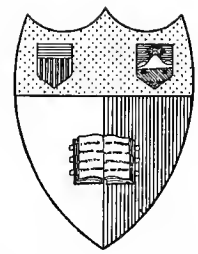

SHAKESPEARE THE PLAYER

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

THE FELTON PORTRAIT

SHAKESPEARE

THE PLAYER

AND OTHER PAPERS ILLUSTRATIVE
OF SHAKESPEARE'S INDIVIDUALITY

BY ALEXANDER CARGILL

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the Memory of the late J. O. HALLIWELL-PHILLIPPS, of London and Brighton, the distinguished Shakespearean biographer and commentator, who not only inspired the writer with enthusiasm for the study of the life and works of the great Dramatist, but rendered him many services while inquiring into the *personalia* of Shakespeare.

Also in affectionate remembrance of DAVID MASSON, LL.D., Litt.D., Professor of Rhetoric and English Literature in the University of Edinburgh, and Historiographer Royal for Scotland; than whom there never was a truer admirer or abler exponent of Shakespeare's genius.

INTRODUCTION

IT is surely one of the most extraordinary examples of the irony of fate, in its relation to the affairs of men, that, of the personal history of one of the greatest human beings born into this world since the dawn of the Christian era, so very few trustworthy facts should be available for all who pause in wonder at mention of the name of William Shakespeare. It is now close on three hundred years since Shakespeare died; yet we know less about the man himself and his career than of certain famous men who lived a thousand years before him.

Personally, I prefer to think of Shakespeare as an ordinary flesh-and-blood creature indeed, but one ever wrapped about with a magic mantle as was Prospero, with a cloudy, an ethereal *something* to conceal his personality from the gaze of the world, and so to appraise him as a man supremely apart—a being, as it were, 'enskyed' by virtue of that amazing endowment of mind and spirit which he has bequeathed to us in his works. Some one has finely said of Shakespeare that, with that innate modesty which usually accompanies lofty genius, he, in the evening of his day, *gently tapped*, as it were, at the door of the world, handed in his amazing gift, *almost without a word about himself*, and passed on.[1] It is in this sense that I prefer to think of

[1] See Appendix A.

Shakespeare the man; and yet, the few facts concerning him and his work that have come down to us, how precious do we reckon them, and how eagerly do some of us search and rummage among our archives to add to them, though we may stumble upon no more than a mere reference to his name.

But of the accredited facts appertaining to the life of Shakespeare, those that concern his career *as a player* are certainly the most noteworthy in point of number, and also in regard to their actual human interest. If his career as a great creative poet and dramatist can only be surmised from a study of his works, that is, without actual evidence of the progression of his genius from height to height, we can nevertheless now and again visualise the superman Shakespeare, living and moving as a player among a throng of players, acting his own palpable part, alike on the stage of the theatre and on the stage of life, and acting it always honourably and successfully.

In the following chapters it is my aim to discern as far as possible something of the *real self* of Shakespeare—that is, his form and figure and human personality as revealed in his career as a player and as the 'fellow' of certain notable contemporaries of his time. The leading chapter, namely, that on 'Shakespeare the Player,' will suffice for this aspect of his workaday life. It was published some years ago as an article in *Scribner's Magazine*, but as no fresh facts of any consequence appertaining to the theme have in the interval been discovered, its republication will, it is hoped, not detract from interest in the subject for all Shakespearean students, but may, in view of the tercentenary of his death, add not a little interest to it.

With regard to the chapter on the 'Physiognomy and Portraits of Shakespeare,' it has to be admitted that no new facts have come to light regarding the personal history of the dramatist, since, as an article, the chapter was published in the *Strand Magazine* (September 1894). True, some new portraits are now added to the original gallery. But these are chiefly 'ideal' portraits, and have otherwise no value, though they are interesting from one point of view or another outside the domain of truth to nature. Still, the gallery of Shakespeare portraits here presented has a special interest, since it must ever contain the sole and final view of the man himself as he appeared in the flesh.

The chapters entitled 'Contemporary References to Shakespeare' and 'Some of Shakespeare's Kinsfolk' are now published for the first time. Apart from his parents and ancestry, his wife, Anne Hathaway, his brothers and sisters, his son and daughters and their husbands, we think of his friends—of, for instance, Ben Jonson, Michael Drayton, and other stage-associates; of his patrons, the Earl of Southampton and the Earl of Pembroke; of his notable fellow-actors, the Burbages; of Heminge and Condell, who edited the first complete edition of his works; of his townsman, Richard Quyney and his son Thomas, and others. These are referred to chiefly in the opening chapters. What a delightful and satisfying gallery of portraits these would form could we only produce all the originals. But, alas!

'In the dark backward and abysm of Time'

many of these figures lie buried. A few, however, are shown in the following pages and are certainly of strong interest.

The question has often arisen, and, indeed, has been a source of much perplexity—Did Shakespeare ever visit foreign countries either in a professional or private capacity? Was he ever outside his own native England? There is, unfortunately, no positive evidence to show that he ever travelled beyond the land which gave him birth. His journeys were mainly between Warwickshire and the Metropolis. It is, of course, easy to assume that, because of his apparent intimacy, as revealed in his writings, with, say, a country like Italy, he received his impressions of that country and its people from personal observation; yet it were idle, without any evidence, to suppose that Shakespeare ever crossed the English Channel.

It is otherwise, however, when the question relates to a visit to Scotland, where the same assumption arises, and that in connection with at least one of his great dramas—*Macbeth*. A chapter on this interesting subject forms part of the present volume, Shakespeare's name being linked with that of his great friend and associate, Ben Jonson. As is well known, Ben Jonson in the year 1618 paid a memorable visit to the poet Drummond at Hawthornden, near Edinburgh. This chapter, though treating mainly of Jonson's visit, also discusses the question as to whether Shakespeare himself ever ventured north of the Tweed.

The problem of the fate of the manuscripts of Shakespeare has tantalised many of the dramatist's admirers, and, indeed, has been responsible for much scepticism as to the authorship of the plays. Some explanation of the non-existence of any Shakespeare MSS. is, therefore, called for, and a chapter on the subject, 'The Mystery of the Manuscripts,' is included in the present work.

A final chapter deals with the 'Death of Shakespeare,' and fittingly brings the work to a close.

I have to thank my friends, Mr. W. Forbes Gray, F.S.A.Scot., author of *Poets Laureate of England: Their History and Their Odes* (Pitman, 1914), etc., and Mr. David Cuthbertson of the Edinburgh University Library, for their kindness in revising the proof-sheets, and especially for checking the accuracy of my references and other essential data.

I also take this opportunity of expressing my cordial thanks to the following firms for granting me permission to reprint those articles which were originally published by them, viz.:—Messrs. W. and R. Chambers, Edinburgh (*Mystery of the Manuscripts*, and *Shakespeare and Ben Jonson in Scotland*); Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York (*Shakespeare as an Actor*); Messrs. Newnes and Co., London (*Portraits of Shakespeare*); The Proprietors of *The Globe*, London (*The Globe Theatre*).

A. C.

February 1916.

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THE figure of William Shakespeare, in the character of histrion or player, as we endeavour to observe its movements across the stage of a comparatively brief career, is, it must be confessed, tantalisingly elusive, dim, and in some degree ineffective. We seem somehow to see more of the shadow of the figure than of its actual self and substance. And yet, by the aid of assured data, much of which is embodied in the present chapter, quite as much is known of the facts of Shakespeare's career as

a wearer of the sock and buskin as of his colossal work of authorship. In Sonnet cx., Shakespeare referring, as some critics imagine, to his histrionic experiences, is supposed thus to lament of himself:

> 'Alas, 'tis true I have gone here and there
> And made myself a motley to the view.'

Whether the reference be rightly or wrongly interpreted, it is perhaps not too much to say that the profoundly interesting questions connected with Shakespeare's stage life have had comparatively little attention paid them alike by students of his works and the multitude of his admirers.

In his twenty-second year, as all accounts agree, Shakespeare began the serious business of life, and that in one of the most unlikely capacities. If, hitherto, he had been foolish enough to entertain, as young fanciful fellows sometimes do, any notion of attaching himself to a theatre in the rôle of actor so soon as he arrived in London, then he must have been rudely disappointed. The very doors of the place were, so to speak, shut against him at first; and so, according to a tradition, he had for a time to pick up a livelihood as a horse-holder outside. And yet, how well and admirably he seems to have acquitted himself in the circumstances!

In a manuscript note preserved in the University Library, Edinburgh, and written, according to Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps, about the year 1748, there is the following reference to young Shakespeare's first employment on coming to London:

'Sir William Davenant, who has been called a natural son of our author, used to tell the following whimsical story of

him: Shakespeare, when he first came from the country to the playhouse, was not admitted to act; but as it was then the custom for the people of fashion to come on horseback to entertainments of all kinds, it was Shakespeare's employment for a time, with several other poor boys belonging to the company, to hold the horses and take care of them during the representation. By his dexterity and care he soon got a great deal of business in this way, and was personally known to most of the quality that frequented the house; insomuch that, being obliged, before he was taken into a higher and more honourable employment within doors, to train up boys to assist him, it became long afterward a usual way among them to recommend themselves by saying that they were Shakespeare's boys.'

In another account, traceable to the same source, but which has the additional value of having the endorsement of Betterton the actor, it is stated of Shakespeare's first connection with the theatre that

'When he came to London he was without money and friends, and being a stranger, he knew not to whom to apply, nor by what means to support himself. At that time, coaches not being in use, and as gentlemen were accustomed to ride to the playhouse, Shakespeare, driven to the last necessity, went to the playhouse door and pick'd up a little money by taking care of the gentlemen's horses who came to the play. He became eminent even in that profession, and was taken notice of for his skill and diligence in it: he had soon more business than he himself could manage, and at last hired boys under him, who were known by the name of Shakespeare's boys. Some of the players, accidentally

conversing with him, found him so acute and master of so fine a conversation that, struck therewith, they recommended him to the house, in which he was first admitted in a very low station, but he did not remain long so, for he soon distinguished himself, if not as an extraordinary actor, at least as a fine writer.'

If Shakespeare began his theatrical career in these not too hopeful circumstances, it would seem, nevertheless, according to these versions of its beginning, that he made the very best of his lot, leading as the effort did to great and glorious consequences. From the very outset of his London life, that shrewd good sense, which is not infrequently allied to the loftiest genius, was a pre-eminent quality of Shakespeare's character. Whatever faults he may have been guilty of at Stratford-on-Avon he now sought to efface, so far as that could be done, by assiduous industry and exemplary conduct, which, in the peculiar circumstances, did him no little credit.

It is not definitely known at what London theatre Shakespeare began his legitimate connection with the stage. At all events, there is no authentic record of the fact extant. Tradition has, however, assigned the honour of this rare distinction to the Red Bull Playhouse, which stood on a plot of ground, formerly called the Red Bull Yard, near the upper end of St. John's Street, Clerkenwell. But the probability is that it was at the Curtain Theatre 'in the Moorefieldes' where he first began his histrionic career. This place of entertainment and 'the Theatre,' as Burbage's place was distinctively named, were the only two theatres in the city proper when young Shakespeare first

arrived in London, and were both situated on the north side of the Thames. It was against these two theatres especially that the Puritanical writers of the day hurled their bolts of denunciation. These buildings were the objects of their wrath and invective, and had heaped upon them copious floods of furious abuse. Typical diatribes are to be found in John Northbrooke's 'Treatise' (1579) in a dialogue between Youth and Age; and in a letter addressed to Sir Francis Walsingham, Secretary to Queen Elizabeth, and dated January 15, 1586 (Harleian MSS., No. 286), in which the writer dwells on the great number of actors performing in the city of London, and deplores the fact that they not only play every day of the week, but also on Sundays. He says:

'The daylie abuse of Stage Playes is such an offence to the godlie, and so great a hindrance to the gospell, as the papists do exceedinglie rejoyce at the bleamish thereof, and not without cause: for every day in the weake the Players billes are sett up in sondry places of the citie, some in the name of her Majesties menne, some the Earl of Leicester; some the E. of Oxford, the Lo. Admyralles and divers others: so that when the Belles tole to the Lectorer, the trumpets sound to the Stages, whereat the wicked Faction of Rome laugheth for joye, while the godlie weep for sorrow—Woe is me! the Playe houses are pestered when the churches are naked: at the one it is not possible to gett a place, at the other voyd seates are plentie. The profaning of the Sabbath is redressed, but as badde a custom retayned, and yet still our long sufferyng God forbayreth to punish. It is a wofull sight to see two hundred proude Players gitt in

their silkes, where five hundred poore people sterve in the streets. But yf needs this mischief must be tollerated whereat, no doubt, the highest frowneth, yet for God's sake, Sir, lett every stage in London pay a weakely pention to the pore, that *ex hoc malo proveniat aliquod bonum*: but it were raythe to be wished that Players might be used as Apollo did his laughing—*semel in anno* * * * * * *. Nowe mee thinkes, I see your Honour smyle and saye to yourself, these things are fitter for the pulpitt than a Souldier's penne; but God who searcheth the hart and reynes, knoweth that I write not hypocritically, but from the wearie sorrow of my soul.'

It was to an institution thus anathematised that young Shakespeare found himself admitted. But whether it was actually on (or behind) the stage of the Curtain Theatre, or of the Red Bull Playhouse, that he made his first acquaintance with the appurtenances of the actor's calling, to which he now aspired, no direct evidence is known to exist.

If we are to credit the testimony (considered, it may be said, of no great value by the eminent Shakespearean biographer and critic, Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps) of a writer in the London *Chronicle* of 1769, then Shakespeare's right of admission to the boards of the theatre rested, at first, on no exceptional personal recommendation. This writer says: 'His first admission into the playhouse was suitable to his appearance; a stranger, and ignorant of the art, he was glad to be taken into the company in a very mean rank; nor did his performance recommend him to any distinguished notice.' In a different tone Aubrey writes of him: 'This Wm. being inclined naturally to poetry and *acting* came to London, and was an actor at one of the playhouses, and did

act exceedingly well. . . . He began early to make essayes at dramatique poetry, which at that time was very lowe, and his playes took well. He was a handsome and well-shap'd man, very good company.' The 'very mean rank' referred to in the former quotation would, however, be probably suggestive of the tradition which assigns to Shakespeare the humble, but—to him—very useful, part of prompter's assistant as his first direct connection with the stage; while Aubrey's compliment as to his acting 'exceedingly well' referred evidently to a later period of the dramatist's career.

But whatever claims on purely personal grounds Shakespeare may have had, by virtue of which he sought, in any capacity, an admission to the stage, there is no doubt that, having once secured his footing, his progress was marvellously rapid. And although for nearly five years—between 1587 and 1592—his London life presents almost a blank to us, yielding not a particle of trustworthy fact as to his doings, in the latter year we find him rising above the horizon, and attracting considerable notice as a popular dramatist. It is a most suggestive question—how was young Shakespeare employed during the interval? The remarkable evidence of his fellow-dramatist, Robert Greene, is conclusive, at least with regard to one point. Shakespeare certainly could not have eaten the bread of idleness. How was 'an absolute *Johannes factotum*' to do that? According to Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps, 'this interval must have been the chief period of Shakespeare's literary education. Removed prematurely from school; residing with illiterate relatives in a bookless neighbourhood; thrown into the midst of occupations adverse to scholastic

progress—it is difficult to believe that, when he first left Stratford, he was not all but destitute of polished accomplishments. . . . After he had once, however, gained a footing in London, he would have been placed under different conditions.' And we may be well assured that he made the most of such conditions. In addition to the literary advantages of his new associations, it may be supposed that, while fulfilling his other engagements, whether as a clever playwright or as an actor who was now acquiring a social if not a professional distinction, Shakespeare must have been carefully schooling himself to acquire proficiency in the latter capacity. For, as yet, in so brief an interval, he could scarcely have discovered for himself that he was to earn such a degree of fame and fortune as a dramatist as to warrant him forgoing almost wholly his dependence on the actor's avocation.

The extraordinary testimony to the personal character of the rising dramatist-actor left on record in Robert Greene's rancorous pamphlet, *A Groat's-worth of Wit*, bears so directly on this period of his career, and is of itself so valuable, that it is impossible to omit, in a sketch like the present, the well-known reference and the singular sequel to it. Besides, it is an especially important testimony, as in the pamphlet in question not only is the earliest authentic notice of Shakespeare's London career to be found, but likewise the first discovered quotation from the works which he had already written. *A Groat's-worth of Wit, bought with a Million of Repentance* was written by Greene almost immediately before his death in 1592. This third-rate dramatist, broken down prematurely by a life of profligacy, would seem to have penned this death-bed tract

as a warning to others, specially singling out those who had been his boon associates, among whom were Peele, Marlowe, and Lodge. With the reality of death in view, the wretched author, bewailing his own pitiful career, urges his friends to profit by his example and relinquish the thankless labour of catering for the theatre. After describing the players as puppets speaking from the mouths of the dramatists, he goes on to say :

'Is it not strange that I, to whome they al haue beene beholding: is it not like that you, to whome they al haue beene beholding, shall (were ye in that case that I am now) be both at once of them forsaken? Yes, trust them not; for there is an upstart Crow, beautified with our feathers, that, with his *Tygers heart wrapt in a players hide* ['O Tiger's heart, wrapt in a woman's hide'—see third part of *Henry VI*] supposes he is as well able to bumbast out a blanke verse as the best of you; and being an absolute *Johannes factotum* is, in his owne conceit, the only Shake-scene in a countrie.'

The libellous reference to Shakespeare in this passage is unmistakable.[1] The sequel to it possesses scarcely less important personal interest. Henry Chettle, the publisher of Greene's scurrilous pamphlet, writes, three months after the death of the latter, to the following effect :

'About three moneths since died Mr. Robert Greene, leaving many papers in sundry booke sellers hands, among other his *Groat's-worth of Wit*, in which a letter, written to divers playmakers, is offensively by one or two of them

[1] See also at p. 62 for fuller context.

taken; and because on the dead they cannot be avenged, they wilfullie forge in their conceites a living author; and after tossing it to and fro, no remedy but it must light on me. How I have all the time of my conversing in printing hindered the bitter inveying against schollars, it hath been very well knowne; and how in that I dealt, I can sufficiently proove. With neither of them that take offence was I acquainted, and with one of them I care not if I never be. The other, whome at that time I did not so much spare as since I wish I had, for that, as I have moderated the heate of living writers, and might have used my owne discretion (especially in such a case), the author beeing dead, that I did not I am as sory as if the originall fault had beene my fault, *because myselfe have seene his* [*i.e.* Shakespeare's] *demeanour no lesse civill than he* [*is*] *exelcnt in the qualitie he professes, besides divers of worship have reported his uprightnes of dealing, which argues his honesty, and his facetious* [*felicitous*] *grace in writing that aprooves his art.*'[1]

Thus, in a few lines, the whole history, or what is likely ever to be known of it, of this early period of Shakespeare's connection with the stage, is curiously summarised. His very name is bemocked and travestied. But although Greene's spiteful reference to it would seem, on the face of it, to have been prompted by a fit of sour, feeble-minded jealousy, and that, too, by a writer who must have seen a good deal in the new author's work and conduct to contrast markedly with his own, it, nevertheless, is most note-

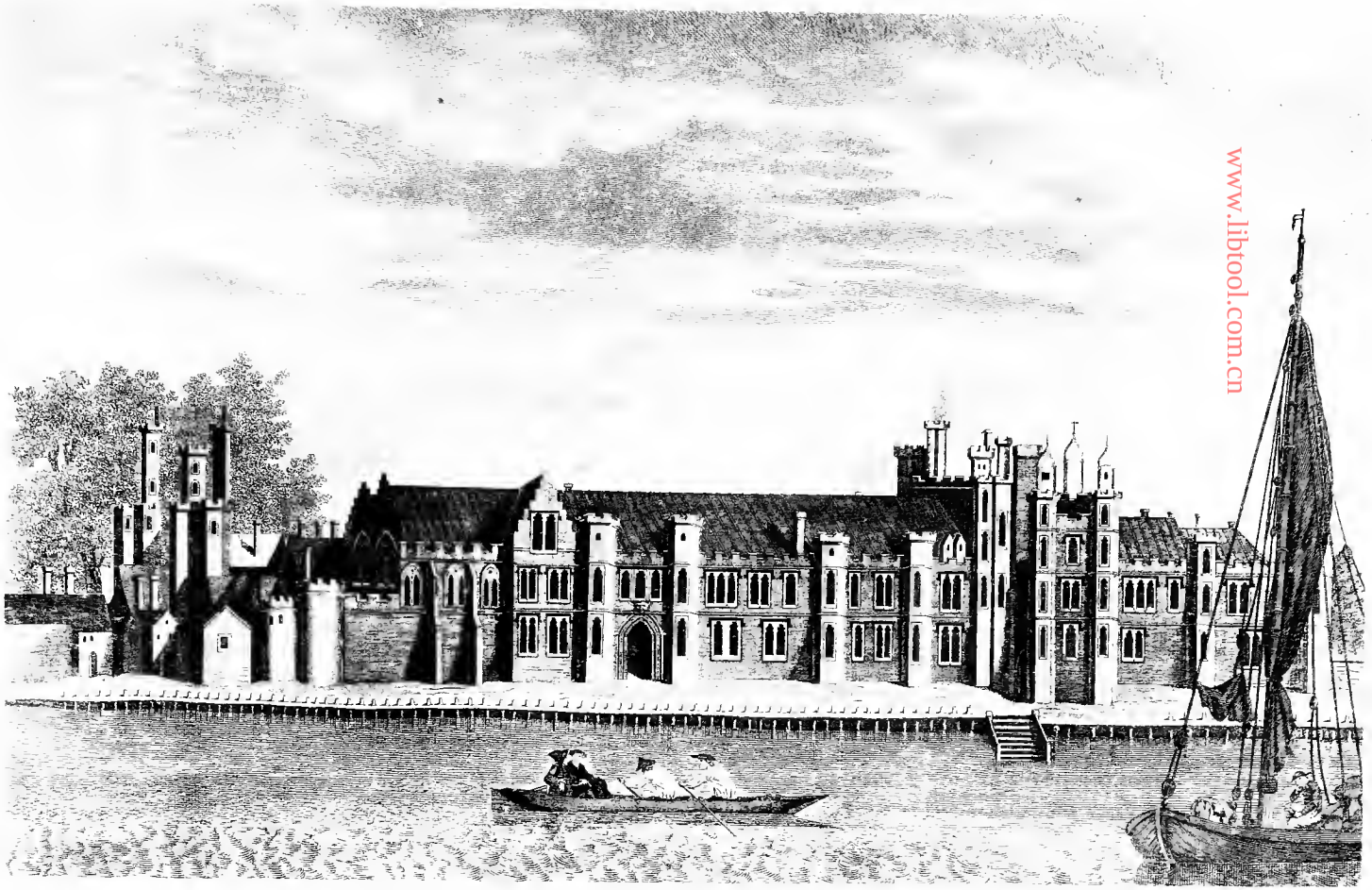
[1] The Preface to 'Kind-Harts Dreame. Conteining fiue Apparitions, with their Inuectives against abuses raigning. Deliuered by seuerall Ghosts unto him to be publisht, after Piers Penilesse Post had refused the carriage.—Inuita Inuidiæ.—by H. C. Imprinted at London for William Wright.' [This interesting work is undated, but it was entered at Stationers' Hall on December 8, 1592.]

worthy and valuable as indicating that Shakespeare was now thoroughly approving himself in that double capacity of player and dramatist, to meet whose demands he would now, in all human probability, put forth the best vigour of his early manhood.

But at length Shakespeare comes to the front with the sterling stamp of genius denoting his power and worth in every branch of his work. As a dramatist he had, by December 1594, and ere he was yet thirty-one years of age, written no fewer than twelve original plays, in addition, probably, to much writing in the way of collaborating or remodelling pieces for the stage for such playwrights as Peele, Nash, and others. To what extent he assisted the latter will likely never be known. As a poet he had won signal distinction with his *Venus and Adonis* and his *Rape of Lucrece*, the dedication of the former to the young Earl of Southampton winning him the strong personal regard of that nobleman, and also, probably, the favourable notice of others who stood high in the land. His name now became well and widely known; his work increased rapidly in all those ways which lead to success and renown, and the man himself as dramatist, and probably as an actor likewise, was now favourably recommended to the Court. And in the last connection we meet with an extraordinary fact. *The earliest definite notice of Shakespeare's appearance on any stage* is, according to the high authority of Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps, 'one in which he is recorded as having been a player in two comedies before Queen Elizabeth at Greenwich Palace in December, 1594.' This fact is established by the following entry in the manuscript accounts of the Treasurer of the Chamber:

'To William Kempe, William Shakespeare and Richard Burbadge, servantes to the Lord Chamberleyne, upon the Councelles Warrant dated at Whitehall xv to Marcij 1594, for two several comedies or interludes showed by them before her Majestie in Christmas time laste paste, viz. upon S^t^ Stephens days and Innocentes days xiii*li.* vj*s.* viij*d.*, and by waye of her Majesties rewarde vj*li.* xiij*s.* viij*d.*, in all xx*li.* [The Court was then at Whitehall.] For making ready at Grenewich for the Qu. Majestie against her Highness coming thether, by the space of viij dayes mense Decembr., 1594, as appeareth by a bill signed by the Lord Chamberleyne viij*li.* xiii*s.* iiij*d.* (MS. *Ibid.*). To Tho: Sheffielde, under-Keaper of her Majesties House at Grenewich for thallowaunce of viij labourers there three severall nightes, at xij*d.* the man, by reason it was night-woorke, for making cleane the greate chamber, the Presence, the galleries and clossettes, mense Decembr 1594 xxiiij*s.* (MS. *Ibid.*).'

In view of such an important piece of evidence as this document supplies, it would seem, from the mere fact that Shakespeare was selected along with others, including such excellent exponents of the art as Kempe and Burbage, that he had, previous to this noteworthy engagement to play before Queen Elizabeth at Greenwich Palace, distinguished himself as an actor. It is quite possible that her Majesty might have desired to see for herself something of the qualities of one of her subjects who, she was probably well aware, had already acquired considerable reputation, and who, she may have reflected, was destined by the exercise of his surpassing powers, of which he had given



GREENWICH PALACE IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

From an old drawing engraved by Basire in 'Vetusta Monumenta' (1767)

substantial evidence, to add lustre to a reign already resplendent. But it is most unlikely that so shrewd a man of the world as Shakespeare was, would have jeopardised his character by appearing in sock and buskin before the royal presence, *without being well assured and confident of his perfect ability to do so creditably.* Thus it may be reasonably supposed that now, when he was to receive so signal a mark of the Queen's favour, he had passed satisfactorily through the period of his noviciate, had won his spurs as an actor, and, in fact, was considered to be in that capacity of little less consequence than Kempe or Burbage, who were at the head of the large body of actors then playing in the Metropolis. From the foregoing record of his engagement as an actor, it is deeply interesting, therefore, to discover Shakespeare, in the first genuine glimpse we get of his career, moving in these courtly environments. Unfortunately, there is nothing to show what part or parts he undertook in the 'two several comedies or interludes' that were played before Queen Elizabeth on this historic occasion.

