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SHAKESPEARE'S TOWN AND TIMES

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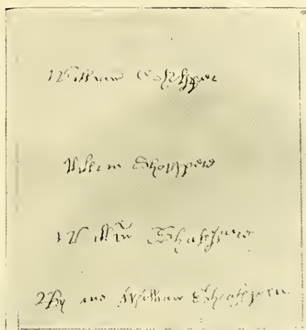
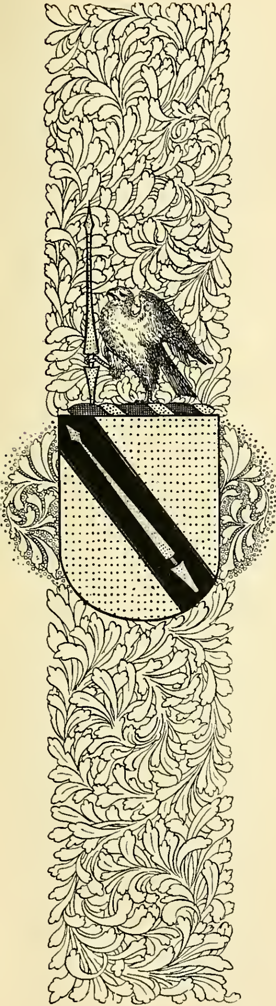


FOUR OF SHAKESPEARE'S SIGNATURES.

THE DAVENANT BUST.



"'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."

Shakespeare's Sonnets.

Shakespeare's

Town and Times.

By

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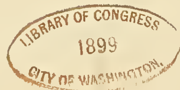
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INTRODUCTION . .
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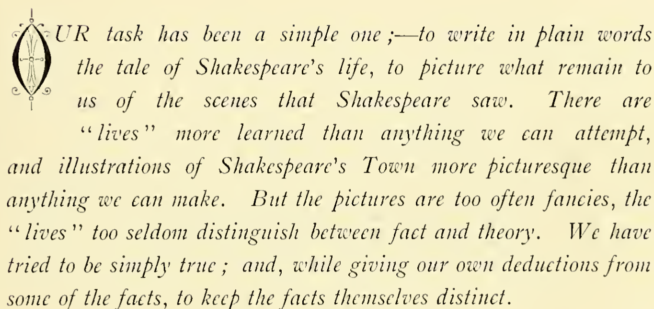


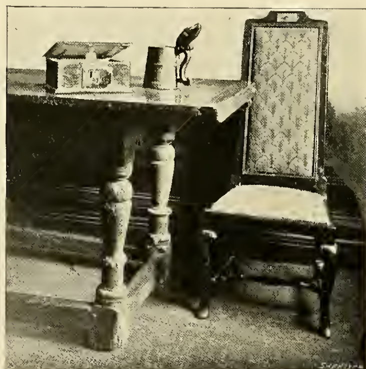
OUR task has been a simple one ;—to write in plain words the tale of Shakespeare's life, to picture what remain to us of the scenes that Shakespeare saw. There are "lives" more learned than anything we can attempt, and illustrations of Shakespeare's Town more picturesque than anything we can make. But the pictures are too often fancies, the "lives" too seldom distinguish between fact and theory. We have tried to be simply true ; and, while giving our own deductions from some of the facts, to keep the facts themselves distinct.

It is to be regretted that no photographic record could have been made a century or more ago, for the vandal and the "improver" have made sad havoc of the Shakespeare haunts. But as the changes are still in progress, our photograms may be useful in years to come, in reconciling the contradictions of more beautiful but less accurate representations.

Something of Shakespeare's gentle, kindly spirit seems still to linger in Stratford-on-the-Avon, and it is a pleasure to acknowledge the generous assistance we have received from all sides. Our especial thanks are due to the Earl of Warwick, Sir Arthur Hodgson,

Mr. H. R. Fairfax-Lucy, Mrs. Charles E. Flower, Mr. J. W. Ryland, Mrs. R. S. de Courcy Laffan, Mr. Richard Savage, Mr. W. G. Colbourne, the Misses Hancock, Mr. Douglas McNeille, Mr. W. Salt Brassington, and Mr. A. H. Wall, the late Librarian of the Shakespeare Memorial, and now Editor of THE SHAKESPEAREAN.

HAWTHORNDEN,
WOODSIDE PARK, N.,
July, 1896.



SHAKESPEARE'S FLAGON, ANNE HATHAWAY'S TRINKET BOX,
THE OLD SHOVEL-BOARD, AND A SHAKESPEARE CHAIR.
(Now in the New Place Museum.)

THE HARVARD HOUSE.

Quiney, vintner. Behind the vintner's cellar is a dark and vaulted chamber, a veritable "black hole," that was probably the cell for incorrigible offenders, at the time when this house was the Town's Cage, or prison. The upper part of the walls and the vaulted roof are probably of more recent date; but the foundation walls, and the raised bench running along two sides and round one end of the cell, are undoubtedly very ancient. If this raised bench were the prisoners' couch, and this their dungeon cell, we may be sure that anything more than a very brief imprisonment would be equivalent to a sentence of death.

Opposite this house, close to the other side of the High Street, stood the old Market Cross, and its site is marked by a stone in the roadway, the meaning of which is probably unknown to most of the younger inhabitants. Under the Cross was a well, which remained in good order below the street level until about 1880, when it was filled up, in order to facilitate the carrying across it of drain-pipes, etc.

Further along High Street is the Harvard House, built in 1596, and the home of Katharine Rogers, afterwards Harvard. Her son, John, emigrated to America in 1634, and founded Harvard University. Opposite, is the Corn Exchange, and a few yards further is Sheep Street, turning to the left. It is worth while wandering down this street, and turning into the side courts and alleys. Some of them are masked at the ends by great barn doors, but no one will object to the curious visitor passing through. Within, these courts are as picturesque as anything to be seen in Italy, and the little maidens and bright-faced boys who wonderingly gaze at the visitors are typical Shakespeare-country children. At the top of the street, again, is the Town Hall, no longer so interesting as when the lower part was open to the pathway, and contained the stocks and other town property. These stocks, alas! have disappeared; probably made into firewood. Over the door is a statue of Shakespeare, presented by Garrick at the time of the Shakespeare Jubilee, and in the Council Chamber, which visitors may see, are several interesting paintings, with some of the old Town Charters.

Chapel Street is a continuation of High Street. On the left is the Shakespeare hotel and house of the Five Gables, the most picturesque old building in Stratford. Here was the head-quarters of the Garrick Jubilee, many relics of which are still preserved; and here, too, are held the principal race-dinners and market-dinners of the town. Further, on the same side, is Thomas Hathaway's house; next to it, Julius Shaw's house, and next again, the house of Thomas Nash, who married the poet's grand-daughter, Elizabeth Hall. Our interest in Julius Shaw arises from the fact that he was one of the witnesses of Shakespeare's will. Thomas Nash's house, next to the garden and site of New Place, where Shakespeare lived and died after his retirement from London, and also during the intervals and holidays of his London life,

OLD COURT, OFF SHEEP STREET.

is now used as a museum, under the Birthplace Trust. Though a charge is made for admission to the museum, the gardens are open free. Opposite the site is the Falcon tavern, in which, according to a none-too-old tradition, Shakespeare drank, and played the game of shovel-board. Unfortunately for this story, the house was not a tavern in Shakespeare's time, but no doubt he was friendly with the occupier, and often spent an evening under its roof. It is just possible, too, that the shovel-board still preserved in the New Place museum may have been in the possession of Shakespeare's neighbour across the way. Let us have faith in the relics when connected with a tradition so pleasant and harmless.

HALL'S CROFT.

The Guild Chapel and Grammar School are worth a careful inspection, and those who can stay over Sunday should attend one of the chapel services. The row of alms-houses, the ancient dwellings of the poorer brethren of the Guild, are full of interest, and if you can obtain an invitation to step inside one of them and chat with its occupant, you gain a glimpse into a very interesting phase of English life,—the declining days of an old pensioner who has drifted into this quiet back-water to rest until the longer rest shall come.

At the end of Church Street we find Trinity College School on the right, and the Old Town turns off to the left. Here is Hall's Croft, the home of

CHAPEL STREET.

THE MIDDLE ROW (NO LONGER EXISTING).

From a Negative by Mr. H. P. Robinson.

to the intrusion of courteous strangers. A little further up the street, on the left, is the back view of the Birth-house, across its lawn and garden; and we would advise all who can sufficiently curb their impatience, to make this their first view of the house. It is much more satisfying than the front view, and it is well that the ineffaceable first impression of the Birth-house should be as pleasant as possible.

Returning to the bridge foot, we find in Bridge Street a fitting ending to the tour of the town itself. There are several houses of entertainment, where the weary traveller may be rested and refreshed,—the Golden Lion, and the Old Red Lion, typical old English hostelries; and the Red Horse, with its memories of Washington Irving. Wherever one may choose to rest for the night, Irving's room must not be overlooked, and we must trespass on the hospitality of Mr. and Mrs. Colbourne sufficiently to secure, at least, a glimpse of the room, and a chance of recording our signatures in the visitors' book. The chair that Irving occupied, the poker which he described as his sceptre, even the clock that he mentioned as ticking in the old sexton's cottage, are preserved with religious care, and the walls of the room are hung with mementoes of many a Shakespeare pilgrim since Irving's time. William Winter, the gentle critic and author, has brought many a contribution, but none more notable than the lines which he inscribed in the front of the present visitors' book:—

"While evening waits and harkens
While yet the song-bird calls,
Before the last light darkens,
Before the last leaf falls,
Once more with reverent feeling
His haunted shrine I seek—
By silent awe revealing
The thought I cannot speak."

Truly much depends upon the spirit in which we visit Shakespeare's home.

It is unnecessary to say much about the surroundings of Stratford. There are varied pilgrimages for a day, a week, or a month, and the arrangement thereof may well be left to the pilgrim, acting under the advice of mine host of the hotel. Of course, the first visit must be to Ann Hathaway's cottage, across the fields melodious with the feathered crowd that sing the same song as their kindred sang when Shakespeare went a-courting. And as we wander where he wandered, we may recall the love-song in which his lady's name is pleasantly enshrined. The lines were written by Charles Dibdin, though some have called them an ancient piece of work, and suggested that they *may* have been by Shakespeare.

"Would ye be taught, ye feathered throng,
With love's sweet notes to grace your song,
To pierce the heart with thrilling lay,
Listen to mine Ann Hathaway.

She hath a way to sing so clear,
Phœbus might wondering stop to hear.
To melt the sad, make blithe the gay,
And Nature charm, Ann hath a way.
She hath a way,
Ann Hathaway;
To breathe delight, Ann hath a way."

Then there is the walk along the river to Luddington, the walk so loved by Judith Shakespeare, as William Black relates in his pleasant chronicle-novel of Stratford life in Shakespeare's day. There is Wilmcote, the home of Shakespeare's mother; Snitterfield, where his father first saw the light; Aston Cantlow, where they were probably married; and Charlecote, with its deer-stealing legend, and the tombs of the three Sir Thomas Lucys in the church; Billesley and Temple Grafton, rivals with Luddington for the honor of having been the scene of Shakespeare's marriage; Clopton House, if the permission of Sir Arthur Hodgson can be obtained; and, further afield, the family mansion,—Shakespeare Hall, Rowington; the glorious old Castle of Warwick; and the ruin of Kenilworth.

Even in Stratford itself there are one or two items of interest that have not come into our tour of the town. In Back Lane, behind the vicarage grounds, is a spot often visited by the curious, a little grave-yard set apart by the vicar and his wife for the burial of their pets. The little plot gives ample evidence that even the dumb animals are not forgotten, for in addition to the tomb-stones, with their polyglot inscriptions to the memories of Adam, Noah, Moses, Bijou, and Oko Jumbo, the graves are neatly kept and trimmed with flowers. In the Birmingham Road, only a couple of hundred yards from the birth-house, is an elm tree within a railing, marking the site of the old gnarled boundary elm, amongst the roots of which young Willie Shakespeare played. A walk to the top of the Welcombe Hills, with their traces of our old savage flint-age ancestors, is not too great an exertion even for the ladies, and it is calculated to give an excellent appetite for breakfast. Or the same stroll in the evening, when, perchance, the mists lie along the river side, and the grass is wet in the valley, will give a chance of hearing the nightingale singing when other birds have gone to rest.

Then, if a day can be given to it, a drive of twelve or fourteen miles along the Banbury Road—along the way that Shakespeare must have ridden—will make an ever-memorable trip. Leaving Stratford by the Clopton Bridge, the road gradually climbs from the valley until close under the foot of Edge Hill, and then by a steep grassy ascent through a hanging wood to the top of the hill itself, just above the field of the first battle of the Parliamentary war. Emerging from the wood, a new and beautiful vale comes in sight, a scene as fair as the Avon valley itself; but that which charms us most is the view looking westward from Edge Hill, across the broad lowlands to where Stratford

nestles by the river. Can we not imagine the joyous heart-leap of the poet, returning from his London triumphs, when he thus caught the first sight of the home-place he held so dear.

From all these wanderings we can contentedly return to Stratford, and feel as Washington Irving felt when he wrote in his Note Book the words so well fitted to close a tourist's day:—

> "To a homeless man, who has no spot on this wide world which he can truly call his own, there is a feeling of something like independence and territorial consequence, when, after a weary day's travel, he kicks off his boots, thrusts his feet into slippers, and stretches himself before an inn fire. Let the world without go as it may; let kingdoms rise or fall, so long as he has the wherewithal to pay his bill, he is, for the time being, the very monarch of all he surveys. The arm-chair is his throne, the poker is his sceptre, and the little parlor, some twelve feet square, his undisputed empire. It is a morsel of certainty, snatched from the midst of the uncertainties of life; it is a sunny moment gleaming out kindly on a cloudy day; and he who has advanced some way on the pilgrimage of existence knows the importance of husbanding even morsels and moments of enjoyment."

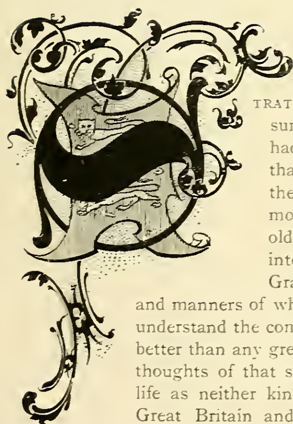
THE MEMORIAL, FROM CLOPTON BRIDGE.

WELFORD VILLAGE.

Chapter II.

SOME HISTORICAL NOTES.

> "O England! model to thy inward greatness,
> Like little body with a mighty heart,
> What might'st thou do, that honour would thee do,
> Were all thy children kind and natural?"
>
> *King Henry V.* Act II., Opening Chorus.



THE ROYAL LIONS.

STRATFORD-ON-AVON, and the country immediately surrounding it, would be far from uninteresting even had no great poet lived there in the past. More than one of Stratford's sons bore yeoman part in the building up of England, and in making her the mother of nations. More than one of Stratford's old houses has a history rich in incident and human interest. The Church, the Guild Chapel, and the Grammar School, take us back in memory to times and manners of which we must know something if we are to fully understand the complex civilisation of to-day. Their records tell us better than any great city's record can tell, of the life and ways and thoughts of that sturdy yeoman class which moulded the English life as neither kings nor parliaments could mould it, and made Great Britain and her sons and daughters over-sea, the nations that they are.

The old halls and mansions within a few miles of Stratford have many a bit of interesting history and legend, more than one blood-stained floor, and haunted room, and secret passage, and priest's hiding chamber, to tell of those turbulent and intolerant days of which we often speak as the "good old times." The Stratford men may have heard the guns at Edge Hill, in 1642, and no doubt some of them fought on each side in that battle of father against son, and brother against brother. Certainly, soon after that battle, the town was occupied by the Royalists, who were driven out by Lord Brooke. He, in turn, gave way to superior force, and the Queen, Henrietta Maria, took up her

THE BOUDOIR, BILLESLEY HALL
(With entrance to priest's hiding place.)

quarters for three weeks at New Place, Shakespeare's house. But these events were in the time of Shakespeare's children, and we are more interested in the local and national conditions that moulded the poet's own life and work.

It is difficult, indeed, at the present day, to realise what Stratford and Warwickshire were when Shakespeare knew them. We hear visitors, as they saunter along the Warwick Road, or skim on their light cycles over the highway from Banbury, talking of how Shakespeare may have wandered in the same way under the whispering trees, or cantered where the cycles glide when on his joysome way to London. But macadamised surfaces and steam road-rollers were unknown in the days of Good Queen Bess; many of the broad roads of to-day were then non-existent, or represented only by ill-defined

winding ways through dense thickets; boggy underfoot, overhung by treacherous boughs, and made painful by the petty annoyances of hidden water-holes, and cruel briar-bushes. Even what are now main roads in such a district, were in those days deep-rutted grass-grown ways, almost impassable for wheeled vehicles in the winter time, and none too convenient in the best of weather. The forest of Arden, too, was then a forest in very truth; with farmsteads and villages set in clearings, such as we think of in connection

THE TOWN CAGE.

with American backwoods. The forest was not greatly changed from the old Saxon times, or from its state when, in the days of King Stephen, a good Crusader, Sir Hugh de Hatton, returning home after escape from slavery among the Saracens, was lost in the woodland surrounding his own lands at Hatton, and would have perished had he not been accidently found by one of his shepherds. Hatton is but a short two miles from Rowington, where lived a strong section of the Shakespeare family, and where it is traditionally stated that "As you like it" was written. In that truly Warwickshire play, we remember Touchstone's remark:—

> "Ay, now I am in Arden, the more fool I; when I was at home I was in a better place, but travellers must be content."

and the little adventure of Sir Hugh de Hatton throws a flood of light upon such a quotation. Not only was the country in its wild state as regards trees and tangle, but wild beasts and wilder men,—broken soldiers, dispossessed land-holders, ne'er-do-weels, and outlaws for conscience sake, made it necessary for men to bear arms when moving a few miles from the villages, and to travel in strong companies if known or believed to carry money or articles of value. Loxley, only four miles from Stratford-on-Avon, was almost certainly the birthplace of Robin Hood, and more than one good Warwickshire name was found amongst his company. 'Tis true that his time was some four hundred years before the poet's, but the rough ways persisted off-and-on, and outlawry and mendicancy were revived in their worst forms under the evil rule of Henry VIII. In those days of little learning and few amusements, the local legends and traditions persisted for centuries, so that Shakespeare would know of the wild wood-men from the fireside stories of his earliest days, and later, from the tales of many travellers, or from his own roaming experiences. The stories of local knights, and heroes, and pilgrims mingled with the tales of the freebooters who stole from the strong to give to the weak, and of whom the country people were proud. The very families from which sprang the picturesque characters that surrounded Bold Robin Hood, and many a less known, though more recent outlaw, remained amongst the Warwickshire peasantry and yeomanry. Did not the youngest of Will Shakespeare's aunts marry John Scarlett, who is said to have been of the same family as the famous Will Scarlett?

In the days of the poet's father, the outlaws increased to the numbers of an army; and only the famine, pestilence, and violence, that rapidly thinned their ranks, gave any effective check to what was a great national danger. Frequent wars on the Scottish border and in the North of England, and the constant plots and rebellions resulting from the unsettled government of the land, filled the country with homeless and desperate men. The great increase of sheep-farming, for wool-growing purposes, caused much good grain land to be laid down to pasture, and threw out of employment immense numbers of farm laborers, whose only resource was beggary and robbery.

This sheep-farming also led to the dispossessing and ruthless eviction all over the country of small farmers and "squatters," whose only claim to their little holdings lay in the fact that they or their fathers had toilsomely created them in the wilderness. Many of the most industrious of the poor folk, men, women and children, were thus turned into the world homeless and penniless, and the best help that the statesmen and the Crown could give to these poor wretches, vagabonds through no fault of their own, was to decree at times slavery, and at other times death, to those who had "no visible means of subsistence."

THE JUDGMENT DAY.

(Fresco over arch in Guild Chapel.)

Just at the time when these troubles had reached their height, William Shakespeare was born; and during his early years Elizabeth, with a consistent policy hidden under many devious windings, was endeavoring to establish a firm and peaceful government.

Turning from the civil conditions, let us for a moment consider the religious history of the times. The bitter struggle between "the old faith" and Protestantism seems to give the key to many of the most puzzling circumstances surrounding the life of the poet. The terrible scenes attendant upon the suppression of the monastries and other confiscatory acts of Henry VIII. were fresh in the memories of the middle-aged men amongst whom Shakespeare was educated. And they *were* terrible scenes, which appealed to the sympathies even of religious opponents, though we, as Protestants, reading Protestant history-books, may scarce realise the fact. The poet's father was about ten years old when the bill for the suppression of the greater monasteries was passed by a king who was still nominally a staunch Catholic, and who, in the same year, passed the Bloody Bill, which aimed at the severe punishment of Protestants and the abolition of diversity of opinion. John Shakespeare and his slightly older contemporaries, whose talk and tales supplied the bulk of the poet's general information, passed through the troublous times when Protestants and Catholics alike were plotting and scheming, stopping at no sort of wickedness to win the favor of the king and the triumph of their own religion. Living in a district that strongly favored the old cause, they saw the new one gradually winning its way by intrigue and cunning, until in 1545 the Primer of Henry VIII. was ordered to take the place of the breviary, in public worship. They saw the Protestant power increasing during the short but beneficent reign of Edward VI., and the return of Catholic power under Mary, whose six years of stormy reign and bitter persecution of the Protestants increased the religious hate of each party for the other. Six years before the birth of the poet, Elizabeth had come to the throne. As he was growing to youth and manhood, the friends of Roman Catholicism were gradually realising that they had little to hope from that vigorous queen. Comparative peace descended upon England, but the bitterest religious hatred was kept glowing by reports of the fighting and intrigues that centred round Mary, Queen of Scots, who represented Romanism in Britain, by the persecution of Protestants in France, and by the veiled, but nevertheless real persecution of Catholics in England. Position and influence were gradually taken away from the Catholics as occasion served, and under circumstances which were often unjust and tyrannical. The Protestants, though triumphant in England, feared as much as they hated the Catholics, who were still all powerful in almost all parts of Europe.

RECOVERY OF THE HOLY CROSS,

TESTING AND ADORING THE HOLY CROSS.

(Ancient Frescoes in the Guild Chapel.)

William Shakespeare was born early in 1564, and was, therefore, four years old when Mary, Queen of Scots, escaping from her prison in Lochleven Castle, gathering a small army, but defeated near Glasgow, made her way into England, threw herself on the tender mercy of Elizabeth, and was forthwith imprisoned in Bolton Castle, Yorkshire. It was in the previous year that the Protestants in France were defeated at St. Denis, and that the Duke of Alva was appointed Governor of the Netherlands, in which capacity he massacred no less than 18,000 Huguenots. The poet was five years old when the Catholic lords of Northumberland and Westmoreland raised the standard of revolt and marched triumphantly through Durham into Yorkshire, to be crushed by the Royal forces. When the poet was six years old, Leonard Dacre raised a northern rebellion in favor of Mary, and in the same year the Scots swooped into England, in return for which a portion of southern Scotland was fiendishly ravaged. At eight years old the poet would hear and wonder as the people talked in awe-stricken tones of the massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day, when Protestants in France, to a number variously stated between 20,000 and 60,000 were slaughtered, and the Pope struck medals, and ordered a *Te Deum* to be sung in honor of the great event. From that time, until he married, the poet would constantly hear of the torture and execution of Romanists in England, and of the almost equal intolerance shewn to the Puritans. And although most of these troubles were far from the secluded vale of Avon, they were seriously discussed around the firesides of Stratford, and partisan feeling ran deep. Warwickshire was strongly Catholic in its general sympathies, and even to the present day many of the old families, both rich and poor, are staunch Catholics. Billesley Hall, at which there is reason to believe that Shakespeare was a visitor, has still its priest's hiding chamber, and its underground passage (now bricked up at the end of a few yards) alleged to run as far as Causton. Clopton House, too, the Manor house of the district including Stratford and Wilmcote, has its priest's chamber in which the Gunpowder Plot conspirators met.

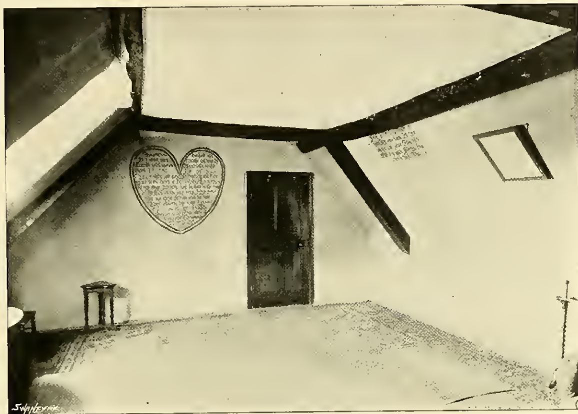
It is well to bear in mind the social and religious conditions of the time, as here very briefly sketched. They especially help us to understand the importance of the town government, with its subscriptions for the maintenance of billmen and bowmen, its struggle with "the dearth," and "the pestilence," and its ineffectual efforts to induce the townsfolk to keep their gutters clean. They also emphasise the value of the various charities and institutions that were connected with the town's government by the Guild.

Of the history of Stratford-on-Avon, as a separate place, we have no trace earlier than a somewhat doubtful charter of Ethelred, King of Mercia, whereby in 691 he conveyed to the then Bishop of Worcester the monastery of Stratford. In 781, Offa, King of Mercia, confirmed the right of the then

SHAKESPEARE HALL, ROWINGTON.

Bishop of Worcester to Stratford, and little more is known of the place until we come to the Domesday Survey (1085) in which it is dealt with very fully and described as having been a manor of the Bishop of Worcester for several centuries.

Before the end of the 12th century, Stratford had several craftsmen and small manufacturers, and from Richard I. the Bishop of Worcester obtained a charter for a weekly market to be held on Thursday.* In 1216 an annual



PRIEST'S ROOM, CLOPTON HOUSE.
(Meeting place of the Gunpowder Plotters.)

fair, held on Trinity Sunday and the two following days, was granted. In 1224 a three-days annual fair commencing on St. Augustine's Day (May 26th) was granted, and later in the century grants were obtained for a four-days fair on and following the eve of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, and a three-days fair commencing on the eve of Ascension Day. The first fair, no doubt, arose from the Church anniversary, while the third arose from the dedication day of the Guild Chapel, which belonged to the Guild of the Holy Cross.

This Guild of the Holy Cross, whose records as far back as 1353 are now preserved in the Shakespeare's Birth House Museum, was the most important factor in the life of Stratford and the country round, during the

* This market day was observed until 1820, when it was changed to Friday.

middle ages. Working on lines somewhat similar to those of the modern Friendly Societies, with their sick and burial funds, schools, and other charities, and having in addition a distinctly religious side, the Guilds were very popular and became very powerful. Of the actual date or manner of origin of the Stratford Guild we have no record, but at the end of the 14th century it was regarded as very ancient, and its officers had no knowledge of its real age. It was an institution admitting members of both sexes, and raising funds by means of entrance fees, by an annual subscription (in 1389 it was sixpence a year) by fines for non-observance of rules; by gifts and bequests; and, later, by revenues from land and investments of accumulated funds. The fines included (in 1389):—

Non-attendance to pay subscription	1d.
Neglect to follow funeral of a deceased member	½d.
Failure to provide a tankard of ale at the Easter Feast ..	½d.
Quarrelling or causing a quarrel at the feast	½d.
Failure to watch by dead member, if summoned	½d.
On introducing guest or stranger without leave, or on taking the seat of another member	½d.

The Guild was governed by two Aldermen and six Councillors, who agreed to forfeit for non-attendance at a council meeting fourpence.

Among the benefactions and advantages of the Guild we find:—The burning of a candle in honor of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Blessed Virgin, and the Holy Cross, "so that God and the Blessed Virgin and the Venerated Cross may keep and guard all brethren and sisters of the Guild from every ill."

The great candle above mentioned and eight smaller ones to be carried from the church to the house of any member who died, and to be kept burning by the body until it was buried, and then set before the Cross on the altar. In case of the death of a poor man or a stranger in the town, the Guild provided four candles, as well as a sheet and a hearse-cloth to lie over the coffin until the body was buried.

A feast was held in Easter-week for the cherishing of brotherly love. Each member to bring a great tankard filled with ale; which ale was given to the poor, after prayers to God and the Virgin and the Venerated Cross; and before the feast. One-third of the brethren were summoned to watch the body and pray for the soul of a deceased brother through the night after his death. Any brother who was robbed or otherwise thrown into poverty was provided with "food and clothing and what else he needs, so long as he bears himself well and rightly towards the brethren and sisters of the Guild."

