRANCIS BACON.

Fair day, my lord St. Albans—sorry news—

Pembroke. An is all lost—an is there no defence?

Bacon. I am a broken reed, my noble lords, have mercy!
I come to offer that which still is in me,
To help directing Rutland's Folio.
If so, you will accept of my assistance,
Now that my work for King and State is done.

Pembroke. Thanks, Bacon, but Montgomery and myself
Have managed our poor Roger's noble works,
And have engaged the publishers withal—
So now there's nothing further to be done.

Montgomery. There was a time when your abilities
Would have been welcome to our enterprise.

Pembroke. But then your high position held you back.

Bacon. Alas, my lords, thus all despise me now!
E'en for the grave I feel myself unfit;
With my misfortunes burdening my soul!

Montgomery. You have our sympathy, and even Essex,
Who, by your treachery suffered on the block
Looks on you now with sympathetic eye!

Bacon. Enough of this, my lord, my heart is broken;
My evil life is patent to me now—

With Rutland's death I lost my inspiration
For all that's worthy in this world of ours.
You know, my lords, how Rutland, used my help,
In delving in the archives of the state
For data in his Histories and Kings.
From Richard Second down to Henry Eighth,
Poor Rutland had his chain of kings complete,
Excepting Richmond, Seventh Henry, whose life
I have myself included in my works.
This life of Henry Seventh I completed,
From records dug for Rutland in his work;
But when he died so sudden, unexpected,
I fell to work upon this reign myself.

Pembroke. From what we know of this, art willing, Bacon,
To freely state that your philosophies
Were largely fed by Rutland's mastermind.
That Rutland's quaint expressions and pert sayings
Were nursed into philosophy by you?

Montgomery. That, but for Rutland, your ideas were vain;
That you exploited Rutland's genius,
And latinized your works to hide the diction?

Bacon. What booteth all denial, when the world
Is witness to my failings during life?
When Rutland died, I lost my better self
And all my mind strove for material things.
Glad am I that poor Essex from on high
Can see my sufferings here before I die!
Farewell, my lords, I'll to the Council now,
Whence I'm prepared to go into the Tower,
Where Rutland spent two miserable years
And where I'm sheltered from the public jeers!

[*Exit Bacon.*

Pembroke. An end befitting such a character!

Montgomery. His uncle the great Burleigh, knew him well—
To be the arrant humbug that he is!
For there is naught in his philosophy

Worth hearkening to, but that the soul of Rutland
Is felt to make this Bacon's words sublime!

Pembroke. Eliminate the thoughts of Rutland-Shake-Speare,
From all that Francis Bacon ever wrote
The residue would be inane and flat!

Montgomery. I hear the voice of Jonson down below,
There's only one Ben Jonson, rare old Ben!

Pembroke. Here he comes now—

Enter JONSON.

Well, good my master, what have we here now?

Montgomery. Fair day, good master, what's the good report?

Jonson. My lords, I have accomplished that—that will
Not fail to please your worships, I'll warrant!
I've writ the dedication and address, and both are signed
By the two actors, Heminge and Condell;
I have an ode or eulogy from Digges;
(But why you want his name, I fail to see—;)
I've writ ten lines on that monstrosity,
That Droeshout is engraving for the book;
But, best of all, I worked up eighty lines
To preface the great Folio for you
That neither God or devil can make out,
But reads withal so smooth and lovingly
That only those who know, can understand.

Pembroke. Well done, good Ben; an here's a purse for thee.

(giving Jonson a purse)

Montgomery. But don't let your Canary rob thy bookshelf!

Pembroke. Nor let thy thirst make sack upon thy wardrobe!

Jonson. Fear not, my lords, my service to your worships
Shan't suffer through those weaknesses of mine!
Pray, let me analize my eighty lines;
You hold the script—I have the thing by heart.

THE STRATFORD BUST
of Falstaff.

Pembroke. Sail in, Ben, let us hear the oracle.

Jonson. I start my potent ambiguity
By hailing "Shake-Speare"—mystic nom-de-plume;
And cover that great genius with praise
For fully seventy of my eighty lines.
Then, not to be too bold in voiding Shaxper,
The Swan who wails his death song in my mind,
I do devote *apparently* four lines
But when we know the Avon runs through Leicester,
Where oft our Shake-Speare sought his lovely muse
It leaves the Stratford Swan a puddling
Upon the cesspool in the New Place garden
Throughout my lines I hail our mystic "Shake-Speare"
And not the usurer of Stratford town!