So comparatively little is known of Shakespeare's personality that it were risky to hazard any opinion with respect to, at least, his physical fitness for a histrionic career. That he was of a fair presence, and possessed of an abundance of natural vigour, is a not unreasonable assumption, especially when his likeness, as represented, for example, in the Droeshout portrait, is studied for a little. Such a likeness of the poet, as he is supposed to have appeared in his twenty-ninth year, suggests a physiognomy which is happily in keeping with one's conception of what the appearance of a great writer should be. Extraordinary force, mental

and physical, strikes one as being the prominent feature of the man Shakespeare indicated by the Droeshout likeness; and thus, the authenticity of his portrait being admitted, the popular ideal with regard to the personal appearance of the great dramatist is in no danger of being destroyed.[1]

But it may be taken for granted that his fitness, so far as physique is concerned, was adequate to the circumstances of the actor's profession. The tradition that he was lame would, indeed, preclude the possibility of his sustaining, with such an infirmity, almost any character on the stage. In the character of Adam, however, the faithful and tried servant of Sir Rowland de Bois and, latterly, of his cruel and unscrupulous son Oliver, in the sylvan play *As You Like It*, it is but fair to admit that such a part would be adapted for performance more readily by a lame actor. A frail and halting gait would have, in a measure, to be assumed by any player essaying the part of the old, weakly servant. Might it not have been from this very circumstance that the tradition as to Shakespeare's lameness originated? The drama of *As You Like It* became at once, on its appearance in 1599, a favourite with the frequenters of the Globe Theatre, who, seeing Shakespeare in the pathetic part of Adam, limping faithfully along after his new-found master, Orlando—since Oliver had discarded him—might somehow have got the impression that the player himself was lame, and hence the tradition. A valuable and interesting piece of evidence relative to the part of Adam in *As You Like It*, which Shakespeare is supposed to have essayed, is that left on record by Oldys, whose account is as follows:

[1] See also the chapter on the Physiognomy and Portraits of Shakespeare.

'One of Shakespeare's younger brothers, who lived to a good old age, even some years, as I compute, after the restoration of Charles the Second, would in his younger days come to London to visit his brother Will, as he called him, and be a spectator of him as an actor in some of his own plays. This custom, as his brother's fame enlarged, and his dramatick entertainments grew the greatest support of our principal, if not all our theatres, he continued, it seems, so long after his brother's death, as even to the latter end of his own life. The curiosity at this time of the most noted actors to learn something from him of his brother, etc., they justly held him in the highest veneration; and it may be well believed, as there was, besides, a kinsman and descendant of the family, who was then a celebrated actor among them, this opportunity made them greedily inquisitive into every little circumstance, more especially in his dramatick character, which his brother could relate of him. But he, it seems, was so stricken in years and possibly his memory so weakened by infirmities, which might make him the easier pass for a man of weak intellect, that he could but give them little light into their enquiries; and all that could be recollected of his brother Will in that station, was the faint, general and almost lost ideas he had of having once seen him act a part in one of his own comedies, wherein, being to personate a decrepit old man, he wore a long beard, and appeared so weak and drooping and unable to walk, that he was forced to be supported and carried by another person to a table, at which he was seated among some company who were eating, and one of them sang a song.'

From the number of works produced by his marvellous

pen between 1590 and 1604-5, some fifteen years or thereby, it might be said of Shakespeare that, during at least the greater portion of the time mentioned, his opportunities, not to speak of his inclinations, to advance himself in the player's art could not have been so numerous as his proficiency and excellence in it might seem to indicate. What an extraordinary man, truly, to be enabled—mechanically even—to maintain his powers under such a combination of labour which, in the exacting exigencies of the actor's calling and the original work of dramatic authorship, was demanded of him during these years. Moreover, he was not exempt, while thus employed, from those cares which fall to the lot of a parent. He had to bear the loss of his only son, Hamnet, in 1596; and we know, too, with much certainty, that, like a wise and happily constituted man, he did not neglect his more immediate personal interests while concerning himself with his glorious life-work. Yet, fortunately for mankind, there were influences—personal considerations, at least—which combined to prevent Shakespeare's genius expressing itself through the medium of himself as a great actor. The influences spoken of as having probably had something to do in bringing about this result are, nevertheless, very ordinary, every-day considerations. For one thing, his work of dramatic authorship proved to be a more lucrative occupation than the actor's calling. *There was evidently a greater demand for William Shakespeare, the dramatist and poet, than for that same individual who was pretty well known as belonging to a certain company of players.* And if Shakespeare himself did not advertise his quality and worth in the former character, then there was one man, at least, who did that, and chose to make money by it, too.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

From the painting by Zucchero in the National Portrait Gallery, London

Do we not owe a modicum of gratitude—however sparingly we may yield it—to Philip Henslowe, theatrical manager and *entrepreneur*, for his share in the great Shakespearean undertakings of these days? A grasping manager he may have been, but in the present instance his 'grasping' was to some purpose, inasmuch as he found in the rising author a mine of inestimable wealth. Containing the kind of precious metal that was wanted, he induced him, for certain considerations that, we may rest assured, were reasonable, and worth the possessing even by a poet, to yield something of his treasures.

It does seem a suggestive incident that the first really reliable record of Shakespeare's engagements as an actor should introduce him to us as playing before his sovereign. But that was not by any means the last occasion on which he was thus honoured, from which fact it might well be inferred that Shakespeare in buskin had worthily acquitted himself to begin with, and that the good opinion Queen Elizabeth had formed of his art was confirmed by what she subsequently witnessed of his further appearances. Of these, or, at any rate, of certain of them, positive evidence exists to show that they were neither infrequent nor exclusively associated with the royal palace at Greenwich, but were made from time to time before the Court in London. Although two years now elapsed ere we again find Shakespeare and his company playing together at the Court of Elizabeth, it is by no means unlikely that in the interval they had performed several times before her Majesty, who was a strong prop and patron of the stage. In the summer of 1596 the company to which Shakespeare belonged became, on the death of Henry, Lord Hunsdon, Lord Chamberlain, the servants

of that nobleman's eldest son, George, Lord Hunsdon. One of the earliest dramas selected for their representation was *Romeo and Juliet*, which had been written by Shakespeare about this time (probably early in 1592), and sold to Henslowe, the manager of the Rose Theatre, where it was produced with great success. Besides that romantic tragedy, the dramatist-actor had also written *Love's Labour's Lost*, *Richard II.*, *Richard III.*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *The Taming of the Shrew*. So that, including what he had written previous to his first appearance before the Queen, he was now the author of at least fourteen plays, besides the poems *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*. The popularity of the new tragedy was, therefore, hardly to be wondered at, in view of the rapidly increasing fame of the writer, who probably essayed, though the fact is not mentioned anywhere, one of the characters of the piece. According to Marston, in his account of the *Scourge of Villanie* (1598), as also in his *Malcontent* (1604), and likewise according to the assertion of Danter, who issued surreptitiously an edition of the tragedy in the year following its production, *Romeo and Juliet* would seem to have taken the city of playgoers by storm, and enjoyed what must have been considered, in these primitive days of the drama, a prolonged and successful 'run.' That Queen Elizabeth witnessed the representation of *Romeo and Juliet* during its first extraordinary 'run' may be pretty shrewdly surmised. The romantic character of the tragedy, apart altogether from the signal success it is said to have enjoyed for so long a period as an entire London season, as then measured, would be certain to excite the interest of the maiden queen, and secure for the play her generous and august patronage.

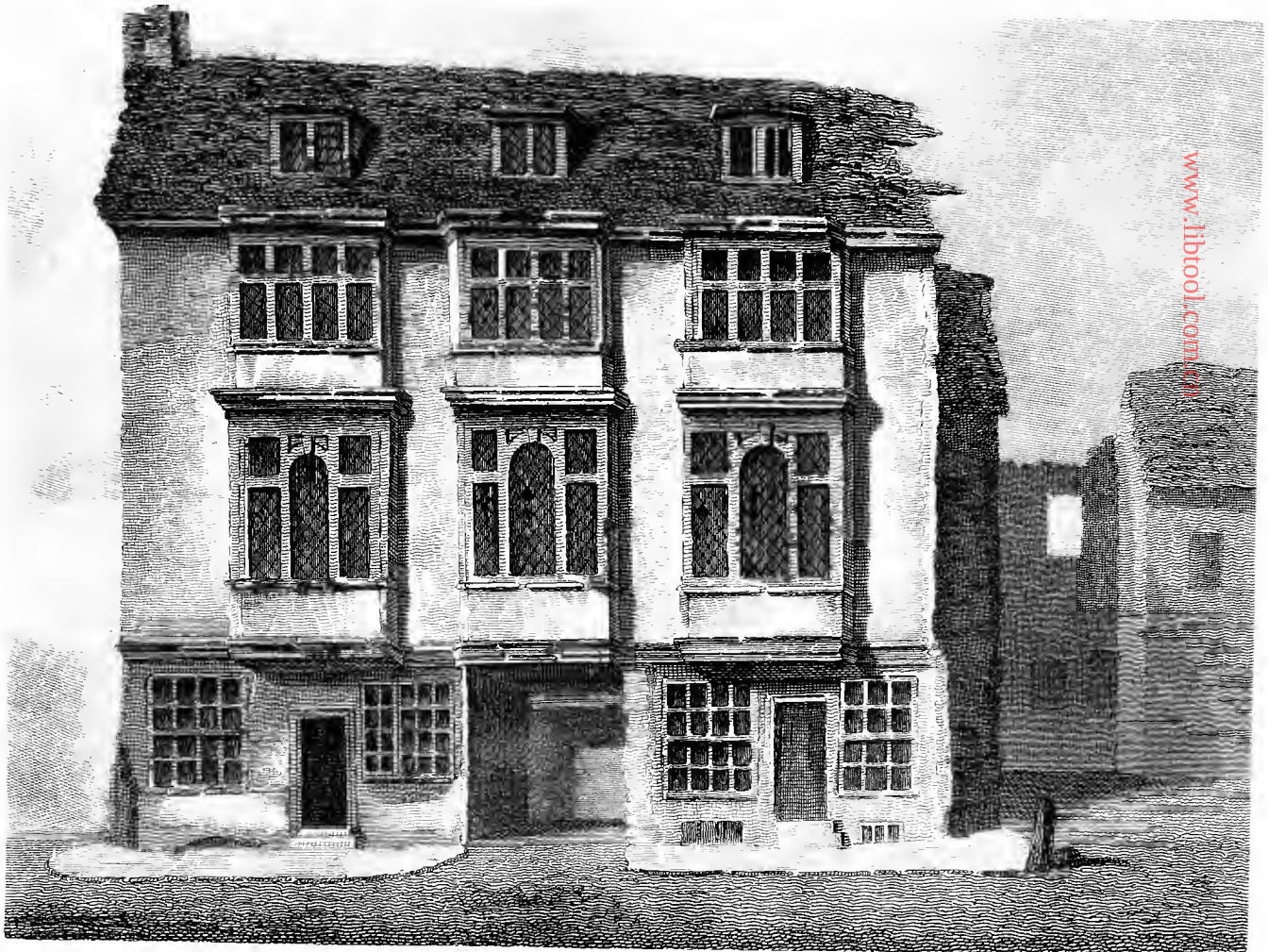
In these times of his rising popularity and increasing wealth Shakespeare was residing in lodgings near the Bear Garden at Southwark. Here, doubtlessly, the popular actor would be frequently seen—a well-known figure. For, although his wife and surviving children still resided at Stratford, where were also other strong domestic attachments, London was now the scene of the greater part[1] of his advancement as an actor and of his triumphs of authorship. There is no doubt that in this locality, too, resided most of his actor-associates. For at this time the Bear Garden, which was situated on the south bank of the Thames, from Winchester Palace to Paris Garden—a locality which abounded with circuses and theatres of various kinds—was specially set apart for 'the keeping of bears, bulls, and other beasts to be baited, and also mastives in their several kennels were there nourished to bait them. These bears and other beasts were kept in

[1] While most of Shakespeare's time was spent in the Metropolis during these busy years, it is well to remember that, besides paying frequent visits to his home at Stratford, he often was touring in the provinces with the company of players to which he belonged, and of which he was now a very important member. The indefatigable researches of that genius of biographers, Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps, to whose *Outlines of Shakespeare* I owe much in preparing this chapter, have unearthed a number of curious but valuable facts referring to these provincial tours. So far as is known, the following is the more important of the list: Shakespeare's company played at Barnstaple in 1605; Bath, 1593, 1597, 1603, 1604; Bristol, 1593, 1597; Coventry, 1592, 1594, 1608, 1614; Dover, 1597, 1606, 1610; Faversham, 1597; Folkestone, 1613; Hythe, 1609; Leicester, 1594, 1606; Maidstone, 1606; Oxford, 1604, 1605, 1606, 1607, 1610, 1613; Shrewsbury, 1593, 1603, 1609, 1610, 1613. How far Shakespeare took part in these provincial tours up to the year 1610 or 1612, when it is pretty certain he finally left the stage as an actor, cannot be said. That he travelled considerably with his company up to that date may readily be conjectured, for he was professionally an indispensable member of it, and was one of the most interested shareholders in the concern; and for these reasons, if for no other, it is most unlikely that the members could always play together lacking the assistance of Shakespeare. Besides, there is the internal evidence of his plays, which abound in provincial references both to places and people, the facts of which Shakespeare might have obtained on the spot.

plots of ground scaffolded about for the beholders to stand safe.'

A favourite resort of Shakespeare and his professional associates of this period was the famous Falcon Tavern on the Bankside. Here it was, it is believed, that the great poet forgathered with such players and wits as Richard Burbage, Augustine Phillips, John Heminge, William Kempt (or Kempe), Henry Condell, William Sly, John Lowin, Robert Armin, Michael Drayton, and last, though not least, Ben Jonson.

The mention of the last-named writer brings to mind a pleasing trait in Shakespeare's character, and, moreover, suggests something of his influence in matters directly connected with the company to which he belonged, and the important position he had by this time acquired in it. Ben Jonson, hitherto (1592) almost unknown as an author, had submitted to Shakespeare's company a new comedy he had written, with a view to its production. According to the testimony of Rowe, the comedy, which was the famous *Every Man in His Humour*, was about to suffer rejection, when Shakespeare interposed, having probably had a reading of the manuscript, and used his influence in its favour. Very likely Henslowe was the chief objector to the purchase of the comedy, in which, perhaps, he did not see the same elements of success which characterised the approved work of Shakespeare. Be that as it may, not only did Shakespeare succeed in getting the new play accepted and produced, but he undertook himself one of the leading parts in it. The original cast of *Every Man in His Humour* was as follows, the names of the players being spelt as given by Ben Jonson in Gifford's edition of his works (1816):



THE FALCON TAVERN ON THE BANKSIDE, SOUTHWARK, AS IT APPEARED IN 1805

'Knowell'	Will. Shakespeare.
'Brainworm'	Aug. Phillipps.
'Cap. Bobadill'	Hen. Condell.
'Master Stephen'	Will. Kempt.
'Kitely'	Ric. Burbadge.
'Downe-right'	Joh. Hemings.
'Just. Clement'	Tho. Pope.
'Master Matthew'	Will. Slye.
'Dame Kitely'	Chr. Beeston.
'Tib'	Joh. Duke.

How the play was received on its first production,[1] and—what interests us most to know at present—how the part of Knowell was acted by Shakespeare, there is no need to tell. It is also known that Shakespeare played in another of Ben Jonson's plays, *Sejanus*. Whether this was undertaken in fulfilment of mere professional engagements, or out of personal compliment to his friend, the author of the play, there is not a scrap of proof to show.

Of the numerous fellow-players and dramatists who were more or less intimately associated with Shakespeare, and whose names will never be forgotten because of that good-fortune, very few were men of so outstanding parts as to warrant their being designated as personally famous and worthy of remembrance. One or two of them, however, were really eminent actors, notably Richard Burbage and William Kempt, or Kempe; and the present sketch would not be complete without giving some brief account of at least those two intimate friends of the poet. Burbage would seem to have been the more excellent actor of the two, while for other and very interesting reasons—namely, his having probably been a native of Shakespeare's county, and

[1] See Appendix F.

his having been remembered by the poet in his will—he deserves a somewhat closer regard. The precise date of his birth is not known; but it is supposed to have been about 1566 or 1567, so that he was Shakespeare's junior by a year or two. His father was James Burbage, who will probably live long in theatrical annals from the fact that it was he who built the first theatre, the original Blackfriars, ever erected in England. In the petition presented by his sons, Cuthbert and Richard, 'to the Right Honourable Philip Earle of Pembroke and Montgomery, Lord Chamberlain of His Majesties household,' setting forth their proprietary right to continue the Blackfriars Theatre, against which a great public outcry had lately been made, the following curious references, including an allusion to Shakespeare, are made to the elder Burbage:

'The father of us Cutbert and Richard Burbadge, was the first builder of playhouses and was himself in his younger yeeres a player. The Theatre hee built with many hundred pounds taken up at interest. . . . Hee built this house upon leased ground, by which meanes the landlord and he had a great suit in law, and, by his death, the like throubles fell on us, his sonnes; we then thought us of altering from thence, and at like expense built the "Globe," with more summes of money taken up at interest, which lay heavy on us many yeeres; and to ourselves we joyned those deserving men, Shakespeare, Hemings, Condell, Phillips and others, partners in the profittes of what they call the House, etc., etc., etc.'

The earliest mention of Richard Burbage as an actor proves that he must have begun his career at an unusually

early age, and so well acquitted himself that he filled a prominent place in the company he was then connected with. It is on evidence that he played the parts of King Gorboduc and Tereus in the *Seven Deadlie Sinns* of Richard Tarleton, the famous comedian, who was supposed to be his godfather; and for so young an actor to be entrusted with such parts would seem to point to the very rapid development of his histrionic capacity. It will also be remembered that in company with Shakespeare and Kempe, Burbage had the honour of being summoned to play before Queen Elizabeth at Greenwich Palace in 1594. But now, with the rapid production of the great and glorious works of his friend and associate, a rare opportunity was afforded Burbage for the display of his dramatic talent; while, at the same time, in Burbage Shakespeare would seem to have found an exponent of character after his own heart. The following lines, supposed to have been written shortly after his death, on the story of the tragedy of *Othello*, in which Burbage is known to have played the part of the Moor, would seem to be suggestive of this probability:

'Dick Burbadge, that most famous man,
That actor without peer:
With this same part his course began
And kept it many a year;
Shakespeare was fortunate, I trow,
That such an actor had:
If we but had his equal now,
For one, I should be glad.'

To what extent Shakespeare and Burbage were thus reciprocally indebted—the dramatist to the skill and force of the player, and the player to the creative genius of the

dramatist—is perhaps only a matter for conjecture. The combination of their respective talents was, at any rate, mutually advantageous. There can be no question that it was by the histrionic excellence of Burbage that Shakespeare was influenced and encouraged in the writing of more than one of his great plays. A glance at the list of the parts—all of them of the first importance—which Burbage is known to have undertaken in the plays of his friend indicates the decided value at which Shakespeare estimated the gifts and genius of this player :

Shylock	acted in	1594
Richard III.	,,	1594
Prince Henry	,,	1595
Romeo	,,	1596
Henry V.	,,	1599
Brutus	,,	1601
Othello	,,	1602
Hamlet	,,	1602
Lear	,,	1605
Macbeth	,,	1606
Pericles	,,	1608
Coriolanus	,,	1610

It has been suggested of Burbage that he was the original actor in every one of the foregoing plays. There is no proof that he was so ; but it may be taken for granted that he was the original *Richard III.*, *Lear*, *Macbeth*, and he certainly created the title-part in *Hamlet*. Here, indeed, is renown! Moreover, there is the additional fame of his having been taught his part in *Hamlet* by the author himself. If that be so, no actor was ever so honoured, so instructed, so immortalised as Richard Burbage. Burbage also performed the leading parts in a number of the plays of other authors, notably those of Ben Jonson, Webster,

RICHARD BURBAGE

From the original painting ascribed to himself, in the Dulwich Gallery

Marlowe, Cyril Tourneur, and Beaumont and Fletcher. When it is remembered that this actor was in many cases, especially with regard to the Shakespearean dramas, the original exponent of the parts he undertook, and at a time when he was personally much concerned with the routine of theatrical management, of the Globe as well as the Blackfriars Theatre, and is, moreover, known to have been a busy and skilful painter, it is not surprising to learn that he succumbed to paralysis at the early age of fifty-two years. His death on 'the 13th of March, 1618-1619,' was the occasion of numerous tributes to his genius as an actor and his worth as a man. The following epitaph was found in MS. (Sloane) No. 1786 in the British Museum, and may be quoted as a sample of the tributes that were paid to his memory :

> 'This life 's a play, scened out by natures art,
> Where every man hath his alotted part ;
> This man hath now, as many men can tell,
> Ended his part, and he hath acted well.
> The play now ended, thinks his grave to be
> The retiring house of his sad tragedy :
> To speak his fame of this be not afraid—
> Here lies the best tragedian ever play'd ! '

On the death, in 1588, of the famous comedian, Richard Tarleton, it was much lamented lest there should be no man living able to take his place on the stage, on which he had 'shone lyke any sunne.' But it would appear that no sooner had that untoward event occurred, which so affected the 'joye and happiness' of the theatrical world, than there stepped forward to fill the vacancy a man who at once so approved his claim and worthiness to do so that there was little to regret at the exit of his predecessor. The new-

comer was William Kempe, the associate of Shakespeare and Burbage, who had, before Tarleton's demise, acquired a wide and genuine celebrity as a comic actor. Few biographical facts of 'Will Kempe' are extant; the data with regard to his origin, birthplace, and boyhood are almost nil. That he was for some time on the Continent a few years before his death, which must have occurred between 1605 and 1609, is well authenticated; but beyond this, and apart from what is known of his acting and relative matters, few lives of men whose names are destined to live long present blanker pages than that of this friend and fellow-player of our great dramatist.

Perhaps the most interesting facts relating to the career of this actor, and referring to our subject, are that he was the original Dogberry in *Much Ado About Nothing*, and Peter in *Romeo and Juliet*. He also took the part of Justice Shallow in *Henry IV.*, Part II., and probably that of the First Grave-digger in *Hamlet*, though it cannot be said with certainty that he was the original actor in these two plays when produced for the first time. It is of some consequence, at all events, to learn that Kempe was the first Dogberry that ever delighted an audience with the exquisite humour of the part; and when we are assured that he was almost as great a comic actor as Tarleton, we may well imagine how admirably the actor, versed, like enough, in his part by Shakespeare himself, was enabled to reproduce a perfect likeness of the character as conceived by its creator.

Of the other actors associated with Shakespeare deserving of more than a mere passing reference, the names of Heminge and Condell claim regard, not only for histrionic, but also for other and perhaps even more important reasons.

The former, John Heminge, is believed to have been the treasurer of the famous company of players with which Shakespeare was connected, and it is definitely known that he was one of the principal shareholders in the concern. Henry Condell also seems to have been a player of some excellence, as, in 1598, he was one of the six actors in *Every Man in His Humour* whose names were selected by Ben Jonson to be made prominent among the ten performers engaged in the representation of that comical satire. It is stated by Roberts, the printer, but without adducing any authority for his assertion beyond stage-tradition, that Condell was a comic performer. Our old performers were often comedians or tragedians as suited the drama they were to act, and the company to which they were attached; but from the many plays in which we find the name of Condell occurring as one of the performers, there is some reason to believe that the stage-tradition mentioned by Roberts is well founded.

But it is chiefly on account of two deeply interesting historical associations with the name of Shakespeare that these two players will ever be remembered—the first is because of their being mentioned, along with Richard Burbage, as legatees in his will, thus speaking to the poet's personal regard for his fellow-players; and the second, because of the priceless services they rendered to literature in issuing the first collected edition of his numerous works. With respect to the former, Shakespeare's will sets forth, *inter alia*, 'Item, I gyve and bequeath to Hamlett Sadler, xxvj^{s} viii^{d} to buy him a ringe; to William Raynoldes, gent xxvj^{s} viij^{d} to buy him a ringe; to my godson William Walker xx^{s} in gold; to Anthony Nashe, gent,

xxvj^{s} viij^{d}, and to Mr. John Nashe xxvj^{s} viij^{d}; and to my fellows, John Hemynges, Richard Burbadge and Henry Cundell xxvj^{s} viij^{d} a peece to buy them ringes.' This kind and affectionate remembrance of his 'fellow-players' would thus indicate the undoubted personal regard which the great dramatist had entertained towards them; and probably it was out of a feeling of sincere gratitude for this token of it that they were induced, after the death of their friend, to collect and publish his immortal works.

Posterity owes a debt of regard and admiration, which it is impossible too frequently to acknowledge, to the joint labours of Heminge and Condell in rescuing the treasures of the mind of Shakespeare, who himself was strangely indifferent as to the fate of his writings, from an oblivion that would, in all human probability, sooner or later have overtaken them.

We cannot do more than merely mention the names of the other prominent players who rejoiced in Shakespeare's fellowship. Among these the names of Augustine Phillips, William Sly, John Lowin, Robert Armin, Lawrence Fletcher, and, last of all, the poet's own brother, Edmund Shakespeare, may be indicated.

Phillips seems to have been, not only an actor, but a musician of some repute, and it is not unlikely that he sometimes played in what we now term the orchestra of his company. His bequest to Samuel Gilborne, who had been his servant, of his 'base viol,' and to one James Sands, of his 'citerne, bandorne, and lute,' suggests that he was, at any rate, not a mere amateur. Of his acting with Shakespeare little is known for certain. But there is no doubt, as has already been pointed out in the list containing

his name, that he acted in *Every Man in His Humour*, and in *Sejanus*, with Shakespeare. That he lived on intimate terms with his fellow-players may be gathered from his 'dying will and testament,' in which he bequeathed legacies to several of them, including the dramatist, to whom he left 'a thirty-shillings piece of gold.'

The first reference to William Sly, or Slye, or Slie, shows that, anterior to 1588, he had acted in Tarleton's *Seven Deadlie Sinns*. Six years afterward he is heard of as belonging to Shakespeare's company, appearing in *Every Man in His Humour*, *Sejanus*, and *Volpone*, and as Osric in *Hamlet*. Sly was a native of Warwickshire, and it is supposed that he arrived in London about the same time as Shakespeare. As is well known, Sly is the name of the drunken character in the Induction to *The Taming of the Shrew*, but there is nothing to show that Shakespeare, as has been said of him, found in his fellow-actor from Warwickshire one suitable for the ridiculous, sack-loving customer of Marian Hacket. There is no evidence to show that Sly was a popular actor, although, from the fact that he had a considerable pecuniary interest in the 'Globe,' we may conclude that he essayed his parts with credit to himself and his company.

As a player, John Lowin had no mean honour thrust upon him when Shakespeare himself instructed him in the kingly part of Henry the Eighth. That Lowin was given such a part implies that he must have been a capable actor; and there is ample testimony extant that he was. He performed in most of the leading plays of the time, and, according to Wright, in his *Historia Histrionica*, was especially distinguished for having 'acted, with mighty applause, Falstaff, Morose, Volpone, Mammon in *The Alchemist*, and

Melantius in *The Maid's Tragedy*.' He survived most of his actor-associates, having attained his ninety-third year.

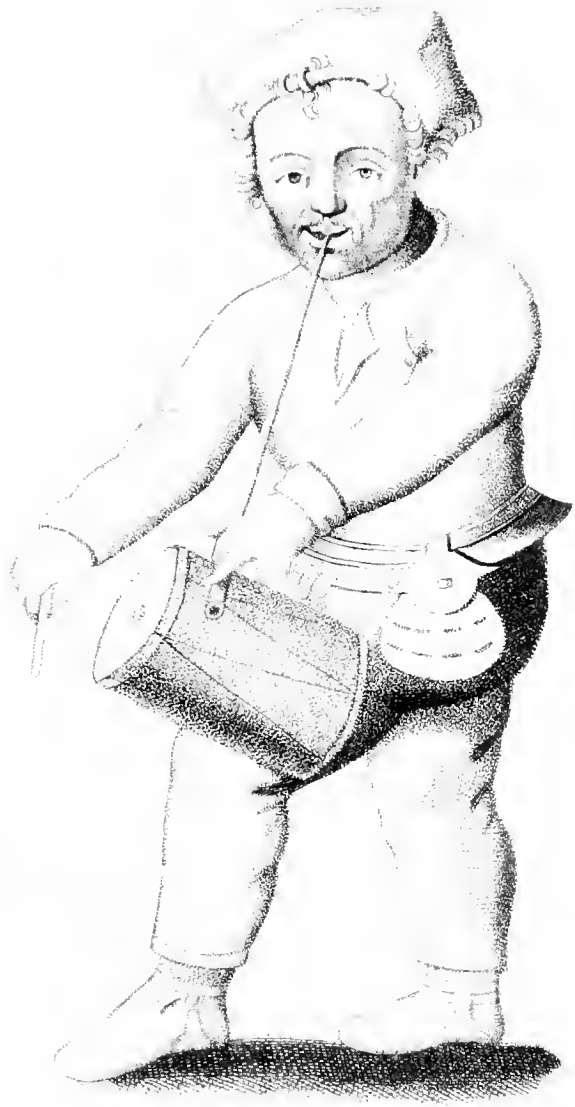
Robert Armin was, according to the testimony of his contemporaries, indebted for his introduction to the stage to no less a personage than Richard Tarleton, the great comedian. In that rare book, *Tarleton's Jests and News out of Purgatory*, there is a short account of 'How Tarleton made Armin his adopted son, to succeed him,' which is explained by the following incident :

'Tarleton keeping a Tavern in Gracechurch Street, he let it to another, who was indebted to Armin's master, a goldsmith in Lombard Street, yet he himself had a chamber in the same house ; and this Armin being a wag, came often thither to demand his master's money, which he sometimes had and sometimes had not. In the end, the man growing poor, told the boy he had no money for his master, and he must bear with him. The man's name being Charles, Armin made this verse, writing it with chalk on the wainscot :

"O world ! why wilt thou lye ?
Is this Charles the Great ? That I deny :
Indeed Charles the Great before,
But now Charles the Less, being poor."