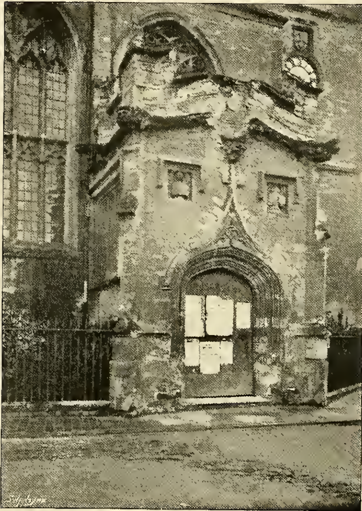
Associations having such beneficent objects and appealing strongly to the religious as well as to the social and commercial instincts of the people, were

of the greatest possible value in a society which possessed, apart from them, no adequate substitute for our trades unions, friendly societies, or even savings banks and fire and life insurance offices. The special guilds for separate trades came later, so that there is little wonder that the general guilds were well supported and eventually so powerful as to be, practically, the local governing bodies.

The accounts of the various masters of the Stratford Guild are so extremely interesting that we feel sure our readers will pardon a digression for the purpose of pointing out some of the facts to be learnt therefrom. The entrance fees varied from time to time, and even in the same year the fee varied somewhat, according to the rank of the brother or sister joining. The largest fees were usually paid by the chaplains, which can be well understood if they were to pose, after admission, as members receiving a stipend. The souls of deceased persons were eligible for membership, and as they were not likely to make any call upon the temporal resources of the Guild, their entrance fee was half the amount charged to brethren still in the flesh, and no subscriptions were demanded. All through the records we find very numerous entries of fees paid for the souls of deceased persons. Widows and unmarried women paid a reduced entrance fee, and in 1436 we find a very curious entry of a compact with a single man—" William Purdon, syngulmon, and if he should hereafter marry, then his wife to be received into the fraternity of the Guild without paying any fine (or entrance fee)." In many cases we find that payment of the " fine " and of subscriptions was made in goods or labor instead of money.

THE GUILD CHAPEL, FROM SCHOLARS' LANE.

We find particulars of the building of the Grammar School, and also of a portion of the Guild Chapel. We learn that the Guild paid tribute of money, and of certain services to the Parish Church, and that in addition to maintaining the Grammar School it subsidised a preparatory school to the extent of providing the schoolmaster with a house, rent free. We find that the Guild very handsomely entertained the travelling preachers and important visitors to the town, and that it formed a court of arbitration which did not hesitate to pay for a feast at the making of two enemies into friends. It gave encouragement to promptness and punctuality by keeping two public clocks, and generally looked after the interests of its members from the cradle to the grave, and even beyond: for did not the Guild pay fourpence a year to the crier, or "le Belman," for "praying round about the town for the souls of brothers and sisters four times a year."



THE GUILD CHAPEL. ENTRANCE.

Of the home life and religious ceremonies of the time we can form a good idea from the records, but perhaps none of the items are more interesting than those pertaining to the feasts of the brethren. The numbers attending the feasts during the first thirty years or so of the fifteenth century varied from a hundred and eight (A.D. 1410) to a hundred and seventy-two (A.D. 1416), these numbers being exclusive of the chaplains, the strangers, the cooks and turnspits, and those brethren who waited on the rest. The providing of a feast for such numbers was evidently beyond the resources of the local tradesmen and the local markets, for we constantly find entries of payments for men and horses to buy the provisions in surrounding towns and villages, and to convey them to Stratford. The sheep, goats, fowls, &c., were bought alive, and kept some time before the feast; the unground grain was bought and ground for bread

and pastry; and whatever the viands may have lacked in elegance and variety, there was certainly no lack of quantity. The partial account of the feast made in 1410, when a hundred and eight brethren attended, is fairly typical of the provision made, and of the market prices then ruling. We find

Corn.—Twenty bushels, 10/-; exclusive of corn to feed the pullets.

Ale.—From Agnes Iremonger, eight dozen (? gallons) good ale, 12/-; small ale, 3/- From Agnes Mayel, nine gallons good ale, 1/6; small ale, 9d.

Meat.—Four calves, 11/-; two "legges" of veal, 8d.; two "buttus" of pork, 8½d.; two sheep, 5/-; one calf, 3/4; nine small pigs, 3/9; 10 "kyddus lambe" bought at "Shresesbury," 5/10; and carriage of same to Stratford, 20d.

Pullets.—113 pullets, 9/11½; three capons, 8d.

Spices.—1½lbs. pepper, 5/6; half quatron saffron, 2/-; one quatron ginger, 7d; one quatron cloves, 14d.; three pounds "raysens de courance," 12d.; six pounds almonds, 18d.; three pounds rice, 8d.; twelve pounds figs, 1/-; "graynus," 9d.

Sundries.—One bushel salt, 7d.; two gallons red wine, 1/4; one gallon "osey," 1/-; vinegar, 6d.; stipend of two cooks, 4/-; two turners (turnspits), 2d.; washing the vessels, 4d.; rushes for the hall, 3d.

THE BROTHERS' DOOR.

Milk, cream, eggs, honey and other items are enumerated, but the details are omitted from the copy of the record. In later accounts we find much more extensive provision. For instance, an undated account (probably about 1461) specifies 270 geese (at 2½d. each), 72 pullets, 32 gallons of milk, and 1,350 eggs: not to mention other items. The market price of eggs remained steady through the century at sixpence a hundred, and the year above quoted (1410) seems to have been a bad one for buying sheep, for their usual price in the records is sixpence each. In 1447 we find a curious entry:—1½d. for laths and nails bought for the window of "la Schole Hous," when the pullets were there before the feast.

In many cases minstrels were engaged to add to the pleasure of the meeting, and they were usually well paid. In 1411 we find 3/4 paid to a harper,

in 1424 the minstrels "de Warrwick" received 20d., in 1427 a minstrel received 20d., while in 1464 sixpence was paid to "divers mynstrells" of Lord Warwick and Lord Gloucester. In 1410 it is evident that there was no plumber resident in the town, for in addition to a "stipend" of twenty pence for "sowdyng" a gutter, we find a payment of one penny for keep of the horse of said "plumbar" for a day and a night.

STAIRS TO THE MUNIMENT ROOM, GUILD HALL.

We will only mention one other incidental subject before returning to our main matter, and that is the light thrown upon the origin of surnames by the old records of the Guild. A considerable majority of the surnames indicate some occupation, and in many cases we find that it was the occupation actually followed by the bearer of the name. One of the most prominent names in the record is Iremonger, and in 1427 we find that the father of Thomas Iremonger was John Couper, while his mother was Awbree Mulleward. At another time we find that the ironwork used in the Guild buildings was bought from one of the Iremongers. In one account of 1460 we find a proctor called Robert Iremonger, while in another account of the same year he is called Robert Halle, Iremonger. In 1442, John Sclatter was chief bailiff, and 15s. 4d. was paid to him for laying tiles. In 1466 we find entry,—"paid William Sclatter, ye sclattur, for sclattynge" certain houses, 14s. Thomas Payntour painted the houses, Geoffrey Baker supplied bread, Thomas Bedemon was the bedeman or bell-man, and Robert Carpenter did the timber work. There is an entry of Thomas Hore, Fissher, and John Fissher, servant of the aforesaid Thomas Hore. In many cases

THE CLOPTON CHAPEL, TRINITY CHURCH.

(Tombs of the Clopton family.)

the place of residence is used as a surname, as Wm. Beoley (of Bearley), Wm. Staffordshir, and John Hoore, "otherwise Stratford," of Winchester, evidently a native of Stratford who had left his own town.

We might wander for a long time in the interesting bye-paths of these records, but space forbids. The Guild was near its zenith in 1478-9, when "the Illustrious Prince (afterwards Edward V.) the eldest son of our Lord the King" became a brother. He was no honorary member either, but manfully paid a "fine" of forty shillings, in a year when common folk paid 6s. 8d., and he also introduced a number of noblemen and gentlemen. By this time the Guild was strong and wealthy. It owned a large proportion of the houses in Stratford, and its lands, both in Stratford and the surrounding districts had become very extensive. By the beginning of the sixteenth century the Guild had passed its prime, and in 1547, at the dissolution of religious houses under Henry VIII., it was suppressed, and its revenues appropriated by the Crown. This high-handed proceeding resulted, amongst other things, in showing the great value of the Guild, for though it was not restored in the same form, the state of misgovernment or non-government into which the town fell caused a petition to be made to the King, and six years after the Guild was destroyed, Edward VI., the son of the destroyer, gave a charter for a local corporation on practically the same lines as the Guild, and with a portion of its ancient revenues (Charter, June 7, 1553). Authorities differ as to the extent to which the dissolution of

CLOPTON HOUSE. REAR.

BECKETT'S MARTYRDOM.
(Fresco in the Guild Chapel.)

MURAL PAINTING.
(Fresco in the Guild Chapel.)

the Guild affected its school, but at the same time that the charter of incorporation was given, the school was reorganised as the "King's New School." Rules were made for its government, and it was sufficiently endowed. Within four years of the charter, John Shakespeare was elected an officer of the corporation, and within less than twenty years of the endowment of the Grammar School, his son William became one of its scholars, as we shall see in later chapters.

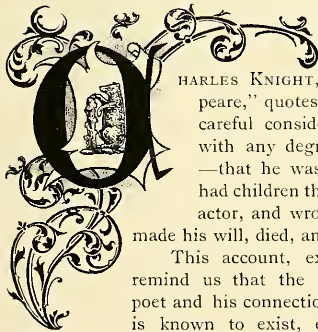
WELFORD VILLAGE.

TRINITY CHURCH AND THE MILL WEIR.

Chapter III.

SHAKESPEARE'S ANCESTORS.

"I lay my claim to my inheritance of free descent."
Richard II. Act II., Scene 3.



BADGE OF THE EARLS OF WARWICK.

CHARLES KNIGHT, at the beginning of his "Life of Shakespeare," quotes from Steevens a few lines that are worthy careful consideration. They are:—"All that is known with any degree of certainty concerning Shakespeare is —that he was born at Stratford-on-Avon; married, and had children there; went to London, where he commenced actor, and wrote poems and plays; returned to Stratford, made his will, died, and was buried." (Written 1773.)

This account, exaggerated in its baldness, is useful to remind us that the number of actual facts known about the poet and his connections is very small. No scrap of his writing is known to exist, except some six signatures, and possibly the two words, "by me," preceding the signature to his will. Only one letter written to him is preserved. The site of the house in which he died is known, and his grave is with us. Almost all beyond this, the early homes of his parents, the place of his birth, his education, his trade,

the very name of his wife, her home, and the circumstances of his life in Stratford, can only be established by conjecture, based on circumstantial evidence, often of a kind that is open to at least two interpretations.

Church and town records were meagre and badly kept in the sixteenth century; and the gross carelessness and ignorant vandalism of too many custodians have destroyed many evidences that might have been of great value in connection with our subject.

The early accounts of Shakespeare's life are brief, and more or less inaccurate. The oldest notes are from a memorandum book of the Rev. John Ward, M.A., who wrote in 1662, the year of his induction as vicar of Stratford-on-Avon. John Aubrey, the gossip-chronicler, visited Stratford about the same time and collected a few particulars of doubtful value. In 1693 a traveller recorded a chat with William Castle, then parish clerk at Stratford. A few notes entered about the same date, and evidently from current traditions, are found in a manuscript biographical notebook, kept by the Rev. Richard Davies, a Gloucestershire clergyman; but the first fairly full account of the poet's life was written by Nicholas Rowe, a dramatist of the end of the seventeenth century, from particulars furnished by Thomas Betterton, whose respect for the poet's work led him to visit Stratford-on-Avon in search of biographical facts. The date of this visit is not known, but Betterton, the greatest Shakespearean actor of his time, took to the stage in 1660, and Rowe's account was published in 1709. Through Sir William Davenant, godson of Shakespeare, and proprietor of the theatre in which Betterton played, there was a direct connection between the time of the poet and that of his first chronicler. It has been pointed out that as the poet's second daughter, Judith, lived to 1662, and his grand-daughter (who was eight years old at his death) lived to 1670, there was a good chance of obtaining fairly accurate particulars at Stratford at the time of Betterton's visit, especially if made, as Mr. Collier suggested, not later than 1670 to 1675.

Malone, whose "Life of Shakespeare" was published in 1821, added much to our knowledge of the poet's history by a careful searching of records and registers, but even Malone seems to make certain important statements for which he quotes no authority, and which appear incredible in the face of ascertained facts. This tendency to set down surmises and probabilities as definite statements, is a weakness almost inseparable from work so largely conjectural as a life of Shakespeare; and all the leading writers on the subject seem to have fallen more or less into the trap. As they also, in some cases, quote the previous writer's suppositions as if they were undoubted truths, it is difficult to trace authority for many statements, and all we can promise in the following pages is that, so far as possible, we will avoid stating as fact anything for which we have not a copy of the original record or authority. From Rowe and Malone we must necessarily quote often with no other acknowledg-

ment than this general one. Other workers have added most useful light, especially J. O. Halliwell-Phillips,* whose "Outlines of the Life of Shakespeare," published in 1848, and revised and extended in successive editions until his death, in 1889, is an invaluable storehouse. Major James Walter, searching amongst "the descendants of Roman Catholic families, resident at the time in 'the Shakespeare country,'" has unearthed a great mass of interesting and suggestive tradition.

THE ARDEN HOUSE, WILMCOTE.

Of all the many debateable points in Shakespeare history, none has given rise to more discussion than the question of the social position of his ancestors. Both the Shakespeare and the Arden families were very extensive; both included many illustrious, as well as many obscure members, and it has been most difficult to decide with what particular branches of the family the poet was connected. Most important evidence is found in the draft grants of arms to John Shakespeare, dated 1596 and 1599. Doubt has been cast upon these documents because the confirmation of them has not been found;

* Halliwell-Phillips only added the second surname (Phillips) in 1872. Hence he is often quoted as "Halliwell," which sometimes causes confusion.

and also because a reference to the "parents and late antecessors" was supposed to relate to the Arden family, who, of course, were not the "antecessors" of John, but of his wife, and, therefore, of his son William. Halliwell-Phillips said of these draft grants:—"Ridiculous statements were made respecting the claims of the two families. Both were really descended from obscure English country yeomen, but the heralds made out," &c. We should hesitate to contradict such an authority were it not for the distinct statement made as recently as 1889 by Charles H. Athill, Richmond Herald of the Heralds' College, and published by Major Walter. It runs:—

> "I have referred to the original papers relating to the Shakespeare Grant of Arms, and there can be no doubt that a patent was assigned to John Shakespeare, the father of the poet, in 1596, and that it was ratified in the subsequent assignment for Arden.
>
> There is also ample proof that the grantee established the fact that he was of sufficient social position to warrant the issue of a patent."

With this statement as our warranty we may claim as actual ancestors of the poet, some of those important personages, who, otherwise, could only be "supposed" to be his forebears. Dugdale collected a great mass of facts as to the history of the Arden family, but did not conclusively prove the identity of his Robert Arden with the great-grandfather of Mary Arden. If the statements in the draft of arms are repudiated, doubt remains. If accepted, the case seems fairly clear. Turchil, a man "of especial note and power and great possessions," lived in Warwick at the time of the Norman Conquest. By the Conqueror he was confirmed in his possessions, and made military governor of Warwick Castle. Following the Norman fashion, he took a surname, "de Eardene," from the Eardene or Arden, the forest land in which he lived and ruled. His descendants, of varying wealth and importance, including more than one sheriff of the county, are traced down to Robert Arden, brother of Sir John Arden, squire of the body to Henry VII.

This Robert was supposed by Knight to have been the great-grandfather of Mary Arden, the mother of the poet; but there is evidence to show that he was really her great-uncle, and that his brother, Thomas, was her grandfather. We find that Robert Arden, grandfather of the poet, is described, in an indenture of 1501, as the son of "Thome Ardern de Wylmecote;" and in 1526 Sir John Arden leaves fees for life to his three brothers, Thomas, Martin, and Robert.

The Robert Arden in whom we are most interested, married a wife whose name we know not, at a date of which we have no record; and had a family of eight daughters.* Left a widower, he married Agnes Hill (born Webbe), a native of Bearley, some three miles from Stratford-on-Avon, and widow of John

* French, Hunter, and Mrs. Stopes say seven daughters. Phillips gives eight.

Hill, farmer, of the same place. R. B. Wheler, a very careful local historian, says that this good woman was sister of the wife of Richard Shakespeare, of Snitterfield, so that the connection between the Arden and Shakespeare families was an intimate one, long before the marriage of John Shakespeare and Mary Arden. As several of the relations will appear in our story of the poet's life, we have drawn up a tabular statement, on lines somewhat different from the ordinary pedigrees, that will convey at a glance what would take many words to make clear. Amongst other matters, it shews instantly what relatives of the poet were living at any given date, and enables us to

SHAKESPEARE HALL, ROWINGTON.

see who may have been interested in the births, and present at the weddings and funerals, that mark the family history.

In most cases the exact date of birth is not known; *b*, therefore, is the date of the baptismal entry. In the same way, most of the deaths are dates of burials, and not the actual dates of decease. The death of Gilbert Shakespeare, the poet's brother, is very uncertain, as the entry of a funeral, February 2, 1612, is of "Gilbertus Shakespeare, adolescens," and it seems hardly likely that a man over forty years of age would be so described. It has been

Shakespeare, Richard
d. about 'Xmas, 1560.

Arden, Robert
d. December, 1556.

Henry

?Thomas

John

Mary

Elizabeth
m. John Scarlett

Margaret
m. Alexander Webbe

Alice

Joyce

Catherine
m. Thomas Etkyns

Joan
m. Edmund Lambert

Agnes
m. John Hewyns

John Shakespeare—married 1556—Mary Arden.

Joan Shakespeare
b. August 15, 1558, d. in infancy.

Margaret Shakespeare
b. December 2, 1562, d. April 4, 1563.

Gilbert Shakespeare
b. October 13, 1566.

Joan Shakespeare
b. April 15, 1569.

Anna (Anne) Shakespeare
b. Aug. 28, 1571, d. April 4, 1579.

Richard Shakespeare
b. March 11, 1574.

Edmund Shakespeare
b. May 3, 1580.

William Shakespeare
b. April 26, 1564.

Anne Hathaway
b. 1556.

W. Shakespeare
m. Anne Hathaway, 1582.

Susannah Shakespeare
b. May 26, 1583.

Hamnet Shakespeare
b. February 2, 1585, d. August 11, 1596.

Judith Shakespeare
b. February 2, 1585.

Henry Shakespeare
buried December 29, 1596.

John Shakespeare
September 8, 1601.

Gilbert Shakespeare
? d. February 2, 1612.

Joan Hart
d. November 4, 1646.

Richard Shakespeare
d. February 4, 1613.

William Shakespeare
d. April 25, 1616.

Anne Shakespeare
d. August 8, 1623.

Mary Shakespeare
d. September 9, 1608.

Elizabeth Scarlett
d. 1588.

Alexander Webbe
d. 1573.

Margaret Webbe
m. Ed. Cornell

Joan Lambert
d. 1593.

Agnes Hewyns
m. John Stringer, 1550.

Agnes Stringer
d. before October, 1576.

1556, 1557, 1558, 1559, 1560, 1561, 1562, 1563, 1564, 1565, 1566, 1567, 1568, 1569, 1570, 1571, 1572, 1573, 1574, 1575, 1576, 1577, 1578, 1579, 1580, 1581, 1582, 1583, 1584, 1585, 1586, 1587, 1588, 1589, 1590, 1591, 1592, 1593, 1594, 1595, 1596, 1597, 1598, 1599, 1600, 1601, 1602, 1603, 1604, 1605, 1606, 1607, 1608, 1609, 1610, 1611, 1612, 1613, 1614, 1615, 1616, 1623, 1646

Susannah Shakespeare m. Dr. John Hall, June 5, 1607.
d. July 11, 1649. *d. November 25, 1635.*

Elizabeth Hall b. February 21, 1608.
m. Thomas Nash, April 16, 1626.
Thomas Nash d. April 4, 1647.
m. Sir John Barnard, Kt., June 5, 1649.
Sir John Barnard d. March 15, 1674.
Elizabeth Hall (Lady Barnard) d. February 17, 1670.

Judith Shakespeare m. Thomas Quiney, February 10, 1616.
d. February 9, 1662. *d. about 1663.*

Shakespeare Quiney b. November 23, 1616.
d. May 8, 1617.
Richard Quiney b. February 9, 1618.
d. February 26, 1639.
Thomas Quiney b. January 23, 1620.
d. January 28, 1639.

Elizabeth Hall (Lady Barnard) was the last living descendant of William Shakespeare.

SHAKESPEARE'S BIRTH-HOUSE IN 1858.

(From a Negative by Mr. H. P. Robinson.)

suggested that this was a young son of the poet's brother Gilbert. If so, it seems strange that the father's name is not given.

Mary, the youngest daughter of Robert Arden, was destined to become the mother of England's greatest poet, but ere we speak of her marriage, let us look for a moment to the poet's other line of ancestry.

The second draft Grant of Arms to John Shakespeare distinctly says that his "parent, *great-grandfather*, and *late* antecessor, for his faithful and approved service to *the most prudent prince* King H. 7, of famous memorie, was advanced and rewarded with lands and tenements geven to him in those partes of Warwikeshere," etc. The italics are interlineations made in the draft, which afterwards separately sets out the marriage connection with the Arden family, and, therefore, seems to prove incontestably that the poet's father claimed, and the Heralds, after usual examination, allowed, an illustrious descent. It is open to argument, and has been strongly contended, that this statement about the illustrious Shakespeare was a fiction, either of the poet, or of the Heralds, and based upon the fact of the illustrious Arden; who, according to the sceptics, being the great-grandfather of John Shakespeare's wife, would be, by courtesy, great-grandfather of John Shakespeare. We fail to see good support for this contention, but leave the question with those who care to examine the authorities and weigh the probabilities. Probably we shall never know with absolute certainty whether the particular Shakespeares from whom the poet was directly descended, were lordly or lowly, but for a long time the Shakespeare family was very numerous in Warwickshire, and included many members in the position of substantial yeomen and farmers, as well as craftsmen of good local standing. That some, at any rate, took a good position amongst the local gentry is well evidenced by the Shakespeare Hall, at Rowington, which, according to old tradition, was the home of Thomas Shakespeare, a brother of the poet's father. The Hall is sometimes spoken of as a manor house, but hardly attains to that dignity. In fact, it is one of some seven or eight good houses in the immediate neighbourhood, all of about the same period. Although long tenanted by farmers who had no appreciation of its historical value, the house is well preserved, and is now occupied by J. W. Ryland, Esq., an antiquary, who treats it with reverent care. Though difficult of access, being a two miles walk from Kingswood, the nearest station; and though not open to the ordinary tourist, the house and its associations are so full of interest that we give a couple of views. The little room above the entrance is traditionally the room used by William Shakespeare, on his visits to the Hall, and the one in which he wrote "As You Like It." Whether the play was suggested by visits to this house, on the very borders of the forest of Arden, or whether the tradition was suggested by the play, is matter for speculation. Certain it is that the play

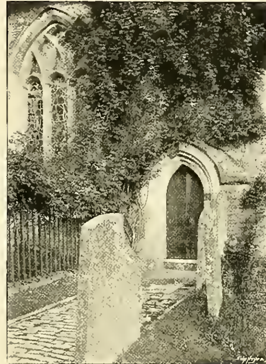
was written somewhere, and there seems no real reason why it should not have been at the house of the poet's relations, situated in the district which is so charmingly made the scene of action.

Exactly what relationship (if any) existed between the poet and the occupants of Shakespeare Hall, in his day, has not been proved. The suggestion about an uncle, Thomas, rests only on local tradition. Connections have been traced between the Stratford, Warwick, Snitterfield, and Rowington branches of the family, though Halliwell-Phillips was dissatisfied with the evidence connecting the poet with Rowington. At the poet's death he owned a copyhold under the manor of Rowington, but as this was

SNITTERFIELD CHURCH.

on a cottage and ground forming part of the New Place estate, where he died, in Stratford, and as it was bought by him from Walter Getley, in 1602, it is no evidence of connection with the Rowington family. French suggested that John and Joan Shakespeare, who were registered on the roll of the Guild of St. Ann, at Knowle, in 1526, may have been the parents of Richard, the poet's grandfather. In 1547, however, we find Joan Shakespeare, widow, living at Lyannce farm, so that even if these good people were connected with the poet, it is probable they did not live at Shakespeare Hall. The problem is full of difficulty; probably it will never be certainly solved; but if

we are content to commence our history with the poet's paternal grandfather, we are on fairly safe ground. Richard Shakespeare, of Snitterfield, is a man of whom we know something definite, and his relationship to the poet may be considered firmly established. He lived at Snitterfield, some four miles from Stratford-on-Avon, as a tenant farmer, holding land under Robert Arden, of Wilmcote, and also under the Guild of St. Mary, at Warwick. Of his commercial connections with Robert Arden we know nothing, but the records of the Court of the Guild of St. Mary, shew that he suffered severely in that terrible depression about the middle of the reign of Henry VIII., to which we referred in the last chapter. In 1529 "Richard Shakespeare owes suit of court;" in 1531 he made default and had judgment given against him. In '33, '37, '38, '40, and '50, similar entries are found, and it is pleasant to know that with the generosity characteristic of the old Guilds to those who were in real misfortune, three of the entries indicate that the default was excused. These facts prove that Richard Shakespeare long struggled with debt and difficulty, and that one of his landlords esteemed him an honest man, worthy of assistance. We shall see that one of his sons, Henry, who remained in Snitterfield, was in similar straits, and was assisted by his brother John. The other landlord, Robert Arden, with whom his tenant was connected by their marriage of sisters, and whose favorite daughter was to become the wife of the tenant's son, John, was probably no less lenient than the Guild.



CHANCEL DOOR, SNITTERFIELD CHURCH.

How long Richard Shakespeare lived in Snitterfield we know not; nor whether he was born there. We have seen his records as early as 1529, and we know that he was still on the farm in October, 1560. In this year, or early in the next, he probably died, as there is no entry of his name in the Church registers, which date back to 1561.

The evidence that John and Henry Shakespeare were sons of this good man, Richard, is very strong, but what other children he may have had does not appear, though there is some possibility that he had a son Thomas. The date of birth of neither of his sons is known, but Malone suggests that probably John was born in 1530. It is not known when John Shakespeare left Snitterfield. Many writers say it was in 1551, but this is obviously impossible, since, in 1552, he was resident in Henley Street, Stratford-on-Avon,

and in 1556, while residing at the same place, was described as a glover. We do not know where or when he learned the glover's craft, but it was certainly not in his native hamlet, and we know that both in Warwick and Stratford there were glovers before his time. No one could practise a trade without the usual apprenticeship, which was almost invariably seven or ten years; generally seven years from the fourteenth year of age, so that it would seem likely (especially if Malone's estimate of birth-year is correct) that the young glover came to Stratford about 1544, and in 1551 became free of the apprenticeship and began business on his own account.

There has been, perhaps, more contradictory speculation about the precise habits and character of John Shakespeare than about any other person or circumstance connected with the poet; and it has been commonly concluded that the character of the poet himself must have been largely inherited from his mother. This seems hardly necessary on an examination of the facts. Taken impartially, they delineate a character common enough in successful men who rise from the ranks, and in no way prove John Shakespeare incapable of being the father of a genius. The whole course of his life, so far as is known, was that of a man of enterprise and energy; of eager, active, temperament, with the initiative and creative faculties strong, the reflective and conservative faculties comparatively weak. Such a man is, as John Shakespeare was, undoubtedly, a cheerful optimist; busy, sympathetic, generous, public-spirited, somewhat careless in detail, because liable to over-estimate his own powers, and prone to have too many irons in the fire.

We have stated that he was described as a glover, whose business in those days included the tanning of skins (sometimes the skinning and even the killing of the animals) as well as the manufacture and sale of all such leather goods as did not come more properly into the trades of the boot maker, or the saddler and harness maker. Leggings and thick farming gauntlets formed part of the commodities, and doubtless, also, such articles as leathern aprons, leather breeches, "black jacks," and "leather bottels." We know that John Shakespeare became the owner or occupier of considerable property, that he dealt in corn, and also in timber (though to what extent is not known). Tradition says that he was a butcher and a wool-stapler, and all these facts and traditions, though at first sight contradictory, fall in with the view that his original and principal business was a glover's (in the wide sense described above), and that as he prospered, his money was invested, as was usual in those days, in houses and land, and in commercial enterprises and speculations which he could personally supervise. The timber transaction may have been one of many dealings, especially since his tanning would make him a regular buyer of bark, or it may have been a casual speculation. The selling of a quantity of barley was natural to a farmer; and the treating and tanning

THE BEST ROOM.
THE WELL YARD.

FARM BUILDINGS.
WASH-HOUSE AND BRAKE-HOUSE.

THE ARDEN HOUSE.

