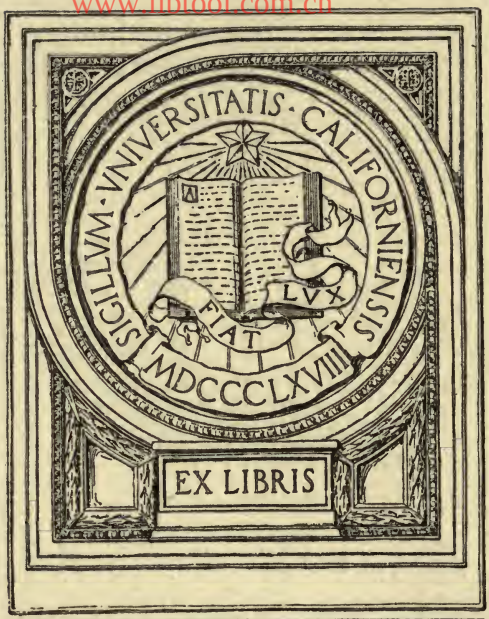
THE SILENT SHAKESPEARE

ROBERT FRAZER



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BY

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"To the great Variety of Readers."

Folio of 1623.

In presenting the results of several years of preparation, the writer desires to acknowledge his indebtedness to the large body of investigators, from Malone to Halliwell-Phillipps, who have ransacked libraries and garrets for new light upon the subject of this sketch. To many of these something is owing, and frequent mention of authorities has been made in the text. But since it is clearly impracticable to trace, in every case, the source from which a suggestion has been received, this general acknowledgment is made, with the hope that no reference of importance has been omitted.

In the matter of accepting the statements of writers on this subject, it has been found necessary to exercise caution; a single instance will serve as an illustration. The present writer has insisted that Shakespeare's death attracted little attention; a point of

some importance, as it testifies to the insignificance of the man.

As to this matter, we find the ingenuous Sir Sidney Lee, a modern pillar of the Stratfordian theory, with a different purpose in mind, making the following remarkable statement:

"When Shakespeare lay dead in the spring of 1616 * * the flood of panegyrical lamentation poured forth in a new flood. One of the earliest of the elegies was a sonnet by William Basse * * This fine sentiment found many a splendid echo. It resounded in Ben Jonson's noble lines prefixed to the First Folio of 1623 * * Milton qualified the conceit a few years later, in 1630 * * Such was the invariable temper in which literary men gave vent to their grief on learning the death of the 'beloved author,' &c."

—*Great Englishmen of the XVIth Century, pp 279-81.*

Here is a very flagrant instance of the method of the *suggestio falsi.* The casual

reader will accept the statement that a flood of lamentation poured forth in "the spring of 1616," when literary men "learned the death of the beloved author," without noting that actually the flood of 1616 consisted of a sonnet by Basse, which did not appear before 1622, of the introductory matter to the folio of 1623, of which more will be said later, and of Milton's verses, in 1630, when he learned of the death of the "beloved author."

However, we can forgive Lee for this sort of work, in consideration of his unwearying research, which produced, for example, his identification of the "Mr. W. H." of the dedication to the Sonnets with one William Hall.

Except in the arrangement and interpretation of the data which are the common property of all, there is nothing new in the following pages. Against the Hathaway marriage, the vital absence of any mention of it in the records of Stratford church, and the remarriage of Mrs. Shakespeare after

1616, are insisted on. The interpretation of Heywood's protest against the insertion of his sonnets in the *Passionate Pilgrim* is perhaps new; and I have not seen the point made that Will Shakspere, whose patron was Lord Strange, could hardly have dedicated the *Venus* and the *Lucrece* to another than his patron.

Perhaps, too, the part that I have assigned to Will Shakspere in the composition of the plays, is more or less new. So far as I know, it has never been seriously maintained that his share in the work was a minor one. Stratfordians are satisfied with nothing less than to credit him with all that is fine in the plays; and Baconians will not allow that he had any part whatever in them.

The presentation of this theory is the principal object and excuse for these essays.

Philadelphia, 1915. ROBERT FRAZER.

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTORY

No self-respecting Shakespearean scholar permits himself to refer to the so-called "Shakespeare problem" otherwise than in terms of concentrated scorn.

Preferably he ignores its existence. This is natural and inevitable. Eyes that have been straining at a microscope do not at once recover their ordinary focus; and the close study of a subject induces affection for the traditions and prejudices which may be entangled in it, as well as for its vital truths.

In this way an unreasoning reverence has grown up for the mere name Shakespeare, even as though the poet had never written "that which we call a rose, by any other word would smell as sweet."

There really is a Shakespeare problem, and the attitude of these scholars does not at once dispose of it. A large and increasing number of sensible persons now doubt that

the actor was the author. That doubt would be converted into certainty could a satisfactory answer be found to the question; who, then, is the author, if not Will Shakspere?

An extraordinarily silent man was this Will Shakspere, and his contemporaries have repaid him in kind. No letters, diaries or memoirs of the day exist to tell us of his personal history. What we know of him has been gleaned from public records. From these indeed, we know a good deal about him; his surroundings, his occupations, interests, acquaintances and acts; and from such we are enabled to form an opinion as to his character.

The only other sources of information open to us, aside from a number of unverifiable traditions, are the writings attributed to him. From them inferences may be drawn as to the character, and to a less extent, to the personal history of the author. This mine has been thoroughly worked by scholars, to their own great satisfaction; and we thus discover that the author was a man of great

literary industry, with an intense appreciation of nature; of aristocratic tendencies, with a touch of the Romeo in him; a philosopher who looked upon this world as a phantasmagoria; a writer of vast intellect, soaring imagination and profundity of insight; and one, moreover, whose life was one of extraordinary intellectual and spiritual growth.

Such are the conclusions reached by scholars like Professor David Masson, and by the editors of the Tudor Shakespeare. It is painful to have to record the fact that the character thus synthetically constructed is wholly and ludicrously unlike the character of Will Shakspere, as revealed to us by the external facts of his life.

Almost in our own day Emerson voiced his perplexity over this discordance in no uncertain phrase. He notes that Shakespeare found a great body of plays in existence, and used whatever he found; he quotes Malone to the effect that out of 6,043 lines in the three parts of Henry VI, only 1,899 are original with Shakespeare. He calls attention to the

fact that Bacon never mentioned Shakespeare, and that Sir Henry Wotton, only four years Shakspere's junior, and surviving him twenty-three years, did not include him in his long list of acquaintances and correspondents. He continues:

> "He was a good-natured sort of man, an actor and shareholder in the theatres, not in any striking manner distinguished from other actors and managers."
>
> "The Egyptian verdict of the Shakespeare societies comes to mind, that he was a jovial actor and manager. I cannot marry this fact to his verse. Other admirable men have led lives in some sort of keeping with their thought; but this man in wide contrast. It must go into the world's history that the best poet led an obscure and profane life, using his genius for the public amusement."

Mr. Edwin Reed has collected and published, in "Noteworthy Opinions," a long

list of doubters, many of them men whose prominence entitles their words to respectful consideration. From among many others, I take these:

A W. von Schlegel
Samuel Taylor Coleridge
Lord Byron
Henry Hallam
Lord Palmerston
Cardinal Newman
James Russell Lowell
Charles Dickens
Walt Whitman
John G. Whittier.

Wm. H. Furness said:

> "I am one of the many who have never been able to bring the life of William Shakespeare and the plays of William Shakespeare within a planetary space of each other."

Disraeli put the following into the mouth of one of the characters in his novel of Venetia:

> "And who is Shakespeare? We

> know as much of him as we do of Homer. Did he write half of the plays attributed to him? Did he ever write a single whole play? I doubt it. He appears to me to have been an inspired adapter for the theatres, which were then not as good as barns. I take him to have been a botcher up of old plays."

This, then, is the first phase of the Shakespeare problem, which deals with the extreme unfitness of Will Shakspere for the role of the greatest dramatic genius of all time.

The second phase of the question has to do with the composite authorship of the plays, in which we note a mass of incongruities, manifested most glaringly, perhaps, in the juxtaposition of passages of extreme beauty, with scenes of intolerable and irrelevant buffoonery.

Long ago the keen, critical eye of Voltaire detected these anomalies, and although he felt and expressed his admiration for

Shakespeare as "an amazing genius" and was the first to introduce his works to Continental readers, he did not hesitate to stigmatize him as a "drunken savage" and an "indecent buffoon."

These deformities in the plays were felt very strongly by the historian Hume, and doubtless were the basis for his much abused criticism of Shakespeare writings.

Considered as a man, educated in the lowest manner, he concedes him to be a Prodigy; while as a poet, he severely criticises his irregularities and absurdities, and his inability to uphold for any time, a reasonable propriety.

May we not allow that there exists some ground for such verdicts, which were delivered before the present age of indiscriminate admiration of the plays?

Gilbert Murray probably represents the views of a majority of modern scholars in holding that the Homeric poems were the work of many poets, whose songs were ulti-

mately collected and set to the "Tale of Troy," and, like the poems of Homer, and like the Hebrew Scriptures, the plays of Shakespeare seem to be the work of many writers in many revisions.

Taking this view, it will be the purpose of the present writer to maintain that the poems known as Shakespeare's were not written by the man of Stratford; and that the dramas known as Shakespeare's were not his, either, but had their origin, in great part, in old plays which were worked over by many minds, produced before many audiences, and enlarged and amended as experience directed, before they were crystallized in the folio of 1623; and that in all this labor Will Shakspere had a minor, although a definite, share.

In entering upon the subject, mention must be made of the Baconian theory, as it has greatly aided in stimulating interest in the question. Although Baconians have failed to convince the world that Bacon was the great dramatist, they have pretty thor-

oughly demolished the claims made on behalf of Will Shakspere.

The writer holds that probability is against the truth of the Baconian theory; that the arguments upon which it rests, founded upon ciphers and symbols; upon parallelisms and allusions, howsoever specious they may be, are in the final analysis, unconvincing.

The fact is that the strongest ground upon which Bacon's name can be urged, is the assumption that he was the only man in England at the time who was capable of producing a dramatic masterpiece.

This is an error—a galaxy of literary geniuses then lived in London, several of whom closely approached the Shakespearean standard of excellence.

There were Beaumont and Fletcher; George Chapman, Michael Drayton, Christopher Marlowe and John Webster, for example. Some were gentleman's sons and University men; many of them had traveled on the Continent; witness Thomas Carew,

Samuel Daniel, who was poet laureate; Robert Greene and Thomas Nash.

There were lawyers also among the dramatists of that wonderful period; John Ford, Thomas Lodge and John Marston, among the number. Thus, the argument for Bacon, based on the law in the plays, which is one of the pillars of the cause, is inconclusive. It is good as against Will Shakspere, but it does not prove Bacon's authorship.

Nothing in Bacon's personal character, and nothing in the pedantic and obscure style of his acknowledged writings, is suggestive of Shakespeare.

Bacon so distrusted the future of the English language that he went to the extreme length of translating, *non sine labore,* his philosophical writings into Latin, in order to preserve them for posterity; thus discarding the most vigorous and adaptable medium the world has ever known, to embalm his works in the stiff wrappings of a dead language.

Now the Shakespeare writers had a clearer foresight.

Bacon died rather foolishly of a cold which he contracted while stuffing a chicken with snow. History does not state what was the object of this abstruse experiment. Did Bacon expect the snow to cook the chicken? Probably not—and yet, for a man who had spent sixty-five years in study; and more particularly for a man who had taken all knowledge for his province, it seems to have been a singularly futile proceeding.

It is not unlikely that some of the writings now accredited to Shakespeare were Bacon's, but for a satisfactory solution of the problem, we must look elsewhere.

There were, of course, men, or there was a man, to whom we must give the name Shake-speare; Mr. Lang, gently ironical, christens him the "Great Unknown"; I prefer to call him the Silent Shakespeare.

CHAPTER II
WILL SHAKSPERE.

The material that we possess for a life of Shakspere consists of municipal records and of records of the theatrical company to which he belonged. We have no account of his literary or social life; and if we were to draw the usual conclusions from the absence of his name in the memoirs and correspondence of the day, we should have to believe that Shakspere had no part in the great social world, and no friendships outside of the narrow circle of his fellow-actors, and of his fellow-townsmen.

A number of late and untrustworthy anecdotes have been collected which represent him as having been a butcher's boy of theatrical tendencies; as a deer stealer; as beginning in London by holding horses in front of a theatre; as seducing an inn-keeper's wife at Oxford, and as dying in consequence of a drunken spree.

It is regrettable that all of the traditions should be of this character, and that none should survive to relate some act or word of kindness, some elevated thought or poetical saying to preserve a worthy memory of the personality of the greatest genius. One tale there is of a favor done to Jonson, which we shall see later to be apochryphal.

Shakespeareans attribute to him the qualities which they conceive must have formed the equipment of one whom they lovingly call "The Master." They assume that he was dignified and cultured; a lawyer, a traveler, a soldier and a courtier.

On the other hand, Baconians are prone to conceive of him as an ignorant, drunken boor, and a mere vulgar impostor.

Neither of these extreme positions is justified by the facts. Shakspere appears to have been a shrewd, virile Englishman, with a taste for wine and for women, and a fondness for low company which remained with him to the end of his life; and with a gift of low comedy which served him well in his

profession, and was the well from which he drew such success and reputation as he enjoyed during his lifetime.

From this point of view I purpose to relate the story of Shakspere's life, and to consider his share in the works called Shakespeare's.

1564 William Shakspere, Shaxper or Shagsper; for he seems to have used these variants, was born in April, 1564, at Stratford on Avon, then a dirty, unlettered village of about fifteen hundred inhabitants.

The exact site of his birthplace is not known. The house now shown to tourists as the birthplace was not owned by his father until 1575, and was first suggested as such in 1769. For some time there were three houses which claimed the distinction. The relics in the museum are scandalous impostures. Whatever Stratford may have been in Walpole's and in Garrick's day, it is now a clean and attractive little town, but terribly commercialised for the benefit of the sentimental American tourist.

Shakspere's parents, John Shakspere and Mary Arden, were a tolerably well-to-do couple of farmer descent. Like his children, his parents were perfectly illiterate.

Illiteracy was at the time no obstacle to public office, for in 1565 only six out of a total of nineteen selectmen of Stratford could sign their names.

We need not be surprised, then, to learn that John Shakspere held several public offices. The high-water mark of his prosperity was in 1568, when he was elected High Bailiff, or Mayor, of Stratford.

One of the functions of the Mayor was to issue licenses to the companies of players which toured the provinces in summer, when the London theatres were closed. It is known that Stratford was not without its share of entertainments of the kind. During the years between 1569 and 1587, twenty-four theatrical companies visited it. It was the duty of the town officials to witness a performance before granting a license, and as his father's son, as well as on his own account, young

Shakspere, it is more than likely, attended many of the representations given during those years.

1578 In 1578 John Shakspere, apparently in money difficulties, although only three years earlier he had bought the "birthplace" in Henley Street, mortgaged his wife's property of Asbies, which was in Wilmcote, or Wincot, for the sum of forty pounds, the equivalent then of about one thousand dollars.

1582 About the end of November, 1582, Will Shakspere, then over eighteen years of age, married. It is commonly believed that he married one Ann Hathaway, of Shottery, who was eight years his senior. Six months later his first child, Susanna, was born; and in February, 1585, the twins, Hamnet and Judith, were born.

The picturesque Hathaway cottage, or what is shown as such, for its position was unknown in 1770, is one of the sights of Stratford; and many pretty fancies have been

woven around the love story of the poet and the maid.

But the shadow of the critic hangs darkly over the romantic tale. There is no record of the marriage, and what we know of the affair furnishes good reason for doubts as to the identity of the bride. We may arrange the argument as follows:

First. On November 27, 1582, a license was issued at Worcester for the marriage of William *Shaxper* with Anne *Whately*, of Temple Grafton.

Second. On November 28, 1582, an indemnity bond was given by two friends of the Hathaways, who made their marks instead of signing, to protect the Bishop from liability for licensing the hurried marriage of one William *Shagspere* with Ann *Hathaway*.

Have we to do with one couple here, or with two couples? If the latter, we have to face the improbability that two men of identical name were seeking marriage in the same diocese at the same moment.

Or were the Whately woman and the Hathaway woman one and the same? It has been suggested that Ann Hathaway had first married some man named Whately, of Temple Grafton, had been left a widow, and that her friends who executed the bond overlooked this small circumstance.

This explanation assumes a great deal of carelessness in all the parties concerned; in the careless friends who forgot their protege's name; in the Bishop for supposing that a bond for the case of one Ann Hathaway would indemnify him for licensing the irregular marriage of Anne Whately; and again in the Bishop to issue the license before the execution of the bond.

These explanations, therefore, do not satisfy.

Richard Hathaway, supposed to be the father of Ann, was a farmer of Shottery, who died a few months before this date, leaving three daughters, none of them

named Ann, but of whom Agnes, supposed to be a name interchangeable with Ann, was the eldest. He left her in his Will, executed in September 1581, the sum of £6-13-4, to be paid her on the day of her marriage. So that she was not married at the time of the making of the Will.

Third. If Shakspere married the Shottery woman, the existing records of Stratford church ought to testify to the fact. As to the Temple Grafton church, its records do not exist, thus leaving open the question as to the marriage having taken place there. And unfortunately, while the Stratford records preserve the dates of Will Shakspere's baptism, and of all the family baptisms; their marriages and burials; they make no mention of his own marriage; he was not married there, nor, we may conclude, to the Hathaway woman at any time or at any place.

Fourth. After Shakspere's death, his widow, whose share in his life appears to have been inconsiderable, remarried, taking one

Richard James as husband, and dying August 6, 1623.

Now in 1616, the year of Shakspere's death, Ann Hathaway was sixty-one years old, and unless in extreme haste to divest herself of the illustrious name, must have been at least sixty-two years old at the time of her remarriage. Before the day of the modern woman, this was a good old age, and it will be conceded that this second or third marriage would be more likely to occur with a younger woman, such as Anne Whately may have been.

The Hathaways abounded plenteously in Stratford. An Anne Hathaway of Shottery married William Wilson on January 17, 1579, but this, of course, was not our Ann.

Lady Barnard, Will Shakspere's grand daughter, dying in 1670, left money to the five daughters of her "kinsman" Thomas Hathaway, late of Stratford. But it seems that this Thomas Hathaway was a relative of her first husband, Thomas Nash, who died in 1647, leaving money to Elizabeth, Thomas

and Judith Hathaway. Thomas Nash was himself a Stratfordian, born June 20, 1593.

Thus there is no evidence of the Hathaway marriage, and there are even plausible grounds for the belief that, after all, Shakspere married Anne Whately de Temple Grafton.

1587 In April, 1587, Edmund Lambert of Barton on Heath, John Shakspere's brother-in-law, and holder of the Asbies mortgage, died. In 1589 John Shakspere began suit against his nephew, John Lambert, alleging that in the autumn of 1587 it had been agreed between the Shaksperes, including William, and John Lambert, that the former were to deliver title to Asbies in consideration of twenty pounds to be paid by Lambert; that they were willing to perform their share of the agreement, but that Lambert would not pay the twenty pounds. Lambert denied that there had been any such agreement, and there the matter rested.