'Tarleton coming into the room, reading it, and partly acquainted with the boy's humour, coming often thither for his master's money, took a piece of chalk, and wrote this rhyme by it :

"A wag thou art ; none can prevent thee,
And thy desert shall now content thee :
Let me devine ! As I am
So in time thou 'lt be the same.
My adopted son therefore be
To enjoy my clown's suit after me ! "



RICHARD TARLETON

From a drawing in the Pepysian Library at Magdalene College, Cambridge

'And see how it fell out. The boy, reading this, so loved Tarleton after, that regarding him with more respect, he used to his plays, and fell in a league with his humour: And private practice brought him to present playing and at this hour performs the same, where, at the Globe on the Bankside, men may see him.'

Tarleton's prophecy that Armin should 'wear his clown's suit after him' was not, according to what is known of the latter's performances, fulfilled in the way expected of him. That he was an 'honest, gamesome' actor may well be believed of him, having had the advantage of so great a master of comedy as Tarleton. But, on the whole, his name, apart from its histrionic association with Shakespeare, and as being mentioned from time to time in connection with the company playing at the Blackfriars and Globe, is perhaps remembered more in consequence of one or two rare literary tracts and pamphlets of some contemporary value than as a player. His *Nest of Ninnies*, for instance, is well known to all Shakespearean students. He is said to have been performing at the Globe Theatre on the day when that building was destroyed by fire.[1]

[1] This great disaster, involving probably one of the most lamentable losses literature ever suffered, occurred on Tuesday, the 29th of June, 1613. Many curious references to that most untoward event are extant. From these it is gathered that the fire broke out on St. Peter's day of the above date, and during a performance of *Henry VIII.*, though doubts exist as to its being the play of that name of Shakespearean authorship. Possibly it may have been the first performance of the new play (which Shakespeare is supposed to have finished early in that year), seeing it was owing to the bungling of some of the performers in the parts they undertook which led to the disaster. At any rate, the great historical drama, with its 'pomp and circumstance,' will ever be associated with a mischance which deprived the world of some of the most valuable manuscripts ever penned; for it is generally admitted that with the destruction of this theatre, the original of much of Shakespeare's handiwork for ever perished. (See Appendix B.)

Literally nothing is known of the histrionic career of the poet's younger brother, Edmund Shakespeare. Edmund, it is surmised, had come to London attracted by the increasing fame and influence of his gifted brother, and in hope, probably, of advancing himself by his aid. It is very likely his brother would introduce him to his company of actors; but there are no accounts of the names of the parts he played, nor how he played them. The few brief years of his London life are altogether a blank; he died in December 1607, in his twenty-eighth year. The following notice of him in the church-book of St. Saviour's, Southwark, is about all that has been discovered, and is touching to a degree in its sad brevity:

'1607—Dec. 31. EDMUND SHAKESPEARE: a player: buried in the church, with a forenoone knell of the great bell . . . . . 20*s*.'

A few words as to Shakespeare's rare artistic instincts, considered in their histrionic connection, may not be out of place in bringing this sketch of the poet-player to a close. Although Shakespeare as an actor may not have been a master exponent of character, however profoundly he may have conceived the same and brilliantly expressed it in speech, it is abundantly evident that, more than any of his contemporaries, he possessed a truly remarkable knowledge and grasp of the actor's art in its minutest detail. That he had a fine, intuitive sense of what that art should be—of its true scope and power in a 'well-graced' actor's exposition—goes without saying, when one merely recollects, for example, the masterful advice on acting which, by the lips of Hamlet, he gives to its professors. The sum and sub-

stance of that advice, as embodied in Hamlet's famous speech to the players, has, for generations of actors, formed the truest and therefore the most valuable text-book ever written on the subject. Such wisdom and understanding Shakespeare could only, of course, have acquired by a large experience on the stage. When the play of *Hamlet* was written, the dramatist had worn the buskin for at least ten years, and had thus abundant opportunities of familiarising himself with every phase of the player's art. Besides, we cannot forget that, in addition to more than ordinary histrionic capabilities and opportunities, Shakespeare was himself endowed with the very genius of insight into those subtle and complex workings of the human soul which it is the highest function and performance of the actor to illustrate and exhibit.

The speech to the players shows not only Shakespeare's thorough mastery of the actor's art, but his profound personal regard for it. It *offends him to the soul* to see a foolish player travesty his profession. A good deal has been made of the question of Shakespeare's contempt, latterly, for the histrionic life and calling. Certain incidents (chiefly in the Sonnets) in Shakespeare's life as an actor are said to be suggestive, according to some critics, of a deep-rooted dislike to that calling. It is scarcely possible to believe, from the strong personal animus shown throughout the speech to the players, that Shakespeare could ever have set his face against a profession which, in that speech, he so strenuously champions, especially when the 'baser sort' of actors subjected it to ridicule by their incompetency and unworthiness. Moreover, the sonnets in which the references occur were written and printed years before Shake-

speare finally relinquished the stage; and it would seem therefore, according to those critics who try to make the dramatist dissatisfied and disgusted with a profession which, from first to last, yielded him very considerable profit, that while fulfilling his many professional engagements with every apparent show of personal liking, he was all the time embittered in his soul against it.

The speech is also valuable for its autobiographical references. Here, indeed, if anywhere, we have a bit of Shakespeare's life told by himself. It is most eloquently reminiscent, not only of Shakespeare the player, wise and matured by a rare experience, but of young Will Shakespeare, the ardent and observant playgoer, and is, moreover, strongly suggestive of the first years of his arrival in the Metropolis, when the greatest theatrical star of the time, Richard Tarleton, was making all theatre-going London laugh at his antics and drolleries.

CHAPTER II

PHYSIOGNOMY AND PORTRAITS

What was Shakespeare like in the flesh?—His mental and bodily endowment—His portraits classified—Authentic portraits—The Stratford Bust and Droeshout Portrait—Ben Jonson's testimony to the truth of the latter—The Chandos Portrait and its history—The Jansen Portrait and the Earl of Southampton—The Felton 'Head'—The Becker Mask—The Stratford Portrait—The Hilliard and Auriol Miniatures—The Dunford Portrait—Zoust's Portrait—Other curious (so-called) portraits of Shakespeare—Ford Madox Brown's Ideal Portrait—The D'Avenant Bust—The Ely Palace Portrait—Summary.

BEYOND what mere tradition has to say on the subject, and omitting at present certain supposed personal references to himself in the Sonnets, there is nothing (excepting, of course, the portraits and only what these suggest) to throw any light on the interesting question as to what manner of man Shakespeare was in the physiological sense. Was he a tall or medium-sized or small man? Was he physically robust or otherwise? Was his complexion dark or fair? In short, what were the chief physical characteristics which differentiated him from ordinary men of flesh and blood? The subject is of much interest could facts regarding it be obtained.

In the first place, we may assume that if ever there was a mortal of whom it could be affirmed that he was endowed with the *mens sana in corpore sano* in the highest degree, it

was William Shakespeare. The sustaining force required for his literary and dramatic accomplishment must have been extraordinary, and was surely enough to testify to his abnormal physical and mental well-being. Think of that achievement for a moment. The two wonderful poems, *Venus and Adonis* and the *Rape of Lucrece*, the thirty-four plays, and the one hundred and fifty-four sonnets—all of more or less superlative excellence—conceived and written between his twenty-second and forty-ninth year (did Shakespeare never tire?)! Why, the result is stupendous and, considering the ways and means and opportunities of three hundred and fifty years ago for such work, unparalleled. At any rate, none but a man in the perfection of mental and bodily strength could have accomplished it, and it would be difficult to find a good reason for objecting to this view. The gods, in making Shakespeare, could hardly be credited with having endowed him with a physical mechanism of a quality that was not adequately commensurate with that mental endowment. At all events, there is the fact just referred to—the fact of a literary 'output' which, alike for its substance and intrinsic worth, is the greatest known in the world of literature. In short, Shakespeare was not only a phenomenon in point of intellectual genius, but he must also have been superbly gifted in the matter of physique. And in this twofold consideration, where can we find his equal in the records of human history? In Leonardo da Vinci, perhaps. Too little regard has been paid to this aspect of the life and work of Shakespeare; and one has only to consider for a moment, in connection with the absurd heresy as to the authorship of the plays, to find how futile is the

endeavour to assign that authorship to a man 'built' physically and temperamentally on such lines as was Bacon. The writing of the plays (of William Shakespeare) was a sheer physical impossibility to Francis Bacon. Let us, then, consider the portraits with a view to arriving at some reasonable conclusion with regard to the main features of the physiognomy of Shakespeare. And to this end I shall only examine the two authentic portraits of the dramatist, viz., 'the Bust' and the 'Droeshout' likeness prefixed to the First Folio edition of his works. I should have liked to include the 'Stratford' likeness, the 'Jansen' portrait and the 'Felton Head' also, as they suggest so much that is akin to my own individual leanings with regard to the matter of Shakespeare's physiognomy, but I must omit any details regarding them, as they can only be considered as more or less doubtful if not ideal portraits. They are therefore referred to as belonging to the latter category.

The Bust of Shakespeare

As all the world knows, this is erected in the chancel of the Church of Holy Trinity in his native town of Stratford-on-Avon. With this likeness generations of pilgrims to that classic shrine have been familiar, ever delighted to gaze upon the marble image with profound admiration.

It is believed that when Shakespeare died, on the 23rd April 1616 (o.s.), exactly fifty-two years of age, a cast of his features was taken—by whom is not known, though the name of the sculptor of the bust, Gerard or Gerald Johnson, a Hollander, has been suggested. Johnson has been credited

with having done his part of the work well, since, before its erection in the chancel of the church, the bust was probably approved by Shakespeare's relations as a good likeness, and deemed worthy of its conspicuous position and of the man it represented. As is well known to all who have seen the bust, its prominent characteristic is the calm serenity and gentleness of the expression of the features, an expression that fairly well satisfies the popular ideal of England's greatest poet.

Since its erection in the chancel—some time between 1616 and 1623—the bust has experienced not a few vicissitudes. Originally coloured over to resemble life, a custom of the period, the bust was never once restored or touched up in any way till 1748—a century and a quarter afterwards—when its condition after such a lapse of time can be readily imagined. In the latter year, however, at the instance of an ancestor of the famous actress, Mrs. Siddons, it received careful and loving attention; the old colours were fetched forth anew, and the monumental setting was improved and made worthy of the poet. The necessary expenses of this work were, it is interesting to note, defrayed out of the profits of a representation of the play of *Othello* by a company of actors 'strolling' by Stratford-on-Avon at the time.

Nearly fifty years after, Mr. Malone, well known in his day as an enthusiastic admirer and commentator of Shakespeare, bethought him that the bust required further renewing, and took it upon himself to 'cover it over with one or more coats of white paint, thus,' in the opinion of those who witnessed the sacrilegious act, 'at once destroying its original character and greatly injuring the expression of the

face.' For this unfortunate display of hero-worship Malone was severely censured, and there is at least one record extant that expresses in a measure the feeling of annoyance his action created at the time. In the old visitors' album at the Church of Holy Trinity the following lines were inscribed as a protest against Malone's offence :

'Stranger, to whom this monument is shewn,
Invoke the poet's curse upon Malone;
Whose meddling zeal his barbarous taste betrays,
And daubs his tombstone, as he mars his plays!'

The bust remained for many years in the condition in which Malone had left it. Eventually, however, it was restored once more. Malone's daub was completely obliterated, and the original colouring, as 'improved' in the year 1748, as far as possible renewed. In that satisfactory condition the bust has, with careful tending, remained ever since, though it has been occasionally touched up to preserve the glorious features of the carved marble as they deserve to be, and doubtless will be, preserved in all time to come.

The inscriptions on the mural tablet below the bust must, of course, ever claim regard for their references to the death of Shakespeare, but they are quite overshadowed in importance by the well-known inscription engraved on the stone slab that covers the tomb, since tradition has it that the lines were the composition of the poet himself, and penned, very probably, when on his death-bed. They read as follows :

'Good frend for Iesys sake forbeare
To digg the dyst encloased here.
Blese be ye man yt spares thes stones
And cvrst be he yt moves my bones.'

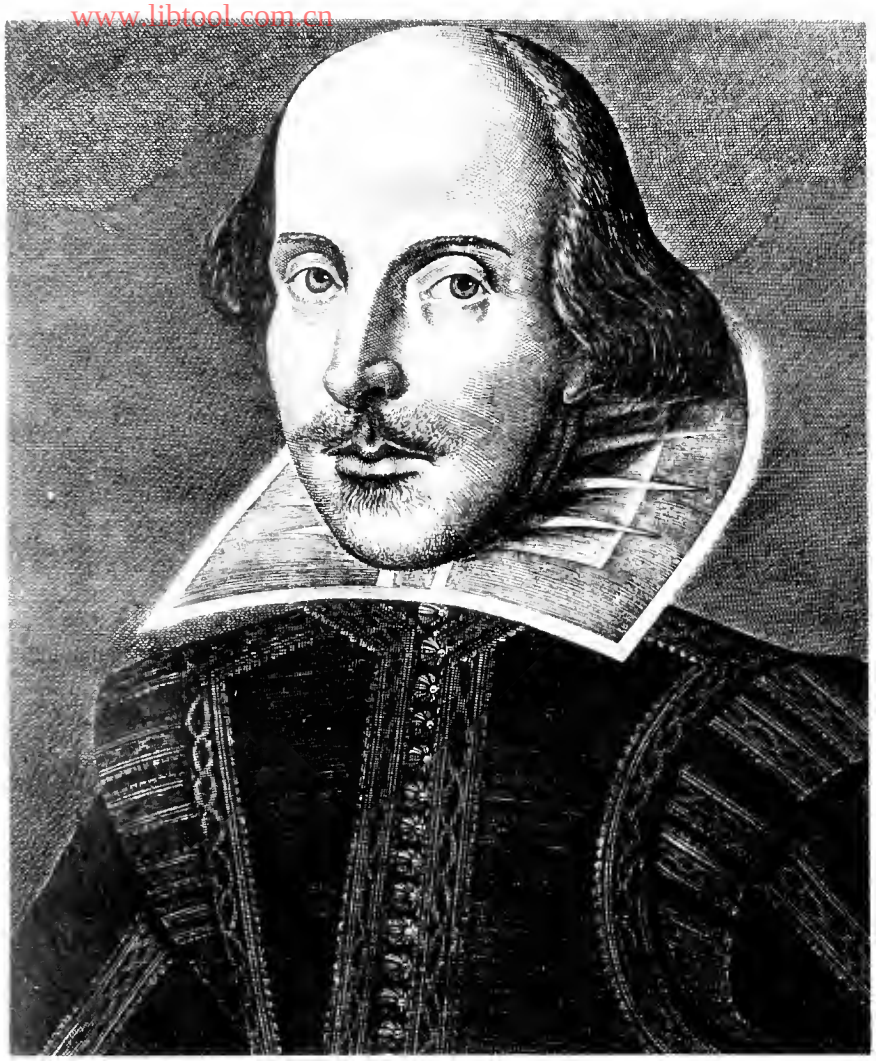
The 'Droeshout' Portrait

In point of intrinsic worth and literary interest the 'Droeshout' portrait of Shakespeare—an engraving of his likeness given to the world for the first time along with the original edition of his collected works in 1623—ranks next to the Stratford bust. Some authorities place what is known as the 'Chandos' portrait of the poet before the 'Droeshout' print; while, again, others value the print even before the bust. But there are one or two good reasons why, in this particular instance, the work of the engraver should be more highly valued than that of the painter.

In the first place, the 'Droeshout' engraving was executed by a skilful artist whose profession it was to 'draw from the life'; whereas the 'Chandos' portrait is only supposed to have been painted by one or other of two men whose calling was that of the player.

The 'Droeshout' engraving bears, in the second place, the special *imprimatur* of Shakespeare's associate, Ben Jonson; and not only his, but it also has the endorsement of the poet's intimate friends and 'fellows,' Heminge and Condell, who were remembered in his last will and testament.

In the third place, there is the suggestive fact that between the Stratford bust and the 'Droeshout' engraving there are certain striking correspondences, not so observable between the bust and the 'Chandos' portrait, that have led the best authorities to infer that the sculptor of the bust in all probability had the engraving before him while executing



THE DROESHOUT PORTRAIT

Now in the Shakespeare Memorial Gallery, Stratford-on-Avon

THE CHANDOS PORTRAIT

Now in the National Portrait Gallery, London

THE ELY PALACE PORTRAIT

From the original painting in the Birthplace Museum, Stratford-on-Avon

THE JANSEN PORTRAIT

Now the property of Sir John Frecheville Ramsden, Bart., Bulstrode Park, Buckinghamshire

THE STRATFORD PORTRAIT

Now preserved in the Birthplace Museum, Stratford-on-Avon

the details of his work, though modelling mainly from the mask taken after the poet's death. If that inference be correct, it again further shows that the 'Droeshout' print had received the approval of the poet's relatives, and also that Heminge and Condell obtained their sanction before affixing it side by side with Ben Jonson's dedicatory lines in the forefront of the famous First Folio (1623). These lines declare as follows:

'To the Reader

This figure that thou here seest put,
It was for gentle Shakespeare cut,
Wherein the graver had a strife
With Nature, to out-do the life:
O could he but have drawne his wit,
As well in brasse, as he has hit
His face; the print would then surpasse
All that was ever writ in brasse:
But since he cannot, reader, looke
Not on his picture, but his booke.[1]

B. J.'

In this work of Martin Droeshout there is nothing, beyond what the print itself bears, to tell of the circumstances in which it was originally executed. Assuming that other portraits of the poet were, in addition to this one, executed during his lifetime, the 'Droeshout' print was doubtlessly one of the earliest. Its date, however, is unknown. Judging from the appearance of the face generally, and comparing that with his other likenesses, Shakespeare had not, it is pretty certain, attained his fortieth year when, with this portrait,

'. . . the graver had a strife
With Nature.'

[1] As in Folio of 1632.

The 'Chandos' Portrait

Of the countless editions of the works of Shakespeare that show a frontispiece likeness of the poet, it is a singular fact that by far the greater number favour the 'Chandos' portrait. The face and features of Shakespeare as 'imaged' in that portrait are those with which his readers are probably most familiar. It is not easy to account for this, since the portrait is certainly not the first in point of genuineness, whatever may be its degree of artistic merit. Possibly it satisfies more fully the popular ideal of the likeness of a great creative poet than does the bust or print just referred to. Be that as it may, the 'Chandos' portrait, for various reasons, more than justifies its being kept in the custody of the nation as a very rare and valuable relic of its greatest dramatist. Its history is, briefly, as follows.

According to the catalogue of the National Portrait Gallery, where the relic is now safeguarded, 'The "Chandos" portrait was the property of John Taylor, the player, by whom, or by Richard Burbage, it was painted. The picture was left by the former in his will to Sir William D'Avenant. After his death it was bought by Betterton, the actor, upon whose decease Mr. Keck, of the Temple, purchased it for forty guineas, from whom it was inherited by Mr. Nicholls, of Michenden House, Southgate, Middlesex, whose only daughter married James, Marquis of Carnarvon, afterwards Duke of Chandos, father of Eliza, Duchess of Buckingham.' Hence the name of the portrait, and such, in substance, is all that is known with certainty regarding its history.

The 'Jansen' Portrait

It is a remarkable circumstance that not a few of the likenesses of Shakespeare should have been executed by others than his own countrymen. As its name would seem to imply, the 'Jansen' portrait was the production of a foreigner. There are others, also, of the Shakespearean likenesses yet to be considered that owe their origin very largely to the skill of devout admirers of the poet who were not in any way of his national kith or kin. In the 'Jansen' portrait, so called from the name of the painter, Cornelius Jansen, it is quite possible that we have a picture of Shakespeare that shows him as he appeared about his forty-sixth year, and when approaching, if not already arrived at, the summit of his physical and intellectual strength and glory. It is also possible that the likeness was painted as a memento or token of that friendship and regard which were entertained for the poet by the Earl of Southampton almost from the outset of Shakespeare's career.

The 'Felton' Portrait

Apart from the question of authenticity, it is safe to say that the likeness of Shakespeare known under the name of the 'Felton Head' is one that will probably fascinate the great majority of the poet's admirers more than any other portrait. It will, however, speak for itself as to this. But for a somewhat severe and sad, if not dissatisfied, look that seems to haunt the eyes, the portrait takes rank, in at least its excellence of ideality, with any other example. Allowing for some exaggeration in the height of the forehead,

a defect which has led some experts to infer that the 'Felton' portrait was in existence even before the 'Droeshout' print, and that, indeed, it served as the model for the engraver, it is assuredly a splendid portrait of Shakespeare, and speaks eloquently of the painter's lofty conception of the poet's features. Its history is curious, if for nothing more than the fact that the name, 'Gul Shakespear,' and the date, '1597,' together with the initials, 'R. B.,' traced on the reverse side of the picture, indicate the likeness to have been, as some authorities believe, the handiwork of Richard Burbage, the player, who is thus for the second time identified with his great contemporary in this interesting connection.

The 'Becker' Mask

In the year 1849 there was discovered at Mayence what bore to be a genuine though gruesome relic of Shakespeare, and claimed to be set almost side by side in value and interest with the Stratford bust itself. This relic was declared to be nothing less than the mask of the face and features of the poet taken after his death in April 1616 (o.s.). As nothing was ever known as to what befell the mask after Gerard Johnson had manipulated it in the preparation of the bust—assuming it had been in his hands for that purpose—the finding of such an extraordinary relic created widespread interest, not only throughout England and Europe, but in America, where also there were those who were ready to believe the story.

The resurrection of the veritable death-mask of the immortal author of *Hamlet* not unnaturally suggests, as it no doubt suggested at the time, a famous scene in the

last act of that famous tragedy. Nevertheless, its discovery was hailed with enthusiasm, and what purported to be an undoubted clue to a mystery more than two centuries old was taken up at once and followed with rare persistence by those who declared they held, in the possession of the mask, the only key to its solution.

The gentleman into whose possession this curiosity came was named Ludwig Becker, who, writing in 1850, gave so entertaining an account of it as to induce Mr. Page, a well-known artist of New York, to visit Germany and there examine this famous relic for himself. After a prolonged scrutiny of the mask, Mr. Page declared his firm belief in its genuineness, and thereupon made from it a very interesting set of models of the features of Shakespeare, which, at the time, attracted great attention. An excellent account of the history of the mask was also written by Mr. Page for *Scribner's Magazine* of May 1876. The relic itself was brought to London for exhibition, where it secured many admirers and willing believers, and it is actually recorded that some were so affected by the sight that they burst into tears!

The 'Stratford' Portrait

Like the 'Becker' mask, the 'Stratford' portrait of Shakespeare, so called from its having been discovered in 1860 in that town, is quite a modern 'find.' Whether the portrait had its original home in London or elsewhere is unknown; but, like the 'Becker' mask, it, too, was taken to the Metropolis for public exhibition. Many opinions were pronounced in favour of its genuineness, while many more unhesitatingly discredited it. At the time of its

exhibition a newspaper warfare was waged over the question with results that, on the whole, were unfavourable to the pretensions of the portrait.

In this likeness Shakespeare appears as if in the very flush and heyday of his early manhood and strength. A robust, almost bucolic, massiveness and compactness is, perhaps, the prominent physical trait. A calm, dignified repose fills the full, winsome eyes, and at the same time gently compresses the eloquent lips. The forehead is ample: somewhat less lofty than in the bust, much less so than in almost any other portrait, but still a fine, full, broad brow that could only have been that of a highly gifted man. Like so much else connected with Shakespeare, the history of this portrait—when, and by whom, and for whom painted—is unknown.

Some authorities believe it to have been the work of a local artist, who either painted it to satisfy his own or another's ideal. Some even incline to the view that it was made to order, to do duty as a common tavern-sign! If so, then it is surely one of the best examples of the kind ever executed. After having been exhibited in London, the picture was taken back to Stratford, where it has ever since found a place of honour and safety.

The 'Hilliard' and 'Auriol' Miniatures

The former is by far the more interesting and meritorious. When its pretensions to genuineness were put forward early in the last century, the 'Hilliard' miniature belonged to Sir James Bland Burges, Bart., who, in a letter to a friend giving an account of it, alleged that it had been discovered in a bureau which belonged to his mother, who had inherited

it from her father, William Somerville the poet, and thus traced its history back to the days when the poet lived in retirement at Stratford.

The 'Auriol' miniature is certainly more pretentious than the 'Hilliard,' though greatly inferior as a work of art or even as a likeness of the poet. It was claimed for it that it at one time belonged to the Southampton family, but there is no evidence of this. It bears to have been painted when Shakespeare was in his thirty-third year, and it is recorded that 'to the bottom of the frame of the miniature was appended a pearl, intended to infer that the original was a *pearl of men*.'

The 'Dunford' Portrait

If the likeness known as the 'Dunford' portrait has the slightest resemblance in any particular to Shakespeare, the individual must be exceptionally gifted who can trace it. When its claims were put forward for the first time in 1815, Mr. Dunford, the owner, assured the public that he 'saw in the portrait a likeness to the "Droeshout" print.' Mr. Wivell, the well-known expert, compared them carefully and concluded that the resemblance was of the kind discovered by Fluellen between Macedon and Monmouth! When the portrait was exhibited shortly after its discovery in the year mentioned, it is recorded that 'of not more than six thousand who went to see it, three thousand declared their belief in its originality.' Even an authority like Sir Thomas Lawrence voted in its favour. Moreover, it was twice engraved by Turner in mezzotinto, so sincerely did many persons believe in it as a true likeness of Shakespeare. Eventually, however, it lost credit, and is now only remembered as an

instance of that strange trait in the character of the British public, namely, its easy gullibility in matters appertaining to Shakespeare.

Zoust's Portrait

An excellent likeness of the poet, which strikingly recalls the 'Chandos' portrait, is one that was alleged to have been painted by Soest, or Zoust. As that artist was not born till 1635, when Shakespeare had been dead for nineteen years, his portrait must have been from a copy—probably that in the possession of Sir William D'Avenant, afterwards known as the 'Chandos' portrait.

The 'Stace' Portrait

What is known as Stace's portrait of Shakespeare is reminiscent, like that by Zoust, of the 'Chandos' likeness, in so far as the arrangement of the figure and dress and the expression of the features are in some points not unlike. The history of this picture is peculiar in that it has had an unusual spirituous aroma about it. Discovered early in the present century in a public-house, 'The Three Pigeons,' Shoreditch, where it hung for more than forty years, its glory 'all unbeknown,' it was sold by auction at another public-house, 'The Old Green Dragon,' Wilson Street, Moorfields. Its ultimate destination, however, was 'far otherwise,' if it really was the case that 'its purchaser, having formed such an attachment to the portrait, secured it by lock and chain in a costly case to be buried with him at his decease.'