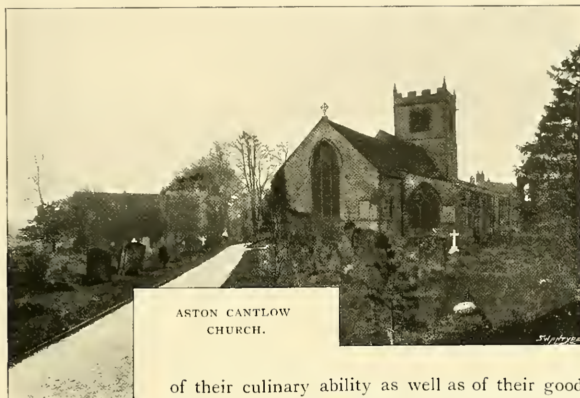
of sheep-skins would necessitate his dealings in skin-wool at any rate, so that more extensive wool-stapling might quite possibly follow.

It has been suggested that John Shakespeare's success was largely, if not entirely, due to the property, social influence, and business ability of his wife, and the fact of his rapid advancement in prosperity and public position after his marriage, has been cited. This seems part of a quite unnecessary attempt to brand the father with incompetence, in order that his character may serve as a foil for the talents of the illustrious son. Without wish to detract from the value of Mary Arden's influence, it is well to note that before his marriage, John Shakespeare was firmly on the lower rounds of the ladder, and had made the first, usually the most difficult steps, towards wealth and position.

In 1552 he was fined twelve pence for having too large a "muck-hill" before his door, but this was just the sort of thing that would happen to an enthusiastic busy man in a time when the only sanitary arrangement was for the private refuse that accumulated in the streets to be periodically removed to one of three or four public "muck-hills" that were equally within the town. The fining was doubtless a spasmodic effort of that time between the disestablishment of the Guild and the charter of incorporation, for two other Stratfordians were at the same time fined for the same offence. In 1556 he sued a neighbour for the value of eighteen quarters of barley, which seems to show either that then he was a grain grower in addition to his leather business, or that he had sufficient ready cash or good credit for speculation outside his own trade. In 1556 he purchased two houses in Stratford, one in Henley Street, and the other in Greenhill Street. On the 30th April, 1557, he was a juror of the leet, and in the same year was elected ale-taster.

Let us now return for a moment to Robert Arden, whose descent we traced from an ancient and honorable house, and whose daughter, in 1557, married the already prosperous glover. As we have seen, he was owner of part of the land farmed by Richard Shakespeare, and we know that he owned another farm and house in Snitterfield, as well as two farms in Wilmcote, one of which he occupied. From the inventory made after his death, we know that his home was substantial and commodious for the time, and the house still shewn at Wilmcote, as Mary Arden's, thoroughly bears out the idea. We may be sure that John Shakespeare was familiar from his youth with the home of his father's landlord, whom, as the husband of his mother's sister, he would almost regard as an uncle. No doubt his poor father, harassed with debt, would often point to his landlord as an example of a shrewd, hard-working, successful man. And no doubt the same landlord was anxiously consulted when the father contemplated apprenticing his boy to the glover's craft, that was to place him beyond those money troubles which had clouded the home through all his young days. We can imagine John Shakespeare as a lad, often calling at the Arden house after a day's ramble in

the forest, to shew his cousins the birds' eggs, the nuts, or other country treasures that he had collected, and to drink a bowl of milk, or munch an apple from the orchard, while telling all his adventures, and gazing in admiration on some of the eleven "painted cloths," which hung in place of tapestry in the hall-way and best rooms. We may be sure that on sabbath days and holidays Mistress Shakespeare and Mistress Arden would often meet, in sisterly fashion, for mutual confidence and encouragement. We may be sure, too, that one or other of the Arden girls would often visit the Shakespeare homestead with presents of some of those frugal dainties, proofs



ASTON CANTLOW CHURCH.

of their culinary ability as well as of their goodwill, with which country women love to give their friends a mild surprise. There were feast-days and fair-days in Stratford, as well as in their own villages and hamlets, when the lads and lasses would meet, decked in all their bravery, and casting care to the winds; for even in hard times those country folk knew nothing of the strenuous, anxious grind of modern city life. There were endless opportunities for the families to become acquainted, and we can imagine John Shakespeare as he progressed in his apprenticeship, and later, as his own business began to prosper, often walking in an evening to Wilmcote, and telling in his hopeful enthusiastic way, of every new sign of success. We can imagine honest Robert Arden, after cheering and encouraging the rising young tradesman, standing under the pent-house roof, as the youth and his own daughters wandered out to the orchard, and smiling a quiet humorous smile as he noted that his youngest favorite daughter, Mary, was also the favorite of

young John Shakespeare. It is but right to mention that Wilmcote tradition (probably of ancient date) says that Robert Arden was in no way friendly to the match, but the facts warrant us in supposing that any objection he might have, was no stronger than the common and very natural objection of a fond father, to losing his favorite daughter.

On November 24th, 1556, Robert Arden, " secke in Bodye and good and perfett of rememberence," made his last will and testament, appointing as his executors his daughters Alice and Mary. He made special and extensive bequests to these two daughters, and suitable provision for his widow (who already held certain valuable assets), and left the residue to his other children, without mentioning their names. On December 16th, in the same year, this

ASTON CANTLOW.

will was proved. The " lande in Wilmcote cawlide Asbies," which was part of the bequest to Mary Arden, is of the greatest possible interest, as it plays an important part in the history of John and William Shakespeare. Though we do not know the extent or boundaries of the land, though the name, Asbies, has long been out of use, a house which is generally accepted as Mary Arden's, is still preserved, and is visited by numbers of Shakespeare pilgrims, to whose use it has been reserved by Samuel Lane, a farmer of the district, who makes a charge of a few pence for admission. The house is indeed well worth a visit, for whether it is or is not the actual home of Mary Arden, it gives us a good idea of the conditions of the well-to-do farmers of about that period. A long two-story house, built of the stone of the district, with low ceilings, wide fire-places, stone floors, and broad window-sills. The stairs to

the upper story are built in the best room; and the bakehouse, wash-copper, and rub-stone under the pent-house roof that runs behind the building, tell of rough, hearty times. The old draw-well stands in the small paved yard behind the house. A low stone wall divides this yard from the main farm yard with its farm buildings on each side, with its manure heaps, and its horse pond. A gate at one end of the house admits to the farm yard from the road, and at the other side of the yard, under a great pent-house roof, high enough to shelter a loaded hay-wain, is a gate which leads to the meadows and the orchard, of which we get a glimse from the back door of the house.

The date when John Shakespeare took Mary Arden from this home is not known; nor are we certain where the wedding occurred. There was no church in Wilmcote at that time, so probably the ceremony took place at the church of the parish, Aston Cantlow. The marriage was almost certainly in

1564
April 26

Gulielmus filius Johannes Shakspere

REGISTRY OF SHAKESPEARE'S BIRTH.

1557, for it was after the death of Robert Arden (Dec., 1556), and the first child of the union was baptised Joan on September 5th, 1558. This marriage with an heiress, the daughter of a substantial local farmer and landowner, and a woman doubtless in every way a true helpmeet for a thriving tradesman, would enhance the position of John Shakespeare, and help him greatly in his somewhat extensive enterprises.

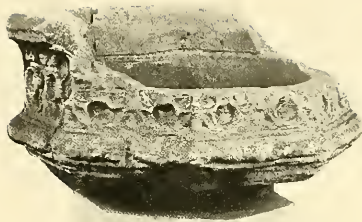
In 1558 the poet's father was chosen one of the four petty constables, his second step toward the position of Chief Alderman which he was afterwards to attain, and it is interesting to note that in this year he was fined fourpence for not keeping his gutter clean, at which time Francis Burbage, the Chief Alderman, and three others were similarly fined for the same offence. On September 30th, 1558, John Shakespeare was, for the second time, a juror of the leet, and in 1559 was re-elected petty constable, and elected one of the affeerors or officers who imposed fines in the case of convictions to which no definite legal penalties were attached. In 1561 he was again affeeror, and also Chamberlain of the Borough, a post for which he seems to have been well fitted, for not only was he re-elected for a second year (1562-3), but we find that later he prepared the Chamberlain's accounts when others were in

office. And yet, marvellous as it appears to us now, this successful business man who is repeatedly entrusted with the accounts of the Corporation, is generally supposed to have been so ignorant of letters and figures that he could not even sign his own name. Though reason almost cries out against such an idea, and though Knight and others have striven to show that inability to sign their names has *not* been proved against John and Mary Shakespeare, the whole of the evidence seems strongly to point to their illiteracy.

On December 2nd, 1562, was baptised, and on April 30th, 1563, was buried Margaret, the second daughter of John and Mary Shakespeare.

In 1564, on or about April 22nd, was born William, the first son, and possibly at that time the only child in the family in Henley Street. The death of his sister Joan is not recorded; in fact, nothing is known of her beyond her baptismal entry on September 15th, 1558; but since another daughter was baptised in the same name on April 15th, 1569, it is evident that the first daughter must have died in infancy. Tradition says that the poet first saw light on April 23rd, the day of St. George, patron saint of England. It may well have been so, and it is fitting that he who was destined to be the greatest of all Englishmen should be born on the day of his country's saint.

TRINITY CHURCH.
(From the Memorial Gardens.)



OLD FONT, TRINITY CHURCH.
(Shakespeare's Font.)

Chapter IV.

SHAKESPEARE'S CHILDHOOD.

"Happy the parents of so fair a child,"
Taming of the Shrew. Act IV., Scene 5.

ARMS OF STRATFORD.

WE know but little of the childhood of Shakespeare, of the time when he was drinking in the influence and inspiration of a noble mother's love. Not a word of direct history or even legend has been carried down the years, and we can only construct a vision of his early days from the bare walls and floors of his birth-house, and from the history of his town.

The birth-house has an unquestionable record from the hands of John Shakespeare to its present owners—the Shakespeare's Birthplace Trust. It is also identified as the house of Shakespeare's birth from a time sufficiently ancient to preclude any suggestion of manufactured tradition, and even the room in which the poet was born is shewn. It has been pointed out that though there is evidence that this house belonged to John Shakespeare at the time his son was born, there is no absolute evidence that the birth did not take place at some other of the homes which John Shakespeare is known to have occupied at one time or other. While

this is quite true, the idea seems so unnecessary and far-fetched that we may well accept the birth-house with its strong presumptive evidence and its old tradition. Probably the house has been so far altered and restored that but little of the original fabric remains, and we know that its interior arrangements have, more than once, been greatly changed, but still, it is our Shakespeare's birthplace, a place which has received its millions of pilgrims, a place which has quickened the aspirations of many an enthusiast who came with deeper purpose than the idle curiosity of the crowd.

The house is greatly changed from its appearance before it was taken over by the Trust, as will be seen by comparing the view from a negative taken

SHAKESPEARE'S BIRTHPLACE.

by Mr. H. P. Robinson, in 1858, with the more recent views taken by ourselves. In making the changes, every possible care was taken to secure a true restoration to the old arrangement. The old timbers and main portions were religiously left untouched, except in so far as decay rendered some repairs imperative, and the alterations were confined to the removing of details known to be recent additions. Every possible precaution is taken for the safety of the home. When it was purchased, the adjoining cottages were also bought and pulled down, to isolate it from the risk of fire. No artificial light of any description is allowed within the walls, and the heating is secured by hot-water pipes brought under the garden, along the pathway from the Custodian's

house. The old stone floor of the main room, broken by ill-treatment during the time when the house was used as a butcher's shop, is left in its old condition, although beneath it is an older floor of oak, still good and sound. Rather than remove the ceiling of the birth-room, which is in a very decrepit state, the Trustees have entirely closed the top storey and held the plaster together as well as may be by a close grating of iron laths, which have a curious appearance. The views of the house prevent the necessity of any extensive description, though it is well to say that it is really two dwellings, and has, at one time, been divided into three.

THE "MAIN ROOM," SHAKESPEARE'S BIRTH-HOUSE.

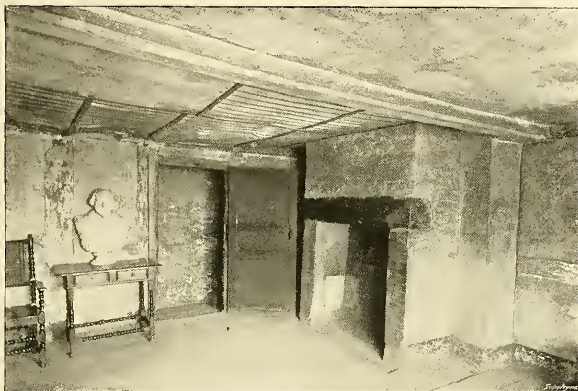
Visitors first enter the main room, a stone floored apartment with immense stone chimney-place, capable of holding and smoking many a side of bacon. Immediately behind is the living-room or kitchen, also with a huge chimney that leaves ample space within itself for a chair each side of the fire. Behind this again is a sort of back hall, leading to the garden, and a small snuggery or little parlor. From the living-room, stairs descend to the cellar, and others take a narrow winding way to a tiny landing between the birth-room and the two rooms (now thrown into one) at the rear. The birth-room is similar to the main room beneath it, with great chimney-place and a row of little lattice

windows. It seems lamentably bare, the few incongruous pieces of old furniture ranged against the walls, only add to the deserted effect, and there is no sense of *home*. Yet what a home it must have been when this was the best bedroom of the thriving glover who was working his way up the ladder of local fame, cheered by the earnest, loving encouragement of his good wife, and the merry prattle of his quick, observant son. The house was never palatial; but in the living-room there was the comfort of a roaring fire and a long high-backed settle, and seats in the chimney-corner when the wind howled without. There were never any paperhangings or tapestries, never any

PARLOR, SHAKESPEARE'S BIRTH-HOUSE.

useless furniture or pretentious luxuries, but the walls were freshly whitened, and on them would hang "painted cloths," framed "samplers," worked by the house-mother in her early days; bright arms, and the more valuable implements of the trade, side by side with bright household utensils, and possibly one or two curios brought from foreign lands to the local fairs. Probably there were some of the painted cloths from the Arden homestead, and possibly one of these illustrated in rude fashion the "Seven Ages of Man," a subject which vied with the story of the Prodigal Son in popularity. We may be sure, from what we know of the life in such homes, that there

was good store of snowy sheets, warm blankets, and heavy counterpanes for the cold nights, and probably a long patch-work cushion, stuffed with rags to mask the wooden hardness of the long settle. In those days when labor was cheap and material expensive, patch-work made warm quilts and comfortable cushions from the cast-off garments of the whole family; and garments were not cast off in such a household until they would no longer bear mending. The cellar held good store of milk and butter and cheese, with brisk ale, and may be, some cyder from the Arden orchard. The long settle, its seat forming two lids, held a couple of packs of flour and a couple of packs of meal, with a wooden scoop in each division, worn smooth and



SHAKESPEARE'S BIRTH-ROOM.

white with years of use. In the barn behind was grain ready to be ground, in the chimney swung the great thick sides of bacon, while hams, and onions and savory herbs, hung from the joists and rafters. The spinning wheel would be found in a corner, and, doubtless, was often busy. Probably there were stools instead of chairs, the tables and the fourpost bed were notable for strength, rather than beauty. Forks and tableknives were not needed, for broth was eaten with a wooden spoon or drunk from the bowl, while the solids were stolidly munched, or cut up and conveyed to the mouth with the knife that each one used for other purposes. Table-cloths or board-cloths were used on semi-state occasions only, and the platters, dishes and bowls were

probably all of wood, which could be easily cleaned by scouring with sand after washing. The stone floor boasted no carpet but a dressing of sand or a bordered pattern of chalk, but it was frequently scoured, and when finished off with a washing of milk, such a stone floor was the pink of cleanliness. For the winter weather rushes would be spread in place of carpeting.

Outside the house was great ignorance of sanitary precaution, and no concern for beauty. The front street, as we have seen, was in a state so bad that we have two records of fines imposed on John Shakespeare for allowing the accumulation of filth by a corporation that was far from squeamish in such matters. At the back of the house where is now a trim garden, there were doubtless the tan-pits, of evil savor, a pig-sty or two, and the usual domestic offices of the time. But beyond these were the open gravel pits of the Guild, and the fields and hawthorn hedges rising away to the Welcombe Hills.

In such a house Willie Shakespeare was born just as Queen Elizabeth, after concluding a treaty of peace with France, was resolutely turning to the settlement of affairs in her own land ; and the early years of his life were stirring times for the country. There was little or no reading in such a home, and by the fireside of a man like John Shakespeare the talk would range over the greatest possible variety of subjects—history, legend, politics, trade, fairy-lore, and town government. It was the ideal environment to store the mind of a quick impressionable lad with poetical ideas and weird conceptions.

Adjoining the home was the workshop, or the wool shop, as it is generally called. This place, bought from Edward West in 1556, must have proved a fascinating attraction to the young poet, with its changing stock of wool and skins, and all the work and mystery of the glover's craft. The boy was yet too young to take interest in his father's steady promotion from office to office, but we must glance at the events which were passing around him.

In the very year of his birth (1564) a sore plague swept over Stratford. All strangers were forbidden to enter, and inhabitants were ordered not to leave the town. Stringent sanitary measures (considering the period) were adopted, and the town council met in the open air for fear of infection.

Probably the mother and young child were removed from the town, for the prosperous tradesman who had lost two infant children, would not wish to let his little son take risks ; so it is likely that when about three months old, the poet made his first lengthy visit to either Wilmcote or Snitterfield. It is, indeed, possible that they moved to Clifford Chambers, where, according to a tradition, John Shakespeare lived for some years. Certain it is that the vicarage house at Clifford Chambers was at that time occupied by a John Shakespeare, though we know of no certain evidence that this was John Shakespeare the Stratford glover. It has even been suggested that possibly the poet was born at Clifford Chambers, but there seems no shred of evidence

THE LIBRARY AT THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

THE VICARAGE, CLIFFORD CHAMBERS.

Occupied during the Poet's early years by (a) John Shakespeare.

in favor of this suggestion. Whatever may have happened to Mrs. Shakespeare and her infant son, the father stayed in the plague-stricken town. On August 30th he contributed twelve pence, on September 6th, six pence, on September 27th, six pence, and on October 20th, eight pence, for the poor of the town and those that were visited by the plague. In this year occurred a piece of vandalism with which John Shakespeare could have had little sympathy if, as seems almost certain, he was a friend of the "old faith." Yet, as one of the chamberlains of the town, he was bound to take part in the payment for what he regarded as an act of sacrilege. It was the tearing down of the rood-loft in the Guild Chapel; the removal of the last trace of papistry, as the images had already been "defaced" in 1562 and 1563.

In March of 1565 John Shakespeare and a colleague made up the chamberlain's accounts, to Michaelmas 1564; on July 4th he was chosen an alderman, and on September 12th sworn into that office. In taking the oaths of office he was bound to swear allegiance to the new religion as well as to the Crown, but, like many others in Warwickshire, he might take his oaths with a mental reservation, knowing that open recalcitrancy meant ruin to his family as well as to himself. In September of this same year, he and eighteen others signed an order to John Wheeler to take the position of bailiff.

In 1566 the chamberlain's accounts were placed in the hands of John Shakespeare alone, and it is noteworthy that in this, and in two or three other cases, balances were shown to be due to him from the corporation, which would hardly have been the case had he been in straitened circumstances. On October 13th, another son, Gilbert, was baptised, a lad who in later years was to make a competency as a haberdasher, in London, afterwards returning to Stratford to act as local representative of his famous brother in at least one important business transaction. The records of this year shew that John Shakespeare became bail in two actions, for one Richard Hathaway, but whether the same whose daughter was afterwards to become the poet's wife, is unknown.

In 1567, John Shakespeare is first recorded as *Mr.*, and this has been taken as an indication that in this year the coat of arms, confirmed in 1596, was granted. His name is found in the attendance book of the town council on three occasions, and on the last of these, September 3rd, he was one of three persons nominated for bailiff, the highest position the town could offer. Ralph Cawdey, a butcher, proved the successful candidate. In this year, too, John Shakespeare was assessed for a royal subsidy on goods of the value of £4.

1568 again saw three nominations for bailiff, one of them being Robert Perrot, who was unsuccessful in the previous year. This time John Shakespeare was elected. Late in this year is recorded an appearance of the

players, under the patronage of the corporation, and it is quite likely that little Willie, who was afterwards to do so much for the players' art, then saw his first theatrical performance. The travelling actors of those days were held in no great repute. No women were in their company, for, at that time, and for a great many years longer, the playing of a theatrical part by a woman would have been held a scandalous exhibition. Usually the whole company tramped on foot from town to town, their slight wardrobe carried by one or two pack-horses or mules. For safety, they often joined forces with the regular vagrants, or school-men (as poor as their companions). The travelling

THE BIRTH-HOUSE. REAR.

of these three classes, in company, gave rise to the well-known old jingle :—

Hark! hark! the dogs do bark,
The beggars are coming to town,
Some in rags, and some in jags,
And some in a velvet gown.

The players who were fortunate enough to have the nominal patronage of some nobleman, and a license to call themselves his servants, would crave permission of the town authorities to perform within its boundaries, and if those authorities were favorably disposed, might receive a "bespeak," with permission to perform two or three times in the town-hall.

In the year 1668-9, the Queen's servants and those of the Earl of Worcester played before the town council at Stratford. The first named company received nine shillings, and the latter twelve pence from the public purse. Though it is not known that Willie Shakespeare saw these plays, we know that other boys exactly his own age saw similar plays in the very same year, and may be sure that John Shakespeare, the leading man of the town, bent on honoring the new departure, would take his family to the play. The long, somewhat low room of the Guild was far better suited for the plays of the day than many with which the actors had to be content, and now that it has been restored* to its original condition, we can well call up the picture. There was no glass in the windows, but stout oak bars, just near enough together to prevent any one crawling through, and the breezes would be partially excluded by heavy hangings or tapestries. Guttering candles and smoky torches arranged in clusters threw a glare on players and public alike. With the stage not more than a foot above the general level, no scenery, few costumes, and scarce any "properties" beyond such articles as might be borrowed in the district, it was very different from the sumptuous theatrical arrangements of the present day. The play, too, was strong and direct in its tendency, generally with a melodramatic moral, and plenty of the broadest farce-comedy element. There was crude justice, "villainy vanquished and virtue victorious," and exaggerated action that were calculated to appeal strongly to simple folk and children ; so that we may be sure of its lasting impression on an active imagination such as that of the child Shakespeare.

1569 was not, so far as we know, a very eventful year for the child whose career we are interested in following. His father's name occurs several times in the town records, now as supervising the chamberlain's accounts, now as witness to a couple of documents, and on sundry occasions as taking his place as presiding officer at meetings of the town council and the court of record. On April 15th a daughter was baptised, and in remembrance of the dear first child that the parents had loved and lost, was given the favorite local name of Joan. This first sister of William Shakespeare, undoubtedly had a great influence upon his life, and we know that she was generously remembered in his will.

In 1570 and 1571 we have few records of the Shakespeare family. John attended council meetings, had money transactions (nature not recorded) with the council, and in the latter year was elected chief magistrate. On September 28th of that year his daughter Anna was baptised.

So far as we have evidence, the affairs of the family were prosperous. But in these years the religious troubles were seething and working, and no doubt many a time the Shakespeare home would see an earnest little party of

* From the end of last, or beginning of the present, century, until 1894, the Guild-hall was divided into three rooms; which led some to ridicule the idea of plays ever having been given here. The restoration, in 1894, shewed that the partitions were no portion of the original fabric.

THE GUILD HALL.

friends of the old faith, gathered around the great hearth to discuss with some anxiety the news brought to the town by some chance traveller. Mary of Scotland was in prison, '69 and '70 saw rebellions in the north, with terribly stern retaliation. In '70 the Pope excommunicated Elizabeth, and a fanatic who posted a copy of the Bill of Excommunication on the Bishop of London's gate, was executed. In 1571 the puritans, who had been almost as repugnant to the government as the catholics, received many concessions, but these were far from helping the catholic cause, which was soon to receive a terrible blow in England, from the very success of some of its extremist friends in France. The unparalleled massacre of St. Bartholomew in August, 1572, must have shocked and saddened all true catholics as well as protestants, and though Elizabeth evidently did not feel strong enough to vigorously protest, there is no doubt that in England at that time was sown that bitter hatred of the papists of which traces remain to this day. It must have been a time of great excitement and anxiety when the news came to the little town of Stratford, and to the home of its chief magistrate; whose son, nearly eight years old, would grasp something of the seriousness of the situation.

Surely we are justified in believing that such an event as St. Bartholomew's day stamped its seal on a whole lifetime. May we not further believe that when the doubts and fears of the time subsided, our little Shakespeare was a child no longer, but was turning his earnest gaze to the future—a boy of purpose.

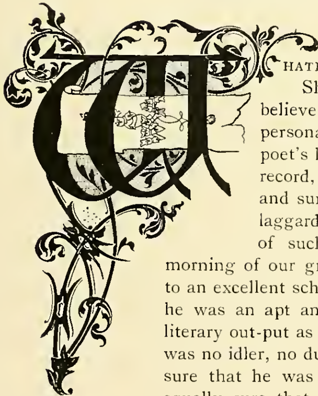
THE BATHING PLACE.

Chapter V.

SHAKESPEARE'S BOYHOOD.

"Then the whining school-boy with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school."

As You Like It. Act II., Scene 7.



ENTWINED INITIALS AS USED BY THE POET AND HIS WIFE.

WHATEVER of autobiography there may be in Shakespeare's works, we may well refuse to believe that the quotation above given carries any personal confession. 'Tis true that of the great poet's boyhood we have not a single direct reliable record, but the whole circumstances of his character and surroundings assure us that he was never the laggard or the dunce of his class. The eldest son of such a home, of such a father, in the very morning of our greatest revival of learning, with free access to an excellent school, how can we believe otherwise than that he was an apt and cheerful scholar? He, who made such literary out-put as we find in the years of his early manhood, was no idler, no dullard or blockhead; and though we may be sure that he was never excessively industrious, we may be equally sure that he loved to match his bright wits, quick

observation, and retentive memory, against the duller brains around him. To imagine that he was not a scholar of the Grammar School of King Edward VI. is madness; to imagine him an unwilling scholar is quite unnecessary.

The school was the fine old foundation of the Guild, established about the beginning of the fifteenth century; and endowed by Thomas Jolyffe, priest of the Guild, in 1482. As we have already seen, the Guild funds were confiscated with the Guild property, by order of Henry VIII., and restored by Edward VI. Hence the school was known in Shakespeare's time, and is until this day, as King Edward the Sixth's school.

Much of the old-time feeling clings around this school and the Guild Chapel to which it is attached. The great bell of the chapel (there are two) is still tolled at six in the morning during summer time, and is rung at curfew time every night during the winter. On the first of the month one stroke is given at the morning call, and each day a stroke is added until the end of the month. Six in the morning was the time for commencing lessons in Shakespeare's day, and the studies were continued for twelve hours, with brief recesses for meals and recreation. The metal of the great bell is of very old date, though it has comparatively recently been recast. Its smaller companion is younger, and is rung to call people to the chapel service, while the two together are the town's fire-alarm. Those who have time to spare will be well repaid for asking permission from the chaplain, and hunting up the verger, with the keys, by the climb up the narrow, worn, and winding stairway to the bell chamber. The old tower is quaint indeed, and there are beautiful views from its wind-doors, across the school playground, across garden and orchard, to the church of Trinity. When the sunlight falls on the church there are few fairer prospects. From this point of vantage we can easily see the plan of the Grammar school and Guildhall, the houses of the poor brethren of the guild, the priest's house, and the pedagogue's house, all clustering round the corner of the playground.

Descending to Church Street again, we enter the passage between the Guild chapel and the Grammar school, and find the main doorway of the Guildhall, on the right, in the passage. The hall is a long, low, room, dating at least from 1417, though it is uncertain whether the building was entirely rebuilt, or only thoroughly restored, in that year. It is only so recently as 1894 that it has been restored to its old condition as one room, after being for about a century divided into three. At that restoration a few interesting facts came to light. On the wall opposite the main door—the end where the players made their stage, were traces of five frescoes. The whitewash that had been over them for years, or centuries, had made their decipherment almost impossible, even with the most careful cleaning, but we can make out that the centre panel is the Crucifixion, with the Virgin on one

GUILD CHAPEL, GUILD HALL AND GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

side, and St. John on the other; while the side panels contain coats of arms. In another panel some old writing was found, incised in the very fine plaster, and, after careful photographic copying, was found to be a memorandum of some fish-sauce and oil—probably obtained for one of the feasts of the guild or the corporation.