Ten years later, John Shakspere brought another action against Lambert, on a new

and different basis. This time he declared that he had tendered the amount of the mortgage to Edmund Lambert in 1580, when it became due, and that Lambert had refused to accept it.

This very improbable statement was also denied by Lambert, and as before, the proceedings were dropped. It is therefore likely that both of Shakspere's contentions were untrue.

Will Shakspere may have gone to London as early as 1585, or as late as 1587. If he was in Stratford in 1587 at the time of the alleged Asbies agreement, the latter supposition is reasonable. Stratford was visited by several theatrical companies during the summer of that year, Leicester's among the number, and he may have returned to London with them in the autumn. It is as reasonable a theory as any, but we do not know.

Nor do we know how the next few years were spent, and his biographers conjecture that he must have been doing this thing or that; traveling in Italy; or soldiering in

Flanders; or clerking in a lawyer's office; anything to fit him for play writing. One author is positive that he pursued the trade of stealing purses during those unrecorded years. This author, it is needless to say, is not a Stratfordian.

It must be remembered that a number of the Shakespeare plays were written before the end of 1592. There is some difference of opinion as to the exact number, but the following list is generally agreed upon:

Titus Andronicus	1584-90
Love's Labors Lost	1585-91
Comedy of Errors	1587-91
Taming of the Shrew	1589
1 Henry VI	1589-91
2 and 3 Henry VI	1591-2
Two Gentlemen of Verona	1590-2

To this list some add *Pericles* as of 1588, but it is more generally assigned to a later date.

Here we have seven dramas done by the time our raw country boy had been in London some five years. *Hamlet,* in an early form,

was known in 1586. Prof. Dowden calls *Titus Andronicus* and *1 Henry VI* pre-Shakespearean, and Dr. Furnivall assigns 1590 as the date of *Midsummer Night's Dream,* and 1591 for *Romeo and Juliet* and for *King John.*

Venus and Adonis must have been in process of labor in 1592, since it was published in 1593.

Is it reasonable to credit Will Shakspere with the authorship of these plays? To do so is to stultify our judgment, and to no purpose, as it will be the object of this essay to maintain.

The London stage at the time of which we are writing was but an humble affair. The most popular feature of the shows was the buffoonery of the clowns, which was more or less extemporaneous. The audiences were made up of the most disreputable and unruly elements of a rude civilization, with a sprinkling of fashionable young men in the boxes or on the stage. The actors were very plain people; grocers, butchers, carpenters,

and the like. Legally they were vagabonds, and the puritanically minded Londoners objected to their presence in their midst. The first public theatres, the "Theatre" and the "Curtain," which had been erected about 1576 by James Burbage and by Philip Henslowe, respectively, were ultimately driven across the river to Southwark. Later each of these managers controlled several theatres. Henslowe, a very ignorant man, who had originally been his wife's servant, confined himself to the letting of his houses for a share in the receipts; but the Burbages managed their playhouses and acted in them.

The fondness of Queen Elizabeth and of her nobility for the drama promoted the development of the stage. Companies of players were maintained under their protection. Thus there were the Queensmen; and companies were named after Lords Nottingham, Sussex, Essex, Worcester, Leicester, Stafford and others. The players gave performances at Court, or at the houses of their patrons,

when called upon; at other times they might give public performances.

One of the companies thus maintained and protected was named for Lord Strange. When Leicester died in 1588 it received many of the players of his company. Lord Strange became the Earl of Derby in 1593, and died in 1594. Soon after, the company became the Lord Chamberlain's; and after the accession of James I, the Kingsmen.

This was the company to which Shakspere belonged.

1592 The first allusion to Shakspere of which we have any knowledge after his departure from Stratford occurs in 1592. On March 3 of that year, *Henry VI* was produced by Lord Strange's company at Henslowe's Rose theatre, and met with great success. It was said that 10,000 persons witnessed it during its run. It is assumed that it was the Shakespeare play, that Shakspere belonged to Lord Strange's company, and that he acted in this play; all of which is probably correct.

Then one Robert Greene, a clever but dissolute author, writing in June or July 1592, made a violent attack upon Shakspere in a pamphlet which was published in August 1592, Greene having meanwhile died, by his literary executor, Henry Chettle.

The pamphlet, entitled "A Groatsworth of Wit, &c," was addressed to three of Greene's acquaintances, playwrights, one of whom he styles a "gracer of tragedies," the second a "young Juvenal," and the third as being "in some things rarer, in nothing inferior, driven as myself to extreme shifts."

He warns the three authors against play-actors; "those puppets that speak from our mouths, those antics garnished in our colors," who have forsaken him to whom they are so much beholden;

> "Yes, trust them not, for there is an upstart crow beautified with our feathers, that with his tygers heart wrapt in a players hide supposes he is as well able to bumbast out a blank verse as the best of us, and being an

absolute Johannes factotum, is in his own conceit the only Shake scene in the countrie."

It is a pity, he says, that such rare wits should be subject to the pleasures of such rude groomes; others, he says, have written against these buckram gentlemen; let their own works bear witness against them, if they continue to maintain any more such peasants. Here he probably referred to Nash, who, in prefacing the Menaphon of Greene in 1589, wrote scornfully of the author of Hamlet.

Thus Greene, who died in the direst poverty, charged actors in general with ingratitude: "I, to whom they al have beene beholding, is it not like that you * * * shall be bothe at once of them forsaken." And in particular, he charged the actor Shakspere with being an upstart with a tiger's heart, an expression travestied from *Henry VI;* and, while making his profit out of Greene's verses, with conceiting that he could make as good himself.

It is a fact that the emoluments of the

actors were much greater than those of the playwrights. The former received one-half of the receipts of the performances, but Henslowe's memoranda show that the highest price he paid for a play was eleven pounds; which sum was to be divided among the authors, five or six of whom were sometimes employed in the composition of a play.

A sequel to Greene's pamphlet was the publication, in December, 1592, of a pamphlet by Chettle; the "Kind Hearts Dream," in which it was said that two of the three writers to whom the "Groatsworth" was addressed had taken offense at it. One of the two, Chettle said, he did not know, nor care to; but the other he held in esteem, both as a man and as an author, and he was as sorry to have given offense as if he had written the passage himself.

This expression is usually explained to be an apology to Shakspere, which is a most inexcusable perversion of its meaning. The apology is plainly made to one of Greene's three friends, and the occasion for it was

that the playwrights, who were sometimes "driven to extreme shifts," did not all care to endorse Greene's diatribes against the actors and managers upon whom they depended for their livelihood.

It may fairly be inferred that Greene's shaft was in fact directed against Shakspere, and that it had to do with some trouble about *Henry VI.* The passage parodied by Greene occurs in *3 Henry VI. I. 4.* Since this play is now attributed to the joint labors of Marlowe, Greene, Peele and Kyd, it is reasonable to conjecture that Greene, being one of the poorly paid playwrights, cherished in his dying moments a grudge against Shakspere as an ungrateful upstart who had dared to alter some of Greene's verses.

We shall see that this first contemporary mention of Shakspere is in accord with other contemporary allusions. We learn from it that he had become an actor, and that he meddled with other men's plays to his own profit instead of theirs.

It is also the first appearance, in the form of a punning variant of the name, of the new form Shake—, which, being adopted in the following year, by the author of *Venus and Adonis,* eventually replaced the original Shak—of the actor's name, and thereby led to much trouble and confusion.

1593 In 1593 *Venus and Adonis,* the "first heir to my invention," was published, and was followed in 1594 by the "*Rape of Lucrece.*" These poems, very successful at the time, but which do not afford much pleasure to modern readers, are dedicated by "William Shakespeare" to Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton. The classical and artificial style of the poems is not Shakespearean, and it requires a robust faith to believe the crude actor capable of their production. In fact, the name attached to the dedications is not his; but only nearly his.

The adulatory tone of the dedications is wholly Baconian, and Baconians find proof of Bacon's authorship in the dedication of

Lucrece, when taken in connection with the first and last lines of the poem.

These may as well be given, in illustration of Baconian methods; the dedication begins as follows:

> "The love I dedicate to your lordship is without end; whereof this pamphlet, without beginning, is but a superfluous moiety."

The passage appears meaningless; the writer may have felt love for his lordship, as he says, and the pamphlet might have expressed a moiety of that love, although it expressed rather an insane passion; but why, even in that day of fantastic speech, should the author describe it as 'without beginning,' unless in order to make an antithesis, and run in the words, 'without end'?

The expression is without meaning at all events, however it may be placed in respect to beginning or end.

Therefore, the Baconians conclude that there is a hidden meaning, and look at the

beginning and at the end of *Lucrece,* and this is what they find, as printed in the original editions:

"FROM the besieged Ardea all in post,
Borne by the trustlesse wings of false desire."

And the concluding lines are:

"The Romaines plausibly did give *con*sent
To TARQUIN'S everlasting *ba*nishment."
*F*inis.

From the initial lines we derive 'Fr B,' and from the last lines, we have 'F bacon.'

In September, 1594, a poem, entitled 'Willobie and his Avisa,' was entered in the Stationer's Register. The authorship is attributed to Matthew Roydon, a minor poet and a friend of George Chapman. Shakespeare is mentioned by name in some introductory verses:

"Though Collatine have dearly bought
To high renowne, a lasting life,
And found that most in vaine have sought

To have a faire and constant wife;
Yet Tarquine pluckt his glistering grape
And Shake-speare paints poore Lucrece rape."

This is a type of many allusions to Shakespeare, which refer to the book and not to the actor, who never spelled his name as Shake-speare.

The first official mention of Shakspere as an actor is in the list of some of the Lord Chamberlain's men, who gave two comedies at Greenwich Palace, at Christmas, 1594. The entry states that William Kempe, William Shakspere and Richard Burbage were paid twenty pounds for their performances at that time.

Although the company of which Shakspere was a member included Burbage, and usually played at Burbage's houses, it sometimes had relations with the rival manager, Philip Henslowe.

The following quaint entry in the so-

called 'Diary' of Henslowe, records the earliest known instance of this:

> "In the name of God, amen, 1591, being the 19th feb, my Lord Strange's men as followeth."

The names of two of Greene's plays follow: *'Friar Bacon'* and *'Orlando';* and on the 3d of March, *Henry VI.* Later in the year *'Lear'* was played.

From June 3, 1594, until November 15, 1596, the Lord Chamberlain's men played at one of Henslowe's theatres, producing during the whole period an average of a new or different play every eighteen days.

A number of the plays then given have identical or similar titles with Shakespeare plays. In addition to the two already mentioned, we find *Titus Andronicus, Hamlet, Taming of a Shrew; Palamon and Arcite,* which is the same in plot with the *Two Noble Kinsmen,* which in turn, is included in one of the Shakespeare folios; and *Henry V.*

Henslowe paid for several of these plays

with the Shakespearean titles, and for plays on Shakespearean subjects: *Troilus and Cressida; Sir John Ould casstel,* which was attributed to Shakespeare in a quarto edition of 1600; The Life of Cardinal Wolsey, a predecessor of *Henry VIII; Caesar's Fall* and *Richard Crookbacke,* a play on the subject of Richard III.

Notwithstanding these various transactions, Henslowe, although he records payments made for the writing of plays to Wilson, Drayton, Dekker, Chettle, Monday, Hathway, Webster, Middleton and Ben Jonson, records no payments made to Shakspere, nor does he mention his name in any way whatever.

1596 In this year Shakspere's son Hamnet died, and was buried on August 11.

1597 In 1597 Shakspere paid sixty pounds for New Place, in Stratford.

1598 Corn being scarce in Stratford, an inventory of the supply on hand was

taken, and William Shakspere of Stratford on Avon, gentleman, was listed as owning ten quarters.

Jonson's 'Every Man in His Humor' was produced in 1598, with Shakspere in the cast. It was not a new play.

On October 25, 1598, one Richard Quiney, a fellow-townsman, wrote to Shakspere asking for a loan of thirty pounds. This is the only letter extant addressed to Shakspere, but three other letters of the same year survive in which he is mentioned. They all relate to the borrowing of money from him.

1599 In 1599 Shakspere assumed a coat of arms, after attempting to have his right to do so recognised upon untruthful statements as to his ancestry.

The design was a falcon holding a spear upright. The motto was 'Non Sanz Droict,' rather an audacious statement, under the circumstances.

Jonson immediately, 1599, inserted a

satirical allusion to this affair in his 'Every Man out of his Humor.' He represented him as a clown who has purchased a coat of arms:

"Carlo. A Swine without a head, without braine, wit, anything indeed, Ramping to Gentilitie. You can blazon the rest signior, can you not?

Puntarvolo. Let the word be, 'Not without mustard &c'

The wit may not be Attic, but its meaning is sufficiently plain; the magnificent Shakespeare, the friend of Earls and the lover of Court ladies, is publicly ridiculed as a clown, by his personal acquaintance.

In this same year 1599, the Burbages built the Globe theatre, and, according to a declaration made by them in 1635, "to ourselves we joined those deserving men, Shakspere, Hemings, Condall, Phillips and others, partners in the profits of the house," these profits being, as is elsewhere stated,

one half of the receipts, and the outer doors".

The statement continues, referring to the Blackfriars theatre, that when they took over the lease, which was in Aug. 1608, they placed in it "men players, which were Hemings, Condall, Shakspere &c." So that long after Shakspere's death, and long after the publication of the 1623 folio, with its flamboyant eulogies, Will Shakspere remained merely a "deserving man" to the Burbages.

The ownership of the Globe theatre was in sixteen shares, of which the Burbages held eight, Condall four, and Hemings four shares. The shareholders were known as the 'housekeepers,' and they had one half of the receipts, except the 'outer doors,' and they paid the rent and certain other expenses.

1600 In the course of the year 1600 Shakspere sued one John Clayton, of London, for seven pounds, and got judgment in his favor. He also sued Philip Rogers, of Stratford, for two shillings. No sum was too insignificant to be neglected by this careful man of business.

1601 On February 2 1601 Southampton ordered and paid for a performance of *Richard II* at the Globe theatre. The Queen was greatly offended with the performance, which she regarded as treasonable. The Essex rebellion broke out on February 8, the play, relating the deposition of the King, being supposedly one of the means adopted to excite and prepare the minds of the populace for the event.

Nevertheless Shakspere played with the company before the Queen at Richmond on February 24, the night before Essex's execution. It is evident that if Shakspere had been regarded as the author of the seditious play, *Richard II,* he would have been the angry Queen's prisoner, instead of being called upon to amuse her by his gambols at this moment.

Again, on March 13 1601, John Manningham, a barrister of the Middle Temple, recorded in his diary a story of Shakspere the actor, which was going the rounds at the time. It was to the effect that Shakspere,

overhearing an arrangement for a meeting between Richard Burbage, then playing Richard III, and his mistress, forestalled his friend with the woman. When Burbage arrived and sent in his name, Shakspere caused answer to be made that "William the Conqueror came before Richard III." Manningham concluded the entry with the remark; "Shakspere's name William."

By 1601 at least twenty of the plays now known as Shakespeare's had been produced. How then are we to account for the fact that an educated man thought it necessary to explain a joke by noting that 'Shakspere's name was William?' Clearly he did not associate the writer and the actor in his mind.

On September 8, 1601, Shakspere's father was buried.

The pursuit of gentility by Will Shakspere has already been noted. About this time his fellow actors, Phillips, Pope and Cowley, with a number of others, over twenty in all, were charged with having obtained grants of arms under false pretenses.

The practise was becoming a scandal against which the satirists launched their bolts of ridicule.

In the "Return from Parnassus," a student sketch, acted in Cambridge in 1601-2, but not printed until 1606, one Studioso is made to say:

"But ist not strange this mimick apes should prize
Unhappy schollers at a hireling rate,
Vile world; that lifts them up to hye degree
And treads us down in groveling miserie,
. . . . . .
With mouthing words that better wits have framed
They purchase lands, and now Esquiers are made.

Of similar tenor are certain passages in "Ratsei's Ghost," which was published in 1605;

Ratsei, a robber, advises a strolling actor to go to London, and learn to feed upon all

men, to make his hand a stranger to his pocket, his heart slow to perform his tongue's promise, and when his purse is well lined, to buy a place of Lordship in the country, that growing weary of playing, his money may bring him to dignity and reputation. Then he need care for no one, nor for them that before made him proud with speaking their words upon the stage. "I have heard," he concludes, "of some that have gone to London very meanly, and have come in time to be extremely wealthy."

In the two above quoted passages, reference is assumed by the biographers to be made to Shakspere, and it may well be so, for they accord with other contemporary allusions. And if so, it will be noticed that Shakspere is credited only with speaking other men's words.

Another passage in the Return from Parnassus contains a reference to Shakspere by name; Burbage and Kempe, two members of the Globe company, are speaking, and the clown Kemp says;

> "Few of the University pens play well. They smell too much of that writer Ovid, and that writer Metamorphosis, and talk too much of Proserpina and Juppiter. Why, here's our fellow Shakespeare puts them all down, I, and Ben Jonson, too. Oh that Ben Jonson is a pestilent fellow; he brought up Horace giving the poets a pill, but our fellow Shakespeare hath given him a purge that made him bewray his credit."

Here reference is made to a literary row which was amusing London in 1601, in which Jonson had come off second best. He had attacked Marston and Dekker in the 'Poetaster,' and Dekker had made vigorous response in "Satiromastix."

Shakspere was not concerned in the affair, and never gave Jonson a purge to bewray his credit. But the College wits who were the authors of the Return from Parnassus, saw their opportunity to poke fun at Kempe, who was the buffoon of Burbage's

Company, by representing him as supposing that Metamorphosis was the name of an author, and to raise a laugh at his simple boasting that his 'fellow Shakspere' had put Jonson down. The one absurdity would be as evident as the other to the educated audience who would witness a College play.

"Silly old stuff" Andrew Lang calls it, truly enough. But that we have to bother with it is the fault of the biographers, who endeavor to turn every bit of nonsense to Shakspere's credit.

1602 On May 1 1602, Shakspere bought 107 acres from William Combe, to enlarge New Place at Stratford. The price was 320 pounds.

In this same year 1602, the Town Council of Stratford, unmoved by the great reputation, which Shakespearians assume was his, of Will Shakspere, prohibited the use of the Guild Hall for dramatic purposes. It was the only suitable place for stage performances in Stratford. In 1612 the prohibition was renewed.

In 1602 William Kemp left the Lord Chamberlain's company to join that of Edward Alleyn, Henslowe's son in law.

Kemp was a well known person on the stage, his specialties being clowning and jig dancing. He had traveled with a company which played in Denmark, in France, and in Italy.

His best known feat was a morris dance over the distance of 114 miles between London and Norwich. He performed this feat in 1600, in nine days of dancing, accompanied by one Thomas Slye, who played the tabor to his partner's steps.