THE SWAN THEATRE ON THE BANKSIDE, SOUTHWARK

Reproduced from Visscher's 'View of London' (1616)

Gilliland's Portrait

If this picture has any merit at all it is in its bald antiquity. In this curious likeness of Shakespeare, which was discovered about ninety years ago, there is at least a 'guid auld grey-bairdie bit o' a man,' as we say in Scotland: nothing more. The purchaser, Thomas Gilliland, writing in 1827, declared it was his impression that the portrait was painted about the time of Shakespeare, 'either by an artist who had seen him, or who copied a genuine portrait of the poet *now lost*, as this likeness differs from all the portraits published or known.' If gathered together, the lost portraits of Shakespeare would form an interesting gallery.

The 'Zincke' Portrait

'The earth hath bubbles as the water hath, and this of them,' is the not inappropriate footnote which the engraver printed on his copy of the likeness of Shakespeare known by the above name. Here again, for the third time, is Richard Burbage, the actor, associated with what pretends to be a portrait of his friend; while, for the second time, in like manner, the name of Ben Jonson is connected with it. Of course the picture is only a fabrication, 'concocted' about 1820 by the artist whose name it bears.

The 'Zucchero' Portrait

Those who are familiar with the portrait of Shelley will not fail to note the very striking resemblance between it and

the above example. But it, too, has small claims to be regarded as authentic.

The 'Ford Madox Brown' Portrait

This is an admirable work of art, such as we should expect from so distinguished an artist as was the late Mr. Ford Madox Brown. He courteously invited me to visit his studio in London many years ago to see his 'ideal' conception of the likeness of Shakespeare, and at the time I was much impressed by it. On a further consideration of it, however, I imagined I saw something in the nature of a blend of the features of Shakespeare and Bacon.

Other portraits worthy of notice are (*a*) the well-known 'D'Avenant' bust, where the figure of Shakespeare rather resembles a man of between sixty and seventy years of age, than of one approximating to his fiftieth year, though the features are beautifully idealised; and (*b*) the even better-known 'Ely Palace' portrait, so called from the fact that it belonged to Thomas Turton, Bishop of Ely (1780-1864). From a note to the reference in the Catalogue of the Shakespearean Collection in the Birthplace at Stratford-on-Avon, it is stated that this portrait was 'painted upon an oak panel in oils. Inscription on top left-hand side—Æt. suæ 39, x. 1603. Framed in old Dutch style.' It, too, has every appearance of being an ideal portrait of Shakespeare, and recalls more than any other portrait the 'Droeshout' original. (*c*) The 'Grafton' example has recently been characterised as only another 'make-believe' portrait of Shakespeare, and, indeed, according to Mrs. Carmichael Stopes,

is probably the likeness of a former Earl of Derby. But not having seen the portrait, I cannot of course venture further remarks as to its genuineness or otherwise. It, too, however, has its quota of believers in its being authentic, like most of the portraits, no matter to what class they belong.

CHAPTER III

CONTEMPORARY REFERENCES TO SHAKESPEARE

Their great value in estimating the worth and character of Shakespeare—Their deep interest as reliable records—'Bond against Impediments' in anticipation of the marriage of Shakespeare and Anne Hathaway—The Stratford-on-Avon Register of Births—Reference to three of Shakespeare's children—*Polimenteia* (1595), a work which contains a reference to '*Sweet* Shakespeare' and some characters in his plays—John Aubrey's (1626-1697) famous references — *Ratseis Ghost* (1605) and *Hamlet* — Francis Meres' *Palladis Tamia* (1598) and eulogy of Shakespeare—Greene's *Groat's-worth of Wit, bought with a Million of Repentance* (1596)—John Wright's *Return from Parnassus, or the Scourge of Simony* (1606)—John Davies' *The Scourge of Folly* (1610); also his *Microcosmos: The Discovery of the little World, with the government thereof* (1603)—Heminge and Condell's 'Dedication' for the issue of the famous First Folio (1623)—John Milton's epitaph—Ben Jonson's tribute—William Camden's mention of Shakespeare (1603)—Michael Drayton's tribute (1627)—Thomas Heywood's reference (1635)—Sir William D'Avenant's reference (1638)—Sir William Dugdale's reference (1656)—Thomas Fuller's notice (1662)—Edward Phillips's notice (1675).

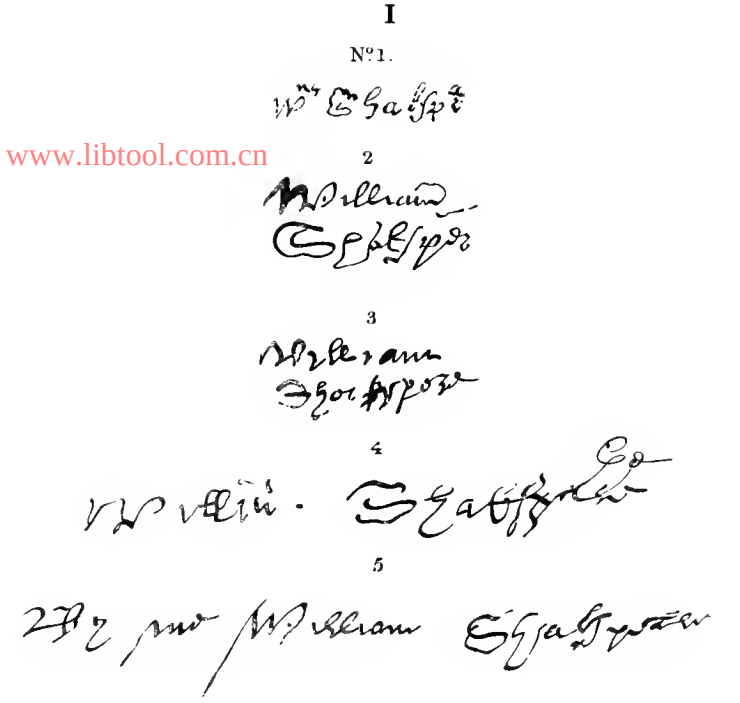
TO understand and appreciate the fact that there are extant so comparatively few references by his contemporaries to a man of such surpassing individuality as Shakespeare, it is necessary to have regard to one or two important considerations. In the first place, publicity, as understood in our age, and especially histrionic or literary publicity, was almost unknown three hundred years ago. True, it had a local habitation of a sort; but popular fame or renown in Shakespeare's day was, as a factor for publicity, a minus quantity and quality, and had mostly to do with those high and mighty ones who

dwelt in palaces and frequented courts, or paraded their precincts. There was no 'Press,' as we know it to-day, to chronicle the doings of the writers or players of the time: nothing in the nature of a recorder or biographer to describe the actions or to follow the footsteps of a famous player or author *à la Boswell* beyond the limits of a very circumscribed stage, or the confines of the player's or author's own private abode, so as to obtain some of those, often unimportant, details of personalia which it is the fashion of our days to publish for the delectation of the public. If a great writer or player possessed the consciousness of the fact of his popular superiority over his fellows, there was no favouring journal to publish the fact; no partisan organ to endorse or, it may be, to criticise its own or another's opinion regarding it. Now and then, perhaps, a pamphleteer—generally a scurrilous fellow—might play fast and loose with the names and fame of certain public individuals who were in some way or other obnoxious to him. Indeed, we have in connection with Shakespeare himself a remarkable case in point where this class of old-time recorder, though attempting to cast a slur on the name of Shakespeare, really rendered it a service, inasmuch as it happened to be one of the very first references to the dramatist and his doings by a reliable contemporary.

Moreover, the fact that the 'histrionics' of the period were exclusively the 'servants,' if not attached to the Court itself, of some noble patron of the theatre, like, for instance, the Earl of Southampton and the Earl of Pembroke, precluded them from almost any sort of self-advertisement, even though they had been desirous of obtaining that or at least some public acknowledgment of their histrionic merit.

The position of her or his Majesty's or his Lordship's 'servants' of the 'sock and buskin,' albeit not 'servants' in any derogatory sense, prevented anything beyond the idle gossip of the day from being recorded about them and their work individually or collectively, except of course, such as is sometimes to be found, in the 'accompts' of the particular households to which they were attached as servants. But alas for the value of the gossip of the day in respect of the part that has come down to us concerning Shakespeare and his fellow-players! Nor are we much enlightened when we decipher this or that 'accompt' which the treasurer was authorised to disburse in so much current coin amongst them for their histrionic services! Besides, it is highly improbable that in those days men were much concerned with the thought of a posthumous fame becoming theirs as the result of their professional achievements, whether in a literary or histrionic or indeed in any sense. And so an indifference towards, or rather an innate inability to bethink itself of, posterity, and what, forsooth, posterity might think of them and their writings, must to a great extent account for the comparative meagreness of extant records concerning a race of histrionic and literary giants such as that which flourished contemporarily with Shakespeare. There are, of course, exceptions to this general finding, but these reasons, coupled with the fact that the arts of handwriting and printing were then little more than in their infancy, and, moreover, were 'caviare to the general,' account for the few records of the period that make reference to Shakespeare's worth and work—in the one case the greatest figure, and in the other the noblest product, of his age. Nevertheless, though Shake-

I



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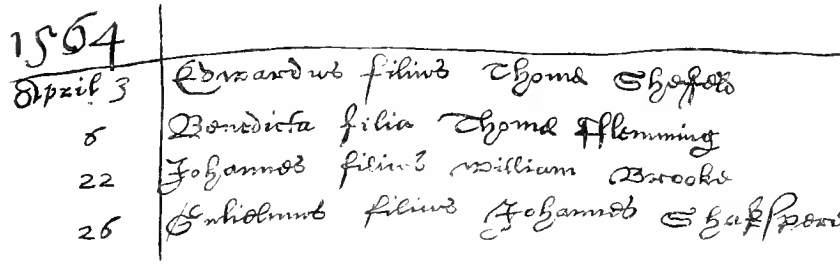

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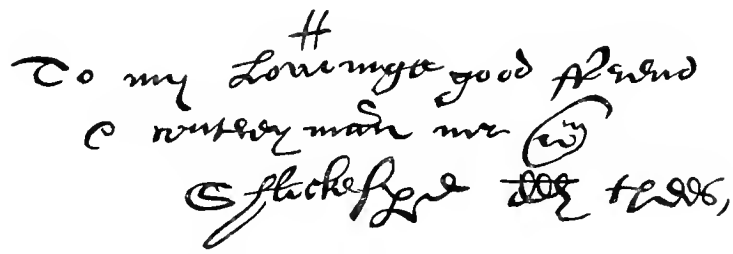


(I) FIVE GENUINE AUTOGRAPHS OF SHAKESPEARE

(II) SHAKESPEARE'S BAPTISMAL REGISTER

(III) SUPERSCRIPTION OF ONLY KNOWN LETTER ADDRESSED TO SHAKESPEARE

speare escaped what might be termed the popular verdict of his period, as understood in the present-day sense, there were certain of his contemporaries who, having come more or less directly in contact with him or his works, have left on record their own version of what they thought and felt regarding him, and the more interesting and important of these are here collected. One or two other 'records,' in which Shakespeare's name is mentioned, are also reproduced.

The Bond against Impediments which was exhibited at Worcester, in November 1582, *in anticipation of the marriage of Shakespeare and Anne Hathaway. From the original, preserved in the Bishop's Registry at Worcester.*

'Noverint universi per presentes nos, Fulconem Sandells de Stratford in comitatu Warwicensi, agricolam, et Johannes Rychardson, ibidem agricolam, teneri et firmiter obligari Ricardo Cosin, generoso, et Roberto Warmstry, notario publico, in quadraginto libris dem Ricardo et Roberto, heredibus, executoribus vel assignatis suis, ad quam quidem solucionem bene et fideliter faciendam obligamus nos et utrumque nostrum, per se pro toto et in solidum, heredes, executores et administratores nostros, firmiter per presentes sigillis nostris sigillatas. Datum 28 die Novembris, anno regni domine nostre Elizabethe, Dei gratia Anglie, Francis et Hibernie regine, fidei defensoris, etc. etc., 25o.—The condicion of thi obligacion ys suche that, if herafter there shall not appere any lawfull lett or impediment, by reason of any precontract, consanguitie, affinitie, or by any other lawfull meanes whatsoever, but that William Shagspere one

thone partie, and Anne Hathwey, of Stratford in the dioces of Worcester, maiden, may lawfully solemnize matrimony together, and in the same afterwards remaine and continuw like man and wiffe, according unto the lawes in that behalf provided; and, moreover, if there be not at this present time any action, sute, quarrell, or demaund moved or depending before any judge, ecclesiasticall or temporall, for and concerning any sushe lawfull lett or impediment; and, moreover, if the said William Shagspere do not proceed to solemnizacion of mariadg with the said Anne Hathwey without the consent of her frindes—and also if the said William do, upon his owne proper costes and expenses, defend and save harmles the right reverend Father in God, Lord John Bushop of Worcester, and his offycers, for licencing them the said Willuam and Anne to be maried together with once asking of the bannes of matrimony betwene them, and for all other causes which may ensue by reson or occasion thereof, that then the said obligacion to be voyd and of none effect, or els to stand and abide in full force and vertue.'

The Stratford Register

In this register occur the following names of Shakespeare's children under their respective dates:

1583. B.[1] May 26. Susanna, daughter to William Shakspere.

1584-5. B. Hamnet and Judeth, sonne and daughter to William Shakspere.

[1] B. signifies baptized.

Another allusion to Shakespeare, evidently the second in printed literature, occurs in a work entitled *Polimenteia, or the meanes lawfull and unlawfull, to judge of the fall of a Common-wealth, against the friuolous and foolish coniectures of this age, etc.* 4º Cambridge, 1595.[1]

In the second portion of this work, which is entitled 'England to her three daughters, Cambridge, Oxford, Innes of Court, and to all her inhabitants,' there is the following reference to Shakespeare. It occurs on pages R. 2 and R. 3. The author is eulogising in his text the poets of England as being superior to those of foreign nations, and refers to Shakespeare and others on the margins, one reference being put at the bottom of one page and the other at the top of the next. The text and notes are printed thus :

'*All praise worthy Lucrecia. Sweet Shakspeare. Eloquent Gaueston.*

Let other countries (sweet *Cambridge*) enuie, (yet admire) my *Virgil*, thy petrarch, diuine *Spenser*. And vnlesse I erre, (a thing easie in such simplicitie) deluded by dearlie beloued *Delia*, and fortunatelie fortunate *Cleopatra*; *Oxford* thou maist extoll thy courte deare verse happie *Daniell*, whose sweet refined muse in contracted shape, were sufficient amongst men, to gaine pardon of the sinne to *Rosemond*, pittie to distressed *Cleopatra*, and euerlasting praise to her louing *Delia*.

Wanton Adonis. Watsons heyre.'

[1] Copy in Edinburgh University Library.

John Aubrey (1626-1697). *Letters by Eminent Persons.*

'Mr. William Shakespear.

'Was born at Stratford upon Avon, in the county of Warwick: his father was a butcher, and I have been told heretofore by some of the neighbours, that when he was a boy he exercised his father's trade, but when he kill'd a calfe he would doe it in a high style, and make a speech. There was at that time another butcher's son in this towne that was held not at all inferior to him for a naturall witt, his acquaintance and coetanean, but dyed young. This Wm. being inclined naturally to poetry and acting, came to London, I guesse, about 18, and was an actor at one of the Play-houses, and did act exceedingly well. Now B. Jonson was never a good actor, but an excellent instructor. He began early to make Essayes at Dramatique Poetry, which at that time was very lowe, and his playes tooke well. He was a handsome well shap't man, very good company, and of a very readie and pleasant smooth witt. The humour of . . . the constable, in *A Midsummer Night's Dreame*, he happened to take at Grendon, in Bucks, which is the roade from London to Stratford, and there was living that constable about 1642, when I first came to Oxon. Mr. Jos. Howe is of that parish, and knew him. Ben Jonson and he did gather humours of men dayly wherever they came. One time as he was at the tavern, at Stratford upon Avon, one Combes, an old rich usurer, was to be buryed, he makes there this extemporary epitaph,

> Ten in the Hundred the Devill allowes,
> But Combes will have twelve, he sweares and vowes:
> If any one askes who lies in this Tombe,
> "Hoh!" quoth the Devill, "'Tis my John o' Combe."

'He was wont to goe to his native country once a yeare. I thinke I have been told that he left 2 or 300 lib. per annum there and thereabout to a sister. I have heard Sir Wm. Davenant and Mr. Thomas Shadwell[1] (who is counted the best comedian we have now) say, . . . that he never blotted out a line in his life; sayd Ben Jonson, "I wish he had blotted out a thousand." His comedies will remain witt as long as the English tongue is understood for that he handles *mores hominum*; now our present writers reflect so much upon particular persons and coxcombeities, that twenty yeares hence they will not be understood.

'Though, as Ben Jonson sayes of him, that he had but little Latine and lesse Greek, he understood Latine pretty well, for he had been in his younger yeares a schoolmaster in the country.'

In Aubrey's sketch of Sir William D'Avenant, knight (Poet Laureate), he refers again to Shakespeare. He writes as follows:

'Mr. William Shakespeare was wont to goe into Warwickshire once a yeare, and did comonly in his journey lye at this house in Oxon, where he was exceedingly respected. . . . Now Sir Wm. would sometimes, when he was pleasant over a glasse of wine with his most intimate friends, *e.g.* Sam. Butler (author of *Hudibras*) etc., say, that it seemed to him that he writt with the very spirit that Shakespeare [did], and seemed contented enough to be thought his son.'

[1] Succeeded Dryden as Poet Laureate.

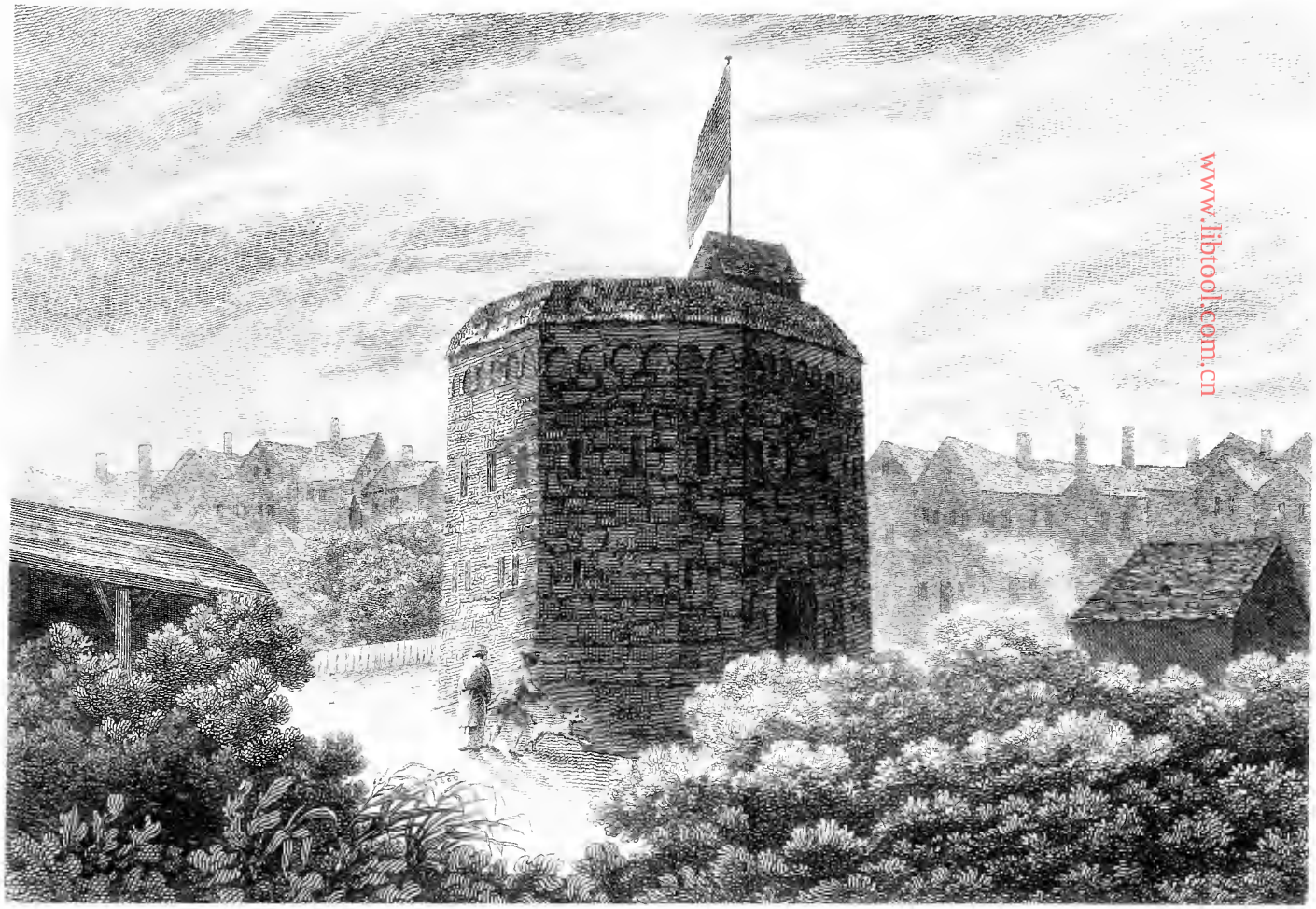
Ratseis ghost, or the second parte of his madde prankes and robberies. Ln. (1605).

'A sketch of the life of Gamaliel Ratsey, a highwayman, hanged at Bedford 26 March 1605. He is said to have thus addressed the head of a troop of actors (Possibly Sh——) after a compulsory performance on the highway :—"When thou feelest thy purse well lined buy thee some place or lordship in the country, that, growing weary of playing, thy money may there bring thee to dignity and reputation." This sage advice Sh—— closely followed in due course. Elsewhere the volume says : "My conceit is such of thee that I durst all the money in my purse on thy head to play 'Hamlet.'"'—William Jaggard, *Shakespeare Bibliography*, 1911, p. 257.

Meres (Francis). *A comparative Discourse of our English Poets* (*Painters and Musicians*) *with the Greek, Latin, and Italian Poets* (*Painters and Musicians*).[1]

'As Plautus and Seneca are accounted the best for Comedy and Tragedy among the Latins, so SHAKESPEARE among the English is the most excellent in both kinds of the stage. For comedy, witness his *Gentlemen of Verona*; his (Comedy of) *Errors*; his *Love's Labour's Lost*; his *Love's Labour's Won* (*All's Well that Ends Well*); his *Midsummer Night's Dream*; and his *Merchant of Venice*. For tragedy : his *Richard II.*, *Richard III.*, *Henry IV.*, *King John*, *Titus Andronicus*, and his *Romeo and Juliet*.

[1] Meres incorporated the 'Discourse' in his *Palladis Tamia* (1598).



THE BANKSIDE, SOUTHWARK, IN SHAKESPEARE'S DAY, SHOWING THE BEAR GARDEN

From an enlarged drawing of the 'Antwerp View' of London

'As EPIUS STOLO said that the Muses would speak with Plautus's tongue if they would speak Latin; so I say that the Muses would speak with SHAKESPEARE's fine filed phrase, if they were to speak English.

'As OVID said of his work,

"Jamque opus exegi, quod nec JOVIS ira, nec ignis,
Nec poterit ferrum, nec edax abolere vetustas;"

'And as Horace saith of his,

"Exegi monumentum aere perennius
Regalique situ pryamidum altius,
Quod non imber edax, non Aquilo impotens
Possit diruere, aut innumerabilis
Annorum series, et fuga temporum:"

'So I say, severally, of SIR PHILIP SIDNEY's, SPENSER's, DANIEL's, DRAYTON's, SHAKESPEARE's, and WARNER's works,

"Non JOVIS ira: imbres: MARS: ferrum: flamma: senectus:
Hoc opus unda: lues: turbo: venena ruent.
Et quanquam ad pulcherrimum hoc opus evertendum, tres illi Dii conspirabunt, CHRONUS, VULCANUS, et PATER ipse gentis.
Non tamen annorum series, non flamma, nec ensis;
Aeternum potuit hoc abolere Decus."'

Greene's *Groats-worth of Wit, bought with a Million of Repentance.* Lond. 1596.

'With thee I ioyne young Juuenall,[1] that byting satyrist, that lastlie with mee together writ a Comedie. Sweete boy, might I aduise thee, be aduised, and get not many enemies by bitter words: inueigh against vaine men, for

[1] Thomas Lodge, author of satirical *Fig for Momus* (1595).

thou canst doo it, no man better, no man so wel: thou hast a libertie to reprooue all, and name none; for one being spoken to, all are offended,—none beeing blamed, no man is iniuried. Stop shallow water still running, it will rage; tread on a worme, and it will turne; then blame not schollers who are vexed with sharpe and bitter lines, if they reprooue thy too much liberty of reproofe.

'And thou[1] no lesse deseruing than the other two, in some things rarer, in nothing inferiour, driuen, as myselfe, to extreame shifts, a little haue I to say to thee; and were it not an idolatrous oth, I would sweare by sweet *S. George*, thou art vnworthy better hap, sith thou dependest on so meane a stay. Base-minded men al three of you, if by my misery ye be not warned; for vnto none of you, like me, sought those burs to cleaue; those puppits, I meane, that speake from our mouths, those anticks garnisht in our colours. Is it not strange that I, to whome they al haue beene beholding: is it not like that you, to whome they al haue beene beholding, shall (were yee in that case that I am now) be both at once of them forsaken? 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 hee is as well able to bombast out a blanke-verse as the best of you; and being an absolute *Johannes factotum* is, in his owne conceit, the onely Shake-scene in a countrie. Oh, that I might intreate your rare wittes to be imployed in more profitable courses, and let those apes imitate your past excellence and neuer more acquaint them with your admyred inuentions! I know the best husband of you all will neuer prooue an usurer, and the kindest of

[1] George Peele (1558?-1597?), dramatist.

them all will neuer prooue a kinde nurse: yet, whilst you may, seeke you better maisters; for it is pittie men of such rare wits, should be subject to the pleasures of such rude groomes.'

Returne from Parnassus, or the scourge of simony. Publiquely acted by the students in Saint John's Colledge in Cambridge. Printed by G. Eld for John Wright and are to bee sold at his shop at Christchurch Gate, 1606.

This is a dramatic satire which reflects upon the chief poets of the period. Among these we find Shakespeare figuring several times. In Act III. Sc. 1, where the speakers are two, Ingenioso and Gullio, there occurs the following:

'GULL. Pardon, faire lady, thoughe sicke-thoughted Gullo maks amain unto thee, and like a bould-faced sutore 'gins to woo thee.[1]

INGEN. (We shall have nothinge but pure Shakspeare and shreds of poetrie that he hath gathered at the theators.)

GULL. Pardon mee, moy mitressa, ast am a gentleman, the moone in comparison of thy bright hue a mere slutt, Anthonie's Cleopatra a black browde milkmaide, Hellen a dowdie.

INGEN. (Marke, Romeo and Juliet. O monstrous theft.[2] I think he will runn throughe a whole booke of Samuell Daniell's.)

. . . . . .

Sweete Mr. Shakespeare.'

The reference to 'Mr. Shakspere' occurs later on in the same comedy, which serves to show that Gullio had an

[1] 'Sick-thoughted Venus makes amain unto him,
And like a bold-faced suitor 'gins to woo him.'
Venus and Adonis, st. 1.

[2] Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, Act II. Sc. 4.

intimate acquaintance with several of Shakespeare's plays. A few sentences further on we have the following:

'GULL. Not in a vain veine (prettie, i' faith): make mee them in two or three divers vayns, in Chaucer's, Gower's and Spenser's and Mr. Shakspeare's. Marry, I thinke I shall entertaine those verses which run like these:

"Even as the sunn with purple colour'd face
Had tane his laste leave of the weeping morne."[1]

O sweet Mr. Shakspeare. I 'le have his picture in my study at the courte.'