CURTAIN.

SCENE IV. *Room in Drury House (2 years later, 1623.)*
THE EARL OF SOUTHAMPTON'S *Town House.*
(Enter Southampton and Pembroke, arm in arm.)

Pembroke. Right glad I am to see you back, my dear Southampton,
And you'll be pleased, sir, with our work meantime.
Montgomery and I, and rare Ben Jonson
Have now our Rutland-Shake-Speare Folio out.
You'll find a copy of it in your library.

Southampton. I am delighted, Pembroke, I assure you,
Especially now that our dear Rutland's work
Is saved from the oblivion that threatened it.
How have you managed with the monument?

Pembroke. The sculptor Johnston came in ample time,
And found a bust amongst the monuments
Of one of many of our local hewers of stone.
This, Johnston chiseled under my direction
To make't adaptable to our purpose.
To tell the truth it doth resemble most
The form and features of Jack Falstaff,
And this embodies Shaxper and the author.

As we decided, for posterity?

Southampton. And have you buried Rutland's secret with it?

Pembroke. Indeed we have! A cavity within the bust
Contains the record of the true "Shake-Speare"
Where moisture, wars or even earthquakes will
Work vainly with old Time for its decay!
And the inscription on the tablet is
In praise of Rutland—Shake-Speare all alone!

Southampton. And how have you arranged to set it up?

Pembroke. From Worcester's Bishop I obtained my leave;
And had the bust and tablet hauled to Stratford.
'Twas on a Monday that it reached that town,
And I was there when everything arrived.
We placed the crates and boxes in the Church,
And had the doors fast closed to all the people.
That night, with masons that I had brought up,
From London, to avoid all gossip,
We fixed the slab in place and raised the bust
Full two feet distant from that Shaxper's grave.

Southampton. Well done my lord, and you deserve full credit.
For executing Rutland's last request.
Thank God, 'tis done and that 'twas done by you,
That was th' executor of Roger's works.

Pembroke. I hardly know how to repay Ben Jonson,
His genius for ambiguity
Hath been the very soul of our success!
I've pensioned him for life and promised him
That any book that ever he should cherish
He should straightway possess, whate'er the price

Enter MONTGOMERY.

Hello, good brother, here's our Lowland hero!

Southampton. Welcome, Montgomery, good Pembroke tells me
You've done a Titian's task on Rutland's Book.

Mongomery. Our work was difficult and incomplete
We were obliged to use some prompt-book copies
And had not time for properly revising.
We did not dare employ outsiders on it
And thus it is some plays are not divided
Into the Acts and Scenes as would be proper.

Pembroke. For both Montgomery's and my own time
Was taken up at Court to such extent
That many things that should forsooth be done
Were necessarily allowed to go unfinished.

Southampton. Well, future editors will see to that
I prophecy that all of Rutland's plays
Will live until the very end of time!

Montgomery. I saw Ben Jonson down below just now
To pay respects to you, my Lord Southampton
Let's have him up—he is a genius
Of that peculiar sort that is unique.

Southampton. You're right Montgomery, cries through the door)
What ho, there, Ben, good Master Jonson,
Step up this way, I want to see thee Ben!

Enter Ben Jonson.

Thou art a Phoenix, Ben, in thine own way
Egad, good Master, thou'st excelled thyself!
The lines thou'st written to that Droeshout portrait—
They are a masterpiece beyond compare
Lord Pembroke sent them on to me to Holland
As well as other lines that thou has writ.

Jonson. I warrant ye, my lord Southampton
When there is aught to do for you
And for lords Pemboke and Montgomery
There's but one man to do it then
And that man's name is Ben, rare Ben!
I warrant ye!

Pembroke. This is not self praise
Mongomery. It is simply fact!

Southampton. Ben, thou'rt a wonder, and I know it well
Now pull thy wits together, for what's coming
Both Pembroke and Mongomery and myself
Would read the very secret of thy heart,
And know without poetic flourishes
In just how far this Shaxper blinded thee.
When didst thou first discover he was acting
As Dummy for a poet-nobleman?

Jonson. Then will my lord of Pembroke here absolve me
From further keeping secret what I know
That is, alone between the four of us here present?

Pembroke. Agreed, Ben, but towards all else keep mum!