Kemp recorded the event in a pamphlet called "A Nine Daies Wonder," of which only a single copy is known to exist. It was dedicated to Mistres Anne Fitton, supposed to be intended for Mistress Mary Fitton, one of the maids of honor to the Virgin Queen.

From this ignorant familiarity, some writers argue that actors, clowns and the like, may have been on intimate terms with personages of the Court, and Shakspere among

the number. But the error in the dedication does not allow us to infer any intimacy with the lady addressed; and it is to be remembered that the days when jesters and buffoons had the privilege of amusing their masters, had not yet passed.

1603 Queen Elizabeth died on March 4 of this year. It was a year of the plague. On May 7 James I issued a patent, licensing the King's players. In the list of eleven players, Shakspere's name occurs second.

In a letter dated October 20 1603, Mrs. Alleyn recorded a visit she had received from Mr. Shakspere of the Globe, in reference to an attempt of one Francis Challoner to borrow money from her. Shakspere told her that Challoner was a rogue, and she wrote that she was glad that she had not lent him anything. It is strange that every reference to Shakspere should be coupled with some mention of money, and none with mention of his wonderful dramas.

1604 In May 1604 Shakspere sued Philip Rogers for the sum of 1 pd, 15 sh,

10 d, the value of some malt he had sold to Rogers. Once before he sued him for two shillings. Unfortunate Rogers.

On March 15, 1604, Shakspere walked in procession, with eight other actors, on the occasion of James's entry into London. Four and a half yards of red cloth apiece was the reward for this service.

Certain answers made to interrogatories in a petty suit of 1612, reveal the fact that about this time, 1604, Shakspere occasionally "lay" in the house of a wigmaker named Mountjoy, in Silver Street, a little to the north of Cheapside. It is fairly well established that prior to 1594, Shakspere lived in St. Helen's parish, Bishopsgate, and that by 1596 he had removed to Southwark.

1605 In 1605, the year of the Gunpowder Plot, Shakspere paid 440 pounds for an unexpired lease of tithes in Stratford. This purchase conferred the right of sepulture within the chancel of the church, and to it we probably owe the preservation of the Shakespeare monument.

On May 4 1605 Augustine Phillips, one of the company, died, and left "to my fellow William Shakspeare, a thirty shilling piece of gold."

1607 In this year Will Shakspere's daughter Susanna married Dr. John Hall of Stratford. This was June 5, when he was 32 years old, and she 25. He held several offices; was twice a burgess; a church warden and a vicar's warden. In Oct. 1633 he was expelled from the town council for "breach of orders, sundry other misdemeanors and for his continual disturbances at our Halles." He died in 1635 and a flat stone in the chancel of Stratford church bears his name. Beside him is his wife's stone, and on the other side of Shakspere's grave is that of Ann Shakspere, who married Richard James.

1608 In 1608 Shakspere prosecuted John Addenbroke for a debt of six pounds, and, Addenbroke having judiciously absconded, Shakspere, to the great sorrow of his biographers, was so unmerciful as to put

Addenbroke's security, Thomas Hornby, in jail. On September 9 1608 Shakspere's mother, Mary Arden, was buried.

On October 16 1608 he stood godfather at Stratford, to Henry Walker's son.

1609 In Aug. 1608, as already noted, the Burbages put him, with his other "men players," at the Blackfriars theatre. Great dramatist and intimate of Earls, as the biographers would have us believe him, he was still subject to the orders of the sons of the carpenter actor, Burbage, and of Hemings and Condell.

1610 The *Sonnets* were published in 1609, and in 1610 *Macbeth* appeared in print. It was the last of the plays known as Shake-speare's to be published during the lifetime of the actor.

Still we find no mention of him in the social annals of the day. One mention of him we do find at this time; in the Scourge of Folly, published in 1610 by John Davies of Hereford. Davies was himself an actor. The reference is as follows;

To our English Terence—Mr. Will Shake-speare.

Some say, good Will, which I, in sport do sing,
Hadst thou not plaid some Kingly parts in sport,
Thou hadst bin a companion for a King,
And been a King among the meaner sort.
Some others raile; but raile as they think fit,
Thou hast no rayling, but a reigning wit,
And honesty thou sowest, which they do reap,
So to increase their stocke which they do keepe.

Davies calls Will a comic writer, or Terence, at whom some railed; and for the rest, a good boon companion among the meaner sort, with a lively wit; and as an actor in Kingly parts.

In 1610 Shakspere bought 20 acres of land in Stratford from the Combes.

1612 In this year an incident occurred which has been curiously misinterpreted by the biographers. It followed upon the publication of the *Passionate Pilgrim.*

In 1598 Wm. Jaggard published two sonnets by Richard Barnfield. In 1599 he issued the "Passionate Pilgrim, by Wm. Shakespeare;" a volume containing about twenty sonnets. Only five of the verses, namely, Sonnets 138 and 144, with three songs from Loves Labors Lost, are Shakespeare's; the rest of the verses are by Marlowe, Barnfield, Griffin, Roydon and others.

No complaint of this publication is recorded; but when Jaggard issued a third edition in 1612, this time adding two poems by Thomas Heywood, still retaining Shakespeare's name on the title page, Heywood promptly protested. He wrote;

> "Here likewise I must necessarily insert a manifest injury done to me in that worke, by taking the two epistles of Paris to Helen and Helen to Paris, and printing them in a lesser volume under the name of another, which may put the world in opinion I might steale them from him, and he, to do himself right, hath since

> published them in his owne name, but as I must acknowledge my lines not worthy his patronage under whom he hath published them, so the author I know much offended with M. Jaggard that (altogether unknown to him) presumed to make so bold with his name."

The above protest was published by Heywood in "An Apology for Actors," and is interpreted by Shakespearians to mean that Shakspere was offended at the liberty taken with his name by Jaggard, and as a proof that Heywood was acquainted with Shakespeare.

If Will Shakspere was offended by this particular unauthorized use of his name, and said so; this is the one and only occasion upon which he ever lifted up his voice against literary piracy. Indeed he should have been the last man to protest, he who is charged by his contemporaries with the appropriation of other men's works.

In addition to specific accusations

brought against him by Greene and Jonson, Chapman is supposed to refer to him in the preface to the Iliad published in 1611, when he writes of some one whom he calls a "windsucker" and a "kestrel," names for a species of small hawk; of whom he says that "whatsoever he takes from others he adds to himself; one that in this kind of robbing doth like Mercury, but stole good and supplied it with counterfeit bad."

But, as a matter of fact, Heywood, in making the protest, was speaking for himself alone. Translated into modern English, his complaint would read somewhat as follows;

I protest against the injury *done to ME* by the printing of my two poems under Shakespeare's name, since it looks as if I had stolen them from him, and he had been obliged to set himself right by now publishing them himself. I know that my verses are unworthy of the honor of being attributed to the writer of Venus, Lucrece and the Sonnets, but still, as the author of them, I am

much offended with the liberty which has been taken with my name.

Apart from the fact that the above is the plain meaning of the passage, it is what we should expect. Heywood was the injured party; the credit had been taken from him and given to another, while Shakspere was not cast in the mould which constrains a man to disclaim unearned credit. Between 1595 and 1613, at least nine plays were published with either "W. S." or "William Shakespeare" on the title page, without protest from the actor, or indeed from any one else, although no one of the nine is now attributed to Shakespeare.

Shakspere never laid claim to any literary production. Since the publication of the poems, the name "Shake-speare" evidently had a commercial value, and the fact that the litigious, grasping man who was always suing someone for small sums of money, took no thought for the protection of what ought to have been a valuable asset, makes

it quite evident that the plays were not his property.

1613 On March 10 1613 Shakspere bought a house in Blackfriars, 200 yards east of the theatre, for 141 pounds, and on the day following, placed a mortgage on it. He bought from Henry Walker, whose son was his god son.

During the same month he was paid 44 shillings for painting a device, or for doing some work in connection with it, at Belvoir Castle for the Duke of Rutland. His fellow player Burbage was paid a like amount.

Jonson and Drayton are known to have been guests at Belvoir, but Shakspere seems to have been there as a workman only.

Beaumont, Fletcher and Jonson are mentioned as having been at the Mermaid, the club which was founded by Sir Walter Raleigh, but there is no mention of Shakspere there.

On June 29 1613, during a performance of *Henry VIII*, the Globe theatre caught fire

and was burned down, but the plays and costumes in stock there were saved.

By this time Shakspere appears to have retired from the stage, and we may consider what is known as to his place as an actor. There is a silly tradition that his best part was that of the Ghost in Hamlet, which we may at once discard, knowing otherwise.

Davies has told us that Shakspere played in Kingly parts, and we may infer from the position of his name near the head of the list of players, both in the King's patent, and in Burbage's declaration of 1635, that Shakspere was a prominent member of the company. As early as 1594 he was one of the three actors who were paid twenty pounds for playing in two comedies at Greenwich before the Court.

Yet little is known as to the actual parts in which he played. We know of only two parts in which we may be certain that he appeared.

The first is the part of "Kno'well," the

leading character in Jonson's "Every Man in his Humor," which he played in 1598.

The second is the part of Caesar. Jonson said of him, in his *Discoveries*, published in 1641, "Many times he fell into those things could not escape laughter, as when he said, in the person of Caesar, one speaking to him; 'Caesar, thou dost me wrong.' he replyd, 'Caesar never did wrong but with just cause,' and such like, which were ridiculous."

This refers to the scene in *Julius Caesar*, Act III, 1. Caesar says;

"Know Caesar doth not wrong—
nor without cause will be satisfied."

During all these years the company was in constant service; in the winter playing in London, unless prevented by outbreaks of the plague; in the summer touring the provinces. These tours took the company, and Will Shakspere with it, far and wide; we read of it in the Channel towns; at Aberdeen in the north, and at Bideford in the west; and in many other places between these extreme points.

1614 By 1614 Shakspere was permanently established at Stratford, where the Combes, with whom he had several business transactions, appear to have been his chosen companions. John Combe, tax gatherer and money lender, died during the year, bequeathing him the sum of five pounds.

We find mention of a Stephen Sly, as a servant of William Combe, and in 1616, of a Christopher Sly of Stratford.

In December 1614 Shakspere went to London upon business, in reference to an attempt of William Combe to annex a piece of common land in Stratford. Shakspere, who had an interest in the matter, owing to his lease of tithes, having first secured himself against loss, took sides with Combe against the corporation, but the scheme failed.

1616 On February 10 1616, Shakspere's daughter Judith married Thomas Quiney, a tavern keeper. It is not on record that any of Shakspere's friends of high degree from London were present on the occasion. Quiney did not turn out well. He was

addicted to adulterating his liquors and was eventually forced to leave the town.

On April 17, William Hart, Shakspere's brother in law, was buried, and on the 23d of the same month, William Shakspere died after an illness of a month.

Shakspere's Will was drawn up in January 1616, and corrected in March, when he was taken ill. He left his daughter Judith 300 pounds; his sister Joan 20 pounds and the house she lived in; to her three sons five pounds each; to his grand daughter Elizabeth Hall, whom he calls his "neece," his plate; and the following small bequests: to the poor of Stratford 10 pds, to Thomas Combe his sword, to Thomas Russel 5 pds, to Francis Collins of Warwick, the lawyer who attended to his affairs, 13 pds 6 sh 8 d, to his godson 20 shillings in gold, to Hamlett Sadler, William Raynoldes, Anthony Nash and to John Nash, 26 sh 8 d each; to "my fellows" John Hemynges, Richard Burbage and Henry Cundell, 26 sh 8 d each for rings.

To his wife, interlined as an after

thought, which no one omits to notice, he willed his second best bed with the furniture. This throws light on his relations with his wife. Possibly he foresaw her intention to become Mrs. Richard James.

All the rest of his property went to his daughter Susanna and her husband; to wit; his goodes, chattels, leases, plate, jewels, and household stuffe whatsoever.

In this Will therefore, there is no mention of books, manuscripts or copyhold rights in his works; nor, although he goes outside of his family in making bequests, does he mention any one beyond the circle of humble people with whom he associated in Stratford and in the theatre.

Perhaps this is the place to refer to a curious error regarding Burbage and Heming into which Charles Kingsley, and following his lead, Henry Pemberton Jr., have fallen.

In Jonson's Masque of Christmas, a small boy is billed to enact the part of Cupid. Before his appearance, his mother, a dodder-

ing old woman, engages an usher in conversation. She praises her boy; "she could have had money enough for him had she been tempted to have let him out for the week to the Kings Players . . Master Burbage has been about with her for him, and old Mr. Hemmings too."

Whereupon Kingsley goes off in one of his characteristic tirades to the effect that she had better have tied a stone about his neck and thrown him into the river than have handed him over to Burbage to make money out of the degradation of Christ's lamb &c, intimating that Burbage wanted the boy for immoral purposes.

Now at that date, women's parts were played by boys, and handsome boys were much sought after, and were more highly paid than the other actors. Of course the old woman was only trying to blow her son's trumpet as a desirable addition to the cast in the Masque, and the point comes out when, after a few words, the poor little fellow breaks down and is sent off the stage.

Three weeks before Shakspere's death, Francis Beaumont, dramatist, was buried in Westminster Abbey. Two years later, when Richard Burbage, Shakspere's fellow, died, many tributes were paid to him as a man and as an actor.

But Will Shakspere's death attracted no attention whatever.

His son in law, Dr. John Hall, made the following entry in his note book of cases;

> "My father in law died last Thursday."

That is all—a brief notice, but sufficient in his eyes.

And yet Shakespearians of today lay their hands upon their hearts, and say:

> "There is no mystery about Shakespeare; records amply establish the identity between the actor and the writer."

It was really Ben Jonson who wrote Will Shakspere's epitaph in the "Poet Ape," or Poet Actor, Ape being Elizabethan for actor, which appeared in 1616. It is as follows;

"Poor Poet Ape that would be thought our chief,
Whose works are but the frippery of wit,
From brokage is become so bold a thief
As we, the robbed, leave rage and pity it.
At first he made low shifts; would pick and glean,
Buy the reversion of old plays; now grown
To a little wealth and credit in the scene
He takes up all; makes each man's wit his own,
And told of this, he slights it. Tut, such crumes
The sluggish gaping auditor devours.
He marks not whose twas first, and after times
May judge it to be his as well as ours.
Fool, as if half eyes will not know a fleece
From locks of wool; or shreds from the whole piece."

Will Shakspere was undoubtedly referred to in these lines, which give truly enough, the measure of his performance, and whose prophecy has been amply fulfilled.

The monument in the church in Stratford was erected by the family, probably very much as we see it today. The restorations made in 1746 were very trifling, and Dugdale's illustrations in his "Antiquities of Warwickshire," of which Baconians make much, have been shown by Mr. Lang to be inaccurate. Dugdale, by the way, gives us no information about the player.

Will Shakspere was a successful man in his way, which was not an extraordinary way. He went to London at a happy moment in the calling he had chosen. He was able to add to the already considerable emoluments of an actor by some sort of popularizing work on old plays which aroused anger and jealousy in some professional playwrights.

So far from being an ignorant, drunken boor was he, that by industry and shrewdness he made himself a place upon the stage,

and a fortune; he looked after his family and restored them to comfort.

But was he the inspired writer the world at large believes him to have been? Do we find it true that his life was one of "constant and extraordinary intellectual growth" as the authors of "The Facts about Shakespeare" phrase it? I cannot bring myself to believe it. To the very end he remained the shrewd, money getting, money lending, litigious man of small affairs. He left no books nor papers, nor anything suggestive of a literary life. He is assumed to have been a man of wide culture; his plays are generally taken from foreign, and sometimes from somewhat inaccessible sources, and yet his equipment was of the most poverty stricken character in all the essentials of a literary life. Every carpenter needs his tools, and Will Shakspere had none.

Baconians hold that Shakspere deserted his family, and neglected to provide for them even after he became able to do so. They support this theory by the case of one

Thomas Whittington, who as they say, dying in 1601, instructed his executor to recover a debt of 40 shillings from Mrs. Shakspere.

What Whittington actually did was to bequeath to the poor of Stratford, 40 shillings "which is in the hand of Anne Shaxpere wyfe unto Mr. Wyllyam Shaxspere and is debt due me, being paid to mine executor by the said Wyllyam Shaxspere or his assigns &c."

The inference from this is that Mrs. Shakspere was holding Whittington's savings for him, in default of savings banks.

In this year of 1601 Shakspere was in prosperous circumstances. Four years earlier he had bought New Place, a pretentious property, and had probably installed his family there. Although the greatest literary Englishman—if we choose to think him such—did so far neglect his children that they never learned to read or write, we have no reason to believe that he neglected their material wants.

There is no evidence that Will Shak-

spere ever knew socially any one outside of the narrow circle of his fellow play actors and fellow townsmen. He was not even distinguished in his own town; he never held any public office there, and was neither missed nor regretted. When, later in the century, visitors came to Stratford; as the vicar John Ward in 1661, John Aubray in 1669, and John Dowdall in 1693, nothing was remembered of Will Shakspere but a few unimportant trifles—he had wit but not art; that he died after a carouse; that he was a butcher's boy, and that he wrote a lot of doggerel verses, including his own epitaph.

There is no mention made of him in any papers left by any of the distinguished personages who were, it is asserted, his friends and intimates.

And, finally, outside of the first folio of 1623, there was never any contemporary claim made that he, Will Shakspere, the actor, was the author of the works since known as "Shake-speare's."

CHAPTER III

VENUS, LUCRECE, AND THE SONNETS

A careful perusal of the foregoing chapter should satisfy the reader of weakness in Will Shakspere's title. Not only does the evidence fail to identify him with the man of culture and genius we are entitled to find as the author of the Shakespeare works, but it points plainly in an opposite direction, indicating that he held, and deserved, only a lowly place among his contemporaries.

Leaving this then, let us inquire as to the evidence that the poems and plays were composed by him. And first as to the poems.

Venus and Adonis. This, the first to appear of the poems, and the first appearance in print of the name William Shakespeare, was published in 1593. It was prefaced by two lines in the original Latin from the *Amores* of Ovid, and by a Dedication to the Earl of Southampton.

The poem relates that on a summer's morn, Adonis was on his way to the hunt, when Venus waylaid him, and despite his indifference, held him during the day, while she made shameless love to him. At nightfall, he left her, very probably being in need of refreshment, and when on the following morning, she found him, he had met his death in the hunt. A flower sprang up from his blood, which she, lamenting, took with her to Paphos.

The tale is, of course, taken from the Metamorphoses, but is told at much greater length, and with the erotic side of the story developed ad nauseam. Where Ovid merely says;

"And she flung
Her limbs upon the grass, and pressed at once
Its verdure and her lover, and her wealth
Of glossy tresses pillowing on his breast
With frequent kisses broken told her tale." Kings transl.

the English writer devotes quite one fourth part of the poem to the presentation, in tedious iteration, of this phase of his theme. Now, this amorousness is not a feature of the Shakespeare plays. The authorship is fundamentally different.