From this hall, we pass through a doorway, over which is an undecipherable inscription, with the date 1619, into a room which is variously called the armoury, and the council chamber, or 'greein' room. If it was not the agreeing room of the guild, it was, doubtless, the "green" room of the players, and, perhaps, this punning possibility has led to the generally

THE 'GREEIN' ROOM.

accepted name. At one time, certainly, it was the armoury. It is a quaintly timbered room, with an old painting of the arms of England, dating from the public rejoicings at the restoration of the Stuarts, in 1660. Another doorway leads from this room to a queer old staircase, a curious branch of which gives access to a tiny room, undisturbed for an indefinite period, until a few years ago, when its pile of dusty lumber was overhauled and revealed sufficiency of interesting documents to earn for it the name of the muniment room. The papers thus found are preserved at the birth-house museum. At the top of the stairs is a fine room over the armoury, now used as the school library. A massive, carved, oak table, of great age, fills the centre of the

THE LATIN SCHOOL-ROOM.

(The figure in the corner occupies the spot traditionally assigned to Shakespeare.)

room, and on the wall, at one end, are painted two roses—red, with white centre, and white, with red centre—supposed to date from 1485, when the wars of the roses ended by happy union of the rival houses.

The mathematical room, over the south-westerly end of the Guildhall, and the Latin school-room, over the rest of that long apartment, are intensely interesting, as associated with Shakespeare's school days. In the northern corner of the Latin room stood the long desk known as Shakespeare's, and now preserved in the birth-house museum. It is objected by some that this was an usher's desk, and not a scholar's desk at all; but if we are to believe the tale of Audrey that Shakespeare "had been in his younger days a school master in the country," this difficulty vanishes. There remains the still greater objection (which, we fear, is a valid one) that the desk preserved in the birth-house is not near as old as Shakespeare's day. But, in relic worship, such an objection is mere detail.

At this end of the Latin room is a "lobby," over the passage that gives entrance to the Guildhall, and having the tower of the Guild Chapel for one of its walls. Until recently, it was spanned at the level of the eaves by a ceiling, on the removal of which it was curious to find the chapel tower wall scratched all over with names and initials of scholars now gone and forgotten. We can only surmise the use of this curious chamber, without light, without ventilation. May be in early days it was a dormitory, later, a punishment room. Returning through the Latin room, and down the outside staircase, of recent date but ancient style, we come into the corner of the playfield. Opposite is the pedagogue's house, as ancient and as curious as the school itself, and between it and the Guild Chapel is a boarding house for the scholars, standing on the site of the house of the priest of the Guild. The pedagogue's house is now devoted to school purposes, providing three or four good class-rooms, and a tiny private room for the headmaster. The building is quaintly irregular, for it has hardly an exterior timber that is truly upright, or truly horizontal, and none of its angles are rectangles.

Although called the pedagogue's house, there is some reason to believe that this ancient building is the original schoolhouse, in which lessons were given before the present school was built, when, possibly, the Guildhall was a one-storey building.

In the school enclosure are two brick walls that we should much like to see removed, as they are contradictions of the original scheme. One surrounds the gardens of the alms-houses (formerly used by the poor brethren of the Guild), the other cuts off from the yard a scrap of garden behind the priest's house. Immediately within this latter wall is a charming old doorway, the Brothers' door to the chapel. Inside the chapel there is not, nor has there been for a century or so, any trace of this doorway. The wall is continuous, plastered level and smooth, for the old purpose of the door is gone. In the

old days, when the priest occupied his house and the pedagogue had his own rooms, when the choristers or the poorer brethren dwelt in what are now the alms-houses, all the buildings opened on the common court-yard, and the yard had also access to the chapel without the necessity of going into the street. Doubtless the Guildhall was the common refectory of priest and brethren, and the brothers' door was regularly used when they rose from their meals to return thanks to the Giver of all good.

This fine old school is well worth any time we may be able to spend upon it, and an acquaintance with its old-time architecture, its hacked desks and

THE PEDAGOGUE'S HOUSE.

tables, and its ancient rough-hewn timbers, helps us to realise the poet's schooldays. The years he spent at school are commonly supposed to have been from 1571 to 1578, and there is no reason to doubt the substantial correctness of these dates. The seventh to the fourteenth year were usually devoted to school learning by boys who were intended to become apprentices; and we are told by the chroniclers that the poet's father removed him early from school, for employment in his own business. The early marriage, and early leaving of his country, for London, are sufficient in themselves to assure

us that the poet did not remain at school much beyond the usual time for lads who were not to go to college; while his father's important position in the town is a guarantee that he had the usual schooling of the time. Taking these dates, then, his masters would be:—1570-72, Walter Roche, Fellow of Corpus Christi College, and Rector of Clifford; 1572-77, Thomas Hunt (to whom we shall refer later, as curate of Luddington, where Shakespeare was probably married), and 1577-78, Thomas Jenkins, M.A., St. John's College, Oxford. These are all men of ability, so that there is no reason to disbelieve that Shakespeare received a thorough ground-work of education. Thomas Hunt, who had the greatest opportunity of influencing the poet, was a man of learning and importance. His salary, we know, was twice as large as that of the contemporary master of Eton. His title, Sir Thomas, was a courtesy of the times, conferred on schoolmasters of standing—as in the case of Sir Hugh Evans, in "The Merry Wives." Though most of the schools of the same time and standing had a "petty" school, wherein the rudimentary English subjects were taught to scholars of from five to seven years, the Stratford school seems to have had no such arrangement. In the early records of the Guild we find frequent allowances of rent, "which the master and the aldermen have pardoned to him yearly, as long as he wishes to keep school in it," and probably this rent-subsidised preparatory school continued after the King's school was established. In such petty schools, the usual books were the ABC, the Catechism, the Psalter and Book of Common Prayer, and the New Testament. Passing into the lowest class of the grammar school, Latin grammar and accidence, with the lesser catechism in Latin for a reading book, would have to be mastered. The second year, in the second form, saw continuance of grammar, with the reading and memorising of dialogue, and sentences from Confabulationes Pueriles, or some similar book. The aim was to make Latin sufficiently familiar to be used in the common conversation of the school, and as a preliminary step, isolated words and phrases were dragged into English sentences. In the succeeding years a dozen books of classical prose and as many of verse were gone through, so that by the time of passing the sixth form the boys must have had a tolerable knowledge of Latin grammar and composition, and the command of an extensive vocabulary. They were encouraged to use Latin when writing to their parents and friends, and letters in fluent language by Richard Quiney, Shakespeare's contemporary and friend, are still preserved.

While great prominence was given to Latin, and in a smaller degree to Greek, we must not suppose that the more useful learning for everyday life was entirely neglected. Reading and writing in English were, of course, incidental to the learning of Latin and Greek, and sufficient arithmetic for ordinary commercial purposes was added.

Between the hours of school, in the long summer evenings, on the Saints' days and holidays, our Willie Shakespeare was busy with games afield, and sport and adventure in the woodland. There were ample greens for rough-and-tumble play in the town itself, without mentioning the school playing field. There were quiet games at marbles and tops ; romping games of fox and geese, lastibat, prisoner's base, and football in the field and streets. The older boys would join in the sport of archery, still in universal practice, with quarter-staff and cudgel play for variety. In the hot weather there was always the resource of a swim in the river, and all through the year there was the attraction of wild nature—much wilder, but far more accessible than

SCHOOL BUILDINGS, FROM PLAYING FIELD.

nature to-day. No one who knows Shakespeare's works, and knows the country too, can doubt that for years he was a constant wanderer by the hedge-rows and the copses. We need no record to tell us that he always knew where he could flush a heron, the bird of solemn and mysterious flight; that he knew where the sand-martins tunnelled their nesting-places, where the kingfisher waited for his finny prey, and where the squirrel and the dormouse passed their winter months. Doubtless he joined his fellows in hunting rats and rabbits; doubtless he baited now and then a badger, for though there were laws against the keeping of dogs by mean persons, a town

like Stratford-on-Avon was well supplied with ownerless dogs that were always ready to follow a pack of boys when sport was afoot. But though we may be sure he joined his fellows in their rough games, no one who knows his work can doubt that his happiest hours were spent in roaming afar, or that the spirit of his boyhood's days is embalmed in Amiens' sprightly song:—

> Under the greenwood tree,
> Who loves to lie with me,
> And tune his merry note
> Unto the sweet bird's throat.
> Come hither, come hither, come hither,
> Here shall he see
> No enemy,
> But winter and rough weather.

It is the very spirit of a hearty healthy Warwickshire lad, with his quick imagination stirred and fed by tales of the outlaws of the greenwood; and we can only wonder which bird's song he intended to immortalise in the lilting line, "come hither, come hither, come hither." Many commentators and composers have missed entirely the extra point and charm of this refrain, which is given by embodying the bird's song in the man's. But commentators have mostly forgotten their boyhood and their birds.

We must not linger on this bright and happy time, but close this chapter with a glance at affairs that affected the family while Willie went to school. At the first meeting of the Town Council in 1672, John Shakespeare and Adrian Quiney (father of the Latin letter-writer) were instructed to represent the interests of the town at the coming Hillary term "accordinge to theire discrecions," and we find that John Shakespeare was present at seven meetings of the council.

In 1573 John Shakespeare witnessed a conveyance, and attended two council meetings.

In 1574, on March 11th was baptised "Richard, sonne to Mr. John Shakspeer," and the father attended four council meetings.

It may be said that these details are meagre, but they are all that remain to us, and they keep us in touch with John Shakespeare's life from year to year.

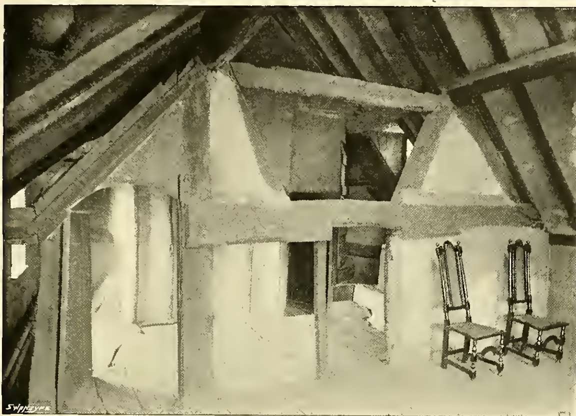
In 1575 the poet's father again witnessed a conveyance—of a valuable piece of property lying next to his own place in Henley Street. In October he bought two houses for £40, but we have no evidence to show where these were situated. He is known to have attended three council meetings this year.

All that we know of the family in 1576 is that the father attended three council meetings. In 1577 six council meetings were held. At one, John Shakespeare attended, from three he was absent, of the other two the attendances were not recorded.

1578, the year in which Willie Shakespeare emerged from boyhood into youth, was important in the family. In this year we first find evidences that

BILLESLEY CHURCH.

John Shakespeare's resources are becoming crippled, and this, combined with the traditions to the effect that the poet was early employed in his father's business, leads us to conclude that in this year he probably left school. On the 29th January we find the first hint that John Shakespeare was less prosperous than some of his fellow-aldermen. The town resolved to arm a number of pikemen, two billmen and one archer. The aldermen were assessed at six shillings and eight pence each, and burgesses at three shillings and fourpence, but exceptions were made in the case of two aldermen and five burgesses. Of the former, Mr. Plumley was to pay five



THE PORTRAIT ROOM, IN THE BIRTH-HOUSE.
(Formerly two bed-rooms; one probably the Poet's.)

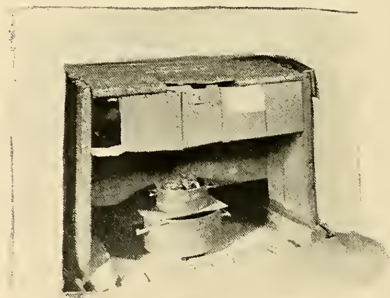
shillings, and Mr. Shakespeare the same sum as the burgesses. A baker whose will was made on November 14th of this year, entered amongst the monies owing to him "of Edmonde Lambarte and ——— Cornish for the debte of Mr. John Shaxper, Vli;" which seems to indicate that John Shakespeare required two sureties to obtain a credit of five pounds, and that the creditor had been forced to look to the sureties for the discharge of the debt. We shall see later that the loans of Edmund Lambert eventually led to the loss of the Asbies estate, which was mortgaged to him in this year for £40. At a meeting of the council on November 19th an assessment of fourpence weekly for the relief of the poor was made upon all the aldermen

with the exception of John Shakespeare and one other. Of nine council meetings in the year we know that he was absent from eight. The attendances at the other are not recorded.

Altogether, this year was the beginning of a dark and anxious time for the family. Of this we may be quite sure, though there is still much mystery surrounding the pecuniary affairs of John Shakespeare. We have evidence which seems to point to absolutely desperate circumstances, and yet we have no sign that the Henley Street property was ever encumbered in any way. The non-attendance at the council, which began at this time, the non-attendance at church which we shall see later, the evident efforts of the council to excuse him, the similar efforts of the commission as to recusants, and finally, his allowing himself to be seized for debt, while still holding valuable property, seem to require explanation.

The theories that we have yet seen seem insufficient for all the facts, and we can only tentatively suggest two points that seem to us to have been insufficiently considered. One is the proud, headstrong nature of the man, John Shakespeare; the other, his almost certain attachment to the Roman Catholic faith. We must remember that the town and its council were divided on the question of religion, and that Sir Thomas Lucy was a stern heretic-hunter. We must remember that during these few years "the Papists had been tortured and executed on the most frivolous pretences." We may be wrong in laying stress upon these religious differences; but it seems to us absolutely necessary to an understanding of John Shakespeare's position.

It was thus, under lowering skies and facing fortune's frown, that William Shakespeare, impulsive, brave and enthusiastic, left his school-days behind and joined his father in the battle of life.



SHAKESPEARE'S DESK.
Birth-house Museum.

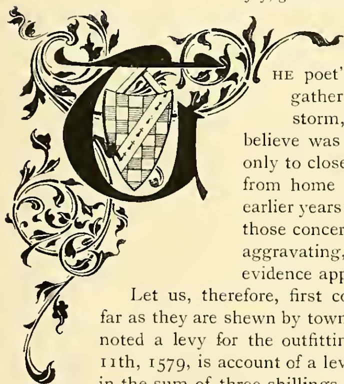
OLD FONT, LUDDINGTON.

Chapter VI.

SHAKESPEARE'S YOUTH & COURTSHIP.

"Here come the lovers, full of joy and mirth.
Joy, gentle friends."

Midsummer Night's Dream. Act V., Scene I.



THE poet's boyhood, as we have seen, ended amid gathering clouds. His youth was to be a time of storm, breaking for a moment into what we must believe was a brief halcyon time of early married life, only to close down again in a tempest which drove him from home and kindred. If the data concerning the earlier years of his life are fragmentary and contradictory, those concerning his youth and marriage are still more aggravating, for at every turn the meagre shreds of evidence appear to conflict with each other.

Let us, therefore, first consider the affairs of John Shakespeare, so far as they are shewn by town records and similar evidence. In 1578, we noted a levy for the outfitting of bill-men and a bow-man. On March 11th, 1579, is account of a levy in which John Shakespeare makes default in the sum of three shillings and four pence. Only a few days later, on April 4th, the little eight-year-old daughter, Anne, was laid to rest

OLD ARMS OF WARWICK

beneath the elms of Trinity churchyard. On October 15th, John Shakespeare's reversionary interest in the Snitterfield estate was sold to Robert Webbe, brother of Agnes, second wife of Robert Arden. From all the ten meetings of the Council in this year John Shakespeare appears to have been absent.

In 1580 the home was cheered by the birth of another son, baptised on May 3rd, and named Edmund, probably after Edmund Lambert, the brother-in-law, to whom his father was becoming hopelessly indebted.

With a view to liquidating this debt so far as it consisted of the £40 mortgage on Asbies, the Shakespeares sold the Snitterfield property, in which

ANNE HATHAWAY'S COTTAGE.

they had a direct interest, for this sum. In September John Shakespeare visited Edmund Lambert's home, at Barton-on-the-Heath, for the purpose of paying off the mortgage. The payment was refused by Lambert on the ground that other sums, for which he had no such security as the estate of Asbies, were still owing, and that he considered them a first claim. Bitterly disappointing as this must have been to John Shakespeare (for the law of forfeiture under a mortgage was most unjustly strict), we are almost bound to conclude that Lambert gave him some verbal undertaking to release the property whenever the full sum due should be tendered. But this was not the only trouble to befall the poet's family in this year, for on the 29th of December, was buried, in the churchyard of Aston Cantlow, all that was mortal of Agnes Arden. The only other record that we have of this year is, that John Shakespeare attended none of the meetings of the Council.

ANNE HATHAWAY'S COTTAGE.

1581 is a similar record of non-attendance. In 1582 only one attendance was made; and 1583 and 1584 are both blank in this respect. In 1582 the poet's father was witness in a suit brought against the Ardens (now represented by Robert Webbe), claiming a large portion of the Snitterfield estates. The result of the suit is not known.

Meanwhile, what do we know of William Shakespeare? There is no certain evidence, but the probability is that he was busy in his father's trade. Major Walter, the latest writer on the subject, contends that John Shakespeare became, soon after his marriage, a gentleman farmer, and left the business of

ANNE HATHAWAY'S COTTAGE. MAIN ROOM.

glover; but since he is legally described as a glover in 1552, and again in 1586, we must conclude that this was his trade in the poet's youth. The internal evidence of the plays and sonnets has been held to prove that William Shakespeare must have been a lawyer's clerk in his youth, and we have nothing to disprove it, but on similar evidence it has been held proven that he was a player, a herbalist, a seaman, a traveller in Scotland, Denmark, and elsewhere, and various other incongruous callings. Until further evidence is forthcoming we must consider him a glover. Aubrey says (1680):—"he exercised his father's trade." Dowdall (1693) says:—"bound apprentice to a butcher." Rowe (1709), to the value of whose account we have previously

referred, says:—"upon his leaving school he seems to have gone entirely into that way of living which his father proposed to him."

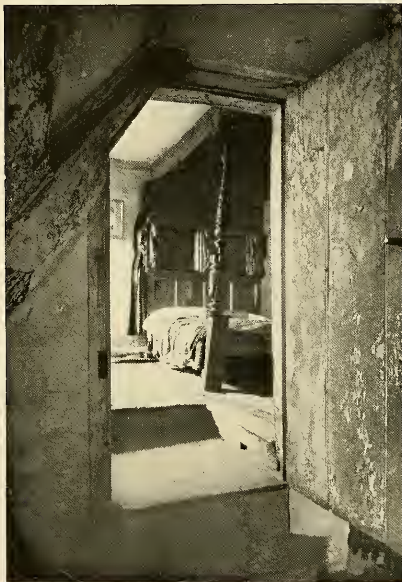
Before many years are over we find the poet a keen and wonderfully successful business man, no dreamer, but one who is besought to undertake affairs of importance, who conducts his own concerns, and those of such friends as can secure his aid, with prudence and ability. We can scarcely imagine that this sound judgment and practical ability can have been entirely unrecognised by his father, even at the close of his schooldays; and we feel justified in assuming that the good glover, harassed by changing fortune,

ANNE HATHAWAY'S COTTAGE. MAIN ROOM.

would turn to his eldest son for assistance. We are fairly safe, therefore, in saying that during the few years before his marriage, the poet was engrossed with the mysteries of skins and wool, tan-bark and timber, looking after the farm-land that his father owned or occupied, and giving an eye to the cutters in the shop, and the glove sewers who worked at their houses.

Such occupation would fill the busy days, but there were long summer evenings when the lads might wander to the neighbouring villages, and fair-days when the lasses came to town. Our poet at a very early age became attached to Anne Hathaway, a maiden of Shottery, some eight years his

senior. So far we may be very certain, for comparatively recently has been unearthed a marriage bond, fully confirming the story that previously rested on tradition. Even now it is not absolutely and conclusively proved that this Anne Hathaway lived at the cottage now bearing her name, or even that she lived at Shottery, but there are several links of evidence that confirm the generally accepted story, and none that disprove it.



ANNE HATHAWAY'S BEDROOM.

At the time of Shakespeare's marriage there were at least three Hathaway families living at Shottery; one of which had members living in what is now called Anne Hathaway's cottage. One member of this family, Richard Hathaway, "husbandman," made his will on the first day of September, 1581, which will was proven in London, July 9th, 1582. The three first bequests are to sons, under twenty years of age, and then we find:—"Item, I give and bequeathe unto Agnes, my daughter, six pounds, thirtene shillinges, fower pence, to be paide unto her at the daie of her marriage." A similar bequest to his daughter Catherine is to be paid at her marriage and another, to his daughter Margaret, to be paid on reaching the age of seventeen. From this it is surmised that the two elder daughters were then contemplating matrimony. "Agnes" and "Anne" were interchangeable forms of the same name, which was also sometimes written Annis or Annes. In the same will is mentioned another Agnes, who in the church registers is called Anne, and contemporary instances are known where the two names were used interchangeably in a single sentence. It is curious, also, to note that the village

of St. Agnes, near Redruth, in Cornwall, is to this day called St. Ann's by the natives, some of whom would scarce recognise its proper name. Thomas Whittington, of Shottery, "my sheepherd," is mentioned in the will as a creditor for four pounds, six shillings, and eight pence ; and in this same Thomas Whittington's will, made March, 1601, we find him leaving to the poor of Stratford, a sum of eleven shillings "that is in the hand of Anne Shaxpere, wyfe unto Mr. Wyllyam Shaxpere, and is due debt unto me."

Fulke Sandells, "my trustie friende, and neighbour," was one of the supervisors of Richard Hathaway's will, and John Richardson was one of the witnesses. We find them, also, as bondsmen in the "Bond against

ANNE HATHAWAY'S BEDROOM.

Impediments," given at Worcester, in November, 1582, and preserved in the Bishop's Registry. This same bond has two seals, one of them bearing the initials R. H.; and these facts complete the evidence of the connection between Shakespeare's Anne and Richard Hathaway, to whose will we have referred. The bond against impediments was to "defend and save harmles the right reverend Father in God, Lord John Bushop of Worcester," against any complaint arising out of his licensing the marriage of William Shakespeare and Anne Hathaway with only once asking of the banns. In addition to this bond, we have an entry in the episcopal register, at Worcester,

of the issuing of a marriage license "inter Wm. Shaxpere et Anna Whateley de Temple Grafton." The difference of a single day in the dates of the entry, and of the bond, need not trouble us. The name Whateley, and the place of abode (or marriage), are of more importance. Mr. Joseph Hill, who has made a careful and special study of the whole question, says:— "there is not a shadow of doubt in my mind that it was fair copied from a waste-book (so-called), and that Annam Hathwey, or Annam Hathaway, was the Latinised form, and mistaken by the copying clerk. Temple Grafton was, I believe, inserted because it was named as the place of the intended ceremony. This was almost invariably the place of abode of the woman." A suggestion so reasonable, we feel bound to accept, so far as the name of the bride is concerned, especially since the name Hathwey is distinct enough in the bond itself, and since Anne Hathaway was unhesitatingly named, by local tradition, long before the marriage bond or any documentary evidence was known to exist. The question of the place of marriage is a little more difficult, as we shall see later.

MRS. BAKER, DESCENDANT OF THE HATHAWAYS.
From a Negative by Miss Hodgson.

The facts that the bondsmen were men of Shottery; men who had witnessed and supervised the will of Richard Hathaway, and that "the consent of hir frindes" is especially stipulated in the bond, are sufficient to assure us that the bride's family, at anyrate, were favorable to the match, though it has been suggested (a pure supposition) that the Shakespeares were opposed to it. Be that as it may, there can be no reasonable doubt that within a few days

of the issue of the license, or early in December, 1582, William Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway. The comparatively short time between this date and the baptism of their first child on May 26th, 1583, has led some to question the strict morality of the poet, but for two reasons this seems gratuitous slander, in the absence of any other evidence. In the first place, the ceremony of hand-fasting or solemn betrothal was in those days, both popularly and legally equivalent to marriage, though it was always understood that it was a ceremony intended to be completed by the service of the church later. This hand-fasting was a legal bar to marriage with another person. It usually took place two or three months before the church service; and in

OLD HOUSES, LUDDINGTON.

wills and similar documents of the period we frequently find a woman described as the wife of a man to whom she was not yet married by the church rites. A very apposite instance occurs in the will of Robert Arden, made July 17th, 1550, in which he mentions his daughter Agnes as "uxor Thome Stringer," although her marriage with Thomas Stringer did not take place until October 15th, 1550.

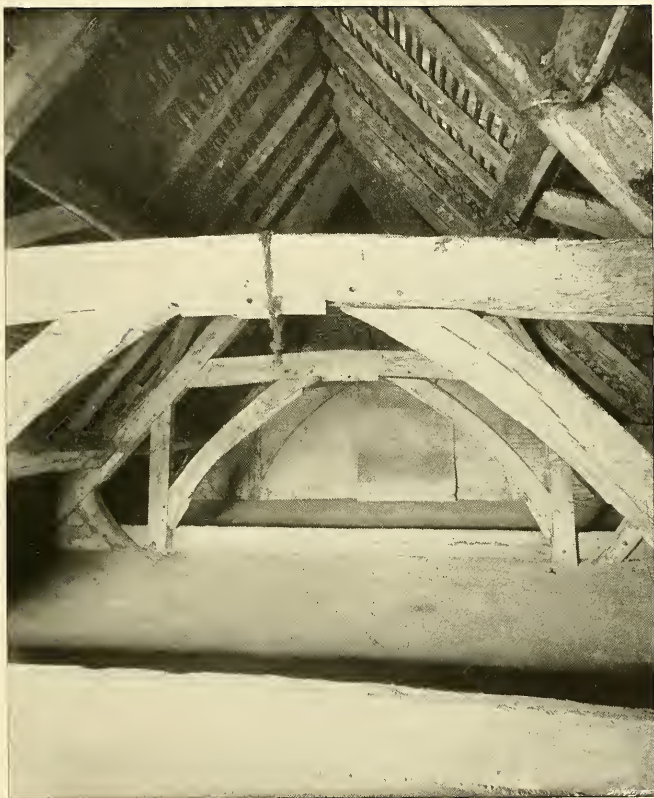
Another suggestion made in defence of Shakespeare's character is that he was probably first married according to the Roman Catholic ritual, but afterwards, in consideration of his father's position and reputation, or in view of some of the harsh legislation of the time, decided to conform to the legally

established rite. Major Walter, indeed, maintains that Shakespeare was married in the private Roman Catholic chapel of the Manor House of Shottery, though he seems to adduce no evidence in support of his conviction.

This is a fascinating subject, and one on which we might speculate for a long time. The roof room of Shottery Manor House exists, in good condition, and if it could by any satisfactory evidence be connected with the Shakespeare wedding, it would form a charmingly quaint place of pilgrimage. Major Walter states definitely that public worship in the Roman Catholic form was continued at Shottery Manor long after it ceased to be legal, and

BILLESLEY CHURCH.

for such a purpose no room could be more suitable than the great one in the roof. In those days, although the laws were severe, the local executive officers were connected by the closest ties with the offenders; in many cases the officers themselves were but half-hearted adherents of the new forms, and the old worship was generally allowed to continue so long as it was not too obtrusive. The ringing of bells would cease; and instead of repairing openly to the church, the worshippers would quietly drop in, by twos and threes at the house of some wealthier neighbor, where a convenient room could be found for their service.



THE ROOF ROOM, SHOTTERY MANOR.

The church in which the legal and conformable marriage took place still remains uncertain, in spite of the greatest possible industry on the part of many devoted students who have ransacked muniment boxes and patiently examined all the church registers. The memorandum of issue of the license appears to indicate Temple Grafton as the place selected; and on the other hand it is suggested that these marriages by special license were almost invariably performed in a little church connected with the cathedral, and on the day on which the license was granted.

The honor of having been the place of Shakespeare's marriage is claimed by an old tradition for the little church of Billesley; and at this point, as we have no very direct evidence, it is worth while to state what little is known about the poet's connection with the place. It was here, in 1639, that Shakespeare's granddaughter was married to Sir John Barnard. Amongst the local gossips it has "always" been reported that Billesley Hall boasted a good store of books, to which Shakespeare had access, and of which he made good use; and there is one room in the hall which has "always" been known as the Shakespeare room, from a tradition that there the poet slept when visiting Billesley. The room is panelled in a style, and with wood quite different from that used elsewhere in the hall, and it is evident that the panelling has been removed from some other place. At two corners it does not join; and there are two doors in the woodwork, though the present room has only one, and the other is fastened against a solid wall. It is said that this wood was brought from New Place when the house was pulled down, but whether the rebuilding of New Place, after Shakespeare's time, or the final destruction a hundred years ago, is meant, we know not.

There is yet another place that claims the honor of having witnessed Shakespeare's legal marriage, and perhaps it has the strongest balance of probabilities in its favor. The little hamlet of Luddington, close to Shottery, and some three miles from Stratford, is regarded by many Stratfordians as the undoubted wedding-place. The old church was long ago destroyed by fire, and it can never be too greatly regretted that although the register was saved it passed into unappreciative hands. At a time when search was being made in all directions for Shakespeare evidence the Shottery register was overlooked because it was supposed to have been burnt with the church. For years it continued in one of the cottages of the district, only to finally disappear. Fullom says that in 1862 he found many at Stratford-on-Avon who remembered having seen the record of Shakespeare's marriage long after it was said to have been destroyed; and Mr. A. H. Wall quotes the late Mr. Charles E. Flower as stating that in his younger days "no one dreamed of disputing the assertion that Shakespeare was married at Luddington old church."