(The last sentence here spoken seems to imply that there existed a portrait of Shakespeare some years before his death.)

'GULL. Let mee heare Mr. Shakspear's veyne. (Act IV. Sc. 1, 1212.)

. . . . . .

ING. William Shakespeare. (Mis-spelt Shatespeare.) (Act I. Sc. 1, 303.)

. . . . . .

GULL. Let this duncified worlde esteeme of Spenser and Chaucer, I 'le worshipp sweet Mr. Shakspeare, and to honour him will lay his Venus and Adonis under my pillowe, as wee reade of one (I doe not well remember his name, but I am sure he was a kinge) slept with Homer under his bed's heade. Well, I 'le bestowe a French crowne in the faire writinge of them out, and then I 'le instruete thee about the delivery of them.' (Act IV. Sc. 1, 1223-1229.)

In the same comedy we find that Burbage and Kempe, who have been instructing two Cambridge students, Philomusus and Studioso, in the histrionic art, give us a reference to Shakespeare. Burbage addresses Philomusus:

'I like your face and the proportion of your body for Richard the 3. I pray, M. PHIL., let me see you act a little of it.

PHIL. Now is the winter of our discontent
Made glorious summer by the soone of Yorke.

BUR. Ver well, I assure you. Well, M. *Phil*, and M. *Stud.*, wee see what ability you are of. I pray, walke with us to our fellows and weele agree presently.' (Act. IV. Sc. 2, 1875-1882.)

[1] *Venus and Adonis*, st. 1.

From *The Scourge of Folly* (1610?), by John Davies of Hereford.

'Epigram 159. To our English Terence Mr. Will. Shake-speare

'Some say good *Will* (which I, in sport, do sing)
Had'st thou not plaid some Kingly parts in sport,
Thou hadst bin a companion for a *King*;
And, beene a King among the meaner sort.
Some others raile; but raile as they thinke fit,
Thou hast no rayling, but, a raigning Wit:
And honesty *thou sow'st, which they do reape*;
So, to increase their Stocke which they do keepe.'

Another epigram by Davies adds significance to the pathos as expressed by Shakespeare in his Sonnet CXI., where he attributes his errors to his poverty. Shakespeare thus writes on his position:

'O, for my sake do you with Fortune chide,
The guilty goddess of my harmful deeds,
That did not better for my life provide
Than public means which public manners breeds.
Thence comes it that my name receives a brand,
And almost thence my nature is subdued
To what it works in, like the dyer's hand:
Pity me then and wish I were renew'd;
Whilst, like a willing patient, I will drink
Potions of eisel 'gainst my strong infection;
No bitterness that I will bitter think,
Nor double penance, to correct correction.
Pity me then, dear friend, and I assure ye
Even that your pity is enough to cure me.'

Davies in his *Scourge of Folly*, Epigram 180, gives us the verses 'Against Aesop the Stage-player':

'I came to English Aesop (on a tide)
As he lay tirde (as tirde) before to play:

I came vnto him in his flood of pride;
He then was King, and thought I should obey.
And so I did, for with all reuerence, I
As to my Soueraigne (though to him vnknowne)
Did him approch; but loe he casts his Eye,
As if therein I had presumption showne:
I, like a subject (with submisse regard)
Did him salute, yet he re-greeted mee
But with a Nod, because his speech he spar'd
For Lords and Knights that came his Grace to see.
But I suppos'd he scorn'd me, by which scorne
I deemed him to be some demi-god;
(That 's more than King (at least) that thoughts discerne)
And markt my fained fawnings, with a Nod.
For, I well knew him (though he knew not me)
To be a player, and for some new Crownes
Spent on a Supper, any man may bee
Aequainted with them, from their Kings to Clownes.
But I (as Aron with the Golden Calfe)
Did grosse idolatry with him commit:
Nay my offence was more than his by halfe,
He erd against his will, but I with wit:
For, Wit me taught (I thought for proofe of folly)
To try conclusions on this doting *Asse*;
I him ador'd too much, but he (vhholly)
Took 't on him smoothly; But well, let that passe,
His golden Coate his eyes dim'd, I suppose,
That he could not well see my Veluet hose.
But if I ere salute him so againe,
Crowne him, and Cockes-combe my crowne for my paine.'

WILLIAM HERBERT, THIRD EARL OF PEMBROKE

From an engraving by Robert van Voerst after a portrait by Daniel Mytens

Microcosmos. The Discovery of the little World, with the government thereof. By John Davies. Oxford, 1603.

In the margin against the line 'Players, I loue yee,' are the initials W. S. and R. B., probably intended for Shakespeare and Burbage. They are thus introduced:

> '*Players*, I loue yee, and your *Qualitie*,
> As ye are men, *that* pass-time not abus'd:
> And some I loue for *painting, poesie*,
> And say fell *Fortune* cannot be exeus'd,
> That hath for better uses you refus'd:
> *Wit, Courage, good-shape, good partes*, and all *good*,
> As long as al these *goods* are no *worse* vs'd,
> And though the *stage* doth staine pure gentle *blood*,
> Yet generous yee are in *minde* and *moode*.'

Dedication to the First Folio (1623)[1]

To the Most Noble and Incomparable Paire of Brethren, William, Earle of Pembroke, etc. Lord Chamberlaine to the Kings most Excellent Majesty.

And Philip, Earle of Montgomery, etc. Gentleman of his Majestie's Bedchamber.

Both Knights of the Most Noble Order of the Garter, and our singular good lords.

Right honourable,

Whilst we study to be thankful in our particular for the many favours we have received from your Lordships,

[1] In the Introduction to *Hamlet and the Ur-Hamlet* (Bankside Shakespeare, 1908, p. xxvii), Mr. Appleton Morgan points out that the more significant parts of the Dedication are adapted from the dedication of Pliny's *Natural History*. It has been suggested that Ben Jonson was the translator and adapter. If this conjecture be correct, Heminge and Condell's connection with the Dedication is rather problematic. Pliny's claim would certainly be strong.

we are fallen upon the ill fortune to mingle two the most diverse things that can be, fear and rashness; rashness in the enterprise, and fear of the success. For when we value the places your Highnesses sustain, we cannot but know their dignity greater than to descend to the reading of these trifles; and, while we name them trifles, we have deprived ourselves of the defence of our Dedication. But since your Lordships have been pleased to think these trifles something, heretofore; and have prosecuted both them, and their Author living, with so much favour, we hope that (they outliving him, and he not having the fate, common with some, to be executor to his own writings) you will use the like indulgence toward them, you have done unto their parent. There is a great difference, whether any book choose his patrons, or find them: this hath done both. For, so much were your Lordships' likings of the several parts, when they were acted, as, before they were published, the volume asked to be yours. We have but collected them, and done an office to the dead, to procure his orphans guardians; without ambition either of self-profit or fame, only to keep the memory of so worthy a friend, and fellow alive, as was our SHAKESPEARE, by humble offer of his plays, to your most noble patronage. Wherein as we have justly observed, no man to come near your Lordships but with a kind of religious address, it hath been the height of our care, who are the presenters, to make the present worthy of your Highnesses by the perfection. But there we must also crave our abilities to be considered, my Lords. We cannot go beyond our own powers. Country hands reach forth milk, cream, fruits, or what they have; and many nations (we have heard) that had not gums and incense, obtained

their requests with a leavened cake. It was no fault to approach their gods, by what means they could; and the most, though meanest of things are made more precious when they are dedicated to temples. In that name, therefore, we most humbly consecrate to your Highnesses these remains of your servant SHAKESPEARE; that what delight is in them, may be ever your Lordships', the reputation his, and the faults ours, if any be committed, by a pair so careful to shew their gratitude both to the living and the dead, as is

Your Lordships' most bounden,

JOHN HEMINGE.
HENRY CONDELL.

TO THE GREAT VARIETY OF READERS (FIRST FOLIO)

From the most able to him that can but spell; there you are numbered. We had rather you were weighed, especially, when the fate of all books depends upon your capacities; and not of your heads alone, but of your purses. Well! It is now public, and you will stand for your privileges we know; to read and censure. Do so, but buy it first. That doth best commend a book, the stationer says. Then, how odd soever your brains be, or your wisdoms, make your licence the same and spare not. Judge your six-pen'orth, your shilling's worth, your five shilling's worth at a time, or higher, so you rise to the just rates, and welcome. But, whatever you do, buy. Censure will not drive a trade or make the jack go. And though you be a magistrate of wit, and sit on the stage at Blackfriars or the Cock-pit, to arraign plays daily, know, these plays have had their trial already, and stood out all appeals; and do now come

forth quitted rather by a Decree of Court, than any purchased letters of commendation.

It had been a thing, we confess, worthy to have been wished, that the Author himself had lived to have set forth and overseen his own writings; but since it hath been ordained otherwise, and he by death departed from that right, we pray you do not envy his friends the office of their care and pain to have collected and published them; and so to have published them, as where (before) you were abused with divers stolen and surreptitious copies, maimed and deformed by the frauds and stealths of injurious impostors that exposed them; even those are now offered to your view cured and perfect of their limbs, and all the rest absolute in their numbers as he conceived them; who, as he was a happy imitator of Nature, was a most gentle expresser of it. *His mind and hand went together; and what he thought, he uttered with that easiness, that we have scarce received from him a blot in his papers.* But it is not our province, who only gather his works, and give them you, to praise him. It is yours that read him. And there we hope, to your divers capacities, you will find enough, both to draw, and hold you; for his wit can no more lie hid, than it could be lost. Read him, therefore and again and again; and if then you do not like him, surely you are in some manifest danger not to understand him. And so we leave you to other of his friends, who, if you need, can be your guides; if you need them not, you can lead yourselves and others. And such readers we wish him.

JOHN HEMINGE.
HENRY CONDELL.

An Epitaph on the Admirable Dramatic Poet, W. Shakespeare [1]

By John Milton

What needs my Shakespeare for his honoured bones
The labour of an age in pilèd stones ?
Or that his hallowed reliques should be hid
Under a star-ypointing pyramid ?
Dear son of memory, great heir of fame,
What need'st thou such weak witness of thy name ?
Thou in our wonder and astonishment
Hast built thyself a livelong monument.
For whilst, to the shame of slow-endeavouring art,
Thy easy numbers flow, and that each heart
Hath from the leaves of thy unvalued book
Those Delphic lines with deep impression took,
Then thou, our fancy of itself bereaving,
Dost make *us* marble with too much conceiving,
And, so sepúlchred in such pomp dost lie
That kings for such a tomb would wish to die.

To the Memory of my Beloved, the Author, Mr. William Shakespeare, and what he hath left us [2]

By Ben Jonson

To draw no envy, Shakespeare, on thy name,
Am I thus ample to thy book, and fame ;
While I confess thy writings to be such
As neither man, nor Muse, can praise too much.
'Tis true, and all men's suffrage. But these ways
Were not the paths I meant unto thy praise ;

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[1] As printed in Professor Masson's edition of Milton's Poetical Works.
[2] From the First Folio (1623).

For seeliest ignorance on these may light,
Which, when it sounds at best, but echoes right;
Or blind affection, which doth ne'er advance
The truth, but gropes, and urgeth all by chance;
Or crafty malice might pretend this praise,
And think to ruin, where it seem'd to raise.
These are as some infamous bawd or whore
Should praise a matron; what could hurt her more?
But thou art proof against them: and, indeed,
Above the ill fortune of them, or the need.
I therefore will begin: Soul of the age!
The applause! delight! the wonder of our stage!
My Shakespeare, rise! I will not lodge thee by
Chaucer, or Spenser, or bid Beaumont lie
A little further off, to make thee room:
Thou art a monument without a tomb,
And art alive still, while thy book doth live,
And we have wits to read, and praise to give.
That I not mix thee so, my brain excuses;
I mean with great but disproportion'd Muses:
For if I thought my judgment were of years,
I should commit thee surely with thy peers,
And tell how far thou didst our Lyly outshine,
Or sporting Kyd, or Marlowe's mighty line.
And though thou hadst small Latin and less Greek,
From thence to honour thee, I would not seek
For names; but call forth thundering Aeschylus,
Euripides, and Sophocles to us,
Pacuvius, Accius, him of Cordova dead,
To live 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 haughty Rome
Sent forth, or since did from their ashes come.
Triumph, my Britain! thou hast one to show
To whom all scenes of Europe homage owe.
He was not of an age, but for all time!
And all the Muses still were in their prime,
When like Apollo he came forth to warm
Our ears, or like a Mercury to charm!

Nature herself was proud of his designs,
And joy'd to wear the dressing of his lines!
Which were so richly spun, and woven so fit,
As since she will vouchsafe no other wit.
The merry Greek, tart Aristophanes,
Neat Terence, witty Plautus, now not please;
But antiquated and deserted lie,
As they were not of Nature's family.
Yet must I not give Nature all; thy art,
My gentle Shakespeare, must enjoy a part.
For though the poet's 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 thinks to frame;
Or for the laurel he may gain a scorn,
For a good poet's made as well as born.
And such wert thou! Look how the father's face
Lives in his issue; even so the race
Of Shakespeare's mind and manners, brightly shines
In his well-turned and true-filed lines;
In each of which he seems to shake a lance,
As brandish'd at the eyes of ignorance.
Sweet Swan of Avon! what a sight it were
To see thee in our waters yet appear,
And make those flights upon the banks of Thames
That so did take Eliza and our James!
But stay; I see thee in the hemisphere
Advanc'd, and made a constellation there!
Shine forth, thou Star of Poets; and with rage
Or influence chide or cheer the drooping stage,
Which since thy flight from hence hath mourn'd like night,
And despairs day but for thy volume's light!

WILLIAM CAMDEN'S MENTION OF SHAKESPEARE, 1603. —Remaines of a greater worke, Concerning Britaine, the inhabitants thereof, *their Languages, Names, Surnames, Empresses, Wise Speeches, Poesies, and Epitaphes.* At London, Printed by G[eorge] E[ld] for *Simon Waterson,* 1605. 4to.

The author, William Camden, was the chief antiquary of Shakespeare's day and the intimate friend of Ben Jonson. Camden's *Remaines* was, according to the 'Epistle dedicatorie,' ready for press on 12th June 1603. Under the heading of 'Poems,' Camden wrote at page 8:

'These may suffice for some Poeticall descriptions of our auncient Poets; if I would come to our time, what a world could I present to you out of Sir *Philipp Sidney, Ed. Spencer, Samuel Daniel, Hugh Holland, Ben Johnson, Th. Campion, Mich. Drayton, George Chapman, John Marston, William Shakespeare,* and other most pregnant witts of these our times, whom succeeding ages may iustly admire.'

MICHAEL DRAYTON'S TRIBUTE.—The Battaile of Agincovrt, and other poems. London, Printed for William Lee, at the Turkes Head in Fleete-Streete, next to the Miter and Phœnix, 1627. Folio.

In the concluding section of this volume entitled 'Elegies,' Drayton gives a poetic epistle—'Of Poets and Poesie'—which he addressed to his friend, Henry Reynolds. There Drayton, who was born in 1563, at Hartshill, a hamlet near Atherstone, Warwickshire,

MICHAEL DRAYTON

From the painting in the National Portrait Gallery, London

and was a Warwickshire friend of Shakespeare, apostrophises the great dramatist thus (p. 206):

'and be it said of thee,
Shakespeare, thou hadst as smooth a Comicke vaine,
Fitting the socke, and in thy naturall braine,
As strong conception, and as Cleere a rage,
As any one that trafiqu'd with the stage.'

It would seem that Drayton wrote these lines before 1619.

THOMAS HEYWOOD ON SHAKESPEARE.—The Hierarchie of blessed Angells. *Their Names, orders, and Offices.* The fall of Lucifer with his Angells. *Written by Tho: Heywood.*—London. *Printed by* Adam Islip, 1635. Folio.

Thomas Heywood, the poet and dramatist, who was a friend of Shakespeare and of many contemporary men of letters, writes in the fourth book of this work of the form of honour paid to poets in old times, and draws attention to the familiarity with which poets of Shakespeare's epoch were treated by the public, who commonly talked of them by their Christian names. Of Shakespeare, Heywood remarks:

'Mellifluous *Shake-speare*, whose inchanting Quill
Commanded Mirth or Passion, was but *Will*.'

SIR WILLIAM D'AVENANT'S TRIBUTE, 1638.—Madagascar; with other poems. By W. Davenant. London, 1638. 12mo.

The author, Sir William Davenant or D'Avenant (born at Oxford in 1606, died in London in 1668), was not averse to being regarded as

Shakespeare's son. His father was an Oxford innkeeper, at whose house Shakespeare often stayed on his journeys to and from London. D'Avenant, who became Poet Laureate, and won fame as a dramatist, is said to have changed the spelling of his name from Davenant to D'Avenant in order to emphasise his claim to kinship with the Warwickshire Avon. In this, the earliest collection of his poems, appears the following on p. 37:

'IN REMEMBRANCE OF

MASTER WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Ode

Beware (delighted Poets !) when you sing
To welcome Nature in the early Spring ;
Your num'rous Feet not tread
The Banks of Avon ; for each Flowre
(As it nere knew a Sunne or Showre)
Hangs there the pensive head.

Each Tree, whose thick, and spreading growth hath made
Rather a Night beneath the Boughs, than Shade,
(Unwilling now to grow)
Lookes like the Plume a Captive weares,
Whose rifled *Falls* are steept i'th teares
Which from his last rage flow.

The piteous River wept it selfe away
Long since (Alas !) to such a swift decay ;
That reach the Map ; and looke
If you a River there can spie ;
And for a River your mock'd Eie,
Will find a shallow Brooke.'

SIR WILLIAM DUGDALE.—The Antiquities of Warwickshire illustrated; from Records, Ledger-Books, Manuscripts, Charters, Evidences, Tombes, and Arms. Beautified with Maps, Prospects, and Portraitures. London, 1656. Folio.

Sir William Dugdale (1605-1686), the great Warwickshire antiquary, gives under the heading, 'Stratford-upon-Avon,' an account of Shakespeare's monument and tombstone with plate by Hollar. He concludes his description of the borough with these words (p. 523):

'One thing more, in reference to this antient Town is observable, that it gave birth and sepulture to our late famous Poet *Will. Shakespere,* whose monument I have inserted in my discourse of the Church.'

Under date 1653, in the Diary of Sir William Dugdale (first published in 1827, p. 99), the antiquary has an entry, 'Shakespeares and John Combes Monuments, at Stratford-super-Avon, made by one Gerard Johnson.'

FULLER'S BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE in his *Worthies of England.* London, 1662. Folio.

In this work (begun about 1643) Thomas Fuller (1608-1661), a literary divine of great repute, attempted the first biographical notice of Shakespeare. Fuller's notice includes these sentences: 'William Shakespeare was born at Stratford-on-Avon, in this County [Warwickshire] in whom three eminent poets [Martial, Ovid, and Plautus] may seem in some sort to be compounded. . . . Add to all these that though his Genius generally was jocular and inclining him to festivity, yet he could when so disposed be solemn and serious, as appears by his Tragedies. . . . He was an eminent instance of the truth of that rule, *Poeta non fit sed nascitur*; one is not *made* but *born* a

Poet. . . . Many were the wit-combats betwixt him and Ben. Jonson, which two I behold like a Spanish great galleon and an English man-of-war; Master Jonson (like the former) was built far higher in learning, solid but slow in his performances. Shakespeare, with the English man-of-war, lesser in bulk, but lighter in sailing, could turn with all tides, tack about, and take advantage of all winds by the quickness of his wit and invention. . . . He died Anno Domini 16[16], and was buried at Stratford-upon-Avon, the Town of his Nativity.'

EDWARD PHILLIPS.—Theatrum Poetarum. A Complete Collection of the Poets, Especially the most Eminent, of all Ages. . . . With some Observations and Reflections upon many of them, particularly those of our own nation. Together with a Prefatory Discourse of the Poets and Poetry in Generall. London, 1675. 12mo.

Edward Phillips (1630-1696?), the author of this compilation, was nephew and pupil of the poet Milton, many of whose opinions he reproduced in this volume. In the Preface Phillips remarks:

'*Let us observe* Spenser *with all his Rustie, obsolete words, with all his rough-hewn clowterly Verses; yet take him throughout, and we shall find in him a gracefull and Poetic Majesty: in like manner* Shakspear, *in spight of all his unfiled expressions, his rambling and indigested Fancys, the laughter of the* Critical, *yet must be confess't a* Poet *above many that go beyond him in Literature some degrees.*'

On p. 194 Phillips makes the following observations upon Shakespeare:

'*William Shakespear,* the Glory of the English Stage; whose nativity at *Stratford* upon *Avon,* is the highest honour that Town can boast of: from an Actor of Tragedies and Comedies, he became a *Maker*; and such a Maker, that though some others may perhaps pretend to a more exact *Decorum* and *œconomie,* especially in Tragedy,

SIR WALTER RALEGH

From the painting, probably by Zucchero, in the National Portrait Gallery, London

never any express't a more lofty and Tragic heighth; never any represented nature more purely to the life, and where the polishments of Art are most wanting, as probably his Learning was not extraordinary, he pleaseth with a certain wild and native Elegance; and in all his Writings hath an unvulgar style, as well in his *Venus and Adonis,* his *Rape of Lucrece,* and other various Poems, as in his Dramatics.'

Phillips also remarks of Ben Jonson that 'he was no *Shakesphear.*' Of Marlowe he says that he was 'a kind of a second *Shakesphear* (whose contemporary he was).' Again, Phillips notes of Fletcher that he was 'one of the happy *Triumvirate* (the other two being *Shakespeare* and *Jonson*) of the chief dramatic Poets of our Nation, in the last foregoing Age, among whom there might be said to be a symmetry of perfect, while each excelled in his peculiar way: *Ben Jonson* in his elaborate poems and knowledge of Authors, *Shakespear* in his pure vein of wit and natural Poetic heighth, Fletcher in a Courtly Elegance, and gentile familiarity of style, and withal a wit and invention so overflowing, that the luxuriant branches thereof were frequently thought convenient to be lopt off by his almost inseparable Companion *Francis Beaumont.*'

CHAPTER IV

SOME OF SHAKESPEARE'S KINSFOLK

Matthew Arnold's sonnet on Shakespeare—Shakespeare and heredity—The Arden strain—Shakespeare's parents—His wife, Anne Hathaway—Hamnet Shakespeare (son)—Dr. John Hall, son-in-law—The poet's daughters—The Quyneys, father and son—A special friend, the Earl of Southampton.

IN Matthew Arnold's well-known sonnet on Shakespeare the opening line is :

'Others abide our question. *Thou art free.*'

This suggests more than is, perhaps, at first apparent. For, in some respects, the ordinary canons of heredity must be held to be inapplicable to a man like Shakespeare. 'The poet is born, not made' : that is to say—a miracle has happened. His ancestry, for example, while highly respectable along both the paternal and maternal lines, and warranting a fairly satisfactory *product*, does not, when traced to its springs or origins, as far as that is possible, encourage too much hope of an uncommon manifestation of mental endowment in any generation, or in any one individual or member.

Of course, the same may be said of other instances where the lineage of men of surpassing genius is considered. But, if the opinion may be hazarded as to whence Shakespeare derived his marvellous bequest of mind and spirit, it is

safe to say that it came more from the Ardens than from the Shakespeares. His manly type of physique, as indicated by the Stratford bust, may be largely credited to his paternal ancestry. Indeed, there is more than a hint of such a probability in his patronymic. But his well-vouched-for gentleness of nature; his rare faculty of imagination; his supreme gift of expression; his wonderful apprehension of the dramatic in life and art, as well as his strong sense of its appeal to the human mind, which together go far to make up the sum of what we call the *genius* of Shakespeare,—these may reasonably be attributed to the Arden strain in his blood.

John Shakespeare (1531-1601)

From what is on record regarding John Shakespeare, the father of the poet, and his career, he seems to have been a worthy man, who was, at least, locally notable, in so far as he attained, in the course of his career, the summit of such social distinction as belonged to a little Midland township of fifteen hundred persons some three hundred and fifty years ago. He must have been a man of considerable individuality to have warranted his fellow-townsmen electing him, after he had filled minor positions of service to the public, to the mayorship of Stratford-on-Avon. Leaving out the question of his occupation (whether he was a farmer, or farmer-butcher, or a glover, or a miscellaneous trader, is really of little moment), John Shakespeare must have been a young man of a certain distinction and quality of character to have been able to woo and win a young lady like Mary Arden; his social status and personality

were evidently regarded as satisfactory by herself and her people.

The marriage of John Shakespeare and Mary Arden took place in 1557—six years after the former came from his father's homestead at Snitterfield, a few miles distant, to reside in Stratford. With his wife it is known that, as part of her marriage dowry, he received two tenements in Stratford, a small estate at Wilmcote, called Asbies, and other properties. How much of the Snitterfield property left by his father, Richard Shakespeare, John actually succeeded to, is not certain, but there can be no doubt that, with these accessions to their capital, the union of John Shakespeare and Mary Arden had, from a worldly point of view, a fairly auspicious beginning. In the year of his marriage John Shakespeare was chosen one of the burgesses of the town, and was also appointed ale-taster. From that year on to 1571, when he was chosen chief alderman, he evidently grew in the esteem of his fellow-townsmen, and, it may be assumed, succeeded, *up to a certain point*, in all other material respects. His family had in the interim increased, and by the year last named six children had been born; it is believed that the pair had in all ten children. William, born in 1564, as is well known, was their third child and first son. The other sons were Gilbert, Richard, and Edmund, between whose births several years intervened.

It appears from reliable testimony that the fortunes of John Shakespeare were rather precarious, though it is impossible to determine what was the exact nature of the adversities that began to disturb his career, about the year 1560, and ultimately brought the cloud that overshadowed

the later years of his life. The main fact known of him is, that he was for a period pecuniarily embarrassed, and there is also evidence extant that shows him to have been not only neglectful of his aldermanic duties, for which he was deprived, in 1586, of his official gown (quite a serious defection), but that he had made himself subject to certain fines and restraints which jeopardised his social credit and standing. One circumstance, however, like the silver lining of the cloud, shows him again making an effort to rehabilitate himself. There is warrant for this belief in the application he made in 1596 to the Heralds' College for a grant of arms, which he obtained. A further grant of arms was acquired in 1599, which had the effect of enabling him to incorporate the Shakespeare 'bearings' with those of the Ardens. A notable feeling for family form, certainly. But how much of it was due to the initiative of their now distinguished and successful scion? It is pathetic, nevertheless, to find that the last really trustworthy reference to the poet's father is in a document containing notes of an action of trespass in 1601.

Altogether, it cannot be said of John Shakespeare that he was a man of outstanding prominence, save for the fact that, in his later years, his son was the risen star among the poets of the period. It is known that he could not even write his own name, and it would not be doing him the slightest injustice to say that neither could he read. How then did his greatly gifted son William behave towards him in these circumstances? Any evidence that exists goes to prove that his filial duty was nobly performed, as became a man sound in heart and lofty in intellect. It is permissible to imagine Shakespeare during one of his visits

to Stratford-on-Avon, while his fame as player and dramatist was growing from year to year, his fortunes keeping pace with his fame, looking in occasionally upon his old folks in their home in Henley Street, giving them some account of himself and his work, of his life in London, and of the friends he had made there, and *perhaps* (for Shakespeare was a modest man) telling them of his newest ventures and even reciting to them some of his immortal verses! At all events, it is a delightful family scene to imagine, and it is not improbable that Shakespeare might thus have unbosomed himself, not only to his parents, but also to his own household established 'over the way' in quiet Stratford town.

At the time of his father's death in 1601 Shakespeare was thirty-seven years of age, in the prime of his genius and approaching the zenith of his remarkable career. There can be little doubt that the financial success of the son had something to do with the improvement in his father's affairs already referred to; but of course that can only be conjectured, as there is but meagre evidence extant to show how far and in what manner that filial duty was performed. And though Shakespeare himself was known to have been a prudent man of business, especially where legal rights and money matters were concerned, it is pleasant to think of the pride it would give the dramatist to find himself able to help to put the family affairs in some sort of order. And we may suppose that it was probably as much for his mother's as for his father's sake that he did so.