The description of the horse appears to have been adapted from the poem on the Creation, by the Frenchman Du Bartas. Du Bartas described the horse which was tamed by Cain as follows;

"With round high hollow smooth brown jetty hoof,
With pasterns short upright, but yet in mean,
Dry sinewy shanks, strong fleshless knees and lean,
With hart like legs, broad breast and large behinde,
With body large, smooth flanks and double chined.
A crested neck, bowed like a half bent bow
Whereon a long thin curled mane doth flow,

A fine full tail, touching the lowly
ground

With dock between two fair fat buttocks drowned,
Pricked ear that rests as little space
As his light foot; a lean bare bonny face,
Thin jowle and head, but of a middling size
Full lively flaming, quickly rolling eyes,
Great foaming mouth, hot flaring nostril wide."

This, our English author, in haste to return to his puling Venus, condenses into four lines;

"Round hoof'd, short jointed, fetlocks shag and long
Broad breast, full eye, small head and nostril wide,
High crest, short ears, straight legs and passing strong
Thin mane, thick tail, broad buttock, tender hide;"

Ovid's Metamorphoses was translated by Golding into English and published in 1565. Du Bartas, who lived from 1544 to 1590, was translated into English by Sylvester in 1598.

Mr. Castle finds traces of a legal training in the author in lines 335-6;

> "But when the heart's attorney once is mute
> The client breaks, as desperate in his suit."

and in lines 511-21;

> "Pure lips, sweet seals in my soft lips imprinted,
> What bargains may I make, still to be sealing?
> To sell myself I can be well contented,
> So thou wilt buy, and pay, and use good dealing;
> Which purchase if thou make, for fear of slips,
> Set thy seal manual on my wax red lips.

A thousand kisses buys my heart from me;
And pay them at thy leisure, one by one.
What is ten hundred touches unto thee?
Are they not quickly told, and quickly gone?
Say, that for non payment that the debt should double,
Is twenty hundred kisses such a trouble?"

With less plausibility, Dr. Furnivall saw references to Startford experiences in such lines as;

"Rain added to a river that is rank
Perforce will force it to overflow the bank."

which he thought might picture the Avon; and in;

"Even as the wind is hushed before it raineth" and in;
"The owl, nights herald, shrieks—'tis very late" and;
"Like many clouds consulting for foul weather"

and in other similar instances. As if such experiences were to be found only at Stratford.

Now, as to the authorship; the poems and Sonnets are taken by Shakespearians to furnish contemporary proof that the actor Will Shakspere enjoyed the friendship of distinguished personages at Court, where he acquired the culture and knowledge of the great world which are displayed in the works. The argument is that the poems show culture, therefore the actor had culture. The connection is not quite clear, but it is the best to be had, since there is no other proof of the existence of either culture or of courtly friendships of Will Shakspere.

As to the plays, the lines of Jonson in the first folio constitute the only direct, contemporary testimony in our possession to the effect that the actor, Will Shakspere, was the admired author of the Shakespeare plays.

Steevens excluded the poems from his edition of Shakespeare's works in 1773, de-

claring that an Act of Parliament would not compel readers into their service.

The dedication of Venus and Adonis runs as follows;

To the
Right Honourable Henry Wriothesley
Earl of Southampton
and Baron of Titchfield.

Right Honourable

I know not how I shall offend in dedicating my unpolished lines to your lordship, nor how the world will censure me for choosing so strong a prop to support so weak a burden; only if your honour seems but pleased, I account myself highly praised, and vow to take advantage of all idle hours till I have honoured you with some greater labour. But if the first heir of my invention prove deformed, I shall be sorry it had so noble a godfather, and never after ear so barren a land, for fear it yield me still so bad a harvest. I leave it to your honourable survey, and your honour to your heart's content; which I wish may always answer your

own wish and the world's hopeful expectation.

Your Honours in all duty,
William Shakespeare.

The author says that if this, his first attempt, be successful, he will offer something more serious. Seven editions of *Venus,* and five of *Lucrece,* were issued by 1616, thus justifying the author's hopes.

It is to be remembered that the poems and Sonnets were not included in the first folio, so that the support of Jonson's identification does not extend to them.

The name "Shakespeare" to which we are here introduced for the first time, was not the actor's name. Although, as is well known, there was no standard of spelling in Shakspere's day, it is to be noted that in all the variants of the name prior to 1593, its first syllable is short; as Shag, Shack, Shak, or Shax. Its original meaning was a common spearman, the first syllable meaning rough, or rascal, and the last spear, or perhaps spur.

The conception of shaking a spear does not enter into the name.

The existing so called signatures, whether written by Shakspere himself or by a scrivener, are in the form Shaksper and Shaxper. It would seem that even Shakespearians should admit the form Shakespeare to be a pen name, devised, if not by the actor himself, then by another.

The poem is the work of a scholar, and it is our theory that Will Shakspere, at the time only a few years in London, was incapable of its authorship.

From our point of view therefore, it is permissible to conjecture that the rising of the name Shakespeare on the literary horizon at the time, was an independent happening, in some way coincident, and perhaps connected with Shakspere's London career; and to inquire who might have found it convenient to set a pen name to his work, as well as who would have been likely to choose such a name as Shakespeare, which added to a

classical composition the classical suggestion of Pallas Athene, the goddess.

It is extremely improbable, for instance, that any professed poet, desiring the advantage of a distinguished patronage to godfather his essay, would deliberately resign that advantage by concealing his identity under an assumed name. Rather would he have been particularly careful to place his own name to the dedication.

This consideration would seem to exclude the known poets from the number of possibilities. Mr. T. W. White ascribes the *Venus* to Marlowe on internal evidence. But why should not Marlowe have used his own name.

At the time the *Venus* appeared, Will Shakspere was in the service of Lord Strange, to whose company he belonged, and it would have been unsuitable for him to have addressed himself to another patron. Had he been capable of writing such verse, he would undoubtedly have addressed Lord Strange as his patron.

Thus the scope of our inquiry, after

eliminating, as we seem bound to do, the actor, and the known poets, is very considerably narrowed.

Raleigh or Sidney have been thought possibilities, but, admitting even that they might have wished to conceal their identity for the moment, can it be explained why either of them should address in so humble a style, a youngster of half their age, and no more than their equal in family or position. It must be confessed that, in this case at least, the trail leads rather plainly Baconwards.

Although the only verses positively known as Bacon's, that remain to us, are his metrical versions of seven of the Psalms, and less surely, a rendering of a Greek epigram, and a dozen other lines, all of them of inferior merit; yet it is known that by some he was accounted a poet.

In 1603 Bacon wrote to Sir John Davies, when James was on his way to England;

> "I commend myself to your love and the well using of my name . . so desiring you to be good to all concealed poets &c"

And in his Apology, published in 1604, Bacon says;

> "I had prepared a Sonnet tending to her Majesty's reconcilement to my Lord (Essex) which I remember I also showed to a great person, one of my Lord's nearest friends &c"

Also, John Davies of Hereford, in his Scourge of Folly, published in 1610, says that Bacon's wit compelled him to write;

> "And to thy health in Helicon to drinke
> As to her Ballamour the Muse is wont;
> For thou dost her embosom; and dost use
> Her company for sport twixt grave affairs."

In Stow's Annals, published in 1615, Bacon's name occurs as the seventh in a list of 27 Elizabethan poets. This was prior to his versification of the Psalms.

So that it is evident that we do not possess all of Bacon's poems as his acknowledged work.

In 1593 Bacon was a member of Parliament, taking a prominent part in political affairs, heavily in debt and a keen competitor for the important post of Attorney General. Essex, with whom he was intimate, was backing his application strongly. Southampton was one of Essex' intimates, and it is conceivable that under the circumstances Bacon might desire to compliment Southampton and gain his support, without making a public avowal of his authorship. The Queen already held his attainments rather lightly, esteeming them but superficial, and it might have gravely endangered his chance of obtaining this serious and weighty position were it generally known that he was flirting so amorously with the Muse.

As to the choice of Shakespeare as a pen name, we may observe first that something like it had been known before, since we learn from Disraeli's Curiosities of Literature that the names *Spavento,* horrid fright; and *Spizzafer,* shiver spear, were in use by the Italian pantomimists.

The attack made by Greene in 1592 upon the actor, as *Shake scene,* may have been a factor in the adoption, and adaptation of the name Shake speare, this as has been said, having been the first appearance of Shake, instead of Shak, in the actor's name.

However that may be, there is no doubt that Bacon was connected in some way with the device, for not only did La Jessée, secretary to the Duc d'Anjou, address a Sonnet to Bacon in 1595, in which he speaks of 'votre Pallas,' but Bacon himself, in the same year, connected the hyphenated name with Pallas, in his Essex device. Then we have Jonson in 1623 writing;

> "In each of which he seems to shake a lance
> As brandished at the eyes of ignorance."

Thus we have the name Shakespeare connected with Pallas, and Pallas connected with Bacon; and we find the idea very suitable to a man with Bacon's turn of mind; Shake-speare, the goddess of wisdom, fully

armed, shaking her spear; not the actor Will Shakspere's name, but sufficiently like it to serve for a cloak.

And so, it may be, the name Shake speare was born; and the success of the poem gave it popularity and commercial value.

The Rape of Lucrece. The *Lucrece* was published in 1594, and is undoubtedly by the same hand as the *Venus,* being just as classical and just as amorous.

Attention has already been called to the curious connection between the "without end" and "without beginning" of the dedication; and the finding of "Fr B" in the first words of the first two lines, and of "F Bacon" in the last words of the two concluding lines of the poem.

That a lawyer wrote the *Lucrece* seems quite clear, as Mr. Castle has pointed out. The author brings in expressions learned in the court house, in the most tragic moments of the story.

Thus Tarquin, debating whether or no he shall commit the crime, says;

> "Why hunt I then for color or excuse," color being a legal term for a shadow of a reason.

And Lucrece is as good a lawyer as he, when she inquires;

> "Under what color he commits this ill."

The deed being done, she finds time in her tempest of grief to think of a register's office to find a name for Night;

> "Dim register and notary of shame," and this leads her to think of another simile;
>
> "Sin ne'er gives a fee; He gratis comes;" and she goes on to describe Tarquin in terms which a lawyer might use in denouncing an opponent.

Of Collatine she says;

> "I will not poison thee with my attaint,"

She recalls the adventures of Helen and

Paris, the connection of which with her own case is obscure, and occasion is taken to bring in a description of a picture of Troy, with the Trojans watching the Greeks from the city walls, which fills seventy six lines of the poem.

The following lines, written by Bacon in 1624, are taken from his version of the 104th Psalm. At this period Bacon was sixty three years old, and a sick man. Even with these handicaps, and that of the difficulty of the subject, the lines are not inferior to many of those in the *Lucrece;*

"Father and King of Powers both high and low
Whose sounding Fame all creatures serve to blow,
My soul shall with the rest strike up thy praise
And caroll of thy workes and wondrous waies.

* * * *

The clouds as chariots swift doe scoure the sky

The stormy winds upon their wings
doe fly

His Angels spirits are, that wait his
Will
As Flames of Fire his anger they ful-
fill.

* * * *

Let all his works praise him with one
accord,
Oh, praise the Lord, my Soule; praise
ye the Lord."

Milton did far worse in his translation of a Psalm, and surely this specimen of verses, indisputably by Bacon, compares quite favorably with the one undisputed poetical composition of Will Shakspere, actor, which commences;

"Good Frend for Jesus sake forbeare
To digg the dust encloased heare."

The Sonnets. The first mention of the Sonnets was made in 1598, when Francis Meres published his *Palladis Tamia,* or Wits Treasury, containing a partial list of the authors of the day who "have enriched the English tongue." He says;

"The sweet witty soul of Ovid lives in mellifluous honey tongued Shakespeare; witness his Venus and Adonis, his Lucrece, his sugred sonnets among his private friends &c."

In 1599 Jaggard included two of the sonnets, Nos. 138 and 144, in the collection entitled the *Passionate Pilgrim.*

In 1609 the Sonnets, as we know them, were published under the title;

"Shake-speare's Sonnets never before imprinted"

with a fantastic dedication which has given much concern to the critics;

"To the onlie begetter of
These insuing Sonnets
Mr. W. H. all happiness
And that eternitie
promised
by
Our everliving poet
wisheth
the well wishing
Adventurer in
setting
forth

T. T."

Since the whole superstructure which has been built up, of friendships existing between Will Shakspere and members of the beau monde, rests solely upon the dedications prefixed to the poems, frantic efforts have been made to connect the actor with some important personage who is assumed to be alluded to in this above dedication, and to be the friend addressed in the Sonnets themselves.

Thus the "onlie begetter" and the "Mr. W. H." of the dedication have been arbitrarily transformed into "the author's friend" and "Lord so and so," no agreement having yet been reached as which particular Lord was denoted by Mr. W. H. Among the suggested names are those of Southampton, Pembroke, Raleigh, Hervey, and a commoner, one William Hewes.

Now, mark the unreasonableness of these attempts; a begetter is either the author, or else the one who gets; that is to say, the collector.

Nor could an humble publisher, like Thomas Thorpe, the T. T. who signed the dedication, have ventured to address the Earl

of Southampton, the Right Honorable William Herbert, Sir Walter Raleigh, or Sir William Hervey, as plain "Mr. W. H." Even to-day it would be inconceivable presumption to do so.

These verses were composed, it is supposed, in great part if not wholly, between the years 1595 and 1598, when they were mentioned by Meres, the latest about 1603.

They were not for sale, according to Sonnet 21, but for private circulation, and were handed about for some years. By 1609 some one had got hold of those that we now possess, and gave them to his publisher friend, who then printed them. The dedication is not addressed by the author to his patron, but by the publisher to the friend who has presented him with an opportunity for a publishing venture.

"Mr. W. H." is undoubtedly one William Hall, as appears from the dedication itself;

"Mr. W. Hall."

In the Isham reprints there is a poem by Robert Southwell, the dedication to which reads; "W. H. wisheth with long life a pros-

perous achievement of his good desires." Southwell's poem was procured by William Hall, and printed for him by G. Eld, who was also the printer of the Shakespeare Sonnets for Thorpe.

"And that eternitie promised by our ever-living poet." This poet was the author of the Sonnets, who insists in many places upon this eternity; as in Sonnets 18, 19, 55, 63, 65, and in several others. Still are we debating who this poet and his friend may be.

There is no doubt about "T. T." for his name is found in the Register of the Stationers Company;

"20 May 1609, Thomas Thorpe, a book called Shake-speare's Sonnets."

Thus the much discussed dedication resolves itself into the following;

To the Procurer
of these Sonnets
Mr W Hall;
happiness and the eternity
promised by their author
is the wish of
the enterprising publisher
Thomas Thorpe.

In 1598, which we may take to be about the date when the majority of the Sonnets had been composed, Pembroke, as William Herbert became in 1601, was only 18 years old; Southampton was 25; Essex 31 years; Will Shakspere 34; Bacon 37; Sir Philip Sidney 44, and Raleigh 46 years old.

The Sonnets number 154; of which the first seventeen are known as the Procreative Sonnets, being addressed to a young man who is advised to reproduce himself, "for love of me." The feverish anxiety expressed by one man concerning another man's procreative exercises is too much overdone to be more than an affectation.

Sonnets 18-126 continue to be addressed, in a very passionate strain, to a man. The poet describes himself as old and selfish, while his love is a boy. There are hints of a quarrel, of jealousy of other men, of forgiveness, of shame, and of a scandal; most of it mere drivel. Sonnet 126, which is a canzonette, and complete in itself, completes this series. Sonnet 107, by the way, is supposed

to congratulate Southampton upon his release from prison, which, if correct, would lead to the conclusion that Southampton was the friend addressed, Southampton the patron to whom the *Venus* and the *Lucrece* were dedicated; and would also fix the date of composition of this Sonnet, since Southampton's release from the Tower occurred on April 10, 1603.

Sonnets 127-152 are ostensibly addressed to a woman, but are so extremely unflattering that one may be excused for doubting that they were addressed to any real person. The lady is described as unattractive and with a bad breath; she is "black as hell," and so are her deeds. Their love is unlawful, and she is his "worser spirit." Sonnet 145, included in this series, is considered to be by another hand.

Sonnets 153-4 are an original translation of a Greek epigram, to the effect that Love's torch having gone out while he slept, it was relighted by the eyes of the poet's mistress.

A biographical character is universally assigned to these sonnets, although a great deal that is in them is evidently mere affectation, such as prevailed in the sonneteering period.

There can be little doubt that the author of the *Venus* and of the *Lucrece* is also the author of the *Sonnets*.

Take the following lines from the *Venus*, where the goddess is endeavoring to argue Adonis into reciprocating her passion;

163. Torches are made to light, jewels to wear,
Dainties to taste, fresh beauties for the use,
Herbs for their smell and sappy plants to bear.
Things growing to themselves are growths abuse;
Seeds spring from seed and beauty breedeth beauty,
Thou wast begot—to get it is thy duty.

169. Upon the earth's increase why shouldst thou feed,

Unless the earth with thy increase
be fed?

By law of Nature thou art bound to
breed,
That thine may live when thou thy-
self are dead;
And so in spite of death thou dost sur-
vive
In that thy likeness still is left alive.

751. Therefore despite of fruitless chastity,
Love lacking vestals, and self lov-
ing nuns,
That on the earth would breed a
scarcity
And barren dearth of daughters and
of sons,
Be prodigal, the lamp that burns by
night
Dries up his oil to lend the world his
light.

757. What is thy body but a swallowing
grave
Seeming to bury that posterity
Which by the rights of time thou
needst must have

If thou destroy them not in dark obscurity
If so the world will hold thee in disdain
Sith in thy pride so fair a hope is slain.

and compare with the first seventeen Sonnets, from which the following are a few of the lines;

3. But if thou live, remembered not to be
Die single, and thine image dies with thee.

13. Dear my love, you know
You had a father; let your son say so.

15. When I perceive that men as plants increase
Cheered and check'd even by the self same sky
Vaunt in their youthful sap, at height decrease
And wear their brave state out of memory;

We may question whether this line of argument was likely to influence the youth-

ful Adonis, but we may not question the conclusion that the author of the *Venus* and the author of the *Sonnets,* were one.

Sir Sidney Lee sees in Southampton the friend to whom the Sonnets are addressed, and thinks that several of the Sonnets embody language almost identical with that in the dedication to *Lucrece;* or in other words, that they were written by the author of the *Lucrece.* See, for example, Sonnet 26.

Yet, despite the supposed intimacy between Southampton and Will Shakspere; despite the real intimacy which must have existed between the author of the Sonnets and their inspirer, there is no mention of Shakspere in Southampton's existing letters or papers.

That the real authorship is concealed under an assumed name is proclaimed in Sonnets 72 and 76.

> "My name be buried where my body is
> And live no more to shame nor me
> nor you.

Why write I still all one, ever the
same
And keep invention in a noted weed
That every word doth almost tell my
name."