Jonson. Well then, here goes: I knew it from the first,
That Stratford Shaxper could not write at all
Why, not his name could that man even write!
In ninety- eight, when I was four and twenty,
I first met Shaxper, then a roustabout,
Who sometimes took a minor part with Burbage.
He never *could* act any heavy part
Although his weight was ample for the purpose
About this time his purse was always flush
Whereas mine own relied on Henslow's bounty.
His drinking habits matched mine own, and thus
We'd often meet in Taverns in the Clink.

Montgomery. Not in the "Mermaid", Ben, in Carter Lane?

Jonson. Just once, my lord, the gentlemen there meeting
Were not within the reach of Shaxper's status,
As common actor he'd stand cap in hand.
When such as Raleigh came into the Mermaid.
Besides, Sir Walter wouldn't talk with such
Thus we felt more at home at minor taverns,
And oft we'd frolic far into the morning.
In this way we became quite intimate

And when good Francis Meres brought out his book—
Southampton. "Wits Treasury" wherein he praised good pens
'Mong others, "Shake-Speare's" plays and poems
Jonson. Of course, I saw that book, and quizzing Shaxper,
Who had no inkling of my own suspicion,
I soon discovered whence the wind did blow
And whence the well-lined purse of Shaxper came.
I got more evidence in ninety-nine—the latter part.
When I saw you, my lord Southampton and lord Rutland
Attend the play most every evening.
Southampton. Quite right, good Ben, after the Ireland fiasco,
Lord Rutland and myself went daily to the play.
Jonson. One day, it was the middle of November,
I saw Will Shaxper talk to my lord Rutland
Complaining as to boys for female parts—
Sir Herbert Grey was there and listening intently
Well I remember that same night, my lords,
For then it was that Ben, rare Ben, knew "Shake-Speare"!
The nobleman who wrote behind that name.
But still I wanted further proof of it.
In quizzing Shaxper, he would not admit,
Nor would he deny the authorship.
He did not have to make denial to me,
For, knowing well the manner of the man;
His small capacity as actor;
The small confines of all his conversation;
His being always flush with money,
And not a source apparent whence it came,
(For third rate actors, get but little pay)
I soon was satisfied there was a secret.
Montgomery. And how came Lady Rutland to invite you
To her salon with literary folk—
Jonson. I sent her lines conveying admiration

For her bright genius in poesy.
I did this purposely to gain access
To Drury House—aye to this very room—
In which I oft had pleasant conversations
With Lady Rutland upon literature.

Pembroke. Lord Rutland wasn't pleased at this, a bit.

He, too, felt you were spying round the house
To pick up crumbs to feed and nurse suspicion.

Jonson. T'was so, and I was asked to cease my visits—

From that day on I knew who was "Shake-Speare"
And when the Tower held my lord of Rutland
I knew the Queen knew, he wrote Richard "Two"
The play performed before the Essex insurrection.
While Shaxper browsed as usual in the taverns.
Why, Burbage, Heminge and Condell all knew it—
That is, that Shaxper played a Dummy part.

Pembroke. T'was I, remember, Ben, who asked you then.

To keep suspicion from contemporaries.

Jonson. An this I did religiously, my lord.

My talk with Drummnod up at Hawthornden, proves this
I knew your wishes and I held my peace—
Contemporaries bothered very little
And no one cared who Shaxper was; or lived—

Southampton. In thy "Discoveries", Ben, Thou hast an item
Which sparkles with thy ambiguity

Jonson. I wrote that thing to please my lord of Pembroke.

An execise in ambiguity—
"Our Shake-Speare"—Nostra, underlined
Was meant, for the great author of the plays.
The conviviality and repartee
Belonged to Shaxper; but a careful reader
Will see at once, that entry is a farce.

Pembroke. So is thy Folio dedication, Ben!

Montgomery. So is thy Address to the Reader, Ben!

Southampton. So are the lines to Draeshout's portrait, Ben!

Jonson. And so am I, my lords, a very farce!

[*Each of the lords hands Jonson a purse.*]

With these, I'll drink your healths, my lords,
Though I be ill to-morrow!

[*Exit Jonson.*

Southampton. Mongomery, you wrote those lines "I. M."
They are your style, I recognize it plainly—

Montgomery. Well, after rare Ben Jonson's bold confession,
I may as well join him and own up too—
In fact, I think the lines are rather neat.

Pembroke. They are for such a poet as thou art my brother!

Southampton. Trying to rival "Shake-Speare" eh? ha, ha!
Try as you will, or any man, you'll never equal
Roger Manners, 5th Earl of Rutland
The only "Shake-Speare"!

CURTAIN.

ROGER OF RUTLAND.