Mary Arden, the Mother of Shakespeare (1535-1608)

Mary Arden was some three or four years younger than her husband, John Shakespeare, at the time of their marriage; she would therefore be in her twenty-second or twenty-third year when that event took place. Her father was Robert Arden of Wilmcote, but the maiden name of her mother is unrecorded. It is known that Robert Arden came of a goodly stock. According to Professor Ward, in his *History of English Dramatic Literature*, there seems to be little doubt that Robert Arden 'was a lineal descendant of the ancient family of that name which traced its descent from Alwyn, vice-comes of Warwickshire, under his uncle, Leofric, in the time of Edward the Confessor, and through him it seems further traceable to Guy of Warwick, with a possible female descent from Alfred the Great.' It is not my purpose to enlarge upon the family history of the Ardens. I should like rather to visualise something of Mary Arden's personal characteristics, for that is all that can be done from the, unhappily, scanty knowledge that we have of the lady who was the mother of our greatest Englishman. The world owes far more than it wots of to the mothers of its great men. Take Napoleon, for example, in one department of human activity, or John Wesley in another; how much, in these two cases at all events, did the sons owe to the genius of their mothers? After all, maternity is ever in the forefront of the 'first things first,' of the great issues in the lives and destinies of men. This truth needs no reiteration, but in the case of Shakespeare it has an undoubted significance.

We can only conjecture that Mary Arden was in all

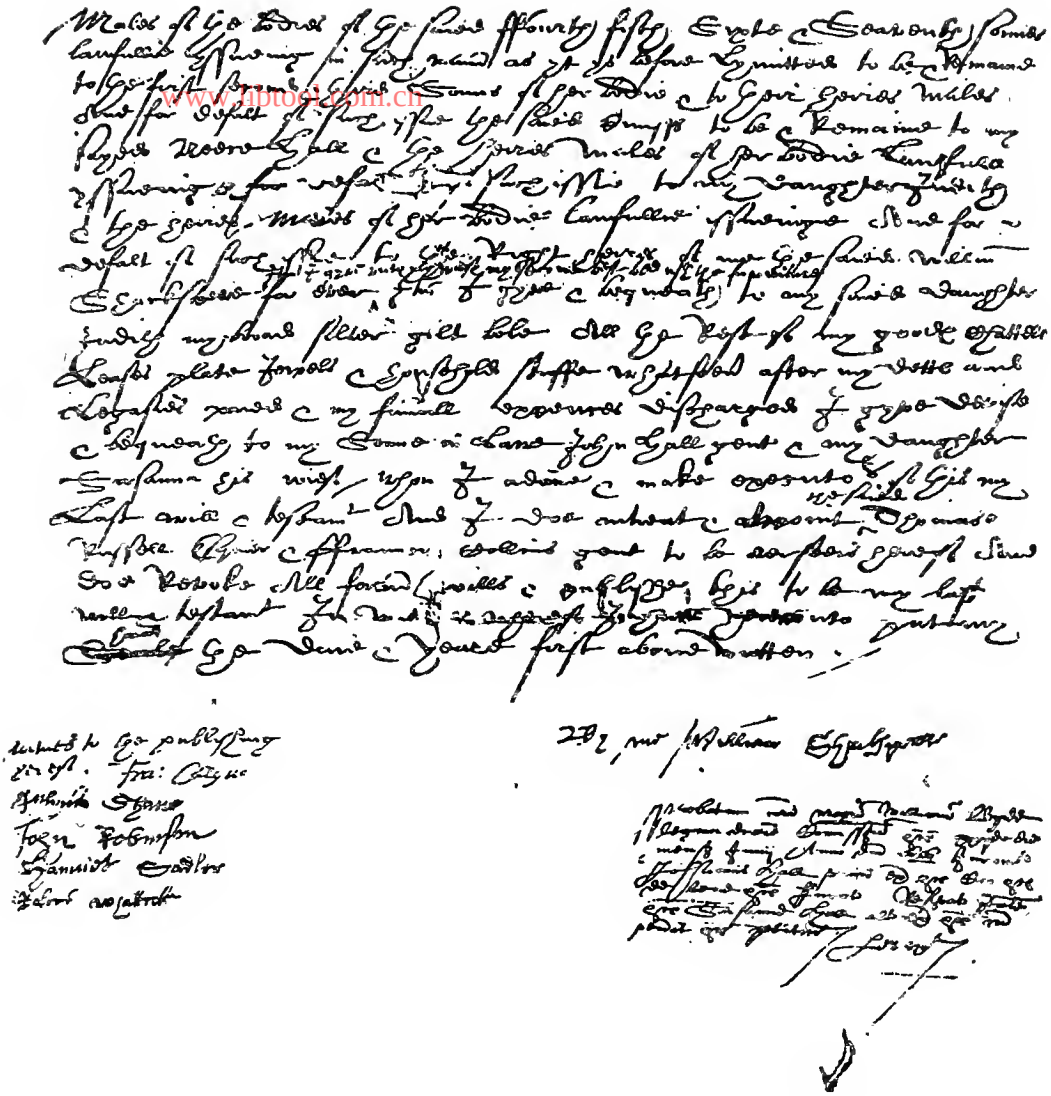
respects an ideal mother for such a poet as Shakespeare; and in thinking of Shakespeare and his parentage, I often consider that one of the most priceless things the world could possess would be a true portrait of Mary Arden. What we do know of her is that she survived her husband, John Shakespeare, for seven years, and passed away when the poet himself had arrived at his forty-fourth year. That Shakespeare took his part at the burial obsequies of his parents may be reasonably presumed.

Anne Hathaway, Shakespeare's Wife (1558-1623)

Anne Hathaway was the daughter of Richard Hathaway, a farmer and sheep-owner in comfortable circumstances, who died in 1582, leaving a large family to the guardianship of his eldest son, Bartholomew, on whom he largely put the support of his mother and the care and oversight of his brothers and sisters.

Much has been written critically on the disparity between the ages of this remarkable pair, and even a reference in Shakespeare's Will to the 'second-best bed' has been drawn upon to try to prove the unwisdom of such disparity and the conjugal unhappiness apt to be due thereto. But here, again, regarding the intimate personal records of Shakespeare's married life, we are largely in a sphere of surmise, and it were idle to enter upon that sphere unless there were something tangible to work upon.

Anne Hathaway must have had, we may assume, some notable personal charm to have attracted the regard of even so young a man as was Shakespeare when he married



FACSIMILE OF PORTION OF SHAKESPEARE'S WILL IN THE PROBATE REGISTRY, SOMERSET HOUSE, LONDON

her in his nineteenth year. Apart from the records in which the name of her family, the Hathaways, is mentioned, there is of course an abundance of tradition but scarcely a scrap of written testimony to guide us in forming a true idea of her individuality. Many questions regarding her, as the wife of Shakespeare and the mother of his children, naturally occur in thinking of the domestic circumstances of the Shakespeares, especially after young Will left Stratford-on-Avon for London and was launched on the tide of dramatic prosperity. His long residence in London, while his wife and children were living at Stratford-on-Avon, provokes the imagination in following the history of the illustrious pair: in picturing them together bearing jointly or singly the responsibilities they assumed on their marriage, and in all their ordinary relationship as husband and wife and as parents.

There is nothing on record to show what Anne Hathaway was like in the flesh, or what her mental capacity was, or even what were her predominant characteristics, as wife or mother; and almost as much as we regret the absence of data to give us even a hint of the personality of Mary Arden, the poet's mother, so do we lament that the data are likewise awanting in regard to the life of Mistress William Shakespeare.

Hamnet Shakespeare (1585-1596)

Of Shakespeare's three children Hamnet was the only son. The death of this boy in his eleventh year, when Shakespeare was thirty-two years old and had been some years settled in London, must have been a grievous loss to his parents and

a bitter disappointment to the father. If Shakespeare ever entertained a hope of founding a family, as he had every right to do, in view of his rising renown and increasing worldly prosperity, that hope must have been largely centred in his son Hamnet. It can readily be surmised, therefore, that he would feel his premature death acutely, but certainly would also bear the loss with that fortitude of heart and philosophy of mind which we have a right to presume belonged to a man of his powers. There is a portrait of Shakespeare, the well-known 'Felton Head,'[1] which I often wish could be considered as a really genuine likeness, since it depicts an expression of sadness such as is not to be found in any other of the so-called portraits of the dramatist; and, moreover, suggests, in what is visible of the dress, that he was wearing mourning for some one. Further, the date of this portrait, it is singular to say, corresponds to that of the death of Hamnet Shakespeare; so that if we could only believe the portrait to be a reliable one, surmise might almost become a certainty. Be that as it may, I can never look at the 'Felton' likeness without associating Shakespeare's solemn and serious countenance as there depicted with some grievous family sorrow recently sustained; and what greater loss could any kind-hearted and noble-minded father suffer than that of an only son in whom his fondest and proudest hopes had been centred? The baptismal and burial records of the eleven-year-old Hamnet Shakespeare are all that exist, in a biographical sense, to link him for ever to his great father; his 'little life,' we may be assured, was blessed in its parentage, happy in its environment, and—but, what else dare we say of it?

[1] See frontispiece, and also reference on page 43.

The singularity of the Christian name, Hamnet, which Shakespeare gave to his son, has more than once been suggested as having provided the dramatist with the title 'Hamlet' for one of his noblest tragedies. Of course, that is only a conjecture, and an absurd conjecture, too; for it is believed that the child Hamnet was named after one of Shakespeare's Stratford friends and neighbours, Hamnet Sadler. In Shakespeare's Will a bequest is made to this friend of 'twenty-six shillings and eightpence to buy him a ring,' and, curiously enough, there his name is spelt 'Hamlett,' though obviously in error.

Dr. John Hall (1575-1635)

The husband of Shakespeare's elder daughter Susanna (the date of their marriage was 5th June 1607, when Shakespeare was forty-three), Dr. John Hall properly takes an important place in this short sketch of the poet's kinsfolk and friends. With regard to the degree of personal intimacy and friendship with the poet himself, which this close family relationship naturally suggests, there is little or nothing to be told. Of course, there is the record that Shakespeare 'ordained' Dr. Hall and his wife (the aforesaid Susanna) to be the executors of his last will and testament, and, moreover, bequeathed to the latter, in the terms of the will, 'all the rest of my goods, chattels, leases, plate, jewels, and household stuff whatsoever after my legacies paid, and my funeral expenses discharged'; this is in addition to other substantial bequests mentioned in an earlier part of the testament, including New Place, Stratford. Obviously, to have been so 'ordained' in a matter of such great personal importance

argues that Dr. Hall was held in considerable esteem by Shakespeare. It also more than warrants the encomiums pronounced upon him and his accomplishments by the editor of one of the Doctor's own literary works, which was published many years after his death. The title of this rare volume is '*Select Observations on English Bodies, and Cures both Empericall and Historicall*, performed upon very eminent persons in desperate Diseases—First written in Latin by Mr. John Hall, Physician, living at Stratford-upon-Avon in Warwickshire, where he was very famous, as also in the Counties adjacent, as appears by these Observations drawn out of severall hundreds of his as choycest, and now put into English for common benefit by James Cooke, Practitioner in Physick and Chirurgery. London, Printed for John Shertey at the Golden Pelican, in Little Brittain, 1657.' A second edition appeared in 1679, which was re-issued, with a new title-page, in 1683.

From this advertisement it is permissible to infer that Shakespeare's son-in-law was a man of high character and of distinguished professional reputation. His near relationship to the poet must, however, and for all time, attach to his name a measure of interest and regard which can be claimed for very few of Shakespeare's kinsfolk and friends. It is to be regretted that there is not even the hint of a reference, in any of his medical writings, to his illustrious father-in-law; for no contemporary, probably, was better fitted, by reason of his consanguinity at least, for enlightening us with regard to the more intimate personal 'traits' of Shakespeare. I have briefly referred, in the chapter on 'The Death of Shakespeare,' to the probability of Dr. Hall having attended professionally at the fatal illness of the

poet. But if he made any notes on the 'case' at the time, which is perhaps doubtful, nothing whatever is known of them.

The Poet's Daughters, Susanna and Judith

Except for the reference to her in her father's will above quoted, and also to references in two other interesting documents: (1) 'The Indenture of Settlement of Shakespeare's Estates, 1639,' and (2) 'A declaration of Uses relating to New Place, 1647' (where, by the way, her Christian name, 'Susanna,' is shortened to 'Susan'), there is no record extant (of the period of her lifetime) to throw a single gleam of light that might enable us to form any idea of what kind of person was Shakespeare's elder daughter, who became the wife of Dr. John Hall in 1607.[1] Nor are we on firmer ground with regard to the younger daughter, Judith Shakespeare, who was married in 1616 (two months prior to her father's death) to Thomas Quyney, a vintner of Stratford-on-Avon. But for these 'vital' memorials containing their names—and also, of course, the register of their births (see page 56)—the story of the lives of the two daughters of Shakespeare must ever remain untold. Tradition, however, it may be said, has dealt a little unfairly towards the memory of Judith Shakespeare, inasmuch as, according to some biographers, Shakespeare is thought to have been displeased with her marriage to Thomas Quyney, on what grounds it is, perhaps, not worth while considering at present. Be that as it may, there is this to be said, that if Shakespeare disapproved of such a union, he evidently showed no resentment, since Judith was

[1] Excepting, of course, the inscription on her tombstone, for which see Appendix E.

mentioned *before* Susanna in his will, and was there as liberally considered as her sister. On the other hand, it has to be remembered that the Quyney wedding took place a very short time—a few weeks only—before Shakespeare's death, and when, it is probable, he had already decided upon the terms of his will and his daughters' individual interests in it.

Richard and Thomas Quyney

Of the Quyneys, father and son, whose names are familiar to all Shakespeareans, it will, I venture to say, be admitted that the greater interest attaches to the former, though the latter became one of the poet's two sons-in-law by his marriage to Judith Shakespeare in February 1616. Richard Quyney, a 'townsman' of Stratford, in all probability was a close friend of Shakespeare, and enjoyed for some time a considerable measure of his personal intimacy. At all events, one of the most interesting documents connected with Shakespeare, a document which is happily still extant, has conferred on the elder Quyney's name a degree of importance and interest that belongs to no other of the poet's Stratford friends. This document is in the form of a letter addressed to Shakespeare soliciting a loan of thirty pounds —a very tolerable sum in those days. It is said to be 'the only letter addressed to Shakespeare known to be in existence,' and of course this fact adds materially to its value. The following 'literal transcript' is taken from page 110 of the Catalogue of the Books, Manuscripts, etc., compiled for the Trustees and Guardians of Shakespeare's Birthplace by Mr. Richard Savage, formerly Secretary and Librarian to the Trustees:

'Loveinge Contreyman I am bolde of yo^{w} as of a ffrende, craveinge yo^{wr} helpe wth xxxll vppon m^{r} Bushells and my securytee or m^{r} Myttons wth me m^{r} Rosswell is nott come to London as yeate & I have especiall cawse, yo^{w} shall ffrende me muche in helpeinge me out of all the debettes I owe in London I thancke god & muche quiet my mynde w^{ch} wolde nott be indebeted I am nowe towardes the Cowrte in hope of answer for the dispatche of my Buysenes yo^{w} shall nether loase creddyttt nor monney by me the Lorde wyllinge & nowe butt perswade yo^{wr}selfe soe as I hope & yo^{w} shall nott need to feare butt wth all hartie thanckefullenes I wyll holde my tyme & content yo^{wr} ffrende & yf we Bargaine farther yo^{w} shalbe the paie m^{r} yo^{wr}self, my tyme biddes me hasten to an ende & soe I committ thys [to] yo^{wr} care & hope of yo^{wr} helpe I feare I shall nott be backe thys night ffrom the Cowrte,—haste, the Lorde be wth yo^{w} & wth vs all amen. ffrom the Bell in Carter Lane the 25 octobr 1598.

yo$^{\bar{w}rs}$ in all kyndenes
Ryc. Quyney.

(Addressed.) To my Loveinge good ffrend
& contreymann m^{r} w^{m}
Shackespere dlr. thees.'

It is not known whether Shakespeare responded to this request by calling at the 'Bell' in 'Carter Lane' for his fellow-'townsmann,' and handing over the needful sum to him, but he could hardly fail to be touched by such an appeal to help him out of his 'London debts,' and we can only surmise that he did so, since, apart from personal friendship, there were substantial cautioners available for the redemption of the loan! But who was Mr. Bushells, or Mr. Myttons, or Mr. Rosswell? Their names never occur again. And so we only obtain of them, in association with Shakespeare,

'A momentary rush-light glimpse, and lo!
Gross darkness covers them.'

Moreover, was not Mr. Richard Quyney already a bailiff

of Stratford-on-Avon? (in 1592); and was it not a 'fine thing' for the young and successful London player to be thought able to help such a well-esteemed townsman, visiting the Metropolis on (business) matters of importance? There is from this incident at least one thing quite evident, namely, that certain of the good folks of Stratford were already, in 1598, and when Shakespeare was only thirty-four years of age, well aware of the comparative affluence of their distinguished townsman, and we can well imagine his pride at being able to render pecuniary assistance to his friend the ex-bailiff. When we remember the famous advice which Polonius gave to his son Laertes—

> 'Neither a borrower nor a lender be;
> For loan oft loses both itself and friend,
> And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry';

and also recollect that *Hamlet* was not yet written, it were idle to speculate as to whom the dramatist had in mind when he made Polonius the medium of his own views on the subject; but it is safe to say he had not forgotten that still extant letter addressed to him from the 'Bell' in 'Carter Lane.'

A Special Friend

Henry Wriothesley, Third Earl of Southampton

Of Shakespeare's own personal friends, apart from his family relations, it is impossible to single out any individual of whom it might be said that he, or she, more than any other, was privileged in having a special intimacy with the poet during some period of his life. That he himself enjoyed the blessing of 'troops of friends,' admitted to varying degrees

HENRY WRIOTHESLEY, THIRD EARL OF SOUTHAMPTON

From the original of Mirevelt, in the collection of the Duke of Bedford

of his intimacy and affection, may be taken for granted; there is testimony on record for saying this at least. But with regard to the place in the love or esteem which Shakespeare had for his friends, and which they had for him, a true kinship of mind and spirit ought perhaps to be reckoned with first of all.

> 'Those friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
> Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel.'

These words of wisdom contain the essence of Shakespeare's own philosophy of friendship, and, we may be sure, were ever acted upon by him in his contact with his fellow-men. And as to that spirit of 'adoption,'—whence could it proceed but from that state of 'the marriage of true minds,' to which he refers in a famous sonnet, and which has its *fons et origo* in the higher self or nature of man? In the front rank of those friends, Ben Jonson, for example, might well be placed; but as Shakespeare had been for ten years pursuing his successful career in London as poet and player before Jonson came into his life, 'Rare Ben' may be set aside to make room for another friend who was to Shakespeare a friend indeed, and to whose regard and influence at the very outset and crisis of his career he owed more, perhaps, than to any other person then living.

> 'There is a tide in the affairs of men,
> Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune.'

It is not unlikely that the poet had this friend in mind when these lines were penned.

To the Earl of Southampton the world of literature is indebted beyond measure. In the two dedicatory letters to this high-souled nobleman, Shakespeare acknowledged

himself as unable to express the measure of his gratitude. It is only fitting, therefore, that in an appreciation of this kind the name of Lord Southampton should have first consideration. Of course, the specially favoured friend to whom most of the Sonnets were addressed and dedicated, and about whose identity so much has been written, ought, it may be urged, to oust Lord Southampton from such pride of place as is assigned to him here. To do so, however, would be doing a hurt to the spirit of Shakespeare, since to himself alone is, probably, due much of the mystification which has perplexed countless students of the Sonnets with regard to the personality of their inspirer. Obviously, too, it would be entering into a sphere of speculation that would be unprofitable.

CHAPTER V

SHAKESPEARE, BEN JONSON, AND SCOTLAND

Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps and Shakespeare's supposed visit to Scotland—The 'travelling' companies of players—Perth Records—Aberdeen Records—Distinguished burgesses of Aberdeen in 1601—Was Shakespeare included in the list?—Lawrence Fletcher, comedian—Aberdeen Treasurer's account—The Old Red Lion Inn, Aberdeen—The tragedy of *Macbeth*—Was Shakespeare ever abroad?—Ben Jonson in Scotland—Masson's *Life of Drummond of Hawthornden*—Ben Jonson honoured and entertained in Edinburgh—Valuable excerpts from the Edinburgh Town Council Records—The banquet to 'Ben' and its cost.

WITH so little that is known of the actual life of Shakespeare to warrant any serious consideration of the possibility of his ever having visited Scotland, or to encourage the hope of any records being found to throw light upon the question, there nevertheless exists a belief that the great actor-dramatist, on one occasion at all events in the course of his histrionic career, travelled across the Scottish Border and reached a point in his itinerary as far north as Aberdeen. Indeed, there are some enthusiasts who incline to think that even Inverness (a considerable distance beyond Aberdeen, especially three hundred years ago) had also the honour of receiving a visit on that occasion. Mr. J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps, perhaps the most painstaking and indefatigable of all the numerous biographers of Shakespeare—the donor of a valuable collection of works relating to the poet presented to the University of Edinburgh

—was one of those who held that belief and encouraged it when and where desirable. Acting on a hint received from Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps a few years before he died, I wrote to Mr. MacLeish, then the Town Clerk of Perth, which place was supposed to have been included in the itinerary referred to, as to the possibility of there being any records extant in that city which might help towards a solution of this interesting problem, and was informed by him that 'the kirk-session records of Perth show that a company of players (no name given) were authorised to give performances in 1589. That, however, was before Shakespeare came to Scotland. *He* (Shakespeare) *was in Aberdeen along with Fletcher in* 1601.' Coming from so accurate and trustworthy an authority as Mr. MacLeish was known to be, this reference to Shakespeare seemed of no little importance. Unfortunately, Mr. MacLeish died before I could ask him to verify his statement or to quote his authority, so that whatever evidence he may have had upon which he founded it is not at present to be obtained, though it can be accepted as made by him in good faith and in reliance on the truth of *some* evidence.

There can be no doubt that, whoever were the players authorised to give performances at Perth in 1589, Shakespeare could not have been of their number, for he was then only twenty-five years of age, and, so far as is known, had accomplished but little in the domain of authorship. Certainly he was settled in London at that time; but, beyond the tradition that he was in some way connected with the theatre, there is no authentic record to determine what was the precise nature of his activities from the time when he left Stratford-on-Avon until 1591 or 1592. If we are to

believe what he himself declared in his dedication of *Venus and Adonis* to the Earl of Southampton, that it was the 'first heir' of his invention, then, although the publication of that poem did not take place till 1593, and even allowing for the probability that it had been actually composed two or three years before, Shakespeare could not, so early as in 1589, have been doing more than merely learning his apprenticeship, so to speak, in the histrion's art; and that is what we are mainly concerned with at present. In all likelihood, the players who visited Perth in the year mentioned were one or other of the numerous companies of licensed performers which at that period visited the various towns and cities, such as they then were, throughout the country. There was, for instance, an important company belonging to the Earl of Leicester, another to the Earl of Worcester, another to the Earl of Warwick, yet another to Lord Hunsdon. Besides these, however, there was the Lord Chamberlain's company of players, of which in 1594—but not prior to that year—Shakespeare is definitely known to have been a member. And as the itinerary of certain of these companies has been ascertained—thanks to the exhaustive researches of Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps—to include numerous places throughout the country, it is not surprising that Perth should have had a visit from one or other of them in the year 1589. Of course it would be very interesting had the session records been more explicit, and given at least the name of the company of players that gave the performances—not to mention what the actual performances were. But even had the names of the members been fully recorded, unquestionably the name of William Shakespeare could not have been in the list. In

passing, it is curious to note the caution of those responsible for the entering of those three-hundred-year-old records. For example, while giving prominence to such passing trivialities in the daily life of the burghers as 'The Visitoris reported guid order kepit within ye burgh on Sabbath preceding,' or, 'Visitoris appointed to visit ye next Sabbath' (here follow their names), nothing is said about the murder of the Earl of Gowrie and the Master of Ruthven, which caused such a stir in the town on 5th August 1600. King James was evidently a man to be feared in those days, and the session no doubt thought it proper to observe a discreet silence.

When we come, however, to the year 1601, and find it stated that 'Shakespeare was in Aberdeen with Fletcher,' and, presumably, other players, there is more reason for believing the probability of such an event. Shakespeare had by that time acquired a reputation not only as a great and fertile dramatist, but as an actor of no mean ability, essaying prominent parts in the more popular plays of the time, many of which were the heirs of his invention. He was, moreover, an important partner in the fortunes of the chief theatre of the day, as there is ample evidence to testify; so that Shakespeare, so far as professional fitness was concerned, might easily have been in Scotland in the second year of the seventeenth century, and, hailing from the south *via* Carlisle and Berwick, and after a stay in Edinburgh, have gone on his way north to Perth and 'Aberdeen awa'.' It was in 1601 that his patron Lord Southampton was imprisoned for treason, and it is also interesting to remember that *Twelfth Night* was written in that year.

Unlike those at Perth, the records of Aberdeen are happily more minute and interesting, so far as they relate to this special matter; yet from a careful examination of them, there is unfortunately nothing to bear out the statement to which reference has been made, that Shakespeare was in Aberdeen in 1601. The following extract from these records, kindly furnished by the Town Chamberlain, is by far the most important, since it is apparently the record of the visit of the players alluded to :

'23 *Octr.* 1601.

'The whilk day Sr Francis Hospitall of Haulzie, knycht, frencheman being recommendit be his matje [Majesty] to the provest Baillies and counsall of this burt to be favourablie Intertenit with the gentilmen his maties servantis efterspect quha war direct to this burt by his matie to accompanie the said frenchman being ane noble man of France cuming onlie to this burt to sie the toun and countrie the said frencheman wt the knightis and gentillmen following wer all reesauit and admittit Burgesses of gild of this burt quha gave thair aythis in commoun form. Followis the names off thame that war admittit burgesses—

Sr Francis Hospitall off Halzie knycht
Sr Claud Hamiltoun of Schawfeild, knycht
Sr Johne Grahame off Orkill, knyt.
Sr Johne Ramsay off ester Bairnie, knyt.
James Hay, James Auchterlony, Robert Ker
James Schaw Thomas Foster James Gleghorne
David Drumond servitoris to his Matie
Monsieur de Scheyne, Monsieur le Bar servitoris to the said Sr Francis

James Law
James Hamilton servitor to the said Sr Claud
Archibald Sym trumpeter
Laurence Fletcher comediane serviture to his matie
Mr David Wod
John Brouderstainis.'

Council Reg. xl. 229.