"Invention" meaning his compositions, and "weed" a garment or cloak, as the word is used in Sonnet 2. The meaning still survives in our phrase, widow's weeds!

So, when we read of "Shakespeare's sugred Sonnets" we understand that Shakespeare is a pseudonym, made noted by the success of Venus and of Lucrece.

The passionate love for young men expressed in the Sonnets accords very well with Bacon's character, for like his master, James I, By the Grace of God King of England, &c., he has been charged with the vice of an erotic fancy for young men. And both Southampton and Pembroke were notoriously licentious.

The "rival poet" of Sonnets 80-86 has been plausibly identified with George Chapman, and the "proud full sail of his great

verse." Chapman is known to have sought Southampton's patronage in 1596-7 for his translation of the Iliad.

A rather showy identification has been conceived by Judge Stotsenburg of Sir Philip Sidney as the author of the Sonnets; of Lady Penelope Rich, for whom Sidney had a fancy, as the Dark Lady; and of Sir Edward Dyer, Sidney's friend, as the friend of the Sonnets. But it is based upon a misapprehension of the line in Sonnet 20;

> "A man in hue, all hues in his controlling."

Naturally, a dyer has all hues in his controlling, but *hue,* formerly spelled *hew,* and from the anglo saxon *hiw,* means form, not color, and is so used elsewhere in the Sonnets. Thus in Sonnet 82;

> "As fair in knowledge as in hue."

And in Sonnet 104;

> "So your sweet hew, which methinks still doth stand
> Hath motion."

In these instances the sense requires the

meaning, form or shape, and in Sonnet 20 the meaning is;

"A man in form, all forms in his controlling."

Referring undoubtedly to the possible results of the procreative activities so highly recommended by our poet.

In Sonnet 76 the author conceives that he is making plain both his own name and the name of the friend to whom he writes;

"every word doth almost tell my name
Showing their birth and where they did proceed."

Unfortunately, we no longer understand the allusions, and the birth as well as the destination of the lines is still disputed.

The punning Sonnets, 135, 136, 143, do not assist us. The author says that the Dark Lady has her will, for his name is Will; William Shakespeare, his pseudonym.

During the years in which the Sonnets were written, our actor was pursuing his lucrative but humble calling; touring the

provinces with his fellow apes, puppets, jugglers and clowns; was trying, with others of his kind, to enter the ranks of gentility, and was being ridiculed for it; was just one of carpenter Burbage's men players; was suing Philip Rogers of Stratford for two shillings; and was tricking his fellow Burbage out of his mistress' favors, or seducing an inn keeper's wife at Oxford.

If Will Shakspere had indeed been Southampton's intimate, as we are asked to believe by those who believe that he wrote the Sonnets, would not his personal history have been written in larger letters?

The series of probabilities above set forth may now be summarized as follows;

1. Venus, Lucrece and the Sonnets are from the same hand.
2. That hand was not Will Shakspere's,
    a. Because there are no known facts in his life to support the belief, and the facts we have are inconsistent with it.

b. Because his patron was Lord Strange, not the Earl of Southampton.

c. Because his name was not Shakespeare, but a name vocally and etymologically different.

d. Because the name Shakespeare, prefixed to the Sonnets, was avowedly a pen name, a noted weed. It was noted, because the success of Lucrece had made it so. It was not Shakspere's, because it was too like his real name to serve as a disguise.

e. Because he was never contemporaneously identified with the author of the poems.

3. Known poets, that is professional poets, would have used their own names.

4. We know that Bacon had written a Sonnet before 1604, and that he was

known as a poet by his contemporaries before 1610, although the only surviving acknowledged verses of his were written in 1624.

5. Bacon had a sufficiently good reason at the moment for concealing his identity as the author.

6. The amorous character of the poems answers to the known disposition of both Bacon and of Southampton.

For those who accept these conclusions, Shakspere's fancied friendships with the great ones of the earth must vanish into nothingness, for there is absolutely no evidence in support of them except the name William Shakespeare attached to the Venus, the Lucrece and the Sonnets.

CHAPTER IV

The First Folio

If Ben Jonson had written nothing concerning Shakspere but the Ode to his Beloved, which is among the prefatory matter to the folio of 1623, we should either have to accept the distinct identification there made of the actor with the author, or we should have to flatly decline to do so, because of the inherent improbability of Jonson's eulogies.

Happily, Honest Ben has spared us the unpleasant necessity of choosing which horn of the dilemma we prefer, by recording, or having recorded for him, upon at least half a dozen occasions, when he was not under contract to write a paean of praise, his opinion of Will Shakspere. These extra folian pronouncements are mutually consistent, but are all at variance with the Ode; the weight and purport of which is thereby greatly modified.

The folio came into existence in the following way:

By 1623 the little circle of the Burbage players had lost some of its principal members. Richard Burbage, its star, died in 1618; William Kemp, the clown, had left it in 1602, and is not heard of after 1605, and Augustine Phillips died in 1605.

John Fletcher had succeeded the older writers as the lion of the dramatic authors. He collaborated with Field, Massinger, Rowley and others, and was the dramatist for the King's players. The Shakespeare plays were no longer new, and were given but infrequently; and their owners, who were also the owners of the theatre, to wit; the Burbage heirs, Heminge, and Condell, saw a possible profit in collecting and publishing them from their own copies in order to displace the pirated editions then in the market.

The charges of publishing were borne by Wm. Jaggard, Ed. Blount, J. Smithweeke and W. Aspley.

The ever-needy Ben Jonson was engaged

to give the book a literary send-off. He was a most suitable person for the purpose, having published his own works in 1616, the first writer to undertake such an enterprise. Besides this, he was the foremost literary man in England; and the poet laureate, having been so created by Letters Patent dated February 1, 1616, with a pension of 100 marks a year, later increased by Charles I to 100 pounds.

The poems were not included in the folio, which contained but 36 plays, *Pericles* being omitted.

Some of the plays are more complete than in the quartos; some are less complete; they were evidently published without editing.

Twenty of them were here published for the first time.

About two hundred copies of the first folio are now in existence, of which it is said that less than twenty copies contain the portrait printed, and not inserted, on the title page.

The verses which introduce the portrait are signed "B. I.," or Ben Jonson, and are written in a style which obituary poetry has rendered familiar to us all;

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 outdoo 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 writt in brasse.
But since he cannot, Reader, looke
Not on his Picture, but his Booke."

The lines asserting that the Graver had a strife with Nature to outdoo the life are not original, but are to be found in other eulogies of the time. It is all dreadfully poor stuff.

The book is dedicated to Pembroke and Montgomery, the "Incomparable Paire of

Brethren, who have prosequuted both these trifles and their Author diving with so much favour"; that is to say, who have attended and approved the performances, for there is no evidence that they ever did more.

Heminge and Condell, who signed the Dedication, are made to say that they have collected the plays and done an office to the dead, who is "by death departed from that right . . . without ambition of selfe profit or fame."

Nevertheless, in the Address to the Great Variety of Readers, which follows, and which also is signed by Heminge and Condell, the public is urged to buy the book; "But, whatever you do, Buy." The public is informed that it was before "abused with diverse stolne and surreptitious copies," but that these are now offered "cured and perfect of their limbs, and all the rest, absolute in their numbers, as he conceived them . . . His mind and hand went together, and what he thought, he uttered with that

easiness that we have scarse received from him a blot in his papers."

These two addresses are universally attributed to Jonson, who, in his "Discoveries," referring to the claim that Shakespeare never blotted a line, sardonically remarks that his friends chose that circumstance to commend their friend wherein he most faulted.

Next we have some lines by Hugh Holland, beginning;

> "Those hands which you so clapt, go now, and wring
> You Britaines brave; for done are Shakespeare's dayes:"

and a Catalogue of the Plays, numbering only 35, for *Troilus and Cressida,* although contained in the folio, was omitted in cataloguing; and *Pericles* is not included in the book.

And so at last we come to Jonson's verses to the Author. It must be confessed that the Plays were sufficiently prefaced, although it would have been well had the editors thought

it worth while to give us some account of the life and personality of the author, and fewer fireworks.

To the Memory of my Beloved
the Author
Mr. William Shakespeare
and
what he hath left us.

Now it must be insisted upon that Will Shakspere was not Jonson's Beloved. On the contrary, Jonson lost no opportunity of attacking our actor in his most vigorous manner. Thus;

In "Every Man out of his Humor," 1599, he pillories Shakspere as Sogliardo, a well-to-do clown, with an ambition to become a gentleman, at any cost. Sogliardo purchases arms; "By this parchment, gentlemen, I have been so toiled among the harrots yonder you will not believe . . . I can write myself gentleman now; here's my Patent; it cost me thirty pound . . . it is your boar without a head, rampant."

And the jester Carlo, who is tutoring the clown, strikes in;

Carlo—A swine without a head; without braine, wit, anything indeed, ramping to gentility.

Puntavarlo—Let the word be 'Not without mustard,' your crest is very rare, sir.

Shakspere's motto, it will be remembered, for this passage has been quoted in a former chapter, was 'Non sanz droict.'

In the "Poetaster," again, in 1601, where Jonson presents himself as Horace, attacked by two scribblers, Crispinus and Demetrious, under which names he satirizes Marston and Dekker, he introduces a braggart captain, one Tucca, who asks Histrio, an actor, if he knows *Pantalabus;* one who takes all, a plagiarist;

> "a gent'man parcel poet; his father was a man of worship, I tell thee—he pens high, lofty, in a new talking strain, bigger than half the rhymers in town."

This also conceeded to be a drive at Shakspere as a thief of plays.

Jonson has been accused of ingratitude in thus attacking Shakspere, and there is a story to the effect that, when a little known author, he wanted the Burbages to produce "Every Man in his Humor" in 1598, the play was about to be rejected, when the gentle Shakespeare intervened, and succeeded in having the piece accepted.

Unfortunately for the truth of the only anecdote which presents Shakspere to us as the doer of a kind or generous action, "Every Man in his Humor" was played by Henslowe's company before this date; having been first presented on November 25, 1596, and a number of times subsequently, with great success. Neither the poet nor the play was unknown in 1598.

The first twelve lines of the Ode form a labored apology;

"To draw no envy (Shakespeare) on thy name,
Am I thus ample to thy Booke, and Fame;

While I confesse thy writings to be such
As neither Man, nor Muse, can praise too much,
'Tis true, and all men's suffrage. But these wayes
Were not the paths I meant unto thy praise:
For seeliest Ignorance on these may light,
Which, when it sounds at best, but ecchos right;
Or blinde Affection, which doth ne're advance
The truth, but gropes, and urgeth all by chance;
Or crafty Malice, might pretend this praise,
And thinke to ruine, where it seem'd to raise."

Surely this is a remarkable introduction to an eulogistic poem. It is not unnatural nor unusual to praise an author in a prefatory notice to his works, and it does not necessarily call down ridicule or malice to do

so. Why, then, did Jonson hedge in this way, as if to protect himself against anticipated assaults upon his position?

Why should Malice think he meant to ruin Shakspere by overpraise, unless indeed, there was some reason for the charge. He owns himself that he is praising him abundantly. And, above all, what way was it 'he meant unto his praise' ?

The Ode continues;

"I, therefore, will begin, Soule of the Age!
The applause! delight! the wonder of our Stage!
My Shakespeare, rise; I will not lodge thee by
Chaucer, or Spencer, or bid Beaumont lye
A little further, to make thee a roome;
Thou are a Moniment, without a tombe,
And art alive still, while thy Booke doth live,
And we have wits to read, and praise to give."

Note the exclamation points in the first two lines above. The statements were not true at the time; Shakespeare was *vieux jeu* for the moment, and Fletcher was reigning on the stage.

The fourth and fifth lines allude to a Sonnet to Mr William Shakespeare which had recently been put forth by William Basse, in which it is said;

> "Renowned Spencer, lye a thought more nye
> To learned Chaucer, and rare Beaumont lye
> A little nearer Spenser, to make roome
> For Shakespeare in your threefold, fourfold tombe,"

But Jonson will have none of that; compare the above lines with the epigram to the Poet Ape, already quoted;

> "Poor Poet Ape, that would be thought our chief,
> Whose works are e'en the frippery of wit;

From brokage, is become so bold a thief
As we, the robbed, leave rage, and pity it.

. . . . .

He takes up all, makes each man's wit his own,
And, told of this, slights it. Tut, such crumes
The sluggish, gaping auditor devours;
He marks not whose 'twas first; and after times
May judge it to be his, as well as ours."

Skipping a little in the Ode, we come upon this;

"And though thou hadst small Latine, and lesse Greeke
From thence to honour thee, I would not seeke
For names; but call forth thund'ring AEschilus
Euripides, and Sophocles to us,
Paccuuius, Accius, him of Cordova dead,

To life again, to hear thy buskin tread,
And shake a stage; or, when thy socks were on,
Leave thee alone, for the comparison
Of all, that insolent Greece, or haughtie Rome
Sent forth, or since did from their ashes come."

Commenting on this, we note that Rowe relates that in conversation with Suckling, Davenant, Porter, and Hales of Eton, Jonson insisted on Shakespeare's want of learning, until Hales had to stop him.

Shakspere may have had small learning, but Jonson thought well of his acting, for he wanted to call up AEschilus and the other ancient worthies to hear his buskin tread and shake the stage.

The line about 'insolent Greece and haughtie Rome' occurs also, as every one knows, in Jonson's "Discoveries," which was written about 1630, but not published until 1641, four years after Jonson's death. Under

the head of *Scriptorum Catalogus,* they are applied to Bacon, who is said to be he 'who hath filled up all numbers and performed that in our tongue which may be compared or preferred either to insolent Greece or Haughty Rome.'

After another interval, the Ode continues;

"Yet must I not give Nature all; thy Art,
My gentle Shakespeare, must enjoy a part.
For though the Poets matter, Nature be,
His Art doth give the fashion. And that he
Who casts to write a living line, must sweat,
(Such as thine are) and strike the second heat
Upon the Muses anvil: turn the same,
(And himself with it) that he thinkes to frame;
Or for the lawrell, he may gaine a scorne,

For the good Poet's made, as well as
borne.
And such wert thou. Looke how the
fathers face
Lives in his issue, even so, the race
Of Shakespeares minde, and man-
ners brightly shines
In his well torned and true filed lines:
In each of which, he seems to shake
a lance
As brandisht at the eyes of Ignorance.
Sweet Swan of Avon! what a sight it
were
To see thee in our waters yet ap-
peare, &c.

It is a pity to cavil at these fine lines; but what must we think of them when we find Jonson telling Drummond of Hawthorndon in 1619, that Shakespeare "wanted arte," and of that passage in his "Discoveries," *De Shakespeare Nostrati,* where he says of Shakespeare that he most faulted in that "he never blotted out a line."

"He was indeed honest and of a free open nature, had an excellent

> fancy, brave notions and gentle expressions, wherein he flowed with that facility that sometimes it was necessary he should be stopped. 'Sufflaminandus erat (he needed to be shut up), as Augustus said of Haterius. His wit was in his own power: would the rule of it had been so too. Many times he fell into those things could not escape laughter . . . But he ever redeemed his vices with his virtues. There was ever more in him to be praised than to be pardoned."

Such was the modest estimation in which Jonson held Will Shakspere, and when he adds "I loved the man, and do honour his memory on this side idolatry as much as any," we may be assured that the honor he gave him was very considerably this side of idolatry. When he was not paid to be adulatory, Jonson describes Will Shakspere as *Sogliardo,* the well to do clown; as *Pantalabus,* the man who takes all; or as the *Poet*

Ape, that bold thief; as the man who wanted arte, as he told Drummond; who wanted learning, as he told Hales and the rest; as the actor who sometimes made himself ridiculous on the stage; the man whose tongue and pen flowed so freely that he needed to be shut up; and finally that wonder of the stage who had more in him to be praised than to be pardoned.

What then are the lines of the Ode but pardonable poetical exaggeration? It is no crime to exaggerate a little upon such an occasion. Nearly every advertiser to sell his wares, does as much. The whole introductory matter is of a like character; the verses to the portrait; the statement that the collection was made without ambition of profit, followed by the exhortation to buy; and the statement that the plays are absolute in their numbers as he conceived them, and the like.

Jonson was not a man of so high minded a moral character as to be above the suspicion of such offenses as we are attributing to him. When in prison in 1598 for having

killed Gabriel Spencer in a duel, he turned Roman Catholic, not from conviction, but as he said himself, "taking the priests word for it;" and later wrote a letter to Lord Salisbury which showed that he was willing to spy upon, and inform against his fellow Catholics.

And in 1619 he told Drummond a very unedifying story about himself. In 1613, it appears, he was in France, acting as governor to the son of Sir Walter Raleigh, who exhibited him, dead drunk upon a car, "which he made to be drawn by pioneers through the streets, at every corner showing his governor stretched out, and telling them that was a more lively image of a crucifix than any they had." Evidently the youth felt but little respect for his tutor.

Returning to the folio; the Ode is followed by two tributes, one by Leonard Digges, in which occurs the line which informs us the monument at Stratford was already in existence;

"And time dissolves thy Stratford Moniment,"

and finally a list of the principal actors in all these plays, containing twenty-six names.

Of the sixteen plays which had appeared in print before 1623, some are more complete in the folio than in the quartos, and these, we infer, were printed in the folio as written, and not as acted; for the acting versions were frequently curtailed. Mr. Edwin Reed has compiled the results of the comparison of eleven of the plays. For example;

Henry VI contains 1139 lines, and 2,000 changes not in the 1619 quarto.

Merry Wives is nearly double the length of, and quite different from the 1619 quarto.

Taming of the Shrew contains 1,000 lines more than the 1607 quarto.

Henry V has the choruses, two scenes, and 1655 lines not in the 1608 quarto.

On the other hand, *Hamlet* is shorter in the folio than in the 1694 quarto, and some of the finest passages are omitted, doubtless for representation on the stage.

Some of the plays are divided into Acts and Scenes; some into Acts without any divi-

sion into scenes. *Hamlet,* with surprising carelessness, has no divisions after Act II, Scene 2.

In *Richard III,* twelve printer's errors are reproduced from the 1622 quarto.

Troilus is not even catalogued, nor is it paged except for the first few pages.

In some of the plays the names of the actors who played the parts are given instead of their part names. Thus we learn that Kempe played Dogberry, and Cowley Verges, in *Much Ado About Nothing;* that Harvey played Bardolph, and Rossill Peto in *1 Henry IV.* Sinkler, Bates, Court, Williams and others, in all about twenty five names of actors, it is said, are made known to us in their parts through these oversights.

What then becomes of the theories of careful editing, and of the assertion of Heminge and Condell that instead of the stolen, surreptitious copies with which the public was formerly abused, these are now offered cured and perfect of their limbs?

On the contrary, it appears that Heminge

and Condell collected the plays, and brought them to the publishers direct from the theatre, and that they were printed from those copies without correction.