As Thomas Hunt, master of the grammar school during Shakespeare's student days, was curate of Luddington when his scholar took to himself a wife,

it is pleasant to believe that the happy pair journeyed gaily from Shottery to his little church, there to receive confirmation of the marriage they had previously solemnised by rites more congenial to their sentiments.

Our evidence about this legal marriage is small, while the previous hand-fasting, or the nonconformable marriage, rests on pure speculation. And if speculation and fancy are to come into play, why should we not attempt to complete the picture—fully warning our readers that our only evidence is our sense of the poetic fitness of things. We have seen that Shakespeare was a child of the Spring, born on the day of St. George, a day that corresponded (allowing for the "new style" of our calendars) with our merry May Day.

LUDDINGTON.

He opened his eyes upon a world that was just ready to deck its May-poles, and closed them fifty-two years later, on the very same day. In all the records of the family we find a strong predominance of the April and May dates, and if we are to imagine his nonconformable marriage at all, we prefer to think of it as having taken place on a bright spring morning, when the hedgerows were green, and when field and woodland alike were joyous with the songs of birds. We can picture the occasional meetings during the winter, at the house of one or another neighbor, and can see the tall, handsome youth, the life and soul of many a party, escorting a fair maiden across the fields to Shottery. There are dark wet nights when he walks in front, swinging his horn lantern to indicate the puddles, and grasps his staff more firmly as they pass the dark corners of the hedgerows. There are other

nights when the earth rings sharply to the footfall, and the keen crisp air sends the blood coursing gaily to the finger tips; when a walk in the moonshine makes one wish that all of life might be night and frost and moonlight. The winter wanes, it is an early spring, and week by week there are more excuses for evening rambles over the Shottery fields. February is warm and open, with many days when the gnats dance in the sunbeams, a month that makes the rose-bushes push their tender green shoots a couple of inches long. March gives a little check. There are boisterous days, and touches of frost at night, but the young glover, now half recognised as a suitor, swings across the field-path to spend a happy hour or two at Richard Hathaway's. March melts into a soft, warm April. The blackthorn is in flower, the birds are busy with their nests, and alongside the hedgerows all is fresh and green. The young man is more attentive than ever, and the younger Hathaways cease to chaff their sister about her boy-lover, for they see that she does truly love the lad, though as yet she herself had hardly realised it. There is an evening ramble, maybe along the riverside, or over Bardon Hill; and as the twilight melts into the moonlight, the man who is to move the whole world with his words compresses the fervor of his soul into the story of his love. Such scenes are sacred.

But a few weeks later we will suppose that the solemn trothplight was given, and they became hand-fasted—man and wife—in the presence of their friends. There may have been a formal service with the rites of the Catholic church, but whether this be so or not, before the hawthorn blossom had all melted from the hedges, William and Anne were one flesh.

As the spring-time came again they were full of that great joy that comes with all new life, and the merry month of May in 1583 saw the hirth of a daughter. There was now no thought of nonconforming. In the autumn they had taken special license, that they might follow the example of their neighbors and acknowledge the authority of the church, and now they take their baby to the same font where her father was baptised, and give her the name—Susanna.

Troubles were brewing for William Shakespeare. His home was soon to be broken up, as the eagle's nest is stirred to force the young to fly, but we may fairly believe that he first had a year or two of peace and happiness by his own fireside.

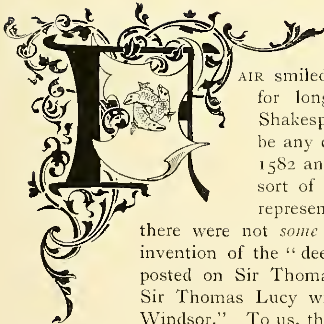
THE GREAT HALL, CHARLECOTE.

THE TUMBLE-DOWN STILE.

Chapter VII.

SEEKING A FORTUNE.

> There is a tide in the affairs of men,
> Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune.
> Omitted, all the voyage of their life
> Is bound in shallows and in miseries.
>
> *Julius Cæsar.* Act IV., Scene 3.



THREE WHITE LUCES.

FAIR smiled the heavens on a humble home, but not for long. We know little with certainty about Shakespeare's early married life, but there can scarcely be any doubt that some time between his marriage in 1582 and his leaving home (? 1585), there was some sort of trouble or friction with the local authorities, as represented by Sir Thomas Lucy, of Charlecote. If there were not *some* basis of fact we can hardly conceive of the invention of the "deer-stealing incident," the story of the lampoon posted on Sir Thomas Lucy's gate post, and the identification of Sir Thomas Lucy with Justice Shallow, in "The Merry Wives of Windsor." To us, the probabilities seem to point to a difference of

religious opinion, possibly an irksome petty persecution of the Shakespeares by Sir Thomas Lucy. William, sensitive, impulsive, and smarting under a strong sense of injustice, may have been rash in denunciation or defiance of Sir Thomas, and then may have felt his danger and fled to London. Years afterwards, when the gossiping chroniclers enquired particulars of his life, they might well hear that trouble with Sir Thomas Lucy forced him to flee, and on pressing for further particulars there is good reason why those who did not know much of the facts should suggest that poaching was the cause of the trouble. At almost the very time when Shakespeare is said to have left his home Sir Thomas Lucy had introduced into Parliament (March, 1585) a bill for preserving grain and game. Game preservers were ever unpopular in rural England, and no doubt the introduction of this bill made a strong impression on the local memories. Probably it called forth strong resentment, and possibly Will Shakespeare was a leader in some lawless demonstration.

THE GATE-HOUSE, CHARLECOTE.

Great pains have been taken to shew that Shakespeare could not have been harried for deer-stealing, because there was no deer-park at Charlecote; or for rabbit-stealing, because rabbits were not game. In reply, various defenders of the old story point out that there is a record of a deer having been sent as a present from Charlecote; that if Charlecote had no deer-park, the trouble may have been in Fulbroke Park, which had contained deer, and which at that time was confiscate to the Crown, and probably in the charge of Sir Thomas Lucy; and further that if the killing of rabbits was not forbidden by law, it was illegal to trespass for the purpose of such killing, and illegal for anyone under certain rank to own a dog. To these the opponents of the tradition reply with the statement, perfectly true, that Fulbroke Park was in the charge of Sir William Compton, of Compton Wynyates, and with a whole series of other considerations, but it seems hardly worth while to follow the argument into hair-splitting subtleties.

Whether Shakespeare stole deer or rabbits, or whether he tore down park palings, or headed an agitation against Sir Thomas Lucy's bill, is matter of more or less indifference. Suffice it that we may be sure that a local trouble in which Sir Thomas was concerned, combined with the chafing that he must have felt under his father's altered circumstances, forced William Shakespeare to leave his home and embark upon that successful venture which placed him at the head of the English-speaking race.

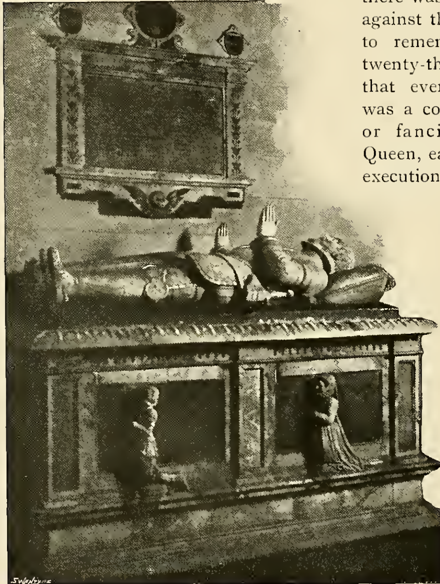
The incidents surrounding this most important step should have the greatest possible interest for us; and as the evidence is so inconclusive that we cannot marshal it into any orderly argument, we will simply place it before our readers as fully as space permits.

CHARLECOTE HOUSE.

The condition of his father's affairs has already been carefully traced to the point when the poet left school, probably to join his father's business. We have seen that there were indications of financial distress, but that through it all John Shakespeare retained his two houses in Henley Street free of encumbrance. We can see no clear explanation of these facts, unless the friction of religious differences, petty persecution and stubborn resentment afford the clue. It may be that an intolerant small majority of Protestants, too manly to enforce against their townsmen the terribly stringent laws of the time, were yet small-minded enough to harry the minority in many ways.

We know that there was bitter thought and bitter feeling between the partizans of the two faiths; and we have had sufficient experience of little local governing bodies to know how personal, political, and religious differences can manifest themselves in round-about spiteful ways.

For some years previous to Shakespeare's marriage "the Papists had been tortured and executed on the most frivolous pretences,"* and in 1581, the year before he was married, there was "great penal legislation against the Catholics." It is well to remember that this was the twenty-third year of Elizabeth, and that even after this time there was a constant succession of real or fancied plots against the Queen, each with its little series of executions—often judicial murders.



TOMB OF SIR THOMAS LUCY.

Well might Burleigh say, in his memorial to the Queen in 1583, "I account that putting to death does no ways lessen them (the Catholics); since we find by experience that it worketh no such effect; . . . persecution being the badge of the Church: and, therefore, they should never have the honor to take any pretence of martyrdom in England, where the fulness of blood and greatness of heart is such, that they will even for shameful things go bravely to death, much more when they think themselves to climb to heaven; and this vice of obstinancy seems to the common people a divine constancy; so that for my part I wish no lessening of their numbers, but by preaching and by education of the younger under schoolmasters."†

* Concise English History. Lupton.

† Hallam.

Many good Protestants, like Burleigh, were weary of severe repressive measures, but in many a case there was temptation to set these measures in force to gratify private spite or ambition; and in other cases pressure was brought on side issues and by indirect means even when the authorities did not wish to impose extreme penalties.

Under this penal legislation, Sir Thomas Lucy was one of the Commissioners appointed to present a list of recusants who failed to come "monethlie to the churche according to hir Majesties lawes." The statute in question was one of 1583, which imposed on all persons over sixteen a fine of twenty pounds for every month in which they attended no service of the Church. We have no record of the first inquisition as to recusants; but on September 5th, 1592, the Commission made a return of "such recusants as have been heretofore presented," and amongst them is found the name of John Shakespeare. Of him, and eight others it was noted—"It is said that these last nine come not to church for fear of process for debt." This has been held a proof of John Shakespeare's impecuniosity, but it was evidently a friendly fiction to save him from the heavy fine, for the rolls of the Court of Record shew that there was no action of any kind against him.

CHARLECOTE HOUSE.

From 1577 to 1586 the poet's father was almost continually absent from his seat on the Town Council (surely not through shame at his financial position), and on the 31st August, in the last-mentioned year, he was deprived

of his position because "he doth not come to the halls when they be warned, nor hath not done of long time." At the same meeting, eight other aldermen were deprived of their seats for the same reason, a circumstance which seems to clearly indicate local dissension.

That other members of the Shakespeare family were self-willed, and that Ardens could suffer death for their beliefs and independence, we know. A century before the poet's time, in 1450, one Thomas Shakespeare, of Rowington, was amongst the followers of Jack Cade; and whether the poet knew of this or not, his treatment of Cade's rebellion, in Henry VI., part 2, is much more fair and sympathetic than that of some of the historians.

Henry Shakespeare, of Snitterfield, was frequently in trouble about his tithes and other matters. In 1574 he was fined twopence for non-appearance in Court. In November, 1580, he was proceeded against for the amount of his tithes, but made defence that he had compounded with Rich. Brokes, of Warwike, "who this jurate did beleve was owner thereof." Two informations filed on March 14th, 1581, deal also with default in tithes. On the 21st November, 1581, there is another record on the same business; and on May 22nd, 1582, excommunication is pronounced against him:—"Shagspere est contumax; reservata pena ut supra; dominus ad petitionem suam pronunciavit eum excommunicatum, pena reservata." As excommunication probably did not trouble Henry Shakespeare, we find him next proceeded against and penalised on a different pretence, for on October 25th, 1583, a fine is recorded:—"Of Henry Shacksper, viijd., for not havinge and wearinge cappes on Sondayes and hollydayes to the Churche, according to the forme of the statute," and as he so far disregarded the Court's authority as to fail to attend when summoned, there is further—"of Henry Shackesper, ijd., for not doinge there sute at this Courte." On several later occasions he was fined for various breaches of the law, but we need not go into them in detail.

Thomas Shakespeare, of Snitterfield, too, was often in trouble for disobedience to the laws. Though it has not been conclusively established that he was the poet's uncle, there is probability that it was so, and in any case the fact of his being fined for not wearing "cappes on sondayes and hollydays to the Churche," throws another interesting gleam of side-light upon our study. This, too, was October 25th, 1583.

And if Shakespeares could be stubborn, Ardens could show the "fulness of blood and greatness of heart" of which Burleigh wrote, as was proved in this very year, 1583, when Edward Arden was executed at Smithfield for an alleged plot against the Queen. Probably this action was really a piece of private vengeance of the Earl of Leicester, Elizabeth's favorite. Edward Arden, with a very few others of the Warwickshire gentlemen (amongst whom, however, was Sir Thomas Lucy) refused to wear the livery of Leicester. This was an affront, indeed, but worse that this, according to

CHARLECOTE HOUSE.

Dugdale, was "galling him (Leicester) by certain harsh expressions, touching his private access to the Countess of Essex before she was his wife." This was one of the society scandals of the day, and the local gossip went that the Countess of Essex had poisoned her husband in order to marry Leicester—an incident which has been suggested as the basis of the Queen's crime in Hamlet. Edward Arden was known to be a Catholic, and was a man of position and spirit—facts sufficient to have secured his removal even had his enemy been much less powerful than Leicester. A priest, named Hall, was found, who "confessed" that he and Edward Arden were conspirators with Master Somerville, Arden's son-in-law, also a Roman Catholic. The three were cast into prison. Somerville, in his despair, committed suicide, the informer was released, and Arden died at Smithfield.

Having regard to all these circumstances, knowing that William Shakespeare was of the same blood as John and Henry, and as Edward Arden, is it any wonder if he should have been equally insubordinate against the local representative of the tyrannical laws ?

The year 1585 has usually been assumed as that in which Shakespeare left his native place "for London." The only evidence on the point is the fact that his twin children, Hamnet and Judith, were baptised on February 2nd of that year. If we are to resolutely believe the deer-stealing story, it is perhaps convenient to fix this particular date, but if the idea we have above set forth is correct, it seems more likely that 1583 would be the year of leaving home. We have no evidence that he went directly to London, though this has been generally assumed; and the stories as to his beginning life by holding horses at the playhouse door, are very insufficiently authenticated. Even his extreme penury seems to be a gratuitous assumption. In view of the substantial position in which we find him a very few years later, it seems far more likely that the poet commenced his life away from home under reasonably favorable auspices, and the suggestion that he left home to become a member of Burbage's theatrical company seems most consistent with all the facts.

We know that James Burbage was a native of the Stratford district, for Lord Southampton, asking the patronage of the Lord Chamberlain for Richard Burbage, his son, and Shakespeare, says:—"they are both of one county, and indeed almost of one town." Malone found some reason for believing that John Heminge, one of the editors of Shakespeare's collected works, and Thomas Greene, the fourth sharer in the Blackfriars theatre, were also natives of Stratford or Shottery, but the evidence is not complete. Burbage, however, was the leading man in the Earl of Leicester's company, for which a patent to play anywhere *except* in London was obtained in May, 1574. In 1573, 1577, and 1587, the Earl of Leicester's company was paid for performances in Stratford. In 1587 the company became the "Lord

Chaimberlain's servants," of which, in 1589, William Shakespeare was a member.

It will be seen that the evidence is very disjointed and inconclusive, but we think that the most natural conclusion is, that William Shakespeare, dissatisfied and, probably, harassed at home, joined the players' company, in which he had acquaintances, somewhere about 1583. A curious side-light is thrown upon this question by the strong circumstantial evidence collected by Stefansson, to shew that Shakespeare must have visited Denmark in 1586. He shews that when the Earl of Leicester led his expedition to the Netherlands, in December, 1585, his retinue included certain actors, a burgher of Stratford-on-Avon, and two of the Arden family. He points out that Burbage's company (the Earl of Leicester's) was playing at the court at Elsinore, from June 17th to September 18th, 1586, and proves conclusively that whoever originally plotted Hamlet, must have had an intimate knowledge of the castle of Elsinore. In any case, we need hardly follow the question any deeper. The various stories of the deer-stealing, and certain drunken frolics; and the many versions of Shakespeare's first experiences in London, appear insufficiently supported to be worthy of quotation at any length.

OLD GATEWAY, BILLESLEY HALL.

Fortunately there are many legends of pleasanter character than those which represent the poet as a poacher and a drunken brawler. We have else-

where spoken of the story of his frequenting Billesley Hall for the sake of the books it possessed. Clopton House, too, he is said to have visited for reading and study. There are stories of his contemplative wanderings in the Weir Brake, weaving fancies for the "Midsummer Night's Dream," and of steady work in the little room over the entrance hall of the Rowington House. But these, like the less creditable tales, are very vague and indefinite.

Let us return to authentic records. On February 2nd, 1585, the parish register has entry—"Hamnet and Judeth, sonne and daughter to William Shakspere." These were the names of two respectable Stratfordians—Hamnet Sadler and Judith, his wife, a fact which seems to prove that Shakespeare was not regarded by his neighbours as a disgraced man. The friendship with the Sadlers continued to the last, for Hamnet Sadler witnessed the poet's will.

From 1585 to 1592 we have only one single record of the doings of the poet—a record that shews him helping his parents in their suit for the recovery of Asbies, so we may well turn to the records of his father to partly fill the gap.

In 1585 there were three suits against John Shakespeare for the recovery of debts. In 1586 there were more suits against him; he was still described as a glover; he served on two juries, and went to Coventry to become bail for a neighbor indicted for a felony.

In 1587, Nicholas Lane recovered £10, part of a sum due to him from Henry Shakespeare, for which it was said that John had promised to be responsible. In 1588 and 1589 the tables were turned, and John Shakespeare appeared as plaintiff in various causes. The most important was an action in the Court of Queen's Bench, against Edmund Lambert, for the surrender of Asbies. It is in this case that we find William Shakespeare coupled with his father's affairs, the only evidence of his life between 1585 and 1592. The case against Lambert seems to have been withdrawn, and was probably compromised by the defendant paying some further sum to complete the purchase of Asbies.

In 1590, John Shakespeare served on a jury, and we have evidence that the Henley Street estate was still his property, for it is so described in an inquisition. At the same time it is interesting to note, from a petition addressed by the bailiffs and people of Stratford to Lord Burghley, that the trade of the town was greatly decayed, and the place in serious distress, its workers living in "great penury and misery by reason they are not set to work as before they have been."

In 1591, John Shakespeare was busy with law-suits, as plaintiff in some, and defendant in others. In 1592 he was mentioned in the list of recusants "heretofore presented" by Sir Thomas Lucy and a commission, and in the same year he was appraiser of the estates of two deceased neighbors. In

1593 there were two actions against John Shakespeare for the recovery of money, and in 1595 another, the last time his name appears on the court records.

Meanwhile, William Shakespeare had been rapidly making his way in London. In March, 1592, a new play, entitled "Harry the Sixth" (Henry VI., first part) was acted by the servants of Lord Strange. It at once attracted attention, and had an unusually successful run. The second part of the same play probably followed soon after, and the third part was certainly written and published, or played, before September of the same year.

In the next year, 1593, "Venus and Adonis" was published, the printer being Richard Field, son of Henry Field, the Stratford tanner, whose goods had been inventoried, in 1592, by John Shakespeare. The dedication was to Lord Southampton, to whose favor and patronage William Shakespeare owed a great deal.

We cannot go into details of all the work of the poet, and we doubt whether a list of the plays with their dates of production, etc., would be of any real interest to our readers. We cannot, either, go fully into the question of the character, tastes, and ability of the poet as indicated by his plays and sonnets, but have preferred to show, to those who know the influence of parentage and environment, what were the forces that could mould his character. A protest must be made, however, against the idea of a superhuman omniscience which has been claimed for the poet, and which claim, pushed beyond the bounds of all reason, has given its principal strength to "the Baconian heresy." It is contended that the poet had such ample knowledge of sea-faring matters, of botany, of the law, and of a hundred other crafts that he must have had the practical experience of a professional, and different men find evidence of different occupations in which his early years must have been spent, all along the line from the work of the school-master to that of the humble butcher. These people prove altogether too much, and it only remains for the Baconian to write down Shakespeare as "a mere swine-herd . . . a coney-catching, beer-drinking idler, or a common play actor, or even a prosperous stage-manager," to shew, if both positions are accepted, that Shakespeare could not have written the works attributed to him. But neither position need be accepted, and those who carefully and with the requisite knowledge can study Shakespeare's works, find in them the faults, as well as the virtues inseparable from his training. We have shewn that he was surely no ignorant boor, for the Grammar-school teaching, though not equal to the work of the universities for producing a pedant, was a liberal education and opened the way to all the knowledge of the time. A study of the poems and plays shows most fully how many of them teem with minor inconsistencies, how Roman citizens are clad in the garb of the middle ages; how gunpowder is introduced in scenes laid before the time of its discovery in the West, and how the truths of geography are perverted to accommodate

poetic truth. The wisdom we find is the fruit of quick sympathy, accurate observation, clear reasoning, true intuition, and fine memory—all the gifts of bounteous Mother Nature—used amid the unparalleled opportunities of a reign that seethed with brain activity. The errors we find are those that may be disregarded by the man who looks to the inner life and the spirit of things, they are impossible to the deeply read classic.

The temptation to follow the poet's life in London is very great indeed, but the scope and purpose of this book limit us to the incidents connected with his own town. We may wonder what happened to his wife and three young children. Did they live in Henley Street, with the old glover; did they go, as is generally suggested, to the mother's home at Shottery; or did they settle in some humble, cosy cottage of their own, where the mother could rear and tend her bairns in her own way, and ever take a pride in keeping her cottage and garden just in that perfect state in which her wandering husband loved to picture them? We know that there was a period of trial and struggle for the brave high-spirited husband, and for the faithful wife; but we know the success that rewarded one, and may imagine the pride and joy that filled the heart of the other.

IN CHARLECOTE PARK.

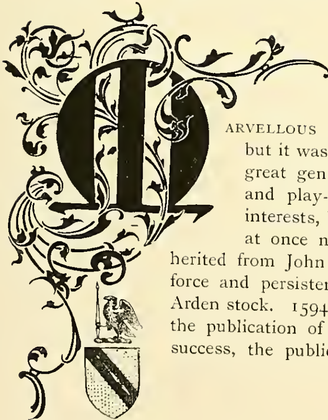
THE OLD MULBERRY TREE, NEW PLACE.

Chapter VIII.

MANHOOD AND THE CLOSE OF LIFE.

"We are such stuff
As dreams are made on; and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep."

Tempest. Act IV., Scene 1.



MARVELLOUS success appears to have attended the poet, but it was a success won by hard work no less than by great genius. An accomplished actor, a prolific poet and play-wright, a man of affairs with extensive interests, both business and personal; to be all these at once needed the eager versatile temperament inherited from John Shakespeare, and also the strong reserve force and persistence that may have come from the sturdy Arden stock. 1594 saw the production of "Titus Andronicus," the publication of "Lucrece," a poem that was an immense success, the publication of a second edition of "Venus and

ARMS OF SHAKESPEARE.

Adonis," and the first production of "A Comedy of Errors." So the success went on from year to year. In 1596, "Romeo and Juliet" took the town (London) by storm, and the record is a series of successive triumphs, embittered occasionally by the attacks of jealous rivals or by trouble with copyright pirates. No doubt the busy worker found occasional rest and refreshment in the little thatched and flower-decked home, where we pictured his wife as tending his children and longing for his return. In fact, we have no certain knowledge that the plays and poems were not written in Stratford, in brief respites from wandering with the travelling company or working in London.

We may be pretty sure the poet visited Stratford in 1596, for on August 11th of that year, his only son Hamnet was laid to rest. In January of the same year was buried Joan Shakespeare, of Snitterfield, possibly a relation; on December 29th was buried Henry Shakespeare, of Snitterfield, and his widow six weeks later. In this year, too, application was made for a grant of Arms to John Shakespeare, who also sold a strip of land in Henley Street, thus proving that he was not reduced to poverty.

In 1597, only twelve years after the time when he is generally supposed to have left Stratford, William Shakespeare bought New Place, the most important house in the town, and one that was known to the neighbors as "the great house." Originally built for Sir Hugh Clopton, late in the fifteenth century it is probable that the building was thoroughly out of repair when bought by Shakespeare, or he would hardly have obtained it for so small a sum as £60. No doubt the house was thoroughly renovated, for it became the poet's residence, and remained so until his death.

1598 was a time of famine, when those who held any store of grain were ordered to give to the authorities an account of the quantity. Twenty stocks are recorded, and of these, four were as large or larger than the stock of ten quarters held by the poet. John Shakespeare's name does not appear on the list. In this year Ben Jonson's "Every man in his own Humour" was produced, through the kindness of Shakespeare, if we are to believe the account of Rowe, who says:—"His acquaintance with Ben Jonson began with a remarkable piece of humanity and good nature; Mr. Jonson, who was at that time altogether unknown to the world, had offered one of his plays to the players in order to have it acted, and the persons into whose hands it was put, after having turned it carelessly and superciliously over, were just returning it to him with an ill-natured answer that it would be of no use to their company, when Shakespeare luckily cast his eye upon it, and found something so well in it as to engage him first to read it through, and afterwards to recommend Mr. Jonson and his writings to the public."

The only other matter that demands our attention in 1598 is a correspondence, in which is included the only known letter addressed to Shakespeare. Abraham Sturley wrote to Richard Quiney on January 24th, and mentioned

that "our countriman, Mr. Shaksper, is willinge to disburse some monei upon some od yarde land or other att Shotterei or neare about us." Adrian Quiney wrote to his son Richard:—"Yff yow bargen with Wm. Sha . . . or receive money therfor, brynge youre money homme that yow maye; and see howe knite stockynges be sold; ther ys gret byinge of them at Aysshome. Edward Wheat and Harry, youre brother man, were both at Evyshome thys daye senet, and, as I harde, bestowe 20 *li* ther in knyt hosse; wherefore I thynke yow maye doo good, yff yow can have money."

On November 4th, Abraham Sturley wrote to Richard Quiney, acknowledging "Ur letter of the 25 of October . . . which imported . . . that our countriman Mr. Wm. Shak. would procure us monei," etc. Evidently Quiney had taken for granted the assistance of Shakespeare, or the poet had given a very prompt reply to his appeal for help, for it was only made on the 25th of October. The appeal itself is preserved in the Birth House museum, and we reproduce, in facsimile, its two sides, of which, for better comprehension we print the following copy:—

Address:—

"To my loveinge good ffrende and contreymann Mr. Wm. Shackespere deliver thees."

The letter runs:—"Loveinge contreyman,—I am bolde of yow, as of a ffrende, craveinge your helpe with XXX *li.* upon Mr. Bushells and my securytee, or Mr. Myttons with me. Mr. Rosswell is nott come to London as yeate, and I have especiall cawse yow shall ffrende me muche in helpeinge me out of all the debettes I owe in London, I thancke God, and muche quiet my mynde, which wulde not be indebeted. I am nowe towardes the Cowrte, in hope of answer for the dispatche of my buysenes. You shall nether loase creddytt nor monney by me, the Lord wyllinge; and nowe butt perswade yowrselfe soe, as I hope, and yow shall not need to feare butt with all hartie thanckefullenes I wyll hold my tyme and content yowr ffrende, and yf we bargaine farther, yow shal be the paiemaster yowrselfe. My tyme biddes me hastene to an ende, and soe I commit thys yowr care, and hope of your helpe. I fear I shall nott be backe thys night ffrom the Cowrte. Haste. The Lorde be with yow and with vs all, Amen! ffrom the Bell in Carter Lane, the 25 October, 1598.

Yours in all kyndenes,

RYC. QUYNEY.

In 1600, the Burbages, with whom Shakespeare was a partner, were busy in erecting a new theatre in Southwark, to which they gave the name of the Globe. The poet proceeded against John Clayton to recover a small debt, and in July of the same year Sir Thomas Lucy died. A nephew, son of the poet's sister, Joan Hart, was baptised August 28th, in the name of William.

LETTER FROM QUINEY TO SHAKESPEARE.

THE CHANCEL, TRINITY CHURCH.