TREASURER'S ACCOUNT, 1601-2

'*Discharge.*

Item to the stage playeris Inglische-men . . 22 *lib.*
Item for the stage playeris support that nicht thaye plaiid to the toune . . . . 3 *lib.*'

It has been suggested that, in spite of the fact that the name of Shakespeare does not appear in the foregoing list, he might nevertheless have been one of the company of players who appear to have been represented in their personnel by Lawrence Fletcher. That may have been so; but it is highly improbable, as Shakespeare was certainly a more important member of the company at this time than his 'fellowe' Fletcher, and would assuredly have been mentioned. No doubt it was a long list of burgesses to make at once; and, had it been proposed to Shakespeare—assuming him to have been in Aberdeen—perhaps he may have declined the honour. But here we are in the mists of surmises, and how easily may the mirage be encountered, especially by the ardent imagination! It is well, perhaps, to let the record decide—for the present at any rate—that the creator of *Macbeth* was *not* in Aberdeen in 1601, or just

four years before that great tragedy was written. Probably arising out of the surmise which this otherwise interesting record has engendered in the minds of many persons, there is a tradition that there still exists, or did exist until quite lately, some old beams or timbers which are said to have been the last remaining relics of a hall or room of an inn (the Red Lion Inn has been named in the connection) where the players—Shakespeare of their number—gave their performance on the occasion of their visit to the city, and for which they appear to have received '25 *lib.*' (or pounds Scots). I have carefully inquired into this tradition, or its genesis, but can find not a basis of fact on which it can satisfactorily rest. The old Red Lion Inn referred to may possibly at one time have been the *locus* for theatrical performances by strolling players, but there is no evidence extant to prove that it actually was so. There was, however, a hall or room in connection with the New Inn in Castle Street, where it is very well known plays were produced in 1768 by William Fisher, who was accompanied on that occasion, curiously enough, by William Woodfall, the brother of the publisher of the *Letters of Junius*; and there was also a theatre at the back of an inn in Queen Street, where, it is interesting to remember, the *claque*—now confined entirely to the theatres of Paris—was in use about 1780. But here also the date in which we are at present specially interested is out of reckoning by more than a century and a half.

So much, then, for Aberdeen; and while in the locality it might be well to refer in a word to the tradition that Shakespeare even visited Inverness in the course of his supposed wanderings in 1601, and there and then obtained that local colouring which he afterwards used to such

admirable purpose in writing his tragedy of *Macbeth*. There is not a particle of evidence to encourage any supposition that Shakespeare was even in the neighbourhood of Inverness in 1601, or at any other time, beyond the internal evidence of *Macbeth*, with its realistic 'touches' and its 'truth to nature' in the reference to the climate of the *locus* of the tragedy, to the witches, and to Dunsinane. But these same masterstrokes, and that fidelity to the truth of things as the great observer and exponent of Nature saw them—two of Shakespeare's supreme characteristics—are quite as applicable to his other plays as to *Macbeth*; especially so is this the case in *Hamlet* and *Romeo and Juliet*, but it has yet to be proved that Denmark and Italy were alike honoured by this strolling player. At that rate of travel—and all to acquire local colour for his plays—Shakespeare could hardly have had time to live in England at all.

Retracing our steps in this interesting quest, we come to where perhaps we ought, strictly speaking, to have started—namely, to the capital city itself, and inquire what, if anything at all, has Edinburgh and its records to say on the subject of Shakespeare's visit to Scotland? ''Tis all, all a blank!' is, it may at once be admitted, the sum-total of a careful and prolonged investigation into the question. The city records have so far yielded not a scrap of information that could throw any light upon it, and mere surmise would be unprofitable. But in connection with this subject, and in close literary affinity to aught that concerns the career of Shakespeare, there is the ever-memorable visit of Ben Jonson to Scotland in the year 1618, just two years or thereby after the death of Shakespeare, who

BEN JONSON

After the portrait by Gerard Honthorst in the National Portrait Gallery, London

was his great contemporary and friend. According to the tradition started by the Rev. John Ward, vicar of Stratford-on-Avon, about fifty years after the event, Shakespeare died 'of a feavour' contracted at or after a convivial forgathering with Ben Jonson and Michael Drayton. Yet, with such an outstanding incident fresh in his memory, it is passing strange that, as Professor Masson has mentioned in his delightful *Life of Drummond of Hawthornden*, whom Jonson came specially from England to visit, not a hint of it should have been recorded by Drummond in his *Conversations*. Was the too convivial Ben ashamed to refer to his part in the untoward event, or, if he did refer to it to his host, did Drummond designedly omit to record Ben's confidences to him on a matter so sadly tragic and painfully personal to himself? Be that as it may, we now know positively that, when in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, the famous author of *Every Man in His Humour* was 'humour'd' to be lionised by the civic authorities to the top of their bent, since he accepted not only the freedom of a burgess—whatever that meant—but also a sumptuous banquet to crown the honour. This interesting piece of literary history has, of course, long been known and frequently recorded; but it is only recently that the city archives have yielded up the veritable original records themselves, and these are now, for the first time, it is believed, here reproduced—copies having very kindly been obtained for me by my old friend, the courteous and learned Town Clerk of Edinburgh, Sir Thomas Hunter, W.S., who, in a letter enclosing them, mentioned that 'a search had been made in the Town Council Minutes from 1597 to 1604 for any reference to a supposed visit of Shakespeare, and also in the Treasurer's and Dean of

Guild's Accounts, but without result.' Here, then, are the records as to the visit of Ben Jonson some dozen years later :

1. Excerpts *from Edinburgh Town Council Records.*

'1618. *September 25th.*—The Council ordains the Deyne of gild to mak Benjamyn Jonsoun, inglisman burges and gild brother in commoun.'

'1618. *October 16th.*—The Council ordains the Thesaurer to pay to James Ainslie, Laite baillie twa hundreth twentie ane pund sex shillings four pennyis debursit be him vpone the denner maid to Benjamin Jonstoun conform to the act maid thairanent and compt given in of the same.'

2. Excerpt *from the 'Comptis of William Rea, Thesaurer of the Burgh of Edinburgh of the yeiris of God* 1617-1618.

'Item thair aucht to be allowed to the Compter payit be him to James Ainslie baillie for expensis debursit vpone ane banequett maid to Benjamin Johnstoune conforme to ane act of Counsell of the dait the . . . day of September 1618, ... jj *c.* xxj *lib.* vj *s.* viij *d.*'

3. Excerpt *from the 'Comptis of David Aikinheid, Deyne of Gild of the Burgh of Edinburgh of the yeiris of God* 1618-19.

'Item the twentie day of Januar j^{m} vj^{c} and nyntene yeirs geuin at directioune of the Counsell to Alexr. Patersone for wrytting and gilting of Benjamine Johnestounes burges ticket being choyes writtin . . . xiij *lib.* vj *s.* viij *d.*'

What a delightful old-time flavour do these quaint and curious records convey to the literary palate, and what an interesting glimpse do they afford into one of the most 'high and sounding' literary periods ever known, with Ben Jonson's conspicuous personality in the forefront! There is, first of all, the legal authority to 'mak' him the 'burges and gild brother in commoun.' The formal presentation of Ben in this capacity, with his rough, bluff visage, something like that of a bloused farmer from a far northern shire, and his ready tongue and mother-wit shafted to deal with all kinds of men and occasions, even municipally arrayed, would doubtless be carried through with due decorum and dignity. His reply to the presiding magistrate and brethren of the Guild would of course be in rare rattling style befitting the man and his environment; and, that preliminary over, there would be the after adjournment to the 'denner maid' in his honour, where the imagination may well revel amid the doings of that delectable function. For Ben loved his sack (as 'canary' was called) more than passing well; and has not Drummond of Hawthornden declared of him (the Hawthornden cellars might well have endorsed all that the owner said) that 'Drink was the element in which he lived'; while Aubrey, too, has a naughty sentence to the effect that 'he would many times exceed in drink; canary was his beloved liquor.' Poor Ben, 'rare' in many things, but not, alas! in *that*. There need be no doubt of it: it must have been a pretty 'banequett' to have cost such a sum even in pounds Scots, and with his burgess ticket (so well engrossed as to entail such an expense) to remind him of it, doubtless he would remember the feast to his dying day. As for the burgess ticket and the 'poetical account' of his wanderings

in Scotland to which he would likely do full justice, since he was a Scot by descent, his forbears having hailed from Annandale, these were probably consumed in the fire that, it is said, burned his library. If, however, the ticket survived that disaster, it would assuredly fetch to-day quite as much as it cost the ancient brethren of the Guild for its embellishment to present to one whom they deemed so worthy of receiving it. Would that it had been possible for them to have done the same for Shakespeare!

CHAPTER VI

THE SONNETS, AND WHAT THEY REVEAL

The Sonnets a treasure-store of poesy unrivalled in the English, or any, language—Other masters of the sonnet form—Are there any certain clues to Shakespeare's own individuality in the Sonnets?—Many investigators in this field of Shakespearean inquiry—Mr. Armitage Brown's excellent work—Some problems regarding the Sonnets and to whom they were addressed—A selection of three sonnets of paramount interest—In these it is possible to get closer to Shakespeare's self than in any of the others—The pronounced 'minor key' in which they are written and what that signifies.

HAD Shakespeare written nothing more than the one hundred and fifty-four sonnets which bear his name, he would, nevertheless, have been regarded as one of the paramount poets of England. Apart from the few facts appertaining to their origin and dedication, and leaving out of account the vexed questions bearing on the object, or occasion, of their inspiration, and also as to the time and the circumstances of their composition, the Sonnets have a supreme interest for all thoughtful minds, and, moreover, are in themselves a veritable treasure-store of the noblest poesy. For their wealth and comprehensiveness of thought, their splendour of imagination, their pomp and flow of rhetoric, the Sonnets—all more or less dealing with the poet's own private mind and spirit in their relation to a real or—it may have been—an imagined passion for some person or persons who had touched his life profoundly—are, it is

universally admitted, unrivalled in the English language, and must ever stand as a special monument to the power and originality of their author. What other great English poet can show such a record in this department of verse? Milton, perhaps, though with but a mere handful of sonnets, and the best of the series one that was actually inspired by Shakespeare himself. Sir Philip Sidney cannot for a moment be thought of in this regard as even 'holding the candle' to his great contemporary. And then, to come to modern times, there are, of course, a few outstanding and often-quoted examples by Wordsworth; also a glorious single sonnet by Keats, and yet another by Gilbert White of Selborne, and a fourth (a masterpiece of its kind) by Matthew Arnold which, strange to say, was also inspired by the overawing greatness of Shakespeare. There is yet another series by Mrs. Browning, which have a place of their own in English literature, but which cannot be thought of in this connection as comparable to those of Shakespeare. The late Mr. Watts-Dunton was another master in this department, and, as has been well said of him, he will probably be best remembered by virtue of his accomplishment therein. But, after all, Shakespeare is supreme here as elsewhere. There is perhaps more food for thought even in a few taken at random from these wonderful Shakespearean sonnets, than can be gathered from any comprehensive anthology that has ever been published.

It is natural, therefore, that many students should have, from time to time, delved deep into this wonderful mine of true poesy, not only to assay the worth of its treasures, but, if possible and especially, to discover some clues therein to Shakespeare's own personal history.

So far, all investigation has resulted in little more than mere conjecture; indeed, there seems to be no getting beyond that. In all probability there never will be anything brought to light to bear upon the problem of the Sonnets and the actual circumstances, personal to the poet, in which they were conceived and written. Mr. Armitage Brown, in 1838, published a very interesting book on the Sonnets, entitled *The Autobiographical Poems of Shakespeare*, an original copy of which, bought by Mr. George W. Smalley, the well-known American publicist, at the sale of the library of the late Mr. Rufus Choate of Boston, lies before me as I write. I have read it over and over again with deep interest, and have come to the conclusion that, while the husk of the matter has received the most painstaking thought from an ardent and profound student of Shakespeare, as was Mr. Armitage Brown, the kernel itself (the core of fact we all want to get at) still remains untouched and unget-at-able. Leaving aside, therefore, such interesting problems as that of the name of the dedicatee of the Sonnets, and of Shakespeare's personal relationship to him or her (or to him *and* her, for some experts declare the Sonnets were addressed *now* to a male friend, and *again* to a female friend), there is much scope for speculation in certain individual sonnets as to their bearing directly upon Shakespeare himself. It is even possible to read, not only between the lines of some of the Sonnets, but in certain of the lines themselves, not a little of the poet's own life and character, and to discern something of his mental attitude and outlook upon men and things, upon nature and its operations, upon life and death and destiny. But it were beyond the scope of the present work to select more material from these

sonnets than may, in reason, justify a reference to them as bearing upon Shakespeare's veritable Self.

And so, after careful consideration, I have selected three sonnets only, as providing, in concrete form, the material which, in my opinion, reveals to us more intimately than any of the other sonnets the true or inner nature of their author. Take, for example, Sonnets xxix. and xxx.

Here we have, if anywhere throughout his works, an all-important self-revelation of the man Shakespeare. The personal note is unmistakably in the minor key, and though he frequently dwells upon this note throughout the entire sonnet-scheme, in these two examples it is strongly emphatic and profoundly impassioned in its utterance. Let us take them in numerical order as published:

SONNET XXIX

'When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,
I all alone beweep my outcast state
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries
And look upon myself and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possess'd,
Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least;
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
Haply I think on thee, and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate;
For thy sweet love remember'd such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.'

It would be absurd to say that, even with such an intense passion conceived for the person to whom these lines were addressed, a supremely sane poet like Shakespeare was merely indulging in imaginary sentiments to belittle

himself in the estimate of his friend or lover. Such an inconsistency would be inconceivable in Shakespeare's case, and so we may reasonably dismiss any idea of a lover's extravagance in using such forceful diction merely to please a mistress, no matter how exacting. If, therefore, we can accept this sonnet as a reliable human document, penned by the author of *Hamlet*, and relating chiefly to himself, what an extraordinarily graphic glimpse do we get into the inner heart and mind of the man. How very close do we get to him. We find, too, that even his wonderful nature could be 'subdued to what it works in like the dyer's hand.' Nay, more; in the often-quoted line,

'Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,'

have we not the best comment to be found almost anywhere throughout his hundred and fifty-four sonnets that Shakespeare's true greatness of mind and spirit was unknown to himself? The merit in others seemed of more account to him than did his own surpassing art. In short, we are 'up against'—in the confessions which many of the Sonnets contain—another of the many mysteries that envelop the personality of Shakespeare.

Let us take the lines as they run:

'When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,
I all alone beweep my outcast state
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries
And look upon myself and curse my fate.'

Assuming their truth as applicable to his own state, here we find Shakespeare in an agony of self-abasement and dejection. Though we cannot even surmise the occasion or circumstance referred to in this stanza, it must have been one of no common kind—with the poet's face fronting

a veritable Wall of Wailing. I shall never forget an incident of which I was witness a few years ago in Jerusalem. It was at the time of Easter, when the Holy City was thronged with a cosmopolitan crowd of pilgrims from many and far countries. One day in the course of my wanderings in the city I found myself at the place of 'Wailing,' the resort of many devout Jews, among whom I stood for some time intensely moved by what I heard and saw. One Jew in particular engrossed my attention: a very fine type of a man, impressive alike in his attire and attitude. With his Bible open at the familiar *Lamentations*, he now recited a verse or two, and closing the book for a moment, now beat his brow against the wall, his eyes streaming tears the while, and his lips and head moving as if in a paroxysm of self-abasement. I never beheld such a picture in all my life—a strong soul crying out 'Unworthy! Unworthy!' and humbling itself in the sight of all men. And then I bethought me of Shakespeare, delivering himself of such lines as those quoted with the insistent paraphrase, 'Unworthy, unworthy,' and he one of the Creator's noblest creatures. What a lesson for little minds, little men!

There must, assuredly, have been a time, or times, in Shakespeare's life when the experiences indicated in this sonnet actually occurred:

> 'In disgrace with fortune and men's eyes.'

Was he here, for instance, memorising his youthful escapades in the demesnes of Sir Thomas Lucy, or thinking of the first months or years of his London life, after he had left sad Mistress Anne Shakespeare on what probably seemed to her,—as well as to himself, a very doubtful quest?

EDWARD ALLEYN, A NOTABLE ACTOR OF SHAKESPEARE'S DAY

Be that as it may, the lines, from their very solemnity and intensity of passion, connote some certain deep experience in his life, the thought of which, as the closing stanzas declare, is only blotted out by his friend's 'sweet love remember'd,' and then, that happy assurance established within his soul, the poet's mood of self-abasement passes, and he scorns to change his state with kings.

SONNET XXX

'When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste:
Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,
And weep afresh love's long since cancell'd woe,
And moan the expense of many a vanish'd sight:
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
The sad account of fore-bemoanëd moan,
Which I new pay as if not paid before.
But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
All losses are restored and sorrows end.'

With the exception of the two opening lines, which contain a beautiful image beautifully expressed, this sonnet, largely a variation of the previous sonnet in its personal feeling, again strikes the minor key in giving forth utterance to what was in Shakespeare's heart and mind at the time it was written. But there are several new 'experiences' referred to in it, notably that indicated in the fourth line of the sonnet:

'And with old woes *new wail my dear time's waste*.'

Was it possible, it may well be asked, that Shakespeare

could have been spendthrift of his time? Surely not; for there is the amazing, the unparalleled productivity of his genius in the long list of plays which he wrote between 1590 and 1612 to justify the affirmation. And yet he upbraids himself for his waste of 'dear time,' and that in no uncertain terms of self-depreciation and lamenting. The very last thing in the nature of blame or censure to be applied to Shakespeare is—who can deny it?—thriftlessness with time or with money; but here he himself provides verse and chapter against the suggestion, unless it is to be supposed that, once again, his love for his 'dear friend' betrayed him into a poet's emphasis of exaggeration.

A very suggestive line in this sonnet is that which refers to

> 'Precious friends hid in death's dateless night.'

Though the Sonnets were first published in 1609, when Shakespeare was forty-five years of age, they are believed to have been in circulation at least ten years earlier, so that the poet was a comparatively young and famous man when he wrote these extraordinary effusions. For him to write, as in the line above quoted, about his 'precious friends' who had even then predeceased him, argues a number of such friends that must have been considerable. Who they were cannot even be conjectured. Omitting relatives, probably not a few were theatrical intimates, while others were presumably of Stratford-on-Avon association. But, once more, there is nothing in the shape of record to inform us on a point of very real interest personal to the poet. I have referred to the subject of Shakespeare's friends elsewhere (chap. I.), and only touch upon it here to suggest

that, socially and professionally, he was like unto other men in his workaday relationships and intercommunications, and—to have written such a line—must have valued the worth of true friendship and deplored its loss, when 'hid in death's dateless night,' even more keenly than ordinary mortals.

SONNET CX

Alas, 'tis true I have gone here and there
And made myself a motley to the view,
Gored mine own thoughts, sold cheap what is most dear,
Made old offences of affections new;
Most true it is that I have look'd on truth
Askance and strangely: but, by all above,
These blenches gave my heart another youth,
And worse essays proved thee my best of love.
Now all is done, have what shall have no end:
Mine appetite I never more will grind
On newer proof, to try on older friend,
A god in love, to whom I am confined.
Then give me welcome, next my heaven the best,
Even to thy pure and most most loving breast.'

In this well-known sonnet, as is believed by not a few authorities, we find Shakespeare in another sad and self-depreciatory mood. Its chief interest lies in the evident reference to his profession of player. The two opening lines clearly support this view. If penned before he was forty years of age, and while in the flush of professional success, the confession contained in these lines would seem to suggest that Shakespeare was deprecating (to his friend) his own calling, and regretting that he had ever adopted it. The question may not unfairly be asked—Did he ever entertain other ambitions outside his profession of player? Or was it merely a denunciatory reference to

it in deference to the opinion on the subject of the unknown friend to whom the sonnet was addressed? I am inclined to think it was, and, if correct in my surmise, believe that here is yet another clue to the identity of that friend. Who will venture to take it in hand?

CHAPTER VII

THE MYSTERY OF THE MANUSCRIPTS

An unsolved problem—Are the manuscripts of the plays, etc., lost for ever?—And how came they to be lost or destroyed?—All that remains of what was penned by Shakespeare's own hand—The poet's supposed signatures—Reasons that account for the loss of the manuscripts—Heminge and Condell's testimony to the character of the manuscripts—Were they responsible for their destruction?—Shakespeare's Last Will and Testament contains no reference to his work of authorship, but includes Heminge and Condell as legatees—Philip Henslowe and his connection with the problem—Other theories—The fire at the Globe Theatre in 1613.

OF the many problems that have gathered round the subject of Shakespeare and his personal history, none has remained so absolutely without solution as that of the disappearance of the manuscripts written by the poet's own hand. For generations this problem has perplexed all who have taken any genuine interest in Shakespeare's magnificent literary bequest; indeed, the mystery of the lost manuscripts may be truly said to have only increased with the lapse of time. Notwithstanding the most careful investigations by successive explorers in this peculiarly fascinating field of inquiry, the same questions that have been asked for now something like two centuries are still entirely unanswered.

By what extraordinary fatality were these precious manuscripts lost to the world? Have they disappeared for ever?

If so, when, where, and by whom were they made away with or destroyed? Or is it possible that they were buried with the poet's mortal remains in the chancel of the Church of Holy Trinity at Stratford-on-Avon, never again to be seen by human eyes? Such are a few of the questions that must ever recur—until the mystery is solved—to those for whom this question, in its intimate connection with the life of one of the most surpassing intellects ever created, will always provide matter for speculation of a most interesting kind.

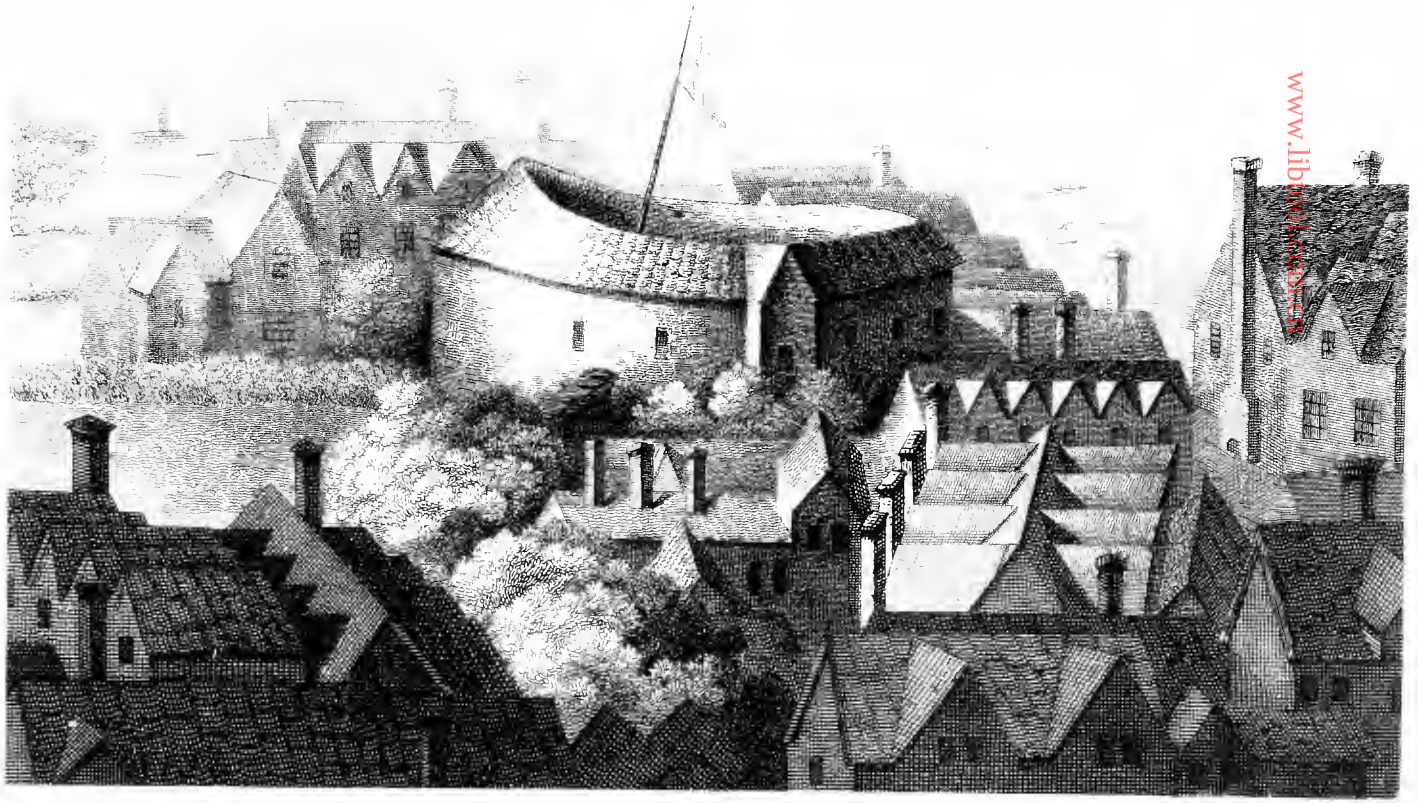
As the matter stands at the present time, the world of literature is, *mirabile dictu*, absolutely without anything whatsoever in the shape of manuscript from the pen of one of its most original, most elegant, and most voluminous writers. Just imagine, were it placed in the market, the money-value of a letter, or of a paragraph or sentence, or even a single line, of genuine 'copy' written by the veritable hand that penned the immortal *Hamlet*. That value cannot for a moment be reckoned, even when compared with the fabulous sums that are nowadays paid for the manuscripts of writers who are not, intellectually, worthy to tie his shoe-latchet. Not a line, however, not a phrase, not a word even, that can be proved beyond dispute to have been penned by Shakespeare's own hand, is known to exist anywhere in the world. In this regard we have surely one of the most remarkable instances on record of the strange caprice of destiny in dealing with the affairs of men. It is true that there are still extant several specimens of the poet's signature—those, for example, appended to his Last Will and Testament, scrawled, in all probability, when his physical force was fast ebbing, and when his signature

became a matter of urgent legal necessity. But, with the exception of these death-bed mementoes, and also excluding his two signatures on the Blackfriars Estate deeds, and his autograph on the title-page of Florio's copy of Montaigne's *Essays* in the British Museum—assuming it to be Shakespeare's own—there is not at the present time to be found anywhere in the world a single stroke of his immortal pen for his admirers to look upon.

How, it may well be asked, did such a literary calamity as this ever come to pass? That, of a body of manuscripts, subsequently imprinted in book form, almost rivalling in material bulk our English Bible, and—may it not, without irreverence, be said—approaching it, nearest of all human writings, in respect of beauty of thought and magnificence of language, not a vestige in any shape or form survives to-day, is one of the most extraordinary facts in the history of English literature. And, moreover, when the comparative lateness of the period of the Shakespeare manuscripts is taken into account, the fact seems all the more bewildering and inexplicable. Nothing, surely, could be more fitly designed to give complexion to the theories that have, from time to time during recent years, been devised to prove that the authorship of the plays belongs, not to Shakespeare, but to another man of genius, than the mystery of the lost manuscripts. When, however, certain circumstances connected with the life of Shakespeare, and with the times in which he lived, are duly considered and their significance adequately appreciated in pondering this interesting literary problem, it may not, after all, be so very much of a mystery as it appears.

In the first place, we must try to realise something of the

dangers by which the manuscripts were beset, and therefore of their chances of survival even beyond the limit of the poet's own day and generation. For instance, the age was utterly regardless of the value—supposing there was a value—of the manuscript works of its writers, and certainly had no means of appraising it. The innovation of the arts of printing and book-production, in the modern sense, was then comparatively recent. Once 'imprinted,' the manuscripts of a work were more often regarded as worthless, and fit only to be destroyed, than as deserving of special preservation. For the calligraphy of the time was, for the most part, elementary, crude, and inelegant. Fine or fluent penmanship was a practically rare acquirement. Many otherwise well-educated persons could do little more in the matter of penmanship than write their names. Even in the highest social circles signature by cross-mark was by no means an uncommon thing. Judging—if it be fair to do so—from the extant specimens of his own signature, Shakespeare himself would appear to have been but an indifferent penman; and not for many years after the Shakespearean period could it be said of the handwriting of men of even outstanding literary gifts that it was, according at any rate to present-day standards, commensurate or even satisfactory. Obviously, the opportunities for, and aids to, good penmanship some three centuries ago were alike meagre and inadequate. Indeed, in ordinary communities of people few persons could use the quill to much purpose, excepting, perhaps, justices of the peace and attorneys, or scriveners, and those in their employment. Shakespeare has, among other occupations that have variously been ascribed to him, been accused of having himself plied the quill as an attorney's apprentice.