It may be interesting to inquire as to how Heminge and Condell obtained possession of the plays, and to whom they belonged; for they certainly did not belong to Will Shakspere's estate. Did they belong to the theatre owners, or to the company of actors? Either was possible; plays were owned in either way; Henslowe the theatre owner, counted his stock of plays on March 3 1598, and had 25 plays. We may therefore inquire as to the ownership of the Globe and Blackfriars theatres, with which Heminge and Condell were connected.

The Globe Theatre was originally built in 1599, and finished in July of that year; was burned down on June 29 1613, and was rebuilt in the following year.

The Burbages, Richard and Cuthbert, had a half interest in it. The other half was divided into eight shares, held by Shakspere,

Heminge, Phillips, Pope, and Kempe, later Condell was added, and later still, Ostler and Field.

These interests could be devised; Pope died 1603-4, willing his interest; Shakspere had evidently disposed of his interest upon leaving London, and by 1627 we find the owners reduced to four, Heminge and Condell having bought in the other actors' shares. Cuthbert Burbage, Mrs. Robinson, who was Richard Burbage's widow; Heminge, and Condell, each owned four shares.

As to the Blackfriars Theatre, it was completed by the end of 1596, and was then leased to Thos. Evans for the *Children of the Chapel,* or as they were subsequently called, of the Queens Revels. In August 1608, the Burbages took over the lease, and placed their own men in the theatre, and joined them partners in the profits of the house. The ownership seems to have been at that time, in eight shares, held by the two Burbages, Shakspere, Heminge, Condell and Ostler.

In 1634 the owners were Cuthbert Burbage, Mrs. Robinson, Jno Shank, Mrs Condell, Jos Taylor, Jno Lowin and Jno Underwood, eight shares in all; Shank holding two shares.

In April 1612, according to Collier, Edward Alleyn paid, with the incorrigible English liking for odd sums, 599 pds 6 sh 8 d, for an interest in the Blackfriars theatre, possibly for Shakspere's share. Alleyn died Nov 25 1626, and his interest must have passed back to the actors in the Kings company before 1634.

As a matter of collateral interest, it was testified by Thomasin Ostler in 1616, that the theatre shares, having then twenty one years to run, were worth, for the whole issue, 4,200 pounds for the Globe, and 2,100 pounds for the Blackfriars theatre.

At no time therefore, did Heminge and Condell own either of the theatres entirely, and if the plays had belonged to the owners, or housekeepers, as they were called, we should expect to find their names joined with

Heminge and Condell in the introductory matter to the folio. But they are not there.

Turning to the actor's companies, we find that they also owned plays. Henslowe made a number of entries of money lent to the Lord Admiral's men for the purchase of plays from the writers; as for instance;

> March 30 1598. Lent unto the Company to give Mr. Willsone, Dickers, Drayton and Cheatall, in parte payment of a booke called Pierce of Exstone (Richard II) the some of 40 sh.

There are a number of similar entries.

Of the eight actors of the Kings company, who together with Shakspere, were named in James license of May 17 1603, and who paraded with him on March 15 1604, on the occasion of the King's entry into London, for their four and a half yards of red cloth apiece; only Heminge and Condell were left by 1623. Richard Burbage died March 13 1618, Augustine Phillips on May 4 1605, and William Slye on August 13

1608. Fletcher, Armin and Cowley appear to have left the company before 1623.

It is a reasonable conclusion that the plays, the last of which, *Henry VIII,* appeared in 1612, belonged to the actors. Heminge was Treasurer of the company, and the plays were probably in his possession. He and Condell were retiring from the stage, and as literary executors and residuary legatees of the old company, gathered together the old plays and looked for a publisher, in order to realize upon this asset. *Troilus* was found at the last moment, and added after the catalogue was printed; *Pericles* was overlooked altogether.

But the plays were no longer as popular as formerly, and it was not easy to find a publisher willing to undertake the enterprise. In the lists of Court performances given in the years 1613 and 1623 inclusive, we find only three representations of Shakespeare plays named. But finally four publishers agreed to share the risk of the undertaking, and the work was issued. From these doubts

and difficulties sprang the need of the elaborate puffing of the prefatory matter, and the numerous typographical errors with which the book is disfigured.

But, even if Jonson's testimony to the great value of Will Shakspere's contribution to the plays be discredited, as it would be in any modern court of justice, yet we must believe that he had some share in them. Not only Jonson, in references made elsewhere to Shakspere's work; but Greene, and Davies, tell us that he did some work on the plays; and they all agree as to what that work was; he fixed up old plays, and popularised them by adding comic scenes; nothing more. He was not a great man, nor a great author, but he did what was in him to do.

And so, while Ben Jonson, the literary man, left a good library, Will Shakspere—actor and comic, left none.

CHAPTER V

Multiple Authorship.

To the casual reader, the plays of Shakespeare appear to be nearly uniform in excellence of style and of thought; to him Shakespeare is always Shakespeare.

That this is not the case is well known to students of the plays. It has been well said that Shakespeare is a noise of many waters, and the only debatable questions concern the proper apportionment of the work of the different writers who have contributed to the works.

Nor is the quality of the plays any more uniform than their style. Critics divided them into three or four classes, according to their merit; and there is as wide a difference between *Macbeth* and *Titus Andronicus,* for example, as between *Midsummer Nights Dream* and the *Taming of the Shrew,* or between *Hamlet* and *Pericles* as there is between

the work of a master and that of a tyro, some of the inferior plays being very poor stuff indeed.

How these differences of style and of quality arose I shall endeavor to suggest; always for the benefit of the casual reader; by a brief reference to the dramatic methods of the time. And first, the practise of collaboration demands our attention.

For it is well known that in Shakespeare's day, theatre managers often engaged several authors to write upon a play, in order to expedite the work. During the two years during which the company of players to which Will Shakspere belonged, occupied Henslowes' theatre; that is from June 1594 to July 1596, a new play was given, on an average, every eighteen days. To keep up this rate of production, it was necessary that plays should be turned out with expedition, and this was accomplished by engaging a number of writers, sometimes as many as six, in the composition of a play.

We find, in the memoranda left by

Henslowe, the names of about a dozen writers, some of them very well known, whom he employed in the work of writing, revising, or adding to plays to be used in his theatres. As for example:

Henry Chettle	Originally, it is believed, a printer. He was engaged upon forty nine plays, of which only thirteen were wholly his.
Thomas Dekker	Who collaborated in fifty two plays, with nearly every author of the day.
Michael Drayton	Like Will Shakpere, a Warwickshire man, a fact to be noted by those who seek to prove Shakspere's authorship by citing local refer-

ences occurring in the plays. Drayton was an actor, a poet, and a dramatist. He wrote about twenty plays which were very popular.

William Haughton — Who wrote one very successful play alone, and collaborated with Chettle, Dekker and Day.

Ben Jonson — Also wrote for Henslowe. His father was a minister. He spent some time at Cambridge; he was a soldier, an actor, a dramatist, and the second of England's Poet Laureates.

Thomas Middleton	A man of good family; a Cambridge graduate, and of Greys Inn. His play "The Changeling" is hardly equalled, outside of Shakespeare.
Anthony Monday	An actor, and a traveler in Italy and in France. He collaborated with Drayton, Wilson, and Hathway.
John Webster	A writer of the first rank. His "White Devil" is a tragedy not much less remarkable than Shakespeare's.
Robert Wilson	Of whom not much is known, except

	that he was praised by Meres as being "for learning and wit, without company or compere."
Robert Greene	A Cambridge man, who studied medicine, traveled in Spain and Italy, and wrote about a dozen plays.

These, with Thomas Kyd, John Day, and Richard Hathway, constituted Henslowes staff of writers; that is, the staff of one theatre manager.

Some of the greatest names of the age remain to be mentioned; Beaumont, Chapman, Fletcher, Ford, Heywood, Lodge, Marlowe, Marston, Massinger, Nash and Peele. Some one has counted the names of forty noteworthy, and two hundred and twenty three minor writers in the Elizabethan era, some of them not far inferior to Shakespeare;

more particularly Beaumont, Marlowe, Webster and Drayton.

Such were the dramatists of the period, of that glorious period when the new world was really new to Europe, and when England was laying the foundations of its future greatness. It formed a galaxy of talent well able to supply all that the plays contain of law, of medicine, of seamanship or classical knowledge, of familiarity with foreign countries; of everything in short, that Will Shakspere could not supply.

Nearly all of them wrote in collaboration with others, and to many of them a share has been ascribed in the composition of the Shakespeare plays.

Between 1591 and 1601 Henslowe paid for or produced a number of plays with identical, or at least similar titles with some of the Shakespeare plays.

And between June 1594 and July 1596 the Lord Chamberlain's men, of whom Will Shakspere was one, played at his theatres.

During this period the following plays with Shakespearian titles were produced;

March 3 1592	Henry VI, a new play
May 14 "	Harey V
Jany 23 1593	Titus Ondronicus, new
April 8 1594	Kinge Leare
June 9 "	Hamlet
" 11 "	Tamynge of a Shrowe

From a large number of similar entries, the following memoranda of payments made by Henslowe for the writing of plays are selected. Henslowe had his own ideas as to spelling.

"Lent unto Thomas Downton, to lende unto Mr Dickers and harey Cheatell, in earneste of ther boocke called Troyeles and Creasse daye, Aprell 7 1599 3 pds.

"Lent unto Samwell Rowlye 1601 to pay unto harye Chettell for writtinge the boocke of Carnalle Wolseye lyfe, the 5 of June 20 sh

"Lent unto Robarte Shawe to lend unto harey Chettell and Antonye Mon-

daye and mihell Drayton in earneste of a boocke called the Rissenge of Carnowlle Wolsey, the 10 of Oct 1601 40 sh

"Lent unto harey Chettell by the company at the Eagell and the childe in pt of payment of a boocke called the Rissynge of carnell Wollsey the some of the 6 of Nov 1601 10 sh

"Lent unto the companye the 22 of May 1602 to geve unto Antoney Monday and Mihell Drayton, Webster, Mydelton and the rest, in earnest of a boocke called sesers Falle 5 pds."

Henslowe did not buy any plays from Will Shakspere nor from Shakespeare, nor did he mention his name in any way.

Furthermore, none of these plays for which he paid, are contained in a list of his stock of plays which he made out, dated March 3 1598.

The actual fact of the practise of collab-

oration being thus established, we may consider its application to the Shakespeare plays. And first, as to the richness of the Shakespeare vocabulary.

Max Muller, quoting from Renan's "Histoire des Langues," said that while an educated man rarely uses over three or four thousand words, the plays contain a vocabulary of 15,000 words. Prof. March makes the same estimate, while Prof. Craik and others place it at 21,000 words. Milton, with 8,000 words, is a bad second.

Bartlett's Complete Shakespeare Concordance contains 1,910 pages, averaging about 8.5 words per page, excluding inflections; a total of over 16,000 words.

The authorised version of the Bible is said to contain 15,000 words in its vocabulary, an estimate which anyone can investigate by consulting a Bible Concordance. The Bible, it will be remembered, is composed of sixty six different books originally written in three different languages, and the translation of our authorised version was

executed by forty eight different scholars. The substantial harmony of style in the Bible, notwithstanding the manner in which it was produced, is greater than that in the Shakespeare works.

The question of the unity of authorship of the Shakespeare plays is thus definitely settled in the negative. No one man has ever been master of such an enormous vocabulary.

If we consider the history of the plays, and the views of the critics as to their authorship, we shall reach the same conclusion. For a rapid survey of the matter we may arrange plays in three divisions; old plays which have been retouched; other collaborated plays; and plays which have been attributed to different authors.

Old plays retouched.

Titus Andronicus. A fourth rate play of 1584-90, published in 1594, 1600, and 1611 anonymously. It was played at Henslowe's on Jany. 23 1593 as a new play. Jonson refers to it in the intro-

duction to Bartholomew Fair, 1614, as then 25 or 30 years old. The folio play contains one scene which is not in the 1611 quarto. Malone pronounced it to be not Shakespeare's; Dowden calls it pre-Shakespearian, and Swinburne says that no scholar believes in the single authorship of Titus, and thinks that it contains some of Greene's work. Other critics have thought that Kyd, Dekker and Chettle had a share in it.

1 Henry VI A fourth rate play of 1589-91, which was published in 1600 as by Shakespeare. It was acted at Henslowe's on March 3, 1591 as new. Nash identifies it in 1592 by a mention of Talbot, who appears in this first play of the trilogy only. Dowden calls it pre-Shakespearian. None of the three plays are by Shakespeare, says Malone. A trilogy of old plays retouched, says Brandes. Only touched up by Shakespeare, says Masson. The old Henslowe play altered, says Marshall. It is attributed by others to Greene, Peele and Kyd.

2 Henry VI Composed 1591-2, published in 1594 as the "First part of the Contention of the two famous Houses of York and Lancaster," containing 2214 lines. The present play is a rehash; the 2d and 3d parts contain 3250 lines of the old plays says Boas. The authorship is disputed, says Masson. Probably in part by Marlowe, say Dyce and Dowden .

3 Henry VI A fourth rate play of 1591-2. It was published in 1595 as "The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York," in 2311 lines. This is the play that Greene referred to in his *Groatsworth,* parodying the line "O tygre's heart, wrapt in a woman's hide." Dowden calls these three plays pre-Shakespearian, and attributes them in part to Marlowe; so also Swinburne. Malone does not think any of the three Shakespeare's. Meres in 1598 did not include *Henry VI* in his list of Shakespeare's plays. By some writers they are attributed to the joint labor of Greene, Peele and Kyd.

King John Composed between 1591-95. It was published anonymously in 1591 as "The Troublesome Reign of King John." A dull old play, says Swinburne. In 1611 it was published as Shakespeare's. The folio is based on the early play, but has about 1,000 new lines. Brandes says that with fine passages it combines intolerable affections. The writer is unknown.

Richard III Composed about 1593, and published anonymously in 1597. On June 24, 1602 Henslowe paid Ben Jonson 10 pds. on account for writing of "Richard Crookbacke," a play on the reign of Richard III. Dowden says that the two Richard plays show Marlowe's hand, and T. W. White attributes *Richard III* to Marlowe.

Richard II Composed about 1594 and published anonymously in 1597 as "The Tragedy of King Richard the second, as it hath been publicly acted by the

Lord Chamberlain his servants," and in 1608 with Shakespeare's name on the title page, "with new additions of the Parliament scene and the deposing of King Richard." In March 1598 Wilson, Dekker, Drayton and Chettle were writing "Pierce of Exstone" for Henslowe. *Richard II* was the play given on February 2 1601, just before the Essex rebellion, and the play which then displeased the Queen. Yet three weeks later we know that Will Shakspere was playing before the Queen, and therefore, that he was not suspected of being its author. Mr. T. W. White attributes it to Daniel or Drayton.

Romeo and Juliet Composed between 1591-6, and published anonymously in 1597. Dowden calls it a revision of an old play. The "Return from Parnassus," of 1599, not the one played in 1601, contains this, says T. W. White;

"Ingenioso speaking; Mark *Romeo and Juliet;* O monstrous theft; I think he will run through a whole book of Samuel Daniel." And Mr. T. W. White ascribes it

to Daniel. Furnivall dates its composition in 1591, and the nurse's words; Act I, 3.

"Tis since the earthquake (April 6 1580) now eleven years" confirm Furnivall's opinion. In London, after the Restoration, it was presented on alternate nights, as a comedy and as a tragedy. The orginal of the play was a Spanish comedy by Lopez de Vega.

Taming of the Shrew A fourth rate play of 1589-97. It was published anonymously in 1594, with which edition the folio agrees, having meanwhile grown longer by some 1,000 lines. On June 11 1594 it was played at Henslowe's. In 1602 Henslowe paid Dekker for writing "Medicine for a curst wife," and Dekker's hand may be traced in the present play. T. W. White attributes it to Daniel or Drayton. Collier and Swinburne to Haughton, and Fleay to Kyd, revised by Lodge and Shakespeare. Masson acknowledges that its authorship is disputed.

1 Henry IV A first rate play of 1597-8 and published anonymously in 1598. This quarto is quite perfect, although Shakespeare is not named on the title page, nor in the registry. In the first edition Falstaff was called Sir John Oldcastle, which was the name of a play written for Henslowe in 1599 by Monday, Drayton, Wilson and Hathway, and published the following year under Shakespeare's name. T. W. White attributes it to Nash.

Henry V Composed about 1598-9, and published anonymously in 1598 as "The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth." The original was a very old play, for Tarleton, who died in 1588, acted in it. It was played on May 14 1592 at Henslowe's, and is mentioned by Nash in the same year. It has been attributed in part to Marlowe, and also to Drayton and Dekker.

Julius Caesar A first rate play of 1599-1604, published first in the folio. In 1598, as is noted by Stotsenburg,

Drayton published "Mortomeriados," containing a parallel passage to one in Julius Caesar, V. 5. On May 22 1602, Monday, Drayton, Webster, Middleton, "and the rest," were writing "Caesars Fall" for Henslowe.

Hamlet A first rate play of 1602, published in 1603 under Shakespeare's name. An old and a very much revised play. In 1591 Nash quoted the "to be or not to be" as known for five years, or as early as 1586. On June 9 1594 it was played at Henslowe's. This early play was probably by Kyd, says Sir Sidney Lee. Mr. Pemberton calls attention to the fact that in the "Brudermord," a German version of the lost Hamlet, *Polonius* is called *Corambio,* which name is given to him in the quarto of 1603, thus showing that the present play is derived from the early play.

Troilus and Cressida Composed between 1601-8 and published anonymously in 1609 and as by

Shake-speare. In April 1599 Dekker and Chettle were writing *Troilus and Cressida* for Henslowe. Marston is thought to refer to this play in his "Histrio Matrix" c 1598. It was registered on February 7 1603 by Master Roberts. The prefatory Address is curious. The title page of the 1609 edition stated that it was "as acted by the Kings company at the Globe," but part of the edition has a different title. Now the prefatory address is, in part, as follows:;

> "A Never writer to an Ever Reader; News. Eternal Reader, you have here a new play, never clapper clawed with the palms of the vulgar . . . . . by the grand possessor's Wills, I believe you should have prayed for them (the comedies) rather than been prayed &c."

There was evidently some trouble about the copyright to the play, which should have been owned by Henslowe, since he paid for it in 1599. It would appear that it was inserted in the folio at the last moment, since

it is omitted from the catalogue and is not even paged. The Irving Shakespeare attributes the last act to Dekker, and Brandes pronounces the play to be decadent and of innate barbarism.

Othello A first rate play of 1604-6, which was first published in 1622. In February 1599 Dekker, Haughton and Day were writing "The Spanish Moor's Tragedy" for Henslowe. The original was undoubtedly a Spanish play. The scene is not Venetian, for there is no mention of canals; the people walk the streets as in other towns; they do not ride in gondolas. It was besides, impossible that a Moor should command a Venetian army. These considerations show, as T. W. White has pointed out, its adaptation from another play.

King Lear Composed about 1605-6, and published anonymously in 1605. An early play was registered on May 14 1594, and was acted at Henslowe's on April 8 1594. Some of the finest passages in the quarto are omitted in the folio.