Early in the following year, Shakespeare's company was implicated in the quickly suppressed rebellion of the Earl of Essex, which practically commenced with the performance, on February 7th, 1601, of Henry IV., "a play of the deposing and killing of King Richard the Second." The play was selected by the conspirators, who paid the players forty shillings toward the loss which they anticipated, as the play was out of date. On the failure of the plot, Essex and his great friend Southampton, were found guilty of treason; Essex was executed, and Southampton was imprisoned for the rest of the Queen's reign. The Queen apparently disdained revenge on mere players, or Shakespeare's close connection with Lord Southampton might have led to serious trouble. As it was, his company performed before the Queen, at Richmond Palace, on February 24th, the night before the execution of Essex; and the following Christmas gave four plays before the Queen, at Whitehall.

Meanwhile, the good old glover had passed beyond his seventieth year, and realised, no doubt, that he was on the down-hill of life. Still, he was alert and active, and his judgment was respected by his fellow-townsmen, for when Sir Edward Greville took certain proceedings against the town, John Shakespeare was one of five men chosen to advise the counsel for the defence. This mark of confidence came quite in the last few months of the old man's life, for on September 8th, 1601, he was buried at Stratford-on-Avon, but whether in the church or churchyard, we know not.

In 1602, the poet bought from William and John Combe 107 acres of land near Stratford-on-Avon (price £320), and also bought a cottage adjoining New Place and standing on land held from the Manor of Rowington. In 1603, the publishing of new plays and the issue of new editions was unusually active. In December, 1602, the poet's company had played before the Queen at Whitehall; and on February 2nd, at Richmond, some seven weeks before the Queen's death, they again appeared at her command. But though honored by Queen and Court, the players were gradually losing favor in certain parts of the country, where Puritanism was hourly spreading; and of this we have evidence in Stratford. Just before Christmas, 1602, a rule was made that no play or interlude should be performed in or about the Guild Hall, and that any bailiff, alderman, or burgess who gave leave or license for any such play should be fined ten shillings for each offence. Apparently, this rule was not always strictly enforced, so that the town council thought it necessary, ten years later, to re-introduce the rule, and raise the fine to £10.

On May 17th, 1603, the King, James I., reached London, and within ten days he granted, under privy seal, a license to Shakespeare's company. During the summer of that year the company played at Bath, Coventry, Shrewsbury, Ipswich, and other places, and in December they performed before the King at Wilton. During the next year the company appeared

twice before the King, and as he was obliged, for fear of spreading the plague, to forbid their performing near London, he made them a present of £30. When the formal entry into London occurred, in March, 1604, Shakespeare and his fellows were in the royal pageant. They were appointed the King's servants and took the court rank of Grooms of the Chamber. In Stratford, during the summer, Shakespeare proceeded to recover £1 15s. 10d., the balance of an account due on several sales of malt, and money lent.

Before the court, during 1605, there were several performances of Shakespeare's plays, as well as those of other writers, and the company

CELLAR OF THOMAS QUINEY'S HOUSE.

travelled much, as was doubtless its usual custom, in the summer. In May, the poet received on the death of his partner, Augustine Phillips, a legacy "to my fellowe, William Shakespeare, a thirty shillings piece in goold." Soon after this, in July, the poet made his greatest investment, paying £440 for a portion of a lease of the tithes of Stratford, Old Stratford, Bishopton, and Welcombe.

The close of the year was marked by a momentous event, important to King and country, and specially interesting to Stratfordians of whatever political or religious complexion. The event was the infamous Gunpowder

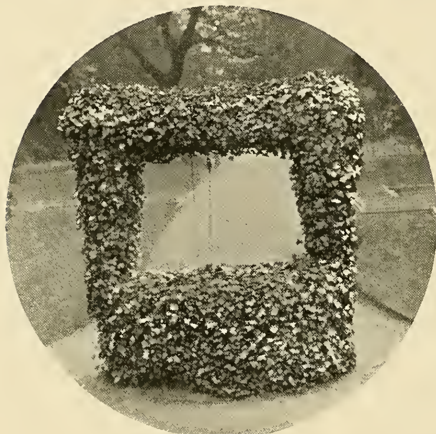
ENTRANCE HALL, THOMAS NASH'S HOUSE.
Now the New Place Museum.

Plot, and the special interest of Stratfordians was secured by the fact that several of the plotters were connected with Warwickshire, while one of their number was resident at Clopton House, only a mile away. We do not for a moment suggest that Shakespeare had any part or lot in the matter, that he was cognisant of any serious plot, or that he, necessarily, sympathised with its plans and objects, but there are certain indications that he must have been acquainted with a number of the conspirators. We have seen the general spirit of the Shakespeares and some of the Ardens, and have referred to the connection between Shakespeare's company of players and the rebellion of Essex and Southampton. Robert Catesby, Thomas Winter, and John Wright, the three original conspirators in the Gunpowder Plot had all been actively and responsibly employed under Essex in his attempt. Tresham, the cousin of Catesby, and probably the traitor who betrayed the plot, had also been prominent in the conspiracy of Essex.

Ambrose Rookwood, a young man who had frequently been prosecuted for harboring priests in his house, was the occupant of Clopton, and we have already given a view of "the priests' room," where they were sheltered. It is on record that he was a devout man, of studious habits, who joined the conspirators out of pure devotion to his friend Catesby; and we may feel sure that such a man, living in the manor house, was well known to the people of Stratford, including the Shakespeare family. Numbers of the Catholic gentry of Warwickshire, as well as of other parts of the Midlands, were aware that some plot was in progress, although not informed of its exact nature; and a great party of them assembled, ostensibly for a mighty hunt, at the home of Sir Everard Digby, at Dunchurch, twenty miles from Stratford. These huntsmen were all well armed, and prepared to consider and to strike a second blow had the first been successful. When joined by the desperate leaders of the plot, fleeing from London in the hope that the Catholics of the Midlands might still be roused to revolt, the carousing huntsmen gradually slunk away. Undaunted, the leaders, with the few who would follow them, marched on the night of the Fifth towards Warwick, where they helped themselves to horses from the very castle itself, and defeated a sheriff's party that was hastily raised against them. Resting at Norbrook, near Snitterfield, they next proceeded to Stratford-on-Avon, where a trumpet was sounded in the Market Square, and the leaders of the conspiracy made proclamation to such of the good folk of Stratford as dared to peer forth from their homes. Not a recruit could be obtained, however, and like ill-success attended the little parties detached to raise friends of the Catholic cause in Grafton and other neighboring villages. Greatly disheartened, the party pushed on to Alcester, some seven miles west of Stratford, and we need not follow them out of Warwickshire, or attempt to describe the last magnificent struggle of these desperate but undoubtedly sincere and valiant enemies of the King.

THE GUILD CHAPEL, FROM THE SITE OF NEW PLACE.

We have no definite knowledge of the whereabouts of Shakespeare at the time of the plot, but the next year (1606) was spent, as usual, travelling about the country, and a great number of the performances have been traced in the records of various provincial towns. In 1607 there were two important events —the marriage of the poet's daughter, Susanna, to John Hall, gentleman, on June 5th, and the death of his brother, Edmund, who was buried in the Church of St. Saviour, Southwark, on the last day of the year. As Edmund is described in the register as a player, we may fairly suppose that he was introduced to the stage as a member of his brother's company.



WELL IN NEW PLACE GARDEN.

A birth and a funeral mark the following year. The only child of the Halls was baptised on February 21st and received the name Elizabeth. This little Bessie, the poet's first grandchild, and the only one born before his death, was very dear to him, as is evidenced by his will. A little later in the year, in September, a great blow fell upon the family in the loss of Mistress Mary Shakespeare, the poet's mother. Her son probably attended the funeral, even if he were not at home at the time of her death, for the 26th of October he was godfather to William Walker. This summer the poet's company had been travelling on the South Coast, and in the autumn they were in the Midlands, for on October 29th they played at Coventry.

A lawsuit against John Addenbroke was taken up on behalf of the poet by his cousin, Thomas Greene, and when Addenbroke could not be found under the execution, his bail-man became liable. A more extensive and involved lawsuit was begun in 1609, in relation to the tithes in which Shakespeare had bought an interest. The outcome of the case is not known. In the same year, too, Shakespeare's Sonnets were first published by Thomas Thorpe. It is probable that these pieces had been written without any thought of

publication, contributed to the albums of friends, and otherwise, for Shakespeare had nothing to do with their publication.

More land was bought from the Combes in April of 1610, twenty acres of pasture adjoining the arable land previously purchased. Beyond this, the fact that Shakespeare's company toured the provinces, and the further fact that new plays were published and the old ones became more popular, we know nothing of this year.

THE AVENUE, TRINITY CHURCH, IN APRIL.

In the next year there was a subscription in Stratford in support of a bill then before Parliament "for the better repayre of the highe waies." All the principal people contributed, including Dr. John Hall, the poet's son-in-law, and as Shakespeare's own name appears in the margin and not in the body of the list, it is supposed that he was not in the town at the time. To this time is attributed "The Taming of the Shrew," and although the plot of both play and induction is known to have existed in an earlier play, the local touches in Shakespeare's are so important in these days of the Baconian heresy that we must note them in some detail. The green at Wincot we have seen in connection with Mary Arden's home on its very border. There Kit Sly, a drunken tinker, has an altercation with Marian Hacket, the fat ale-wife. A lord, returning from hunting, picks up the befuddled Kit, and, in sport, instructs his servants to take the toper to bed, and suggests that on his waking, the servants shall

pretend that Sly is a lord, who has been mad. A party of travelling players, visiting the lord's house, aid the deception, so that this scene forms the interlude to the proper play of "The Taming of the Shrew," which is supposed to have been acted by the strollers. Wincot (or Wilmecote) and its green remain to us; there is a tradition as to the alehouse, and Stephen Sly, a relative of the tinker, is remembered as a "character," and mentioned several

WEST·WINDOW, TRINITY CHURCH.

times in the town records of Stratford. Barton-on-the-Heath, mentioned in the play, is one of the villages near Stratford. The "lord" of that district was the lord of Clopton, so that Clopton House, and its fine oak-panelled dining-hall is obviously suggested as the scene of the play.

The purchase of an estate in Blackfriars, close to the Blackfriars theatre, occurred in March of 1612, and seems to indicate that the poet had not yet

retired from the stage and London life, but probably this retirement took place very soon afterwards. Early in the following year died the poet's brother, Richard, and he was buried on February 4th. On June 29th, 1613, the Globe Theatre (constructed, like other theatres at the time, of wood) was burned to the ground. Shakespeare was, apparently, absent. About the same time there was a slander in circulation smirching the fair fame of

TRINITY CHURCH, LOOKING EAST.

Mistress John Hall, the poet's eldest daughter, who took proceedings against the slanderer, John Lane, with the result that he was excommunicated.

The bequest of £5 to William Shakespeare, by John Combe, who died in July, 1614, should have prevented the currency of the story that Shakespeare had scurrilously lampooned his neighbor. This was a busy year for the poet. The Globe Theatre was rebuilt, and " saide to be the fayrest that ever

was in England." He was also interested in the enclosure of the common fields, a project set afoot by William Combe, of Welcombe, apparently for his own benefit.

A great fire, exceeding in its disastrous results those of 1594 and 1595 put together, swept through Stratford-on-Avon. The Shakespeare property appears to have been untouched, though fifty-four dwelling-houses, together with much other property, estimated at the value of £8,000 was consumed in about two hours.

The bulk of the years 1614 and 1615 were probably passed in peace and contentment in Stratford. Of the real home life and personal history of the poet we know so very little with certainty. Rowe says that the time was spent "as all men of good sense will wish theirs to be, in ease, retirement, and the conversation of his friends."

The preparation of the poet's will, in January, 1616, may have indicated that he thought his end was nigh, or may have been just the natural precaution of a time when leisure had enabled him to arrange his affairs. Though drafted, the will was not signed in January, and in February the poet's family was busy and doubtless happy about the wedding of the poet's daughter, Judith, to Thomas Quiney, son of the letter-writer, Richard. Thomas Quiney was a vintner, and took his wife to the Town Cage, their home for over thirty years, in the cellar of which may still be seen traces of the barrel slopes. The rejoicings attending this union would delay the signing of the will, and it would seem that the poet was suddenly seized with illness (tradition says a fever) about the end of March, for the scrivener, Frauncis Collyns, was hastily summoned from Warwick; the rough draft of the will was hastily altered, and, without waiting for fair copying, was signed with its interlineations. The original month, January, was corrected to March, but the original date, the 25th, remained unaltered. On the 23rd of April, the day of his birth, the poet passed away, and on the 25th his body was carried along Church Street, through the Old Town, past the house of Dr. John Hall, under the arching lime-trees in whose budding branches the rooks cawed noisily, and laid to rest near the altar of the old grey church, close to the murmuring river.

April 25 will Shakspere gent

BURIAL ENTRY IN PARISH REGISTER.

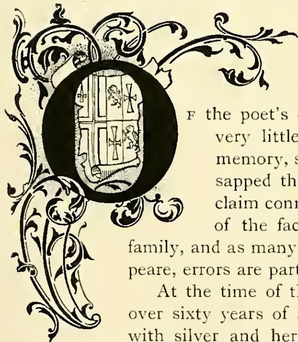
THE AMERICAN WINDOW, TRINITY CHURCH.

Chapter IX.

A GREAT MAN'S MEMORY.

"I have some rights of memory in this Kingdom."
Hamlet. Act V., scene 5.

. . . . . . "Honours thrive
When rather from our acts we them derive
Than our fore-goers."
All's Well that Ends Well. Act II., scene 3.



ARMS OF CLOPTON.

Of the poet's descendants, as of his ancestors, we know very very little. His children, the natural guardians of his memory, soon died out, as if the one grand personality had sapped the vigor of the family tree, and those who now claim connection with the poet have surely little knowledge of the facts. From his sister Joan descended the Hart family, and as many Harts were given the christian name of Shakespeare, errors are partly explicable.

At the time of the poet's death, we may imagine his wife, then over sixty years of age, as a brisk and kindly dame, her hair shot with silver and her step less firm than when she was wooed in Shottery fields, but with eyes still bright and cheeks still ruddy. His

daughter Susannah, now a staid matron of thirty-three summers, and a good business woman, was busied with her husband's affairs and the education of her little eight-year-old daughter Bess. Her husband, good Dr. John Hall, though sneered at because some of his prescriptions were such as only quacks would use in the present day, was a capable and well-educated physician, a Master of Arts with a Continental university training, and was making a reputation far beyond the limits of his own town, or even of his county.

Joan Hart, the poet's sister: widowed only a few days before his death, was living in Stratford with three sons of the ages of sixteen, eleven and six years, and the other member of the family, the poet's daughter Judith, had just married Thomas Quiney.

There were friends and neighbors in plenty to mourn the loss of him who had been a genial friend no less than an ornament to the town. Amongst them were Julius Shaw, who lived next door but one, Hamnet Sadler, for whom the poet's only son was named, John Robinson and Robert Whattcott, all of whom witnessed his will. And there was his next door neighbor, Anthony Nash, with his son Thomas, who was afterward to become the husband of Bess Hall.

In November, 1616, Judith Quiney's first child was christened Shakespeare, but less than six months later the baby died. In February, 1618, another little son cheered the Quiney household, and was named Richard. In November of the same year, Michael, the youngest son of Joan Hart, was buried. In 1620, (January 23rd) Thomas, son of Thomas Quiney, was baptised.

In 1623, seven years after her husband, Mrs. Shakespeare—or as posterity will ever call her, Anne Hathaway—was laid in the church beside her husband's grave.

Bess Hall, meanwhile, was growing to years of maturity, and on the 22nd of April, 1626, she was married to Thomas Nash, who lived in the house which is now the New Place Museum. Dr. John Hall died in 1635 and was buried November 26th; and four years later there were three funerals in the family in two months. On January 28th, 1639, was buried Thomas, and on February 26th, Richard, the sons of Thomas Quiney, while on March 29th, William Hart, the poet's nephew, who had been a player in London, was buried at the Stratford church.

The strained social conditions of the early part of the seventeenth century terminated in war, and in 1642 the king was sorely in need of funds, and called upon his loyal subjects for loans. A list of the sums raised in Stratford-on-Avon is preserved, from which we learn that by far the largest contribution came from Thomas Nash, the husband of Elizabeth Hall, who contributed £100. In the following year, Queen Henrietta Maria triumphantly entered the town at the head of 5,000 men and took up her quarters at New Place, where she held court for three weeks. At this time the family of Shakespeare

THE GOWER STATUE.

consisted of his daughters Susannah and Judith, his grand-daughter Elizabeth, and his sister Joan.

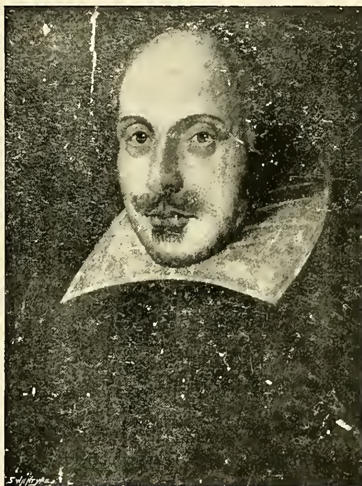
The next break in the family was in April, 1647, when Thomas Nash died. His wife, the former Bess Hall, was married again on June 5th, 1649, to John Barnard, and only a month later, July 11th, 1649, saw the death of her mother, the poet's eldest daughter, Susannah. The youngest daughter, Judith, died on February 9th, 1662, and probably about a year later was followed by her husband.

The last remaining descendant of the poet, now Lady Barnard, died on February 17th, 1670. Her husband, now Sir John Barnard, lived to 1674.

THE BIRTH-HOUSE MUSEUM.

The natural keepers of the poet's memory having thus failed, the responsibility fell upon the Harts, descendants of his sister Joan, who lived in the birth-house, a portion of their inheritance from John Shakespeare. In this historic building the family dwelt until about 1793, when Thomas Hart, fifth in direct descent from Joan Hart, left Stratford for Woolwich, where he died in 1800. Having no children to succeed him, Thomas Hart persuaded a relative, Thomas Hornby, to rent the house, and buy certain relics at a valuation in order that they might be kept together and shewn to the public. Thomas Hornby occupied the birth-house until his death, and afterwards his

widow kept the place until 1820, making a livelihood by shewing the house and the relics. In 1820 the rent was raised, and Mistress Hornby took a house opposite the birth-place, where she still continued to shew the relics, and where they were to be seen as recently as 1888. As a complete collection they were last in the possession of Thomas Hornby, of Kingsthorpe, grandson of Mary Hornby, and they were dispersed on June 4th, 1896, at the auction rooms of Messrs. Christie, Manson & Woods. Thirty-one lots realised £130 18s. od., the highest price for any one lot being £26. That such a collection was allowed to be dispersed in such manner is doubtless due to the fact that some of the items were regarded by the Birth-House Trust as being insufficiently authenticated, or of little interest.



SUPPOSED ORIGINAL OF THE DROESHOUT ENGRAVING.

The birth-house itself was conveyed on May 11th, 1796, by Thomas Hart to his brother John, who sold it in 1806 to Thomas Court. Court died in 1818, and on the death of his widow in 1846, arrangements were made to sell the place. Rumours that the house was likely to be sold to a well-known American showman aroused quite an excitement amongst certain Britons, who, until then, had taken but little interest in the place. Two committees were formed, and in 1847, when the house was put up for auction, it was bought by these committees jointly, the conveyance being completed in 1848 to four of their members. In 1866 the property was finally transferred, under a public Trust Deed, to the Corporation of Stratford-on-Avon.

At this point we will leave the history of the birth-house for the present, to turn for a moment to the work of two men to whom we can never be sufficiently grateful, and who must be considered as second in interest only to the poet's own children. Two of the three fellow-players remembered in the poet's will, anxious that his works should be preserved as completely as

possible, chose out the best of the acting-copies in use at his old theatre, and published them in collective form. The two men were John Hemings and Henry Condell, and the plays, published in 1623, were the famous first folio edition. Most of the plays had already been published singly in quarto form, probably by pirates, but the folio edition contained half-a-dozen works until then unpublished, and attracted an amount of attention that could never have been secured by the quartos. Ben Jonson wrote a poetical introduction, heading it—"To the memory of my beloved, the Author, Mr. William Shakespeare, and what he hath left us," and a portrait engraved by Marcus Droeshout was also included. The importance of a portrait thus authenticated by Jonson, and by two other men who had been intimately acquainted with the poet for years, can hardly be over-estimated. We may be sure that it was from some painting which they regarded as a fair portrait, and Jonson, at any rate, was satisfied with the copy, for he wrote—

To the Reader.

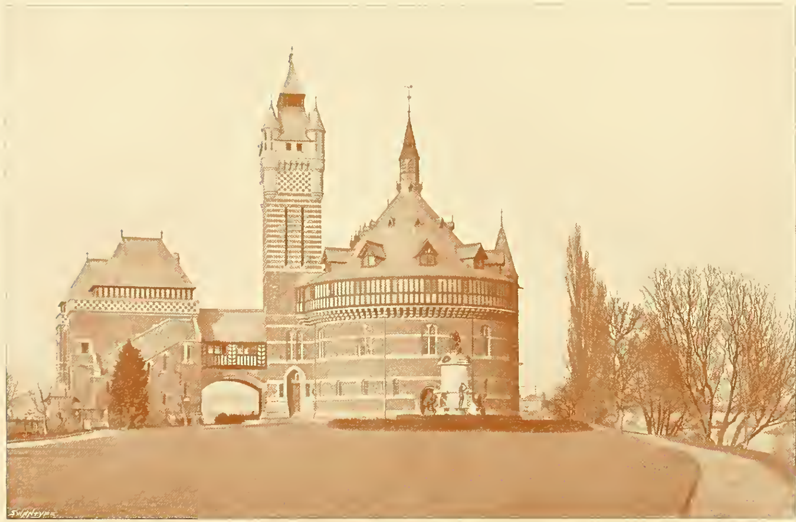
"This Figure, that thou here seest put,
It was for gentle Shakespeare cut;
Wherein the Graver had a strife
With Nature to out-doo the life:
O, could he but have drawne his wit
As well in brasse, as he hath hit
His face, the Print would then surpasse
All, that was ever writ in brasse.
But, since he cannot, Reader, looke
Not on his Picture, but his Booke."

The whereabouts of the original from which this portrait was engraved has been the subject of much speculation, but within the past few months the Memorial Library at Stratford-on-Avon has obtained a painting which is believed by many excellent authorities to be this very original.

The only portrait that can compete with the Droeshout as regards undoubted authenticity and early date is the bust in the parish church of Holy Trinity. We know that this was erected before 1623, because it is referred to by Leonard Digges in his poetical ascription published in the first folio edition of the plays. His lines commence—

"Shakespeare, at length thy pious fellowes give
The world thy Workes: thy Workes, by which, out-live
Thy Tombe, thy name must when that stone is rent,
And time dissolves thy Stratford Moniment,
Here we alive shall view thee still."

It is believed that the bust was provided at the sole expense of Dr. Hall and his wife, and certain it is that they superintended the erection. It is also traditionally recorded that the bust was copied from a cast of the features, and as death-masks were not uncommonly made by doctors in those days, it



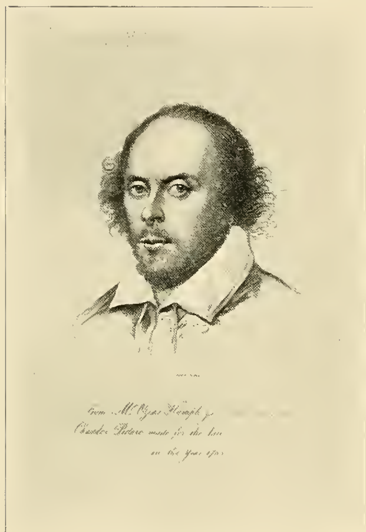
THE MEMORIAL LIBRARY AND THEATRE.

is quite possible that such a cast was taken by Dr. John Hall, handed to the sculptor, and, having served its purpose, left in the sculptor's hands—but of this more anon. The "tombe-maker" who supplied the monument was Gerard Johnson, the son of a Dutch tomb-maker whose yard was close to the Globe Theatre, and who, therefore, was probably well acquainted with Shakespeare's appearance. Originally the tombstone was painted to resemble life; the eyes light hazel, the hair and beard auburn. This coloring on soft stone was not imperishable, so that early in the eighteenth century the figure was much decayed in parts, and in 1748 Mr. John Ward devoted the profits of a representation of Othello to the repairing and beautifying of the bust. In 1793, Malone, with a want of taste for which he can never be quite forgiven, persuaded the vicar to have the bust painted white, in which state it remained until 1861, when the white was scraped off and the whole repainted to match as nearly as possible the traces of original color. In all these changes the bust must have suffered considerably. As it is well represented in one of our illustrations we need not describe it, but will simply say that both sculptors and surgeons are agreed that it was made by a craftsman rather than an artist, and that it is a study of a dead, rather than a living face.

MONUMENT IN TRINITY CHURCH.
(Negative by the Swan Electric Engraving Co.)

Next in order of interest, and decidedly in advance of the two portraits already mentioned, as regards artistic merit and realisation of our ideal of Shakespeare, comes the Chandos portrait. Our copy of it is from an engraving in the collection of the Earl of Warwick. The original picture is in the National Portrait Gallery, and, according to the catalogue, was the property of John Taylor, Shakespeare's contemporary, a player. It is supposed to have been painted by Taylor or Richard Burbage.

Taylor left it in his will to Sir William Davenant, after whose death it was bought by Betterton, the actor, to whose enthusiastic admiration of Shakespeare we have already referred. After Betterton's death it was bought by Mr. Keck, of the Temple, who left it to Mr. Nicholls, of Southgate, whose daughter married the Marquis of Carnarvon, afterwards Duke of Chandos. Eventually, by the late Lord Ellesmere, it was given to the nation. This history seems perfectly clear, but objection has been raised that the portrait is a friendly artist's conception of a somewhat idealised Shakespeare. Surely all Shakespeare lovers will appreciate the idealisation, if any. Another portrait of great interest, though its history is unfortunately lost, is the "Stratford" portrait, now hanging in an upper room of the birth-house. Its discovery is as recent as 1860. Previous to that time it was not known to be a portrait of Shakespeare, but was simply an old portrait belonging to the Clopton family, from whom it was bought with other pictures and the house in which they hung, by Mr. William Hunt, in 1758. In 1860 someone suggested that the picture as it then stood was the work of two different periods, and two artists of very unequal skill. In fact, it was an old painting of considerable merit, masked by decidedly inferior additions. Careful removal of the later work revealed the picture we reproduce, and it was presented to the Birth-Place Trust by Mr. William Oakes Hunt.

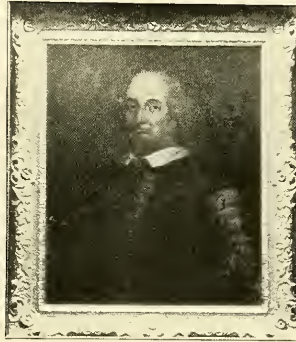


THE CHANDOS PORTRAIT.

To return to the Droeshout portrait. As the poet died when the engraver of this portrait was quite young, we may be certain that it follows some earlier work, and within the last few months, by the generosity of Mrs. Charles E. Flower, the Memorial Library has been enriched by the addition of what is believed to be the original painting. It is an old picture on a panel of elm,

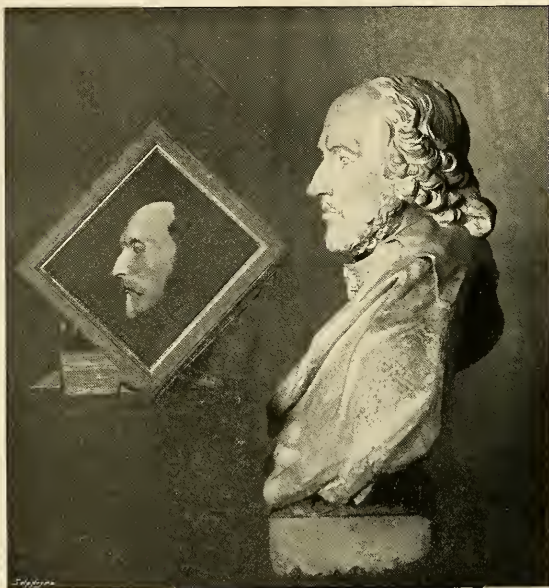
and bearing the date 1609. A large number of experts, both painters and antiquarians have critically examined the picture, with the result that all agree that there is little doubt of its having been painted in Shakespeare's time, or of the date having been painted at the same time as the picture. Mr. Poynter, R.A., and Mr. Ouless, R.A., are of the decided opinion that the picture was painted from life; and a well-known engraver says that the picture is certainly not a copy of the engraving, though the engraving was probably done from the picture, or—more likely still—from a drawing thereof.