When Shaksper toppled over at the inn,
To end a life of mystery and sin,
He never thought his name would live so long,
As honored author of another's song.

Lord Rutland passed away four years before,
When Shakespeare's novel wit appeared no more.
The world at large will soon discover why,
And be convinced that Willie lived a lie.

Rutland had good cause to shield his writing,
For he dreaded good Queen Bess and James;
As his tragedies were very biting,
And he feared the Tower on the Thames!

Monarchs like not mimic insurrections—
Upon the stage—no more than in their land;
And Lord Rutland had some predilections
As to Life! Now do you understand?

Rutland knew what life was in the Tower,
For he had spent two years within its walls;
He had cause to fear the Royal power—
Knew its weight when once a courtier falls!

That is, William, where *you* came in handy—
That is why Lord Roger bought your name;
At such work, dear Will, you were a dandy;
William Shaksper, can'st deny the same?

Ben Jonson, who was with Will when he fell,
As boon companion held his friend full dear,
And that there was a secret he knew well,
But drowned his curiousity in beer!

Know, William Shaksper, what has helped your cause;
And made the world do reverence to your name,
For two centuries thou wert beneath a gauze,
Until Malone and Steevens brought you fame!

When Earl Francis, Rutland's younger brother,
Paid you monies for the work you'd done;
Was it paid to you to shield the other,
Leaving you to bleach what he had spun?

VALE, BACONIANS, VALE!

Alas, ye poor misguided Baconeers
The game is up—Francisco is no more,
He held out well throughout these lingering years
Decay presaged his end some years before.

But now your theory is down and out,
'Tis halt and ever fainter draws its breath,
'Tis bald and blind and lame from rheum and gout,
'Twas ye, that hurried the poor thing to death.

Go, hie ye up to Gorhambury heights,
Mourn for this "son and heir" of good Queen Bess,
Recount his deeds, his bribe taking delights;
His Authorships that kept ye on the guess!

Think! Bacon, at the age of thirty-two,
Writes lines on amorous Venus to a youth?
Imagine the First Folio come to you
Full of such errors?—that proclaims the truth.

Don't Bacon in his Promus plainly show
The way he cribbed philosophy and thought,
From Shake-Speare's writings from the very go
The fox not dreaming that he would be caught?

Did Bacon ever mention Shake-Speare's works?
And Shake-Speare ever name the trusty Francis?
In these two questions revelation lurks
That killed the last of Gorhambury's chances.

All the philosophy Sir Francis wrote
Is almost worthless to the world to-day,
While daily from *"our Shake-Speare"* do we quote
And shall continue doing so for aye.

Remember Bacon was Lord Rutland's "man"
Engaged to delve in archives of the Crown,
For data so important to his plan,
And eke to hold suspicion 'gainst him down.

Amongst the papers Bacon left behind
Not one of any value hid from view,
The Baconites persist in being blind
Groping in Caverns dark and places new.

STRATFORD, AWAKE!

Swan nursing Stratfordites take heed in time
  And bury your false relics out of sight,
Then from the grave obliterate that rhyme
  For Truth emerged is spreading wonderous light.

Disown those legends told about Will's youth
  And disavow his genealogy,
For, if you hesitate, you may, forsooth,
  Be hanged upon Will Shaksper's family-tree.

Burn all the mortgages and bills of sale
  To which his name appears to be attached,
For all these evidences tell the tale
  Of monstrous fraud and lies till now unmatched.

Deny Ann Hathaway wed Richard James
  As soon as drunken Will was stowed away;
And find *just one* among a hundred names
  'Mongst nobelmen who recognized his lay.

Will's soul, e'en now is snickering in his grave
  (It had no wings to make it soar on high)
To see you simple minded folk behave
  Like blind fanatics—and not knowing why!

Will's only act deserving of some praise
  Was getting drunk and short'ning his vile life,
And the chivalrous compliment he pays
  In his last will, to charming Ann, his wife.

We've found another portrait of your master
  The only one extant that's true to life,
'Twas interlined in Stratford—had he cast her?
  And painted for poor Ann, his suffering wife.

So *he* wrote Hamlet, Macbeth, Shylock, Lear?
  Ye Gods, this callous heart knew mournful Jacques?
For shame, ye silly Stratfordites, look here,
  You need some melted ice poured down your backs!

Give us *one* link to show your Swan's connection
  With any one of Shake-Speare's wondrous plays
Send it to Sidney Lee, for his collection,
  'Twill grow into a chain in seven days.