Thus it appears by consent, in most instances, of confessed Stratfordians, that of the 37 Shakespeare plays, sixteen are old plays retouched, and therefore, containing the work of several writers.

But this is by no means the whole story; a number of the other plays are believed to be the product of collaboration.

Other Collaborated Plays.

Two Gentleman of Verona Composed about 1590-92, and first published in the folio. In January 1585, *Felix and Philiomena,* these being the names of the principals in "Diana in Love," a translated Spanish romance, was played before the Queen at Greenwich. In 1598 Meres attributed the same story to Shakespeare. T. W. White quotes Upton and Henmer as saying that the *Two Gentlemen* is by some inferior hand, and Stotsenburg thinks it the work of Dekker and Drayton.

Midsummer Nights Dream Dates from 1590-97, and was published in 1600. Its authorship is attributed to Peele and Drayton by T. W. White.

Merry Wives of Windsor Composed about 1598-1602 and published in 1602.

It was perhaps adapted from the "Jealous Comedy," of 1592. The quarto is a mere outline of the folio. Interpolated by a botcher, says Halliwell-Phillipps. It is a play of no literary merit, and its composition has been ascribed to Dekker and Drayton.

Alls Well that ends Well In its present form dates from 1597-1602, but is supposed to be referred to by Meres in 1598 under the title of *Love's Labor's Won.* The plot is taken from Boccaccio's Decameron; only the comic parts, says Brandes, being of Shakespeare's invention. Swinburne assigns to it a second

place among the Shakespeare plays, and Stotsenburg sees in it signs of more than one author.

Measure for Measure Composed in 1603-4 but first published in the folio. It was founded, says Castle, on *Promos and Cassandra,* a comedy by George Whetstone of 1578. In 1602 Heywood and Chettle wrote a play for Henslowe called "Like quits Like," an expression found in Act V. 6. of *Measure for Measure.*

Macbeth A first rate play of 1606, published in 1610. Portions of it are Middleton's, says Swinburne. One of the most striking scenes is by a hack, says Lee. T. W. White thinks it is by Chapman. Certain confusions in the plot indicate the participation of more than one writer.

Timon of Athens Dates from 1607-10, and first published in the folio. Only in part by Shakespeare, says Dowden. No scholar questions the part

taken by some hireling in *Timon,* say Swinburne and Lee.

Pericles A fourth rate play of 1607-8, although Masson and others say that it may be as early as 1588. Dryden called it Shakespeare's first play. It was published in 1609, and is not in the folio of 1623. Malone did not consider it to be Shakespeare's, and Masson suggests Greene as author. Says Jonson;

> "Like *Pericles,* and stale
> As the shrieve's crusts, and nasty as his fish
> Scraps out of every dish."

Only partly Shakespeare's, says Dowden. More than one author, says Swinburne. It was registered February 7 1603, but conditionally, not to be printed until permission was had from the owners.

Cymbeline About 1609-10 but not published until 1623. The vision of Posthumus is mummery by another hand, says Lee.

A Winters Tale Dates from 1610-11 but first published in 1623. It is attributed by T. W. White to Greene and Nash. Andrew Lang notes that Delphi is mentioned as Delphos, a place that has no existence, and that it is confused with Delos, thus locating the oracle on an island.

Henry VIII Composed in 1612 and first published in 1623. In 1601 Chettle was writing "Cardinal Wolsey's Life," and Chettle, Monday and Drayton were writing the "Rising of Cardinal Wolsey" for Henslowe. The present play is partly by Fletcher, says Lee. It is by Fletcher and Massinger, say Poel and Dowden.

Adding these eleven plays to the sixteen old plays retouched, we have a total of twenty seven plays out of thirty seven Shakespeare plays which are considered by competent critics, to contain the work of more than one author.

Some of the remaining plays have been attributed, by one writer or another, for more

or less substantial reasons, to other authors than Shakespeare. As follows;

Love's Labor Lost A play of 1585-91, which was published in 1598. An entirely orginal play; but the quarto states on the title page "Newly corrected and augmented by W. Shakspere," which does not of necessity imply that he was its author. In fact, the early date of its composition, which is fixed by internal evidence, such as references to the French wars of the eighties, almost certainly exclude the possibility of Shakspere's authorship. Brandes pronounces it to be by the author of the *Sonnets*. Reed gives it to Bacon, and T. W. White to Greene.

Comedy of Errors Composed between 1587-91 but not published until 1623. A vulgar parody of Plautus' "Menaechmi," probably by Greene, says T. W. White. A reference to the Spanish Armada as a recent event would appear to fix the date of its composition at

about 1588. Stotsenburg assigns it to Dekker or Porter. In any event, if it dates from 1588, it could not have been written by Shakspere.

Merchant of Venice A first rate play of 1594-6, published in 1598. Inspired by Marlowe's "Jew of Malta," but from a Spanish original; the names are Spanish. T. W. White assigns it to Peele.

2 Henry IV Composed about 1597-8 and published anonymously in 1600. Its composition antedates that of the first part, since in this quarto of 1600 Falstaff is called Oldcastle, while the 1598 quarto of the first part has already the change from Oldcastle to Falstaff. Both plays are attributed by T. W. White to Nash.

As You Like It 1599-1600, and published in 1608. The story is taken from Lodge's "Rosalynde," of 1590, and T. W. White assigns the play to Lodge.

Antony and Cleopatra A first rate play of 1606, published in 1608, and

Coriolanus 1608-9, first published in 1623, are both assigned by T. W. White to Bacon.

Tempest 1610-11, not published until 1623, is attributed by T. W. White to Chapman.

These eight plays bring the total number so far described, up to thirty five, leaving only two; *Much Ado about Nothing,* and *Twelfth Night,* concerning the authorship of which I have met with no conjecture. T. W. White dismisses them with the remark; "authorship unknown."

The foregoing review, brief and superficial as it is, ought to sufficiently exhibit upon what an insecure foundation rest both the popular idea of the unity of the Shakespeare plays, and that other wild theory that Will Shakspere, of Stratford, was the great author.

We may rest assured that many of the plays are revisions of older plays, and that many others were composed at a date so early that it precludes the possibility of the Will Shakspere authorship. So evident is this, that inveterate Stratfordians have been obliged to suppose that our Will wrote some of the plays while yet in Stratford. We need not trouble ourselves to combat this theory.

By the proved fact of collaboration then, we readily account for the knowledge of the classics, of law, medicine, seamanship, court life, foreign countries and all the rest, which has so tried the souls of the commentators.

By some means the name Shake-speare; please note not Shaks-pere, Shags-pere, nor Shax-per; acquired a commercial value, and the popular name was affixed to a variety of plays, just as stories or jests are fathered upon some noted raconteur of our own day; and it has remained, and will doubtless continue there. But it is only a name—nothing more.

Jonson and Beaumont retained the proprietorship of their plays, notwithstanding the performance of them at the Globe by the King's players. But no claimant has ever appeared for the authorship of the "Shakespeare" plays, except a name. It has therefore been said the "greatest of all our English poets is but a name."

Is is in fact, hardly too extravagant a conjecture to suppose, from the absence of unity of style in these plays, and from the way in which they were tossed into the folio, that they were neither more nor less than a part of the old stock of plays, and that Heminge and Condell owned them.

CHAPTER VI

"Our English Terence"

Voltaire found Shakespeare at once "an amazing genius," and "an indecent buffoon." "It appears," said he, in the prefatory matter to his drama of Semiramis, "that Nature pleased herself in assembling in the head of Shakespeare the highest degree of force and greatness, together with all that was most coarse, dull, low and detestable." S. G. Tallentyre, in her delightful life of Voltaire, explains this anomaly, which so perplexed Voltaire, by remarking that he did not know, as we do, "that many of the clowns, and the clownish jokes to which he took a just objection, were interpolations and not Shakespeare himself."

Both of these clever authors are in the right, but the world is still debating the question of who was the genius, and who the the clown.

It is evident that Will Shakspere was known among his contemporaries for a writer of a sort; as early as 1592 Greene sneered at him as an upstart crow who fancied that he could bombast out a blank verse as well as the best of us; Davies called him a comic writer, "Our English Terence"; and Jonson said that he was a bold thief who bought the reversion of old plays, and made each man's wit his own.

More than this, when Jonson published his *Sejanus,* after it had been acted at the Globe theatre in 1603, with Shakspere in the cast, he stated in the preface that "it was not the same with that which was acted on the public stage . . . a second pen had a good share in it . . . not to defraud so happy a genius of his right" he has replaced his own words in the play. It is not unreasonable to infer that the interpolater in this case, at whom this caustic shaft was aimed, was none other than Will Shakspere.

Drayton, in an elegy to Henry Reynolds, said "Shakespeare, thou hadst as smooth a

comic vein, Fitting the sock, and in thy natural brain &c." And in our own day George Brandes, best of Stratfordians, wrote of *All's Well that ends Well,* that only the comic parts were of Shakespeare's invention.

The author of the *Merchant of Venice,* whoever he was, made of Shylock, and without doubt, intended to make of him a pathetic and tragic character. But the Shakspere troupe gave the part to a buffoon. And Halliwell-Phillips has unearthed a tradition to the effect that Shakspere inserted some comic business for Iago, and gave the part to a popular comedian.

Given his character and reputation as we see them, it is a justifiable assumption that the perpetrator of these literary outrages was Will Shakspere himself; and we may deduce from their occurrence, that since no author would permit such changes in the interpretation of his work, Will Shakspere was not the author of these plays.

In adopting this theory we do not acknowledge that there is occasion to sup-

pose that a conspiracy was in existence to deceive the world as to the authorship of the plays; or for supposing that, in the case of any great number of them, some great personage was concealing his identity under an assumed name. The facts are that a large number of the plays were old; the work of writers whose names were known to those who were in the business of writing or of producing plays, and that they had been bought up by the Globe players and popularized. Shakspere's contemporaries give him credit for a talent of that sort. They have come down to us with his name attached to them because he was the latest editor; because his additions had increased their vogue, and because Heminge and Condell, recognizing these facts, and not much caring what the original authorship might be, sent them forth as by William Shakespeare.

It is contended by some Baconians, that Shakspere was entirely illiterate, and this is a most obscure subject, for, as a matter of fact, no specimen of his handwriting has

come down to us, except half a dozen signatures, which do not sustain the claim made by Heminge and Condell that he was a ready writer, and which, in fact, the unbelieving assert, were written by the law clerks who prepared the documents to which they are appended.

It is undoubtedly very disconcerting to be obliged to confess that no scraps of the handwriting of so—supposedly—celebrated and voluminous a writer should exist, and those who prefer to believe in the perfect illiteracy of the gentle Shakespeare are able to remind us that a large part of the work of the clowns was extemporaneous; Robert Wilson and Richard Tarleton were noted for "a quick, extemporall wit," and it is therefore not impossible that their parts may have been thus devised, and later written down by others.

Nevertheless, it is difficult to believe in the total illiteracy of William Shakspere, even if his parents and his children were totally illiterate. As a prominent member of the Company, acting in principal parts, it

would seem that he should have been able to read; and in his business as money lender, hardly less important to him than the stage, he could hardly have succeeded without some knowledge of writing, although the public scrivener was always in that day, at the service of the unlettered; nor could he have done what Jonson said he did without some learning. The field is open for conjecture.

My own firm conviction, based upon what we know, and upon the balancing of probabilities in what we do not positively know, is that Shakspere really did contribute something to the plays, and that his contribution was the writing of the comic parts; and that his contemporaries understood this to be the case.

The Shaksperian touch can very readily be recognized in the plays; there is nothing anywhere else just like the Shakspere buffoonery. When, at the performance of a Shakespeare play, some exquisite scene is followed by an irrelevant and grotesque intrusion of the buffoons and drunken clowns,

with the coarse haw-hawings and idiotic quibblings which so offended Voltaire, the auditor may confidently say, "here is the real Shakspere—Will Shakspere of Stratford." These fooleries delighted the groundlings of the day; they delighted Queen Elizabeth, whose taste was not of the most refined; and they made the plays profitable.

It is in the low comedy portions of the plays, and in them alone, that are to be found the Stratfordian allusions which identify the writer as a Stratford man.

Students find many names and references in the plays which indicate that some Warwickshire man had a share in their composition.

Michael Drayton was a Warwickshire man; he was a successful playwright, and has been put forward as a part author of the plays; but he did not come from Stratford.

The Taming of the Shrew. The following lines from the Induction to the *Taming of the Shrew,* contain several Stratfordian allusions.

The drunken tinker says;

1. Sly. What, would you make me mad? Am I not Christopher Slie, old Slies sonne of Burton-heath, by byrth a Pedler, by education a Cardmaker, by transmutation a Beare-heard, and now by present profession a Tinker. Aske Marrian Hacket the fat Alewife of Wincot if shee know me not; if she say I am not XIIII d. on the score for sheere Ale, score me up for the lyingst knave in Christendome.

The above lines, which do not occur in the old play of 1594, contain four references to Stratford;

a. Sly was a Stratford name, and although the drunkard in the old play was one "Slie," yet the name has been localised by the addition of the Christopher,

since one of that name is mentioned in Greene's diary in 1616, as living at Stratford.

b. Burton-heath, or Barton on the heath, a few miles to the south-east of Stratford, was the home of Edmund Lambert, who loaned John Shakspere 40 pds on the Asbies property in 1578.

c. Hacket is a name which still survives in the neighborhood.

d. Wincot, or Wilmcote, was near by. The Asbies' property of Mary Arden was situated at Wilmcote.

The *Tamynge of a Shrew* was entered in the Stationer's Register on May 2 1594, and was published anonymously in the same year, as "A pleasant Conceited History called the Tamynge of a Shrew, As it was sundry times acted by the Earle of Pembrook his servants." It was played at Henslowe's on June 11 1594. But it was known before 1594, since Greene alluded to it in his Menaphon, which was published in 1589.

The old play contained the Induction, with a 'Slie,' but without the Stratford allusions. It ended by Slie being carried in in his own apparel and left outside the tavern door still asleep. The tapster awakes him, and he concludes that he has been dreaming.

The old play is undoubtedly the original from which the play as we know it was developed. The folio of 1623 contains 1124 lines more than the quarto of 1594. The Induction alone contains 297 lines, while the Induction of the old play contained only 172 lines. Fleay thinks that the original was by Kyd, remodeled by Lodge, and added to by Shakespeare.

Now, if we turn to the *Merry Wives of Windsor,* we shall find further evidence of growth as the result of years of representation.

Merry Wives of Windsor. This play was first published in 1602, as "A most pleasant and excellent Conceited Comedie of Syr John Falstaff, and the Merrie Wives of Windsor, by William

Shakespeare, As it hath bene divers times Acted by the Right Honourable My Lord Chamberlain's Servantes, Both before her Majestie and elsewhere."

It contained 1620 lines; the present play has 2701 lines; an addition of 1081 lines.

Our folio play contains the following passages of interest in our present inquiry.

2. Act I. Scene 1.

a. Shal. Sir Hugh, perswade me not. I will make a Star Chamber matter of it; if he were twenty Sir John Falstoffs, he shall not abuse Robert Shallow Esquire.

Slen. In the County of Gloster, Justice of Peace and Coram.

Shal. I (Cosen Slender) and Cust-aloram.

Slen. I, and Rato lorum too, and a gentleman borne, (Master Parson) who

writes himselfe Armigero, in any Bill, Warrant, Quittance or Obligation, Armigero.

Shal. I that I doe, and have done any time these three hundred yeeres.

Slen. All his successors (gone before him) have don't, and all his Ancestors (that come after him) may; they may give the dozen white luces in their coate.

Shal. It is an olde Coate.

Evans. The dozen white lowses doe become an old coat well; it agrees well passant, it is a familiar beast to man, and signifies love.

. . . .

b. M.Page. I am glad to see you, good Master Slender.

Slen. How do's your fallow Greyhound, Sir, I heard say he was outrun on Cotsall.

M.Pa. It could not be Judg'd, Sir.

. . . .

c. Falstaff. Now Master Shallow, you'll complaine of me to the King?

Shal. Knight, you have beaten my men, kill'd my deere, and broke open my lodge.

Fal. But not kiss'd your Keeper's daughter?

The old play contains the dispute between Shallow and Falstaff in an undeveloped form;

Shal. N'ere talke to me, Ile make a Star Chamber matter of it.

. . . .

Fal. Now M. Shallow, you'le

complain of me to the Counsell, I hear?

Shal. Sir John, Sir John, you have hurt my keeper, kild my dogs, stolne my deere &c.

Among the changes which differentiate the new play from the old, is the elimination of profane expressions. This was the result of parliamentary legislation in 1605-6. Another is the addition of the reference to the Cotsall, or Cotswold games which were revived subsequently to the date of the quarto, and were held on the Cotswold Hills, near Stratford.

The bashful lover, the riddles, and the allusion to Greene Sleeves, a popular song, are additions which were added from time to time.

The white luces of Justice Shallow are also additions which were intended to touch up Sir Thomas Lucy of Charlecote, four miles from Stratford, and the addition testifies to Will Shakspere's hand in the work

of enlargement, for the old story of his deer stealing in Sir Thomas Lucy's park, and of his consequent punishment, still commands belief; although some writers, among whom is Mrs. Stopes, have endeavored to discredit it.

Mrs. Stopes argues that, as Sir Thomas Lucy died in 1600, and the allusions to luces and coats of arms did not appear in the 1602 or the 1619 editions of the play, it is improbable that the reference so long after his death, could have been intended for him. Can such anger dwell in divine minds? exclaims in effect, Mrs. Stopes.

A second Sir Thomas Lucy was living in London in 1595, who died in 1605, and who was succeeded by his son, the third Sir Thomas Lucy, who created a Park at Charlecote and who did make a Star Chamber matter of a deer stealing affair which occurred on his Worcester estate.

But Mrs. Stopes's attempt to disentangle the luces, the Lucys, and the deer stealing episode, are not entirely successful. In the

first place, the play of 1602 contains the Star Chamber threat and the deer stealing charge, and was published prior to the complaint of Sir Thomas 3d; and in the second place, if the white luces and the old coat allusions did not refer to the Lucys, to whom did they allude?

In 1592 on Sept. 25, Sir Thomas Lucy and other Commisioners, reported John Shakspere, the actor's father, as one of nine recusants who were liable to fines for non-attendance at church services. If the deer stealing episode ever occurred, this report could hardly have failed to revive the ancient grudge in the mind of Will Shakspere, and whether it did or not, it may have had a share in the imagining of Justice Shallow's old coat and white luces.

Our interest in the matter, however, is limited to establishing the Stratfordian character of the passage, in order to connect Will Shakspere with its composition.

The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth &c.

This play was registered on May 14, 1594,

but it was first published in 1598, in black letter. It was, however, a much older play, since Tarleton, who died in 1588, acted the part of the clown Dericke in it.