By far the most beautiful likeness of the poet, and one that gives us a loftier idea of his personality than even the Chandos portrait, is the terra-cotta bust depicted in our frontispiece, from the original in the Memorial Library. Known as the Davenant bust, and recently acquired by the Memorial, this magnificent portrait has attracted a great amount of attention, though so far as we are aware, it has not been reproduced in any way. Sir William Davenant, godson of the poet, and one of his favorites, was eight years old when the poet died. He was an educated gentleman, a courtier, soldier, musician, actor and poet—in fact, he held the position of poet Laureate. It is believed, also, that he was a painter of some ability. In 1662, while many of Shakespeare's contemporaries were still alive, Sir William Davenant built the Duke's Theatre, in Lincoln's Inn Fields. Long after his death the building was very greatly changed; all except the front wall was rebuilt, and the place became a warehouse. In the middle of the present century it was occupied by Messrs. Spode and Wilkinson, the great pottery and china merchants. A few years ago the whole was pulled down to be replaced by a building for the Royal College of Surgeons, and during the demolition there was found over one of the front entrances, a niche, bricked up in front, and containing a terra-cotta bust of Ben Jonson. Unfortunately, as no such niche was suspected, the bust was broken by the workmen. Mr. Clint, who was superintending the operations, suspected there might be a simliar recess over the other doorway, had it carefully un-bricked, and found therein the bust of Shakespeare, which has since been called the Davenant. By Mr. Clint the bust was given to



THE "STRATFORD" PORTRAIT.

Sir Richard Owen, his son-in-law, who bequeathed it to the Memorial. A copy of it was made for the Duke of Devonshire, who gave it to the Garrick Club, after making two casts, one of which he retained, while the other was given to Sir Joseph Paxton, and by him to the Crystal Palace Company. Many competent judges are satisfied as to the age of the bust, while others claim that it is quite recent work. Certain objectors have said that the costume is later



DAVENANT BUST AND COPY OF DEATH MASK.

than Davenant's time, and others have gone so far as to suggest that the bust was made for Spode and Wilkinson, by Flaxman or one of his pupils. There is a date, 1846, roughly but very plainly scratched in the unfinished clay behind the bust; but a very curious fact about this is that some of those who carefully examined the bust when it first came to the Memorial, state *no date was visible upon it at that time*. The case is somewhat mysterious, and we

THE LIBRARIAN'S ROOM—THE MEMORIAL LIBRARY.

can scarcely conceive that a leading firm of merchants, having commissioned an artist like Flaxman to make two portrait studies of famous men, should be foolish enough to wall them up on leaving the building.

There is only one other portrait of Shakespeare to which we need here refer; but that is perhaps the most interesting of all, for it purports to be the death-mask, made by Dr. John Hall, from which the Stratford bust, and possibly some of the paintings were made. This death-mask was brought to London by Ludwig Becker, a portrait painter and naturalist of Hesse-Darmstadt, who was at the time living in Mayence as court painter to the Grand Duke. For its history we are indebted to Becker. He says that it was preserved in the family von Kesselstadt, of Mayence, for many generations, under the firm belief that it was the cast of Shakespeare's dead face, and in connection with a small painting in oil on parchment, representing a corpse lying in state, dated 1637, and inscribed "Traditionen nach Shakespeare" (or say—"traditionally, after Shakespeare"). In 1842, a few months after the death of Count and Canon Francis von Kesselstadt, the family collection was sold by auction, and the picture was purchased by one Jourdan, an antiquary of Mayence, who sold it in 1847, to Ludwig Becker. Becker endeavoured to trace all particulars of its history, and heard of the cast from which it was alleged to have been painted, but could find no evidence of the cast having been sold, though he found many people who remembered its existence. In 1849 in a mean general-dealer's shop in a back street of Mayence, he saw a cast which he instantly recognised as the original of his picture, and which he gladly purchased.

LADY MACBETH.
(The Gower Statue.)

He had previously obtained a letter from Professor N. Müller, of Mayence, who had intimately known Count Kesselstadt from 1790, to the effect that the count had regarded the painting as being undoubtedly authentic, and had refused some very handsome offers to purchase it. The cast bears a date A.D. 1616. Becker's purpose in bringing the cast to England was to sell it to the British Museum authorities for £10,000. It was kept for some time, and

examined with much care. Sir Richard Owen examining it critically as an anatomist, said he would be fully prepared to accept it as Shakespeare's face, and that if its history could be authentically established, there was hardly any price the museum would hesitate to pay for it. Various Shakespeareans who considered the evidence, felt it to be insufficiently strong: and, as Ludwig Becker died in Australia while on a Government expedition in 1861, the bust and painting were returned to Darmstadt to Dr. Ernest Becker.

One or two of the difficulties in the way of the acceptance of the history of the death-mask have been cleared away, and one specially interesting point is recorded by Mr. A. H. Wall, an enthusiastic believer in the death-mask. He refers to the official records of foreigners in London which were kept during the reigns of Elizabeth and James I., from which it appears that Gerard Johnson was not resident in London during the time when Shakespeare's tomb must have been made. As he was a native of Amsterdam, it seems quite reasonable that the death-mask may have been sent to him there.

HAMLET.
(The Gower Statue.)

Lord Ronald Gower, William Page, the great American sculptor (who crossed the ocean specially to examine and measure the death-mask), and many other eminent authorities are inclined to believe in the genuineness of the mask. Mr. Page wrote—

> "If England believed Shakespeare's face, cast from his just cooled and perfect features, lay in a little nook of Hesse-Darmstadt, do you believe she would not pawn her islands rather than possess it? . . . While royal sons and daughters are dowered, and jewels remain in the Tower, Shakespeare's face lies in a foreign land unredeemed. Oh, the pity of it!"

The Garrick Jubilee in 1769, which marked the opening of the new Town Hall, and the presentation of the freedom of the Borough to David Garrick as the greatest actor of his time, has been regarded by many as a tribute to Garrick

and a general self-glorification rather than a tribute to Shakespeare's memory. Certainly, many of the performances were hardly such as we should now-a-days consider the most fitting tribute to Shakespeare, but the long and laudatory account of the affair given by Wheler shews that the people of the time regarded it quite seriously and worked earnestly for its success. A great pavilion was built in the Bank Croft (where the Shakespeare Memorial Library now stands), and the second week in September was given up to feasts, balls, serenades, processions, masquerades, fireworks, and all the accompaniments of a carnival. The freedom of the Borough was presented to Garrick in a handsomely carved box made from the wood of the mulberry tree planted by Shakespeare, and Garrick presented to the town the statue of Shakespeare that still stands in a niche on the north wall of the Town Hall.

PRINCE HAL.
(The Gower Statue.)

The more dignified celebrations which are now held every year in the birth-week attract a great number of pilgrims, and it is to be hoped that they will eventually become generally recognised as important annual events by every lover of English literature and the drama. The week which includes April 23rd is set aside for the celebrations, and is usually opened with special Shakespearean sermons at the Parish (Trinity) Church, the Guild Chapel, and some of the Nonconformist places of worship. A leading company of players occupies the Memorial Theatre and gives a week of Shakespearean plays, usually including one or more that have been specially revived and arranged for this purpose. Mr. J. W. Benson and Mr. Ben Greet, both supported by excellent companies, have devoted great care and skill to the birth-week performances, and the charming little theatre, with its excellent stage arrangements and ample scenery and effects, has done much to give a new life and deeper meaning to many of the less known, as well as some of the more popular of Shakespeare's works. About thirty of the plays, in all, have been thus produced, and we are tempted to hope that the dream of the founder of the Memorial Theatre may yet be realised, and Stratford become a national school of dramatic work.

During the birth-week is held the annual meeting of the Stratford-on-Avon Shakespeare Club, and usually one or more public dinners or suppers, at which the noted pilgrims to the Shakespeare shrine have an opportunity of meeting and knowing the guardians of the shrine itself. Another pleasant feature of the birth-week is that its influence is gradually spreading, and celebrations in various forms are becoming increasingly numerous in Birmingham, London, and many other centres both in Britain and abroad.

We must commend every effort that tends to direct more attention to the great master of English and his work, but after all, second to the works themselves, the relics so reverently tended at Stratford-on-Avon are the great preservers of our Shakespeare's memory.

FALSTAFF.
(The Gower Statue.)

Easily first stands the Birth-house, with its record of between 25,000 and 30,000 pilgrims yearly. Here, as at the other places of pilgrimage, a charge is made for admission; and only those who know the cost and care of preserving the various houses, providing suitable attendants and guardians, and giving assistance that is freely and courteously tendered to all Shakespearean students, can realise how very necessary is such a charge. Not only is the income necessary for the purchase and support of the buildings and for the buying of books, relics, etc., but a check upon the swarms of irresponsible "trippers" is indispensable to the safety of the buildings and their contents. Photographers and artists sometimes grumble at the special fees that are charged to them, but if they once consider the comparatively limited space, and the great crowds of people who frequently almost block the buildings, they will understand the necessity of severely repressing the photographic work and sketching, in the interests of the majority.

The Birth-house is in the charge of Mr. Richard Savage, secretary to the Shakespeare's Birth-place Trust, who is very ably supported by the Misses Hancock, custodians, with assistants and gardener. The rooms to the left of the entrance are never shewn to visitors, but are reserved as a depository for

the Town records and documents, and as a meeting-room for the board. The cellar, too, is not shewn, a fact that we greatly regret, although we know it is based on the objection to allowing lights in the building. Still, as the cellar is the only part of the building that may not have suffered serious alteration in the centuries since the poet's time, we feel that its opening would be greatly appreciated, and surely could be done—including the necessary lighting—with very little trouble and with absolute safety. The closing of the garret storey of the house is easily intelligible when we know how very insecure is the flooring, and realise the anxiety of the Trust to avoid repairing the floor, which would mean destroying the old ceiling of the birth-room.

The main room, the living-room, a little back parlor, the birth-room and the portrait-room are shewn by the custodians, and if the visitors to the house are not too numerous, those who wish may step out into the garden. At one time all visitors were allowed into the garden, but the impossibility of keeping some from "picking and stealing" caused the privilege to be withdrawn.

The adjoining house, formerly the wool-shop, is converted into a museum and library. The objects of interest include many curiosities of Shakespeare's time, carvings from old churches in the district, etc., etc., as well as relics directly connected with the poet and his family. The original of the Quiney letter, the old desk at which Shakespeare is supposed to have studied, a seal-ring engraved with the initials W. S. and found many years ago in a field near the church, and a number of deeds and manuscripts are amongst the most important items. Many of the objects were given by Miss Wheler, sister of Mr. R. B. Wheler, the historian.

Anne Hathaway's cottage, most charming of all the places of pilgrimage, is owned by the Birth-place Trust, and is in the charge of Mrs. Baker, an old lady of some eighty-five years, and a descendant of the Hathaway family. The simple pride with which the place is shewn, and the courtly way in which the old lady will offer a drink of water from Anne Hathaway's well, or a few leaves or flowers from the garden, always make a lasting impression, and add to the delight of a visit. When tourists are very numerous, Mrs. Baker must have a weary time, and there is little chance of these personal attentions. The old cottage cannot fail to delight any lover of the quaint and picturesque, and it requires no other curios to make it a perfect museum. In one of the upper rooms is an old carved oak four-post bed that belonged to the Hathaway family long ago; and an old bible that usually lies on the little round table near Mrs. Baker's chair has the births, marriages, and deaths of the Hathaways entered on its fly leaf. Mrs. Baker is always ready to chat about the cottage and the many distinguished visitors she has received, and we trust she may long remain amongst the custodians of the poet's memory.

The Grammar School and Guild Hall are open to the public during convenient hours when the scholars are not at work, and, as at the other places, a small fee is charged, and the proceeds devoted to the restoration fund. Little need be added to the description given in Chapter V. As in Shakespeare's day, the school takes high rank amongst the schools of the country, and its masters are justly proud of the successes won by their scholars. Most of the masters have been men of learning and refinement, with pride in their school and a loving enthusiasm for the memory of its greatest scholar. No exceptions to this rule are the late master, the Rev. R. S. de Courcy Laffan, or the present master, Rev. E. J. W. Houghton. As the master of the Grammar School is also entrusted with the services in the ancient Guild Chapel, he is a most responsible custodian of the memory of the poet.

The Guild Chapel is not usually open to visitors except on Sundays, when strangers are welcome to either morning or evening service. At other times the chapel may be seen by special request, and those who hunt up and make friends with the sexton, after obtaining permission from the head-master, may enjoy the views from the windows of the tower. The old frescoes which we reproduce in Chapter II. are almost invisible now, but copies of them may be seen in an interesting old book in the Memorial Library. The tomb of Sir Hugh Clopton is in the Guild Chapel, with a tremendously long inscription detailing the many noble gifts he made to his native town. It has been suggested that Shakespeare may have had lessons in the Chapel during repairs to the Grammar School, thus obtaining the simile used in Twelfth Night—"cross-gartered . . . like a pedant that keeps a school i' the church." However this may be, he must often have worshipped in the little chapel, even then old and historical, that stood next door to his manhood's home.

The New Place Museum, formerly the house of Thomas Nash, who married Shakespeare's grand-daughter, is also the property of the Birth-place Trust. In the main room are a number of relics of the poet, and curiosities found about the site of the house where he died, and in pulling down the barn connected therewith. The old shovel-board or shuffle-board from the Falcon Inn, across the way, is one of the principal objects, but there are also two high-backed, wool-worked chairs, known to have been in Shakespeare's possession, a trinket-box said to have been Anne Hathaway's, and a wooden drinking flagon said to be the poet's. There are many minor relics, engravings, etc., and the house gives access to the site of New Place, with the little scraps of foundation-work carefully preserved and covered with wire netting. Here we may take a draught of water from the same well that supplied the poet's wants, though now it is bowered in ivy, while in his time it was in the cellar. In the enclosure is a mulberry tree, the grand-child of the tree the poet planted. This museum is in the care of the Secretary of the Birth-place Trust.

The New Place gardens are open, without charge, at stipulated times, and though there is little resemblance to the "great garden" of Shakespeare's day it forms a charming resting-place. Here may be seen the child of Shakespeare's great mulberry, and a piece of sculpture representing the poet and the muses, from the old Shakespeare gallery in Pall Mall. While we can never too greatly regret the destruction of Shakespeare's home, and of the mulberry tree that was his pride, we think that the man who was responsible for the deeds has been somewhat too harshly judged, and that there were, at any rate, two sides to the case. The Rev. Francis Gastrell, the gentleman in question, was a man of wealth, resident in Lichfield, who bought New Place in 1753, apparently for use as an occasional residence. Malone says that he cut down the famous mulberry tree "to save himself the trouble of showing it to those whose admiration of our great poet led them to visit the poetic ground on which it stood." Malone also tells us that Mr. Gastrell objected to the monthly tax levied on the house, holding that it should only be payable when the house was occupied, "but being very properly compelled by the magistrates of Stratford to pay the whole of what was levied on him, he peevishly declared that *that* house should never be assessed again, and soon afterwards pulled it down." It is all very well to blame the poor man who was so worried by his neighbors as to pull down the property which he had purchased only four years before, and all very well to speak of the sight-seeing throng as being led by "admiration of our great poet"; but surely the magistrates shewed obstinacy and want of tact, as well as very little reverence for the home or the spirit of Shakespeare, when they drove the quarrel to such an issue. Does it not remind us of the persecution and harrying of John Shakespeare and his son by a very similar set of petty tyrants.

The church of the Holy Trinity, where lie the poet's remains, has been under the charge of appreciative and unappreciative vicars, but has fortunately, at last, fallen into the custody of the Rev. Geo. Arbuthnot, D.D., a genuine admirer of Shakespeare. Proud of the trust, he devotes to the preservation and restoration of the church both time and money; and, finding these insufficient, is ever urging others to assist. Dr. Arbuthnot's earnestness and untiring enthusiasm are very infectious, and under his hands the church has greatly benefitted. Still, much remains to be done before the fabric is in a satisfactory, or even a safe state. The west window is so shaky with the buffetings of time that it seems as if the next great storm must blow it bodily into the church; the floor, laid on the cold, wet earth of the riverside, is sadly in need of air-space and drainage beneath; the warming of the church needs improving to stay the ravages of damp and cold, and there are many other points that need attention. The vicar has been severely criticised at times for allowing a new organ and stained glass windows to take precedence of these necessary repairs; but, unfortunately, the great subscribing public

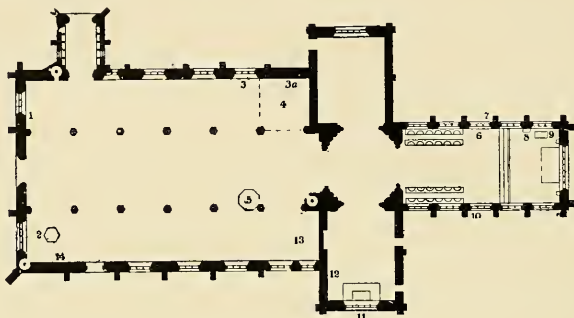
will contribute to a memorial window when it will hardly give a penny for re-laying a floor, and the vicar is anxious that the church should be in every way a worthy shrine. The church is open to visitors, and Mr. Bennett, the custodian, who takes the place of his uncle, the late Mr. Butler, is an interested and interesting guide to those who visit the place in reverent spirit.

On entering, the visitor will find visitors' books, collection boxes, and a small pamphlet issued by the vicar as a guide to the church and a small memento. In a glass-topped box under the west window of the north aisle, is the old parish register, open at the entries of the baptism and burial of

NEW PLACE MUSEUM.

Shakespeare. Here, too, is the old chained bible ; and under the west window of the south aisle is the old font in which the poet was baptised. These objects are marked, respectively, 1 and 2 in our little plan of the church. Following the same plan, at 3 is a tablet to the memory of the Harts, a copy of an inscription placed in a corresponding position on the wall outside. At 3A is a little window with some scraps of stained glass in the upper part. These are interesting as being all that remain of a window recording the re-building of the choir, in the following words—"Thomas Balshall, Doctor of Divinity, re-edifyed this quier, and dyed Anno 1491." The Chapel below (4), properly called the Chapel of Our Lady the Virgin, is better known as the Clopton Chapel, since it contains the handsome tombs of

many of the Clopton family. The American window, indicated by 6 on the plan, was placed as the result of collections made entirely from Americans It represents the "Seven Ages of Man," as personified by Moses, Samuel, Jacob, Joshua, Solomon, Abraham, and Isaac.



PLAN OF TRINITY CHURCH.

Close beside the north chancel door is the Shakespeare monument, and below it, inside the altar rails, are the tombs of the poet and his family, as well as of some of his contemporaries. The order is shewn in the little diagram. Shakespeare's own epitaph reads:—

Judicio Pylium, Genio Socratem, arte Maronem,
Terra tegit, populus mæret, Olympus habet.

Stay, pasenger, why goest thou by so fast,
Read, if thou canst, whom envious death hath plast,
Within this monument; Shakespeare, with whome
Quick nature dide; whose name doth deck this tomb,
Far more than cost, sith all that he hath writt,
Leaves living art, but page to serve his witt.

Obiit anno Domini 1616, Ætatis 53, Die 23 Ap.

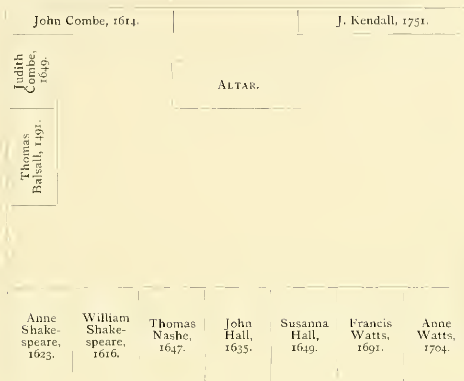
The Latin heading may be freely rendered:—

A Nestor in Judgment, a Socrates in Intellect, a Virgil in Art:—
The earth covers, the people mourn, and heaven holds.

The oft-quoted lines, which were a stock inscription with some of the undertakers of the end of the sixteenth century, are on the stone that covers the grave.

Good frend for Jesvs sake forbeare,
to digg the dvst encloased heare:
Bleste be ye man yt spares thes stones,
and cvrst be he yt moves my bones.

The tomb of John Combe was made by the same sculptor as the Shakespeare monument.



If the south chancel door (5) is open, it is worth while to step into the churchyard for the glimpse of the poet's monument framed by the worn old stonework. The new American window (11) is in the south transept. Pending the receipt of funds it is incomplete, but the part already in position was formally unveiled on April 23rd, 1896, by Mr. Bayard, the American ambassador. Near it is one of the most interesting inscriptions in the church (12), on the tomb of Richard Hill, a contemporary of Shakespeare. The upper part of the inscription is gone, but the following may be fairly well traced :—

Hic nvtritvs erat, natvs, nvnc hic jacet hillvs,
hicqve magistratvs fama ter mvnere fvnctvs;
cvmqve bonos annos vixisset septvaginta,
ad terram corpvs, sed mens migravit ad astra.

heare borne, heare lived, heare died, and bvried heare,
lieth richarde hil, thrise bailif of this borrovv;
too matrones of good fame, he married in godes feare,
and novv releaste in joi, he reasts from vvorldlie sorrovv.

heare lieth intombed the corps of richarde hill,
a vvoolen draper beeing in his time,
vvhose virtves live, vvhose fame dooth florish stil,
thovgh hee desolved be to dvst and slime.
a mirror he, and paterne mai be made,
for svch as shall svckceed him in that trade;
he did not vse to svveare, to gloase, either faigne,
his brother to defravde in barganinge;
hee vvoold not strive to get excessive gaine
in ani cloathe or other kinde of thinge:
his servant, S. J. this trveth can testifie
a witnes that beheld it with mi eie.

Numerous other objects of interest are to be seen in this ancient sanctuary, but we must leave them to be pointed out by the custodian, and take the reader, for a moment, to the Memorial Library, Theatre and Museum.

As long ago as the Jubilee in the last century, Garrick dreamed of Stratford as a centre of study, a school of acting and elocution. A dream the idea remained until the late Mr. Charles E. Flower, a generous benefactor to Stratford-on-Avon, tried to secure its realisation. He was not supported as he had hoped by the general public, but in spite of all difficulties and by dint of contributions from his own purse to the extent of some thirty thousand pounds, in addition to the gift of the site, the theatre was at length completed, and was opened on April 23rd, 1879, and the library and picture gallery on April 18th, 1881.

Unfortunately, the apathy of Shakespeare lovers was such that only by the desperate expedient of spending every penny of the endowment fund could the building be completed, and the support is still far from what it ought to be. In fact, if it were not for the extreme generosity of Mrs. Charles E. Flower, and others of the same family, the work would be very seriously crippled. As it is, the want of money is felt at every turn, and the amount of good work accomplished in spite of all difficulties is really wonderful. We have already mentioned the attention given to the revival of plays, and the committee has published a complete edition of the plays as produced at the Memorial Theatre, in cheap and convenient form for schools. To a very great extent (probably no one save Mr. A. H. Wall, the late librarian, is aware how great) the library has served its purpose as a mine of information for the Shakespeare student. Although the necessity of catering for tourists and sight-seers has prevented the council providing such accommodation as they wish for students, the library has been considerably used, and the correspondence with enquirers in all parts of the world is very heavy.

The library contains some seven thousand volumes, including the plays in a great number of editions and languages, books on Shakespeare and his works, plays of sixteenth century authors, books on contemporary history,

THE MEMORIAL LIBRARY.

costume, etc., and biographies of Shakespearean actors. The librarian and his assistants also carefully collect and file all cuttings of Shakespearean interest from newspapers, magazines, etc., and these ephemeræ, carefully collated and indexed, will eventually prove of untold value to students.

Probably for many years to come the Library will have to rely for its increase mainly upon gifts, which can be made to a special Library fund. Or, if a Shakespeare lover wishes to contribute a volume or set of volumes, the librarian will gladly inform him of such as are still wanted; and as there are blanks at almost all prices, a gift of almost any sum can be represented by a definite book or books. Although the library has hundreds of editions of Shakespeare's works, there are still many scores of American editions (to mention one field only) that are listed as wanted.

SHAKESPEARE'S MONUMENT.
(Glimpse through South Chancel Door.)

Many relics of well-known Shakespearean actors, collections of "Shakespeare's flowers," etc., are treasured and exposed to public view. The art gallery above has been enriched by many generous gifts, and has a very fine collection of pictures. The most interesting are those hung together as a gallery of portraits of the poet, including the painting we have described and reproduced as the original of the Droeshout engraving. Here, too, is the Davenant bust.

The Memorial Theatre, excellent in every way for its purpose, is far too often dark and silent, and much united work must be given by Shakespeare lovers in many lands, before Stratford and its Memorial are the centres of light and activity, which it is desired that they should be.

The tower of the Memorial gives a magnificent view of the country round, and is very well worth the climb.

The work of the Memorial is conducted by Mr. Charles Lowndes, the secretary, and Mr. W. Salt Brassington, librarian, with Mr. Rainbow as custodian, and his daughter as assistant librarian. Every one of these people has a full belief in the importance of the task entrusted to them by their committee.

The generous donation of a bronze statue of Shakespeare, by Lord Ronald Gower, has already been mentioned. The statue is Lord Gower's own work, as are the four figures round the base, and is thus a specially graceful as well as a valuable tribute to the poet's memory.

STAIRWAY, MEMORIAL LIBRARY.

That the memory of Shakespeare's daughter Judith may be ever green, a tablet is affixed to the shop that was formerly her home for so many years, and Mr. Edward Fox, who occupies the building, is very pleased to show the capacious cellars which were turned to business account by Quiney, the vintner, after they had served their purpose as the town's dungeons. Mr. Fox has recently stripped one of the walls, revealing the ancient timber in a way that throws interesting and unexpected light upon the early arrangements of the house, and he has secured from the sale of the Harts' relics, what is believed to be an authentic and contemporary portrait of Judith Shakespeare.

The Arden house, too, at Wilmcote, is open to the public for a very small fee, and many visitors will feel grateful to Mr. Samuel Lane, the farmer, who reserves the house to their use and guards it from decay.

Of the Jubilee Fountain in the Rother Market we wrote briefly in an earlier chapter. As a tribute to the great man's memory from an American admirer it is especially appreciated. The design is British, and, curiously enough, the free-stone came from a Yorkshire quarry within a few yards of the Spink Well where it is said that the last wild boar in England was slain.

Of the less material memorials and tributes to the memory of Shakespeare we can say but little, yet the work of the many earnest men who are ever searching for the least glimpses of side-light upon the poet's life and times must not be ignored. There are, of course, those officially connected with

PICTURE GALLERY, MEMORIAL LIBRARY.

this work—Mr. Richard Savage, Mr. Salt Brassington, Mr. A. H. Wall, and others, but there is also a little army of devoted workers, both in the district, and in other countries, even to the ends of the earth. Of important contributions recently made, we may specially mention the publication of the "Register of the Guild of Knowle," by the Archæological section of the Birmingham and Midland Institute; "Records of Rowington," by Mr. J. W. Ryland; "Baddesley Clinton" (now in the press), by the Rev. Henry Norris; and the valuable work of Mrs. Stopes.

There is a common, but mistaken, idea that all that can be known of the life and times of Shakespeare has already been collected and published. On

the contrary, there is still an immense amount of good work to be done, especially with regard to the life of the poet away from Stratford; and anyone with a sufficient interest in the subject, and a knowledge of the English language, may yet dig stones to lay upon the cairn erected to our great man's memory.

JUDITH SHAKESPEARE.
(From a Painting owned by Mr. Edward Fox.)

APPENDIX A.

Information for Visitors.

A HUNDRED thousand tourists, every year, pass through Shakespeare's town. How many of these ever feel the spirit of the place, how many realise that in the habits and prejudices, the language and customs of the people, we have strong and interesting survivals of the very surroundings of Shakespeare's life? How many think, or care to think, that in this secluded corner of the country there is a survival of the sturdy yeoman class from which the poet sprang?

And how many know that Jack-in-a-Green may still be seen; that the May-pole dance has never been misssd for a year since the stern repression of the Puritan days, and that many another quaint old custom is still kept up amongst the Warwickshire village folk?

If people come thousands of miles to see the bricks and mortar of our British history and literature, how much more should they linger to lovingly study the ways of thought and speech, the very intellectual and moral atmosphere which made possible the history and the writings. It is in the hope that we may induce some to stay long enough in Warwickshire to really catch the spirit of its village life that we have collected the rambling notes in this chapter. Perhaps some of the suggestions may seem incongruous, and especially the suggestion of the local weekly newspaper, as a help to an appreciation of the old-time spirit. Yet the *Stratford-upon-Avon Herald* is every week recording—not as matters of curiosity, but as ordinary news—many local happenings that take us back to the olden times. And the *Herald*, too, has frequent contributions on Shakesperean subjects that are well worth reading and filing.

The Shakespearean, a sixpenny monthly magazine, and the only British magazine devoted to Shakespearean matters, will be found still richer in Shakespeare lore, and prove most valuable to the serious student.