The play began with the trouble over the robbery of a carrier by one of Prince Henry's men, who is arrested. The Prince rescues him, and strikes the Chief Justice, in accordance with the legend. Then follow the King's reproaches, the repentance of the Prince, his assumption of the Crown, and the death of Henry IV. The new King throws over his old associates, and defies a French embassy. He besieges and captures Harfleur, wins the battle of Agincourt, and the play ends with the submission of the French princes, and Henry's betrothal to the French Princess Katherine.

A patriotic play, such as this, was naturally very popular, and it furnished the skeleton upon which three Henry plays of Shakespeare were built; *Henry IV,* parts 1 and 2, and *Henry V.* We shall see to what extent it was expanded.

1 Henry IV. This was first published anonymously in 1598. The text of the quarto was quite perfect. There were in all, eight editions before the folio of 1623, and all of them, except the first, attribute the play to Shakespeare.

2 Henry IV. The first and only quarto edition of this play was published anonymously in 1600. It is thought to have been written before the first part, as, although Oldcastle was altered to Falstaff before the first part was published, in 1598, the name Oldcastle is retained in one place in the quarto of the second part. And, since Jonson mentions *Silence* in "Every Man out of his Humour," in 1599, the second part of *Henry IV* must have been played not later than 1598-9.

The differences between the text of the quarto and the folio indicate that the quarto of *2 Henry IV* represented the play as it was acted. The passages which are omitted in the folio are the Falstaffian scenes, which were liked by the actors because of their

popularity, while some of the historical scenes are omitted in the quarto as tedious, and less popular than the comic scenes.

Henry V. Although "Harey the Vth" was played at Henslowe's on May 14, 1592, the first quarto was not published until much later; in 1600, and anonymously. It contains only about one half the number of *Henry V's* lines, but the speeches of Pistol are given in full.

Pistol must have been a much liked character. He is named on the title page of the quarto of *2 Henry IV* as "Swaggering Pistol," and in the quarto of *Henry V* as the "Antient Pistol."

The "Famous Victories" was "plaid by the Queen's Majestie's Players," *2 Henry IV* and *Henry V* by the Lord Chamberlain's Company.

The expansion of the "Famous Victories," which contains but 1641 lines, into the three Henry plays, which contain, in the quartos 7629 lines, and in the later folio of 1623, 9869 lines, testifies at once to the im-

mense popularity of the subject, and to the manner of its development. Oldcastle, who in the old play, made a single appearance with but six lines to speak, became Falstaff, and his drolleries were infinitely extended. Bardolph, Nym, Pistol, Poins and Peto, the Irish, Scotch and Welsh captains; and Shallow and Silence, are all new creations and additions to the old play.

The comic scenes in the three folio plays constitute about one third part of the whole, and are evidently the result of growth in response to the popular demand for amusement.

It is in these comic scenes, and more particularly, in *2 Henry IV*, that we find a number of Stratfordian allusions.

Thus we find;

3. *2 Henry IV*. 1. 2. Falstaff is speaking;

a. Fal. He may keep his owne Grace, but he is almost out of mind, I can assure him. What said M. Dumbledon

about the satten for my short cloake, and slops?

It appears that Dumbledon is a Stratford name. In the same play we have;

b. Act II. 4.

1st Drawer. What hast thou brought there? Apple-Johns? thou know'st Sir John cannot endure an Apple-John.

2d Draw. Thou say'st true. The Prince once set a Dish of Apple-Johns before him and told him there were five more Sir Johns; and putting off his Hat, said, I will now take my leave of these sixe drie, round, old-wither'd Knights.

According to Miss Rose Kingsley, who has written upon "Shakespeare in Warwickshire," apple johns are still to be found at Dancing Marston. But it may have been a

common expression, since Jonson uses the term in "Every Man out of his Humour," where one Shift says, "as I am a poor esquire about the town here, they call me master apple john."

In *2 Henry IV.* III. 2. the author makes another attack upon the Lucys in the person of Shallow;

c. Shal. I was call'd anything: and I would have done anything indeede too, and roundly too. There was I, and little John Doit of Staffordshire, and blacke George Bare, and Francis Pick - bone, and Will Squele, a Cot-sal-man, you had not foure such Swindge-bucklers in all the Innes of Court againe.

. . . .

Fal. . . . This same starved Justice hath done nothing but prate to me of the

wildnesse of his Youth, and the Feates he hath done about Turnball-street, and every third word a Lye . . . he was for all the world, like a forked Radish, with a Head fantastically carved upon it with a Knife . . . If the young Dace be a Bayt for the old Pike, I see no reason, in the Law of Nature, but I may snap at him.

d, And in Act V. 1.

Shal. W e l l conceited D a v y: about thy Businesse, Davy.

Davy. I beseech you sir, to countenance William Visor of Woncot against Clement Perkes of the hill.

Shal. There are many complaints, Davy, against that Visor, that Visor is an ar-

rant Knave, on my knowledge.

Davy. I graunt your Worship that he is a knave Sir, but yet, Heaven forbid Sir, but a Knave should have some Countenance at his friends request.

This William Visor was a neighbor of the Ardens at Wilmcote, and there was a John Perkes of Snitterfield, whose daughter married Robert Webbe, a cousin of Will Shakspere's. Miss Kingsley says that Cherry Orchard farm, at Weston, two miles from Stratford, is still known as the Hill farm.

Bardolph was the name of a Chamberlain of Stratford in 1585-6, and a further coincidence which has been noted to account for the connection of Falstaff, or Oldcastle, with Bardolph, is found in the fact that a Sir Roger Cobham, or Oldcastle, was married to an Ann Bardolph.

Poins and Peto are Warwickshire names, and Captain Fluellen may have had as a

prototype one William Fluellen, who was one of the nine Stratford recusants already alluded to.

Miss Kingsley makes much of an expression used by Ulysses in Troilus and Cressida, III, 3, "The fool slides o'er the ice that you should break," as having been copied from "Foole upon Foole," a book published in 1600 by Robert Armin, Shakspere's fellow actor; wherein the same expression is made use of in relating an incident said to have occurred at Evesham on the Avon, about ten miles below Stratford. There is of course, no ground for supposing that Shakspere was the only person who had access to Armin's book, or who might have made use of an expression which had caught his fancy.

We meet the "poor Johns" again in the Tempest, II. 2., where Trinculo says;

> "A fish, hee smels like a fish; a very ancient and fishlike smell; a kinde of, not of the newest, poore-John &c."

We will leave to those who believe in the identity of the author of *Love's Labors Lost* and of the *Tempest,* and in his immense growth in spirituality during the intervening years, the problem of explaining why the comedy of one of his earliest plays should be so artificial and scholarly, and that of one of his latest so indecently coarse.

Other Warwickshire expressions and allusions are to be found in the plays; in fact, it is said that nearly every English County is represented in allusions to local customs or dialects; but, with the exception of Sir Roland De Boys and to the Forest of Arden, in *As you Like it,* there are no other distinctively Stratfordian references in the plays. And I will again remind the reader that as Michael Drayton, although best known to us as a poet, was a successful playwright, and a Warwickshire man, references to Warwickshire in general may be attributed to him with equal probability as to Will Shakspere.

Such then, are the portions of the plays with which we may, with some certainty, associate the name of Will Shakspere of Stratford, and we can recognize without difficulty, in similar scenes, the same hand elsewhere in the plays.

It is difficult to conceive that Bacon, or any town-bred man, could have given us the Dogberrys, the Shallows, and the country bumpkins who wander on and off the scenes, often quite irrelevantly and without any part in the development of the tale.

But Will Shakspere was of the soil himself; he knew such people in the flesh, and was familiar with their thought and speech. He had the wit to reproduce them, and the reality of his characters, and the human nature in them, reached his audiences, and, much more than the fine literary qualities of the dramas, secured their success.

He popularised old plays, and years of representation developed them. In time the original authors were forgotten by the many.

This, in effect, is what Greene and Jonson said of Shakspere; and it explains the sort of success he had; and it also explains his personal insignificance and obscurity.

In a word, it explains what has been called the mystery of William Shakspere of Stratford.

CHAPTER VII

THE SILENT SHAKESPEARE

We have now reached the extreme limit of solid ground, and, to pursue the subject farther, must venture upon the sea of conjecture.

Thus far we have been guided by facts, and by conclusions, more or less disputable it is true, but which nevertheless have been deduced not unreasonably from facts. We are tolerably certain that Will Shakspere was not the man to write genius into the plays, and that as a matter of fact, he did not, and never during his lifetime, was credited with having done so. It is also tolerably certain that most of the plays had a long history before they took the form in which they have reached us, and that many minds, both of writers and of actors, of which last Will Shakspere was one, had a share in shaping them.

But if any one master mind, outside of the circle of writers previously herein named, impressed his greatness and noble personality upon the plays, research has failed to discover him. He himself has been silent as to his share in the work, and history has been silent about him. Unlike Marlowe, Dekker, Beaumont, Jonson and the rest, whose work is known and recognized, that greater than them all lived unrecognized, and even to this day "the greatest of all our English poets is only a name." He is the Silent Shakespeare.

What if their plots be absurd, impossible and without moral sense; the comedy vulgar buffoonery, and the ladies' hussies; all of which Dr. Johnson discovered long ago; what, if even as plays, the Shakespeare plays have been superseded by modern works which some of us may prefer to witness; as literature the world has proclaimed them supreme.

Who then was Shakespeare; did such a being exist apart from the collaborators who, as we now know, worked on the Shakespeare plays?

There must be only a few of the plays which do not bear testimony to the participation of other hands, but it is also perhaps true that in nearly all of them there is something of what we call "Shakespeare."

Attempts have been made to determine the authorship sought for by internal evidence gathered from study of the plays themselves; thus they have been attributed to Bacon because of a certain familiarity with legal terms; to Raleigh because of a similar familiarity with nautical terms, this among other things; and to Dekker and others because of characteristics of style.

But we might as well look for the author in the lists of physicians, or of naturalists, or of philosophers, for there is something of all these to be found in the plays. While in many places the frequent occurrence of legal phrases is such as to suggest a mind trained to their habitual use, there is nothing of this that any one of half a dozen of the collaborators could not have furnished; and no special knowledge of the sea shown that any one

of half the population of the island might not have possessed.

Perhaps the most illuminating clue to the undiscovered authorship of the plays to be derived from their critical study is found in the conclusion that they are permeated throughout by Roman Catholic and aristocratic sentiments. This vein has been well worked by Mr. Geo. Wilkes, and, even after making due allowance for a fact which he ignored; that in Shakespeare's day the stage was a target for the dislike of the Puritans; and that playwrights and actors retaliated by lampooning the Puritans in their plays; enough remains of an intimate knowledge of, and of reverence for Roman Catholic doctrine and practice to make it clear that some one much in sympathy with that cult had a large share in the writing of some of the most beautiful passages in the plays. This fact, as Mr. Wilkes justly remarks, excludes Bacon from the list of possibilities.

So, too, with the aristocratic tendencies of the plays; only a single one, the *Merry*

Wives of Windsor, is without its titled personages; in only two, *As you Like It,* and *Timon of Athens,* do we find the poor well spoken of; and Mr. Wilkes describes this feature of the plays as servility to rank and contempt for the poor.

Such a cast of mind is not incompatible with great talents, for Bacon's character was of this description. But it is a harsh judgment to pronounce upon the author, and by no means necessarily a true one. It is equally within the limits of probability that the writer held a genuine belief in the value to the nation of nobility, and a low opinion of the vulgar. If Carlyle could characterise the population of England in his day as "mostly fools," and the founders of the Constitution of the United States could feel such distrust of the people as that much-respected document evidences, surely an aristocrat of Elizabeth's England may well be supposed to entertain similar, but intensified views.

In the *Nineteenth Century* of May, 1906, Sir Sidney Lee called attention to the dis-

covery by Mr. James Greenstreet among the Domestic State Papers of Queen Elizabeth's reign, of two letters dated June 30 1599, from London to Antwerp and Venice, in which it is stated that the Earl of Derby "is busyed only in penning Comedies for the common players."

Mr. Greenstreet published his discovery in the "Genealogist" in 1891 and 1892, in three articles, in which he attempted to prove that the Earl was the real Shakespeare.

It is perhaps not strange that a devoted Stratfordian should not have thought it worth while to follow up the investigation which Mr. Greenstreet's death closed, and yet there are circumstances which lend considerable interest and importance to the matter.

The 6th Earl of the Catholic House of Derby was William Stanley, whose initials are the same as those of William Shakespeare.

More important is the fact that the Stanleys were undoubtedly in close touch with

the Shakspere players. Ferdinando Stanley, the elder brother of William Stanley, was the Lord Strange who maintained the theatrical company of which Will Shakspere was a member. This patronage was continued after he became Earl, and for a time after his death, by his widow, the Countess of Derby. From 1594 until 1617 at least, William Stanley maintained his connection with the stage.

This is sufficiently interesting to justify some account of the house of Derby, and of the 6th Earl in particular; taken from the Stanley Papers, and from the above mentioned articles of Mr. Greenstreet.

The 4th Earl Henry Stanley, married Feb. 7, 1555, Margaret Clifford, who was descended from Charles Brandon and Mary Tudor, sister of Henry VIII. He died Sept. 25 1593, and was succeeded by his eldest son;

The 5th Earl — Ferdinando Stanley, who had borne the title of Lord Strange from 1572 until his accession, and who had maintained the theatrical company known as Lord Strange's, and to which Will Shakspere belonged from about 1576-7. Ferdinando died within a year on April 16 1594, and was succeeded by his younger brother;

The 6th Earl — William Stanley, the subject of this sketch, who married almost immediately, on June 26 1594, Elizabeth Vere, daughter of the 17th Earl of Oxford.

William Stanley was born in London. In 1572, says Mr. Greenstreet, he went to St. John's College, Oxford, with his brothers, Lord Strange and Francis Stanley. It seems that the younger brothers had dis-

pleased the Queen in some way, for she writes under date of Dec. 6 1571 to Lord Strange that she "is sorry not to have found the like earnest good will to her service in his brethren."

In 1582 he went to France with a preceptor, and after three years to Spain, where he wounded his adversary in a duel, and had to escape to France in disguise.

From France to Italy, High Germany, Egypt, the Barbary coast, Palestine and to Constantinople, where he was put into prison. After a romantic release, he went to Russia and to Greenland.

In 1585 his father, the 4th Earl, with whom he was a favorite, was received as Ambassador to the Court of France; and Mr. Greenstreet thinks that he joined the English army in the Netherlands, as a soldier and comrade in arms of the Earl of Southampton.

He was at home again from December 1587 to July 1590, as may be learned from the records of Lathom House, one of the

family seats. One or two extracts from these records follow;

1587 —July 13, 14. Lathom. Leicesters troupe played.
Dec. 17. Mr. William Stanley came home from Chester.

1588 —Oct. 12. The Queens players came.

1588-9 —Jan. 7 & 12. Derbys, or Lord Stranges players played.

1589-90—Jan. 22. Sir Edward Fitton came at night.

Sir Edward Fitton was the father of Mistress Mary Fitton, whom some suppose to be the Dark Lady of the Sonnets, and Mr. Greenstreet suggests that William Stanley may have been one of the three Wills of the Sonnets.

The Stanley Papers refer to William Stanley as the great Sir William, whose travels and martial exploits are well known.

He was abroad again in 1594, when Ferdinando died, and returning home, at once became involved in litigation with his

nieces over his estates, which he found to be held by four Bishops for the use of these two ladies.

He was made K. G. on April 23 1601; served as privy counsellor extraordinary from March to May 1603, and was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Lancashire and Cheshire on Dec. 22 1607. His London residence was in Canon Row, Westminster.

Chapman refers to him in his preface to the Iliad in 1594, as "most ingenious Darby." Addressing his friend, Matthew Roydon, he says;

> "But I stay this spleen when I remember, my good Matthew, how joyfully oftentimes you reported unto me that most ingenious Darby, deep searching Northumberland, and skill embracing heir of Hunsdon had most profitably entertained learning in themselves to the vital warmth of freezing science and to the admirable lustre of their true nobility &c."

William Stanley's connection with the stage has been explained.

Northumberland maintained a company of players which was known as the Lord Admiral's Company.

Hunsdon's heir was George Carey, who succeeded to the title of Lord Hunsdon upon the death of his father, who was the Lord Chamberlain on July 23 1596, and continued to be the patron of his company, known as the Lord Chamberlain's.

Thus Chapman, in naming Darby, Northumberland and Hunsdon, was paying court to three famous patrons of the stage.

In 1637 William Stanley surrendered his estate, reserving to himself only one thousand pounds a year, to his eldest son James, and retired to a country house on the Dee, near Chester, where he died in 1642.

James was the 7th Earl, the great Earl, who espoused the royalist cause, was taken prisoner after the battle of Worcester, and was beheaded on Oct. 15 1651.

Since William Stanley, at once soldier, statesman, courtier and scholar, was connected with the stage for many years; first by inheritance from his brother, and later by his own choice; was connected with the very company of which Will Shakspere was a member; and was himself a dramatist, busying himself in 1599 "only in writing comedies for the common players"; it is difficult to escape the conclusion that he had a hand in shaping the Shakespeare plays.

We may conceive of him as aiding in the revision of the old plays; adding perhaps, those fine passages which Will Shakspere and his fellows sometimes omitted in representation in order to make room for their own buffooneries, but which have happily been preserved to enrich all time.

The writer has now executed his design of setting out the considerations which make for the rejection of the view that Will Shakspere was our Shakespeare. Volumes might have been written—have been written—on the subject, and to treat it with any larger

degree of detail would involve much repetition of that which has been written by others, and which is accessible to all.

A brief summary of the argument may be useful, and will make a suitable ending.

The record of Will Shakspere's life traverses the theory that he was a great genius.

His contemporaries assigned to him an inferior and not altogether creditable role in the production of the plays; a fact to which very little attention has been given.

He did not write the poems. His patron was not Southampton, but Lord Strange. In the *Sonnets,* which are undoubtedly by the same hand as the *Venus,* and the *Lucrece,* it is distinctly stated that the name under which they appeared, William Shakespeare, was but a pen name.

There is no evidence, worthy of the name, that the plays were his. The one and only contemporary

writer who distinctly identified the actor with the genius, namely Ben Jonson, did so only in his well-known ode, "To the memory of my beloved." In the title, as well as in the body of the ode, he contradicted every other known utterance by him, to the number of half a dozen, on the subject. Every other remark made by him, or reported of him, shows that he did not like Will Shakspere, and indeed, regarded him as a very ordinary person.

The history of the plays, and the internal evidences of style, fix the authorship in great part elsewhere.

The occurrence of Stratfordian allusions only in the comic scenes; which scenes are usually irrelevant to the action of the drama, and distinctly differing in style, point to the explanation that these were the contributions of Will Shakspere.

The suggestion, first offered by Mr. Greenstreet, as to the genius who stamped his individuality upon the plays, plausibly answers the question "Who was Shakespeare?" by replying; William Stanley was William Shakespeare.

Finis.

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