The Sports and Pastimes of the Warwickshire folk are partly modern, but even a good game of cricket is useful from the Shakespearean point of view if it detains the traveller for an extra half-day amid Warwickshire scenery.

Cricket. Played every fine summer evening, by numberless clubs, etc. The Stratford-on-Avon Athletic and Cricket Club (Hon. Sec., Mr. T. R. Ellerker, Shottery) has an exceedingly fine ground with good pavilion, etc. Fixed matches are played every Saturday, from the middle of May to the middle of September, and on certain other days. Other sports are also encouraged by this club. Visitors may become members. Subscription, 7s. 6d.

Boating. The Stratford-upon-Avon Boat Club. Hon. Sec., Mr. John Smith. A competitive and pleasure-rowing club. Has its own field and boats. Holds sports monthly during the summer, on Thursdays that do not clash with the Athletic Club's sports. Visitors may become members—fee: 10s. per month.

Swimming. There is a good public bathing place.

Football and Athletics are actively supported by the Cricket Club, so that sport of some kind may be seen in its ground every week of the year.

Steeplechases. Held annually about the end of April or beginning of May. Hon. Sec., W. Hutchings, 26 High Street.

Lawn Tennis. A good private club, which admits visitors on introduction by members.

Golf. A good club that admits visitors. Excellent links within easy access of the town.

Bowls. The green in Guild-street, is owned by Mr. Colbourne, of the Red Horse Hotel, and used by an informal club that includes many of the principal tradespeople. Visitors welcome.

Quoits. Industriously played in many of the villages, where pitches may be seen on the green or in a convenient field on any fine summer evening. Matches are played between the teams of neighboring villages.

The Town Band. Hon. Sec., W. Trinder, junr. Plays in the Bancroft gardens and elsewhere during the summer.

The Volunteers have their annual week under canvas at Whitsuntide.

Friendly Societies. The leading friendly societies—the Freemasons, Foresters, Oddfellows, and Buffaloes—are well supported, but the whole district is also full of small friendly and provident societies, somewhat on the lines of the old Guilds. In the ceremonial of the Buffaloes, many of the old Guild customs remain. Of course, the meetings of these societies are only open to such visitors as are members of their fraternity.

Foxhounds. The Warwickshire Hunt meets all round the district during the winter.

Otter Hounds occasionally make a drag on the Avon, and by those with sturdy limbs and lungs, no better sport need be asked.

Angling. The Cliffe Angling Association preserves some good water. Particulars from the Hon. Sec.

May Day is fully celebrated at Welford round the May-pole on the green, and there are May-poles at Offenham and King's Norton. In Stratford, the children decorate themselves and try to collect coppers, but Jack-in-a-Green, kept up until within the last few years, is no longer seen.

The Mop, or hiring fair, for general business and pleasure, but primarily for the hiring of farm servants, is held on October 12th. An ox is roasted whole, and the flesh sold in small portions, and there are many other characteristic scenes. The Runaway Mop, for servants dissatisfied at the first hiring, is held a fortnight later.

The Wakes are still held at many of the villages. Those at Shottery and Clifford Chambers are well attended by Stratfordians and other outsiders. Shottery Wake is on the Sunday and Monday between the 10th and 17th of July, while that at Clifford Chambers is on the Sunday and Monday between the 19th and 26th of June. Wilmcote Wake is early in July, and lasts for a week. The principal sport at Wilmcote is "bowling for a leg of mutton."

Gunpowder Plot. November 5th is celebrated by a club which is said to have been founded on the first anniversary of the plot. It meets at the Falcon for supper (formerly a tripe supper), followed by speeches and loyal toasts. The small boys make bonfires and burn Guy Fawkes in effigy, and some of the villages have great fires and noisy celebration.

Beating the Boundaries is still occasionally practised in some neighboring parishes. It was recently done at Clifford Chambers.

Morris Dancing is still kept up by the men of Marston, who have handed it down, father teaching son, for generations. Each dancer has his hereditary part, and the elaborate costumes, intricate manœuvers, and curious music are the same as in old days. Until recently they visited Stratford regularly and were freely encouraged. Of late years they have been rather frowned down upon, and their performances in the town are irregular and less public than they used to be.

The Mummers visit Stratford every Christmas from Snitterfield and Bidford. They dance, sing, and "repeat certain lines which have been handed down for many generations"—probably part of the old mumming play "The Peace Egg."

Clubs. The Liberal and Conservative Clubs have the usual social advantages. Open to visitors on introduction by a member. The Union Club, in Chapel-lane, is purely social, and its members have the right to introduce friends for one week.

The Shakespeare Club meets somewhat irregularly at its headquarters, the Red Horse Hotel. Hon. Sec., Mr. Richard Savage.

The Carriers' carts and wagons, recalling the traffic of the old times, and most of them prepared to carry passengers lumberingly along the roads to their villages, visit Stratford every week. Many of them come twice or thrice in the week, and several daily; from about seventy different towns and villages.

Finally, Stratford is fortunate in having true artists amongst it painters and photographers. Several painters have very fully caught the inspiration of the district, and especially is this the case with Mr. J. Laurence Hart, whose studio in Scholar's-lane (only a few yards from the Guild Chapel) is always freely open. It is a pleasant place to spend half-an-hour, even if not immediately intent on purchases. The photographers, too, have superior local work. Mr. Douglas McNeille's snow subjects, his stereoscopic views and his lantern-slides are specially admired, and Mr. Tyler has a very fine and extensive series of local subjects.

PLACES OF WORSHIP, WITH TIMES OF SUNDAY SERVICES.

Holy Trinity Church	8 a.m.	11 a.m.	3	p.m.	7	p.m.
Guild Chapel			11	a.m.	7	,,
St. James's Church, Guild-street		8 a.m.	11	,,	7	,,
St. Gregory's (R.C.) Church, Warwick-road		8 ,,	10.30	,,	6.30	,,
Congregational, Rother-street			10.45	,,	6.30	,,
Wesleyan, Birmingham-road			11	,,	6.30	,,
Primitive Methodist, Great William-street			10.30	,,	6.30	,,
Baptist, Peyton-street			10.45	,,	6.30	,,
Salvation Army, Rother-street		11 a.m.	3	p.m.	6.30	,,
The Brethren, Guild-street and Scholar's-lane			10.30	,,	6.30	,,

THE DINING HALL, CLOPTON HOUSE.

MAP OF THE DISTRICT.

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APPENDIX B.—Shakespeare's Will.

THE words that are underlined appeared in the original draft, but were scored out before the will was signed. Those in italics were not included in the original draft, but were added at the time of signing.

Vicesimo quinto die Januarii *Martii*, anno regni domini nostri Jacobi, nunc regis Anglie, &c. decimo quarto, et Scotie xlix° annoque Domini 1616.

T. Wmi. Shackspeare.—In the name of God, amen! I William Shackspeare, of Stratford-upon-Avon in the countie of Warr. gent., in perfect health and memorie, God be praysed, doe make and ordayne this my last will and testament in manner and forme followeing, that ys to saye, First, I comend my soule into the handes of God my Creator, hoping and assuredlie beleeving, through thonelie merittes of Jesus Christe, my Saviour, to be made partaker of lyfe everlastinge, and my bodye to the earth whereof yt ys made. Item, I gyve and bequeath unto my sonne in L daughter Judyth one hundred and fyftie poundes of lawfull English money, to be paied unto her in manner and forme followeing, that ys to saye, one hundred poundes *in discharge of her marriage porcion* within one yeare after my deceas, with consideracion after the rate of twoe shillinges in the pound for soe long tyme as the same shal be unpaid unto her after my deceas, and the fyftie poundes residewe thereof upon her surrendring *of*, or gyving of such sufficient securitie as the overseers of this my will shall like of to surrender or graunte, all her estate and right that shall discend or come unto her after my deceas, or *that shee* nowe hath, of, in or to, one copiehold tenemente with thappurtenaunces lyeing and being in Stratford-upon-Avon aforesaied in the saied countie of Warr., being parcell or holden of the mannour of Rowington, unto my daughter Susanna Hall and her heires for ever. Item, I gyve and bequeath unto my saied daughter Judith one hundred and fyftie poundes more, if shee or anie issue of her bodie be lyvinge att thend of three yeares next ensueing the daie of the date of this my will, during which tyme my executours to paie her consideracion from my deceas according to the rate aforesaied; and if she dye within the saied terme without issue of her bodye, then my will ys, and I doe gyve and bequeath one hundred poundes thereof to my neece Elizabeth Hall, and the fiftie poundes to be sett fourth by my executours during the lief of my sister Johane Harte, and the use and proffitt thereof cominge shal be payed to my saied sister Jone, and after her deceas the saied l.li. shall remaine amongst the children of my saied sister equallie to be devided amongst them; but if my saied daughter Judith be lyving att thend of the saied three yeares, or anie yssue of her bodye, then my will ys and soe I devise and bequeath the saied hundred and fyftie poundes to be sett out *by my executours and overseers* for the best benefitt of her and her issue, and *the stock* not *to be* paied unto her soe long as she shalbe marryed and covert baron by my executours and overseers; but my will ys that she shall have the consideracion yearelie paied unto her during her lief, and, after her deceas, the saied stock and consideracion to bee paied to her children, if she have anie, and if not, to her executours or assignes, she lyving the saied terme after my deceas, Provided that if such husbond as she shall att thend of the saied three yeares be marryed unto, or att anie after, doe sufficientle assure unto her and thissue of her bodie landes awnswereable to the porcion by this my will gyven unto her, and to be adjudged soe by my executours and overseers, then my will ys that the saied cl.li. shalbe paied to such husbond as shall make such assurance, to his owne use. Item, I gyve and bequeath unto my saied sister Jone xx.li. and all my wearing apparrell, to be paied and delivered within one yeare after my deceas; and I doe will and devise unto her *the house* with thappurtenaunces in Stratford, wherein she dwelleth, for her naturall lief, under the yearelie rent of xij.d. Item, I gyve and bequeath unto her three sonns, William Harte, ... Hart, and Michaell Harte,

fyve poundes a peece, to be payed within one yeare after my deceas to be sett out for her within one yeare after my deceas by my executours, with thadvise and direccions of my overseers, for her best proffitt untill her marriage, and then the same with the increase thereof to be paied unto her. Item, I gyve and bequeath unto her *the saied Elizabeth Hall* all my plate *except my brod silver and gilt bole*, that I now have att the date of this my will. Item, I gyve and bequeath unto the poore of Stratford aforesaied tenn poundes; to Mr. Thomas Combe my sword; to Thomas Russell esquier fyve poundes, and to Frauncis Collins of the horough of Warr. in the countie of Warr., gent., thirteene poundes, sixe shillinges, and eight pence, to be paied within one yeare after my deceas. Item, I gyve and bequeath to Mr. Richard Tyler thelder *Hamlett Sadler* xxvj.$^{s.}$ viij.$^{d.}$ to buy him a ringe; *to William Raynoldes, gent., xxvj.$^{s.}$ viij.$^{d.}$ to buy him a ring*; to my god-son William Walker xx.$^{s.}$ in gold; to Anthonye Nashe gent. xxvj.$^{s.}$ viij.$^{d.}$, and to Mr. John Nashe xxvj.$^{s.}$ *viij.$^{d.}$* in gold; *and to my fellowes, John Hemynges, Richard Burbage, and Henry Cundell, xxvj.$^{s.}$ viij.$^{d.}$ a peece to buy them ringes.* Item, I gyve, will, bequeath and devise, unto my daughter Susanna Hall, *for better enabling of her to performe this my will, and towardes the performans thereof,* all that capitall messuage or tenemente, with thappurtenaunces, *in Stratford aforesaied*, called the Newe Place, wherein I nowe dwell, and twoe messuages or tenementes with thappurtenaunces, scituat lyeing and being in Henley streete within the borough of Stratford aforesaied; and all my barnes, stables, orchardes, gardens, landes, tenementes and hereditamentes whatsoever, scituat, lieing and being, or to be had, receyved, perceyved, or taken, within the townes, hamlettes, villages, fieldes and groundes of Stratford-upon-Avon, Oldstratford, Bushopton, and Welcombe, or in anie of them in the saied countie of Warr. And alsoe all that messuage or tenemente with thappurtenaunces wherein one John Robinson dwelleth, scituat lyeing and being in the Blackfriers in London nere the Wardrobe; and all other my landes, tenementes, and hereditamentes whatsoever, To have and to hold all and singuler the saied premisses with their appurtenaunces unto the saied Susanna Hall for and during the terme of her naturall lief, and after her deceas, to the first sonne of her bodie lawfullie yssueing, and to the heires males of the bodie of the saied first sonne lawfullie yssueinge, and for defalt of such issue, to the second sonne of her bodie lawfullie issueinge, and of to the heires males of the bodie of the saied second sonne lawfullie yssueinge, and for defalt of such heires, to the third sonne of the bodie of the saied Susanna lawfullie yssueing, and of the heires males of the bodie of the saied third sonne lawfullie yssueing, and for defalt of such issue, the same soe to be and remaine to the fourth sonne, fyfth, sixte, and seaventh sonnes of her bodie lawfullie issueing one after another, and to the heires males of the bodies of the saied fourth, fifth, sixte, and seaventh sonnes lawfullie yssueing, in such manner as yt ys before lymitted to be and remaine to the first, second and third sonns of her bodie, and to their heires males, and for defalt of such issue, the saied premisses to be and remaine to my sayed neece Hall, and the heires males of her bodie lawfullie yssueing, and for defalt of such issue, to my daughter Judith, and the heires males of her bodie lawfullie issueinge, and for defalt of such issue, to the right heires of me the saied William Shackspeare for ever. *Item, I gyve unto my wiefe my second best bed with the furniture.* Item, I gyve and bequeath to my saied daughter Judith my broad silver gilt bole. All the rest of my goodes, chattels, leases, plate, jewels, and household stuffe whatsoever, after my dettes and legasies paied, and my funerall expences discharged, I gyve, devise, and bequeath to my sonne-in-lawe, John Hall, gent., and my daughter Susanna, his wief, whom I ordaine and make executours of this my last will and testament. And I doe intreat and appoint *the saied* Thomas Russell esquier, and Frauncis Collins, gent., to be overseers hereof, and doe revoke all former wills, and publishe this to be my last will and testament. In witnes whereof I have hereunto put my seale *hand* the daie and yeare first above written.—By me William Shakspeare.

Witnes to the publishing hereof,—Fra: Collyns; Julius Shawe; John Robinson; Hamnet Sadler; Robert Whattcott.

APPENDIX C.

New Light on Shakespeare's Lineage.

WHILE our own book is in the printers' hands, a most interesting and probably important volume has been published, from the pen of John Pym Yeatman, Barrister-at-law, &c.* Though the time before our last pages close for the press is too short to allow us to thoroughly consider Mr. Yeatman's arguments, we feel that to pass his work without notice would be a decided mistake.

The book has been hastily and somewhat slovenly compiled; much of the argument is far from being clear and connected; a strong partisan feeling that prevents clear judicial reasoning pervades the whole book, and the proof-reading has been very careless. These serious detail blemishes seem to have led most of the critics to overlook and ignore the enormously important contribution which Mr. Yeatman has made to the history of Shakespeare—provided his statements stand verification, and we cannot doubt they will do so.

We briefly sum up the main contentions of the book, not necessarily in the order of their importance in the eyes of Mr. Yeatman.

1.—That John Shakespeare, William Shakespeare, Dr. John Hall, and most of their relatives were strongly Roman Catholic.

2.—That the fact of Catholics being legally debarred from bringing any case in the courts (they were practically outlaws) explains many otherwise obscure points. That the cases in which the Shakespeares did appear were either—*(a)* in the local courts, where the officials, etc., were secretly Catholic, or *(b)* a case in which *some* of the plaintiffs were Protestants. This is also held to explain why Shakespeare's works were never published by himself. As he had no legal rights, any work he published could have been pirated with impunity; whereas, if it were confined to stage performances, the pirates would need to make a shorthand report, a difficult matter with their crude reporting methods, especially as the proprietors of the theatre were interested in preventing it.

3.—That John Shakespeare was not a tradesman of any kind, but a gentleman of family and position, reduced in circumstances by confiscations on the ground of his faith, but still amply independent. That the fining for having a muck-hill, etc., occurred to John Shakespeare the shoemaker, or some other John Shakespeare, and that the first Joan (born August 15th, 1558) was not the poet's sister, but probably the shoemaker's daughter, etc.

* "The Gentle Shakspere: A vindication. London: The Roxburghe Press, 3 Victoria Street, Westminster.

4.—That the poet did go deer-stealing, and was rather wild; and that Anne Hathaway was an ill-bred, uneducated woman, whom he married as the only atonement he could make for the results of an illicit connection, and who was rather a drag and encumbrance on him through life. It is suggested that his sowing of wild oats was caused by despair and desperation on being refused by a maid (possibly the daughter of Sir Thomas Lucy) with whom he was deeply in love.

5.—That Shakespeare's will is a proof of his loss of self-control and partially of memory; "that it is a terrible will; it is the act of a man in a passion, who knew not what he did. It has cruelty and vindictiveness stamped upon it. Generosity and forgiveness are wholly wanting." Mr. Yeatman suggests that this will was made especially to disgrace, humiliate, and financially ruin the poet's daughter Judith, as a punishment for her misconduct with Thomas Quiney; points out that Judith only repeated her mother's act, and suggests that she was aided and abetted by her mother.

Points 3, 4 and 5 seem to be quite unsupported by any new evidence; and the two latter points appeal to us as unnecessary, unjustifiable, and ungenerous attacks upon the memory of a man whom Mr. Yeatman professes to admire and respect. It is a pity Mr. Yeatman did not confine himself to the new and important matter which he appears to have unearthed and collected; and from which the public attention is likely to be diverted by the matter above summarised.

The discovery which Mr. Yeatman claims to have made consists of a link connecting the poet's family with the Griffiths, Griffins, or Gryffyns, descended from the old Welsh kings. This connection makes the poet a relative of Francis Bacon, a cousin of Sir Thomas Lucy, a relative of Lord Burleigh, and a cousin of Elizabeth Vernon, who became the wife of the Earl of Southampton. Incidentally, Mr. Yeatman shews that Richard Shakespeare, the poet's grandfather, was Bailiff of the Priory of Wroxall; and it is through the discovery of this good man's marriage with Alys Gryffyn that all the other matter has come to light. It also connects the poet with the Prioresses of Wroxall, who, like the Bailiff, were thrown on the mercy of the world, on the confiscation of the property of the Priory.

The connection with the Griffin family, through the poet's grandmother, gives an ancestry including numberless men of high standing, and the importance of such a discovery can hardly be over-estimated. A great collection of wills and other documents throwing light on the histories of these people is published by Mr. Yeatman.

Of course, before accepting his conclusions as final, it will be necessary to examine, with the greatest possible care, the evidence brought forward, a task that is made difficult by the mass of matter irrelevant to the main point by which it is accompanied.

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ERRATA.

Page 59.—*For* Brake-house *read* Bake-house.
Page 76, line 1.—*For* 1668-9 *read* 1568-9.
Page 78.—Title of Illustration: "Willows, near Luddington."
Page 84, line 10.—*For* Audrey *read* Aubrey.

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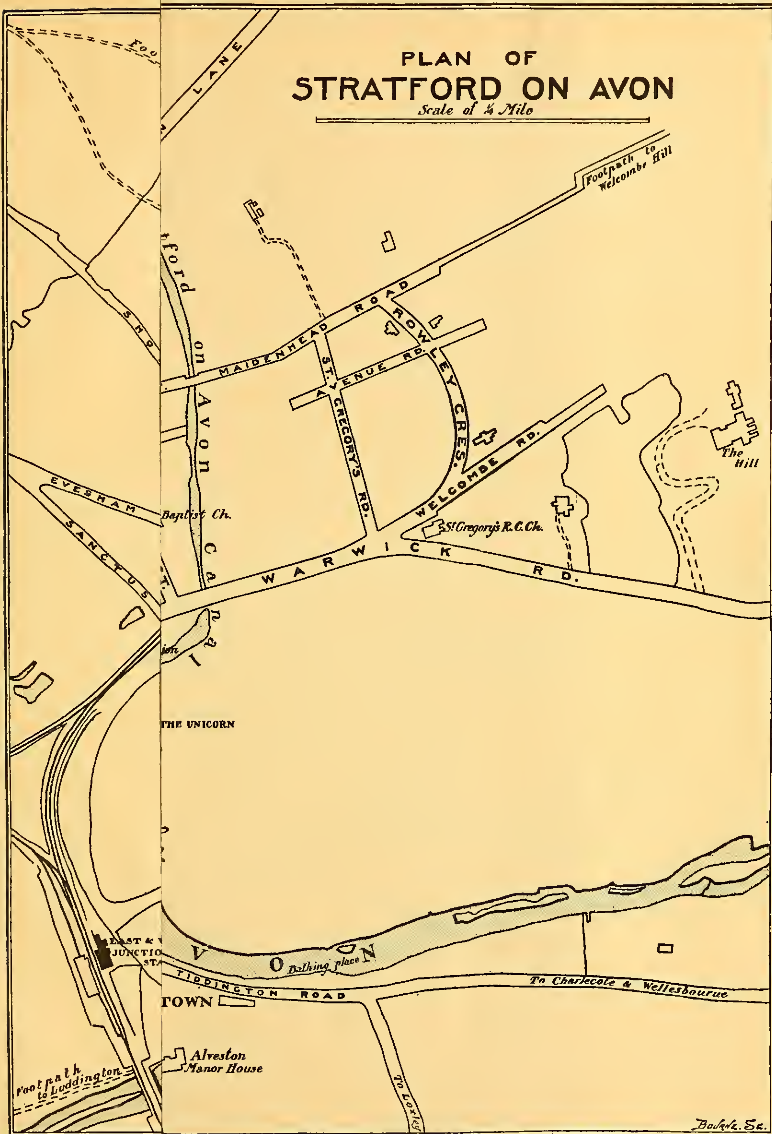
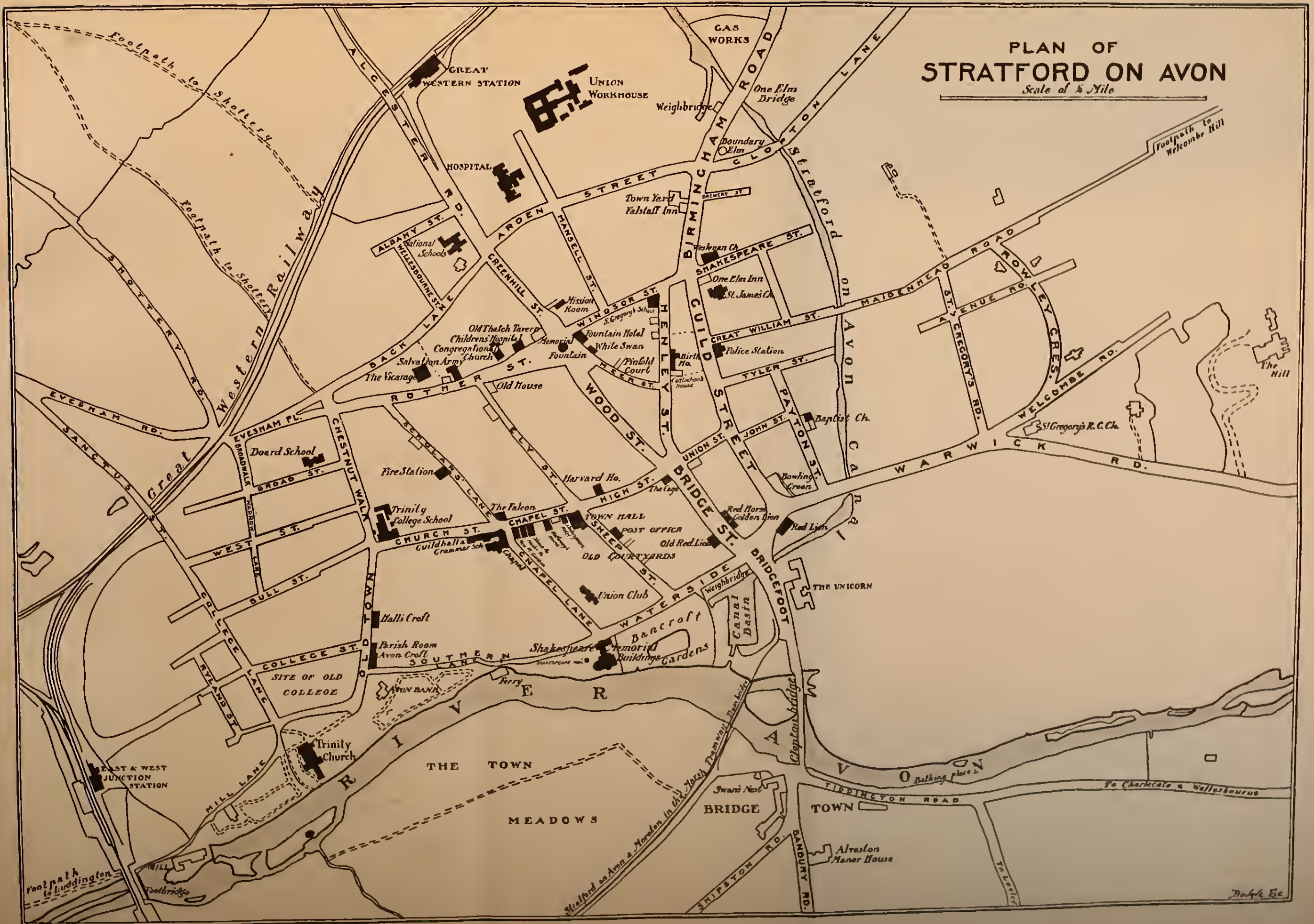

PLAN OF
STRATFORD ON AVON
Scale of ¼ Mile
LANE
Footpath to Welcombe Hill
MAIDENHEAD ROAD
ROWLEY CRES.
ST. GREGORY'S RD.
AVENUE RD.
WELCOMBE RD.
The Hill
St. Gregory's R.C. Ch.
WARWICK RD.
EVESHAM
SANCTUS ST.
Baptist Ch.
Stratford on Avon Canal
THE UNICORN
AVON
Bathing place
TIDDINGTON ROAD
To Charlecote & Wellesbourue
TOWN
Alveston Manor House
Footpath to Luddington
To Loxley
Bourne. Sc.



PLAN OF
STRATFORD ON AVON
Scale of ¼ Mile
Great Western Station
Union Workhouse
Gas Works
One Elm Bridge
Weighbridge
Birmingham Road
Clopton Lane
Boundary Elm
Hospital
Arden Street
Alcester Rd.
Town Yard
Falstaff Inn
Brewery St.
Footpath to Shottery
Footpath to Welcombe Hill
Stratford on Avon Canal
Albany St.
National Schools
Wellesbourne St.
Mansell St.
Wesleyan Ch.
Shakespeare St.
One Elm Inn
St. James Ch.
Maidenhead Road
Rowley Cres.
Avenue Rd.
St. Gregory's Rd.
Greenhill St.
Mission Room
Windsor St.
S. Gregory's School
Henley St.
Guild Street
Great William St.
Police Station
Old Thatch Tavern
Childrens' Hospital
Congregational Church
Memorial Fountain
Fountain Hotel
White Swan
Pinfold Court
Birth Ho.
Back Lane
Salvation Army
The Vicarage
Rother St.
Old House
Meer St.
Tyler St.
The Hill
Welcombe Rd.
Shottery Rd.
Great Western Railway
Evesham Rd.
Evesham Pl.
Chestnut Walk
Scholars' Lane
Ely St.
Wood St.
John St.
Payton St.
Baptist Ch.
St. Gregory's R. C. Ch.
Warwick Rd.
Broadwalk
Board School
Broad St.
Fire Station
Union St.
Harvard Ho.
High St.
The Cage
Bridge St.
Bowling Green
Sanctus St.
Narrow Lane
Trinity College School
The Falcon
Chapel St.
Town Hall
Sheep St.
Post Office
Red Horse
Golden Lion
Red Lion
West St.
Church St.
Guildhall & Grammar Sch.
Chapel
Old Red Lion
Old Courtyards
Chapel Lane
Bridgefoot
The Unicorn
Bull St.
Union Club
Waterside
Weighbridge
Canal Basin
Old Town
Hall's Croft
Bancroft
Parish Room
Avon Croft
College Lane
College St.
Southern Lane
Shakespeare Memorial Buildings
Gardens
Site of Old College
Avon Bank
Ferry
River Avon
Clopton Bridge
Tramway Bridge
Rylands St.
Trinity Church
East & West Junction Station
Mill Lane
The Town Meadows
Stratford on Avon & Moreton in the Marsh Tramway
Swan's Nest
Bridge Town
Bathing place
Tiddington Road
To Charlecote & Wellesbourne
Alveston Manor House
Shipston Rd.
Banbury Rd.
To Loxley
Mill
Footbridge
Footpath to Luddington

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