THE ROSE THEATRE, BANKSIDE

From an engraving in Wilkinson's 'Londina Illustrata,' where, however, it is called the Globe

One has only to glance at his signature (if it be his) to the Blackfriars Estate deeds to give that story its quietus once and for all. When the Ireland forgeries were being swallowed wholesale by the 'gullible English public' of a century ago, no one thought for a moment of applying so simple a test as this signature—ready to hand as it was—by which that foolish youth might more easily have been brought to book for his audacious knavery.[1] Keeping all this in view, therefore, it is not difficult to understand how, in Shakespeare's day, the manuscript writings of men even famous among their contemporaries would be lightly regarded and set aside after these writings had been printed and circulated in book or pamphlet form. But in Shakespeare's case the great body of his writings—namely, the Plays—were not published till some years after his death, so that it is permissible to suppose that, at least, the major portion of the manuscripts were extant in 1623, or seven years after the poet's death; or how else did his friends Heminge and Condell accomplish their great editorial undertaking in that year? Assuming Heminge and Condell to have edited from the manuscripts[2]—or, at all events, from certain of them—it is not too far-fetched a theory, and it has been suggested before now, to attach to them whatever blame there may be for the subsequent loss of the manuscripts. Yet to no two men does the world of literature owe a deeper debt of gratitude than to these fellow-players of Shakespeare for what they did in conserving and publishing his works, though seven years after his death.

[1] See Ireland's *Confessions and facsimiles of fabrication of Shakespeare and other MSS.* in the University Library, Edinburgh.

[2] See at page 70, *scarce a blot in his papers.*

Secondly, it is to be remembered that it is sometimes a characteristic of transcendent genius to belittle its own creations. With Shakespeare this appears, so far as is known, to have been the case in an eminent degree. In his Last Will and Testament—an all-important document in considering this subject—there is not a hint of anything having reference to his writings. His bequests are numerous and varied, but nothing in the shape of literary matter is even suggested. Why this indifference of Shakespeare to the fate of the many manuscripts written by his own hand? Had he previously sold all these to Philip Henslowe, the actor-manager of the famous Rose Theatre, where so many of the plays were first brought out? If not, did Shakespeare consider them to be of such little account as to be unworthy of a scrawl of the scrivener's quill when making up the inventory of his various bequests? Such, indeed, would appear to have been the case; and while it is probable that the Last Will and Testament was a matter of sudden and serious urgency, though containing many trivial details as to his bequests, the omission of all mention whatsoever of his work of authorship is a fact of strange significance. From what we know of Shakespeare's prudential character in the matter of pounds, shillings, and pence, it is not too much out of the way to suggest that, by the year 1616, he had already sold all his plays to Philip Henslowe, so that, his pecuniary interest in them having ceased, he could not bequeath a property which he had parted with to another, and, we may shrewdly surmise, for a worthy consideration. What, therefore, of Henslowe's connection with the manuscripts, supposing he became the purchaser of them?

Before answering this question, however, a third reason in accounting for the disappearance of the manuscripts may be advanced at this stage of the inquiry—namely, Shakespeare's frequent absences from London. These absences would certainly tend to jeopardise their safety, if his manuscripts were left behind either at his lodgings or at the theatre with which he was connected. Probably there was no great English highway more frequented by Shakespeare than that between the Metropolis and Stratford-on-Avon. It is, of course, unknown how often he journeyed first and last between the two places, at the latter of which lived his wife and family and other relatives, whom no doubt it was his desire to visit as frequently as the exigencies of his actor-calling would permit. But scarcely a single by-the-way incident of these journeys is on record.[1] We only know that the occasion of one of the home visits had to do with the purchase of property there, while another was probably connected with a sad domestic bereavement—namely, the death of his son Hamnet. Apart, however, from these purely private journeys between London and Stratford-on-Avon, Shakespeare, in fulfilment of his professional engagements, must unquestionably have travelled farther afield from time to time. In Sonnet cx. the reference to his theatrical wanderings is unmistakable.

But what were the precise circumstances of his travels with his 'fellowes' will never be known. Not a few biographers have ventured to map out certain lines or routes of travel over which, they say, the poet-player *must* have passed in the course of his career. Italy, for example, declares one writer, he must have visited frequently, since

[1] Sir William D'Avenant. See page 59.

not a few of the plays have all the brilliant sparkle and glamour of the sunny South! Scotland, too, declares another biographer, must assuredly, on one occasion at all events, have been honoured by a visit from Shakespeare and his companions of the sock and buskin; otherwise, how could the tragedy of *Macbeth* have been written? It is quite within the bounds of possibility that he visited not only Scotland and Italy, but also Denmark; but unfortunately there is no positive evidence extant to show that he actually did so. But whether or not the journeyings of Shakespeare from London included trips to Scotland, or farther afield to Denmark, France, and Italy, there is no doubt that his absence from London from time to time subjected whatever of his manuscripts he left behind him in his reputed lodgings near by the Bear's Garden at Southwark, or in the repositories of the Globe Theatre, in whose fortunes he had a considerable personal interest, to obvious risks of loss, if not of actual destruction.

And the mention in this connection of the famous Globe Theatre suggests, finally, the chief accident by which, in the total destruction of that theatre by fire in 1613, many of the Shakespeare manuscripts were in all probability destroyed. By that deplorable disaster a really tangible reason, accounting for the disappearance of these writings, may confidently be offered. So far as the few extant records of the fire may be relied on, the calamity befell on a certain day in the month of June in the year named, and when a rehearsal of *Henry VIII.*, which Shakespeare is supposed to have written (partly at least) a short time previously, was in progress.[1] The cause of the fire is un-

[1] See also at Appendix B.

THE GLOBE THEATRE, SOUTHWARK

Reproduced from Visscher's 'View of London' (1616)

known, although a contemporary writer alleged it to have been occasioned by some gunpowder used 'in the firing of cannons in displaying the pomp and circumstance of that grand spectacular play.' Be that as it may, the wooden erection was soon ablaze and destroyed with everything it contained. It is not known if any lives were lost; but surely it is not too much to surmise that in this conflagration many of the manuscripts of the actor-poet perished for ever. This, let it be remembered, was the theatre where his plays were, at that period, originally staged. In its fortunes Shakespeare himself had a considerable interest. Philip Henslowe was its acting-manager, and to him initially Shakespeare made over the copyright of his plays, as these were written, for certain sums of money, with which he was enabled to establish himself a proprietor of houses in New Place and elsewhere at Stratford-on-Avon. What more likely, therefore, than that Henslowe had many of these manuscript plays in his possession when the disaster of June 1613 befell? If this theory be set aside, is there another and a better to account for their loss?

'The tempest shatters and the flood o'erwhelms,
Yet after many days there may emerge,
Spite of the rending of a thousand tides,
Flotsam and jetsam, darkling, on the Waste:
But fire with ever-ravening rage devours,
And, like a fierce and famished beast, licks up
The last and veriest fragment of the wrack!'

CHAPTER VIII

THE DEATH OF SHAKESPEARE

The ever-memorable date, April 23, 1616 (o.s.)—Version as to the cause of Shakespeare's death—Shakespeare's 'Last Will and Testament' and the date of its execution—Was Shakespeare then in decaying health?—Halliwell-Phillipps's theory—Ward's account of the cause of death—Examples of 'fact' from his *Diary*—*The Tempest*, Shakespeare's final dramatic work, and its supposed significance—His 'mortal coil' 'shuffled off'—The burial of Shakespeare.

ON the twenty-third day of April 1616 (o.s.)[1] Shakespeare 'shuffled off this mortal coil,' and was laid to rest two days later in the chancel of the Church of Holy Trinity in his native town. According to the generally accepted story, the day of his death corresponded with the day of his birth in 1564; so that, when the 'fell sergeant' entered the house in New Place, Stratford-on-Avon, to the dismay of all within, the gentle master, for whom he came with the warrant of arrest, was just fifty-two years of age, or little more than arrived at the period of manhood's prime and vigour. What, therefore, was the fatality that, at an age far short of the Psalmist's limit for the sons of men, put so sudden and dramatic a close to the career of one of the most extraordinary beings, in point of mental endowments, the world has ever seen, just when that career was, presumably, at its highest level of possibility,

[1] May 3 in the new style.

and without—so far as is known—a hint of a shadow of decline upon it?

Tradition, which has had so much to do with the personal history of Shakespeare, has given us more than one version—has, in fact, handed down two versions—of the cause of his strangely sudden death, though of the actual circumstances attending it there is no authentic record anywhere extant. Reference to these two versions will be made presently; but what is absolutely certain and deeply interesting to remember in connection with the death of Shakespeare is, that that event took place just about one month after he had executed his 'Last Will and Testament' (dated March 25, 1616), in which he avowed himself then to have been 'in perfect health and memory, God be praised.' In executing that Will, the first draft of which had, it is known, been prepared in the preceding January, it may be taken for granted that Shakespeare was actuated chiefly, if not solely, by reasons of personal prudence and consideration for those who were near and dear to him. If, however, as more than one biographer believes, the Will was necessitated by reason of the poet's failing health, it is difficult to imagine that he would have endorsed such an avowal of mental and physical health with the forceful expression of gratitude to the Almighty which crowns it. For, in his day and generation, Shakespeare was well known to have been particularly wise in worldly matters, as well as pre-eminently distinguished above his fellows in intellectual capacity. To 'praise God,' therefore, for his 'perfect health and memory,' when his health was such as to warn him that the execution of his Will should be no longer delayed, was at least inconsistent with what is known of Shakespeare's

character and conduct in the ordinary concerns of life. And even to say that he merely adopted the stereotyped phraseology in vogue, and introduced it, presumably, by the *noverint*, or lawyer, who drafted the Will, is not enough to warrant the use of such phraseology in Shakespeare's case, especially if his health was otherwise than what he thus declared it to be. At the same time, it is not too much to suggest that, in the early months of 1616, Shakespeare may have experienced an inward premonition that the end of his days was at hand, and that it behoved him to see that his affairs were put in order ere he set out upon that mysterious journey whence no traveller returns. In this connection, such a suggestion opens up a deeply interesting field for speculation into the subtler aspects of the mind of Shakespeare; for truly he was one, if ever a mortal was, of those

> 'rare, apprehensive spirits,
> Who far-forespy Time's features taking on
> The awful likeness of a destiny.'

Be that as it may, is it not at any rate a very striking coincidence that the execution of Shakespeare's Will and Testament on March 25, 1616, should have been followed by his death a month or thereby later?

As indicated, there are two traditional accounts of that event, which numerous biographers of the poet have variously quoted, the one account assigning the cause of death to a malignant fever, and the other attributing it as the result of an indiscretion on the part of Shakespeare at a convivial forgathering with his friends Ben Jonson and Michael Drayton, who had come from London in that memorable spring to pay him a visit at Stratford-on-Avon. Other biographers have somehow linked the two accounts together, mentioning the said indiscretion as the origin of the fatal

SHAKESPEARE'S MONUMENT IN THE CHANCEL OF TRINITY CHURCH, STRATFORD-ON-AVON

fever. From the time of Nicholas Rowe, Shakespeare's first critical editor, to the present day the story has, in one way or another, found its limits in these two, or twin, versions. Even Halliwell-Phillipps, who knew more, perhaps, of the purely personal side of Shakespeare's career than any other biographer, was constrained to recognise those limits and to put on record his views on the subject in the following words: 'The cause of the malady, then, attributed to undue festivity, would now be readily discernible in the wretched sanitary conditions surrounding Shakespeare's residence. If truth, and not romance, is to be evoked, were there the woodbine and sweet honeysuckle within reach of the poet's death-bed, their fragrance would have been neutralised by their vicinity to middens, fetid water-courses, mud walls, and piggeries.'

But, strange to relate, the only evidence, and that merely evidence of hearsay, on which is founded the version of the story attributing the cause of Shakespeare's death to 'undue festivity' on the occasion mentioned, is that supplied by the diary of John Ward, who became vicar of Stratford-on-Avon a generation or thereby after Shakespeare's time. This *Diary* is now very rare, but there is a copy of it in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh, which I had recently an opportunity of perusing; and a more absurd hotch-potch of ridiculous gossip-mongering, idle tittle-tattling, and inconsequent story-telling it would, I think, be impossible to find anywhere. It were only to insult the memory of Pepys even to suggest of Ward's concoction as having the faintest claims to the literary charm and excellence—apart altogether from its *fact-telling* value—which characterises the former's famous classic. In all probability Ward's *Diary* would have been consigned to oblivion long ago,

but for the sole redeeming fact that it contained a brief reference to the death of such a pre-eminent writer as William Shakespeare, and that, moreover, the only reference which had been made thereto up to the time of Ward's advent as vicar of Stratford. Here, then, is the story as told by this precious diarist:

'Shakspear, Drayton, and Ben Jonson had a merrie meeting, and *itt seems* drank too hard, for Shakspear died of a feavour there contracted.' Mark the '*itt seems*'; how very specific and final a touch it gives to a story of such interest and consequence as that just narrated! But, as a further sample of the *olla podrida* which the Reverend Mr. Ward's *Diary* contains, here are one or two notes taken at random from its pages. These will at least give some idea of the kind of diarist he was, and help to form an estimate of his reliability in a matter of such paramount importance as the death of the man whose name is the greatest in European literature. Quoth the Reverend John Ward:

'*I have heard a storie* of a Quaker that came to Sir Henry Vane to persuade that hee was to bee the Lord's Anointed, and poured a botle of stinking oil uppon his head, which made Sir Henry shake his ears.'

. . . . . .

'Herring is a treacherous meat: the ladies love it well, but not the smell of itt.'

. . . . . .

'St. Swithine, Bishop of Winchester, wrought many miracles, and one was that hee made whole a basket of eggs that were all broken, and some other things accounted as miracles in those dayes.'

. . . . . .

'Because Conventicles were forbidden in Scotland, one there said Grace of an hour and half long.'

And so forth through some two hundred odd pages. Yet this is the authority whose hearsay story ('I have heard a storie' is his frequent expression) of the cause of Shakespeare's passing away forms the only basis of what is actually known regarding that event, and on nothing more substantial have numerous biographers, from Rowe's time till now, taken their deliberate stand. 'A parlous story, sirs, o' my conscience!' Surely Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps's theory of the pestilential foulnesses surrounding Shakespeare's residence in New Place is far worthier of credence, since it was based at least on data carefully acquired and closely examined by himself in the course of many years' research.

But there is a point in connection with Shakespeare's career which, while it throws no direct light on the actual cause of his death, may nevertheless be considered to have had some relation to that event. It is generally believed that, though Shakespeare died at the age of fifty-two, his work of authorship had ceased some four or five years previously. *The Tempest* is commonly supposed to have been his last, as it is thought by many admirers to be his noblest, creation—a masterpiece of the wizard's work—and it is known to have been staged in 1611. That being so, what is to be thought of the unproductive intervening years of what had hitherto been so busy and strenuous a life? True, he busied himself on his retirement to Stratford-on-Avon, in the year just mentioned, with the concerns appertaining to his acquired wealth, the fruits of his London labours, and to the interests of his family. But there were

no more plays from his erstwhile prolific pen. How can this sudden and prolonged cessation to the work of adding to the number of the heirs of his invention be accounted for? Were the fountains of his poesy dried up for ever? Or was it a case of mental hypersthenia, his faculties exhausted and Nature demanding her toll of the tired worker? There is, happily, no diarist to be reckoned with in a question like this. But this we know, that, on the date mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, to him who so finely apprehended the spirit of spring-time there came not only 'the uncertain glory of an April day,' but, alas! the cloud itself that 'takes all away.' Dare we say that, to a life and work like Shakespeare's, it came all too soon?

It is probable that Shakespeare in his last illness was medically attended by his son-in-law, Dr. John Hall, and that the best skill was brought to bear on the malady, whatever it was, that so swiftly ended the poet's life. His wife and daughter may be presumed to have lovingly attended to the physician's instructions in administering to the stricken poet's necessities, and it may well be imagined that the whole township of Stratford would be gravely concerned at the cloud which darkened it during these late April days of 1616. Not a single fact appertaining to the burial of Shakespeare and its attendant obsequies has ever been discovered.

> 'Thou know'st 'tis common,—all who live must die,
> Passing through Nature to Eternity.'

How suggestive, truly, is such an incident as the 'passing,' without even a recorded word of comment from a single contemporary, of one of the greatest spirits that ever dwelt in mortal flesh!

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

GILFILLAN'S EULOGY OF SHAKESPEARE

SINCE this work was written, I have received from an old and valued friend, the Rev. James Drummond, of Allendale, Northumberland, a letter stating that the 'some one' I refer to in my introductory chapter is no other than the well-known Scottish preacher, author, and lecturer, the late Rev. George Gilfillan, of Dundee. I had myself for some time searched and inquired in vain for the reference indicated, but, thanks to Mr. Drummond, I am now enabled to quote it here. In a lecture on Shakespeare, in *A Gallery of Literary Portraits*, published in Messrs. Dent's 'Everyman's Library' (page 188), Gilfillan uses the following impressive words:—

'A munificent and modest benefactor, he (Shakespeare) has knocked at the door of the human family at night; thrown in inestimable wealth as if he had done a guilty thing; and the sound of his feet dying away in the distance is all the tidings he has given of himself.'

APPENDIX B

THE 'GLOBE' THEATRE ON THE BANKSIDE[1]

THE famous old Globe Theatre on the Bankside, which derives its celebrity from the fact that Shakespeare once acted upon its stage, and was himself a partner in its fortunes, enjoys a unique place in theatrical history. Because of its having been associated with a portion of the actual life and work of the great Englishman whose name enjoys a more cosmopolitan renown than that of any man before or since the period he has immortalised, the Globe has been styled the most famous theatrical edifice ever built.

Originally erected, it is supposed, in 1599 by Richard and Cuthbert Burbage, the site was adjoining that of the notorious Bear Garden on the Bankside, where the crowd of London pleasure-seekers flocked, more numerously on Sundays, to witness the bull and bear baiting sports, as they were termed. During the reign of Henry VIII. these sports were exceedingly popular. Even in Elizabeth's time they enjoyed the patronage of the 'high and mighty' of the land. Indeed, they formed the chief amusement of the people for many years after, and Sunday was generally signalised by some special entertainment. Parliament closed the Bear Garden in 1642; and, though it was opened again after the Restoration, the previous interference of the authorities would appear to have practically given this method of sport its quietus. In addition to the Globe and the Bear-baiting Circus on the Bankside, there were at that time in London the 'Theatre' or 'Curtain' in Shoreditch, and the 'Red Bull' in Clerkenwell Green. Tradition asserts that it was at the last-named theatre that Shake-

[1] Originally published in the *Globe* newspaper.

THE BEAR GARDEN

From an enlarged drawing of an extensive View of London in 1647, engraved by Hollar

speare first found occupation on arriving in London from Stratford-on-Avon. Theatre-goers had thus ample opportunities of being amused; at any rate, in the famous comedian, Richard Tarleton, they had the privilege of applauding a player whose comic genius won him so great distinction that he enjoyed the especial friendship of, among other personages, Queen Elizabeth herself. Shakespeare was a young man of two or three-and-twenty when Tarleton was in the full flush of his career, and there seems no reason to doubt that he would occasionally witness the latter's performance either at the Curtain or Red Bull.

As to the building itself and its material construction, many interesting particulars are, of course, extant. In form it was not, as generally supposed, a circular-shaped theatre, although it was probably round within. Its name is not, therefore, derived from that notion, although it seems a pretty correct notion when regard is paid to Shakespeare's well-known allusion to the theatre in *Henry V.*, where Chorus asks—

> 'Can this cockpit hold
> The vasty fields of France? or may we cram
> Within this wooden O the very casques
> That did affright the air at Agincourt?'

The theatre was octagonal in shape, as most of the representations of the building, as it existed in Shakespeare's day, indicate. That it was, moreover, a 'frame of timber' is supported by the authority of Stowe. The roof of the building was of thatch. Before the fire in 1613 the theatre was surmounted by a large sign of Atlas supporting the globe; hence, of course, its name. On the re-erection of the theatre this sign gave place to a flag displaying St. George's Cross.

Historically, the most interesting years in the existence of this memorable theatre are from 1603 to 1613. In the former year Shakespeare joined the management as co-lessee with Richard Burbage, Heminge, Condell, and others. This was the busiest

period of his life. Some of his finest dramatic creations then appeared; while he himself essayed several acting parts in the dramas. Moreover, he was becoming rich, and was buying property in his native place. In the decade of 1603-13 he was shaping by his own hands that chief or corner stone of his life-work on which his immortality rests secure and inviolate against all vicissitudes; and the little Globe Theatre on the Bankside was unquestionably the palpable and conspicuous place where that was accomplished. By the disastrous fire which befel the building in 1613, it is sad indeed to contemplate the loss to literature thereby occasioned. There is not a line of Shakespeare's own handiwork extant to-day; at least, its whereabouts is unknown. How much of it perished by the fire at the Globe Theatre is a question sometimes asked, but one that will never be answered. It is more than probable that many Shakespearean treasures, in the shape of original MSS. of his plays, and other personal documents, were then destroyed.

Of the incidents of the fire, a few interesting facts are extant. Its story, as told by Sir Henry Wotton, is quaint but graphic in the extreme:—'The King's players had a new play, *All is True*, representing some principal pieces of the reign of Henry VIII., which was set forth with many extraordinary circumstances of Pomp and Majesty, even to the matting of the Stage; the Knights of the Order, with their Georges and Garters, the Guards with their embroidered Coats, and the like: sufficient in truth within a while to make greatness very familiar, if not ridiculous. Now King Henry making a Masque at the Cardinal Wolsey's House, and certain Canons being shot off at his entry, some of the paper or other stuff wherewith one of them was stopped, did light on the Thatch, where being thought at first but an idle smoak, and their eyes more attentive to the show, it kindled inwardly, and ran round like a train, consuming within less than an hour the whole House to the very grounds.' It is not known if Shakespeare was a witness of this disaster, nor to what extent he personally suffered by it. The theatre was, however, rebuilt in the

following year, when a new company of players from the Blackfriars occupied its stage. These players were, by 'ordinance of Parliament,' prohibited from appearing on any stage, and so the glory of the Globe passed away; for though at the Restoration new histrionic enterprise met with no such authoritative restrictions, the old actors had all died, and the famous playhouse itself had ceased to be.

APPENDIX C

THE BACONIAN HERESY

If this heresy has done anything at all to affect the fame of Shakespeare, it has probably widened the circle of his admirers all over the world, and increased their enthusiasm for his genius. And though it is impossible to say that the number of persons who pin their faith to the heresy has been in any way diminished in recent years, it is safe to affirm that nothing in the way of literary discovery as to the authorship of the plays is ever likely to dethrone Shakespeare and to set Bacon in his place. I desire, nevertheless, to say a few words here; first of all to those who declare themselves believers in the (so-called) Baconian theory; and, secondly, to those who are perhaps wavering between two opinions on the subject. And I may at once state that I do not propose to touch on the question of the plays at all. My argument against the Baconian theory is based largely on the facts connected with the authorship of the two poems—*Venus and Adonis* and the *Rape of Lucrece*, both of which were avowedly the work of Shakespeare in his early years. The former poem was, in fact, the 'first heir' of his invention, as he himself described it in the dedicatory epistle to the Earl of Southampton; but the latter must always be bracketed with the earlier poem because of the special interest attached to the dedication of both works to Shakespeare's noble friend and patron.

'Venus and Adonis'

Published in 1593, when Shakespeare was twenty-nine years of age. The entry in the books of the Stationers' Company give the

actual date of publication as the 18th April. The poem was probably written some years before; but, though Shakespeare had already achieved some distinction as a dramatist, he tells us himself, according to the dedicatory epistle to Lord Southampton, that the poem was 'the first heir of my invention.'

Dedication

'To the Right Honourable Henry Wriothesly, Earl of Southampton, and Baron of Tichfield.

'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 seem but pleased, I account myself highly praised, and vow to take advantage of all idle hours, till I have honoured you with *some graver labour*. But if *the first heir of my invention* prove deformed, I shall be sorry it had so noble a godfather, and never after ear so barren a land, for fear it yield me still so bad a harvest. I leave it to your honourable survey, and your honour to your heart's content; which I wish may always answer your own wish and the world's hopeful expectation.—Your honour's in all duty, WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.'

'THE RAPE OF LUCRECE'

Published, first under the title of *The Ravishment of Lucrece* in 1594, just one year after the publication of *Venus and Adonis*. As, at least, ten plays from his pen had, from the time of Shakespeare's arrival in London, already been given to the world up to this year, it is evident that he was taking full 'advantage of all idle hours,' referred to in his dedication (in 1593) of *Venus and Adonis*, to make good his promise to Lord Southampton. Moreover, the dedication of the *Rape of Lucrece* to the same nobleman in the following year indicates the increasing regard Shakespeare had

for Lord Southampton, and suggests something more than mere patronage for the rising young author.

Dedication

'To the Right Honourable Henry Wriothesly, Earl of Southampton, and Baron of Tichfield.

'The love I dedicate to your Lordship is without end; whereof this pamphlet, without beginning, is but a superfluous moiety. The warrant I have of your honourable disposition, not the worth of my untutored lines, makes it assured of acceptance. What I have done is yours; what I have to do is yours; being part in all I have, devoted yours. Were my worth greater, my duty would show greater; meantime, as it is, it is bound to your Lordship, to whom I wish long life, still lengthened with all happiness.—Your Lordship's in all duty, WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.'

In these two letters to the Earl of Southampton we have the only extant personal references by Shakespeare to himself and his work of authorship. They are, therefore, the most interesting and important documents (assuming the genuineness of the originals) in connection with the work of authorship of the world's greatest dramatist. Were the original letters to be discovered, what a price they would realise to-day! Apart from that impossibility, however, they enable us to come very closely and intimately to the individuality of Shakespeare, which cannot be said of any other document (not even his will) bearing more or less directly on the worth of his work or his character.

In the first place, both letters bespeak an uncommon modesty on the part of Shakespeare in regard to the value of his two poems. He speaks, for instance, of *Venus and Adonis* as 'my unpolished lines,' of the *Rape of Lucrece* as 'this pamphlet,' while in the opening lines of the first letter to Lord Southampton he *knows not how he shall*

offend in dedicating the poem to his lordship. Then (as if to make amends for this act of daring, in the event of 'offence' being taken) he goes on to 'vow to take advantage of all idle hours' to return with 'some graver labour.' It can, perhaps, scarcely be said that the *Rape of Lucrece* was a 'graver labour' than his *Venus and Adonis*, for it is generally conceded that the latter is greatly superior in many respects to the former poem. But Shakespeare's conscientiousness could not admit of a vow of lesser seriousness, and he himself might have felt that he was not unjustified in considering the *Rape of Lucrece* worthy to be so reckoned.

If, therefore, it be granted that the author of the poems referred to is the same person as the author of the plays which we know by the name of Shakespeare, it is not easy to understand how Shakespeare —then only thirty-two years of age and almost unknown—should have been selected by Francis Bacon as the medium for the concealment of the authorship of the works purporting to bear the name of Shakespeare! I ask any reasonable person this question: Was it likely that a nobleman of the high character of the Earl of Southampton, to whom Shakespeare, as we have seen, dedicated his *Venus and Adonis* and the *Rape of Lucrece*, would lend himself (to oblige Francis Bacon) to be a party to what can only be described as a huge literary fraud? If we allow this, then Bacon must also have written these poems and—as early as 1594, before the first play was written—devised a scheme of concealment of his own identity under the name of William Shakespeare with the connivance of the Earl of Southampton, not once only but twice, in the years 1594 and 1597! The idea is preposterous.

APPENDIX D

SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS: WERE THEY ACTED IN FULL?[1]

SHAKESPEARE'S dramatic instinct was certainly of the highest. It is a striking tribute to his genius that *Hamlet* was in his lifetime the only drama by Shakespeare that was acted at the two English Universities. But all over the world *Hamlet* is a living, vital force, with a perennial interest, which is always received with applause and enthusiasm when performed by good actors.

One naturally wonders what interpretation Shakespeare himself as actor would give to the character of Hamlet. And a further interesting point is whether in his own lifetime *Hamlet* and other plays were acted in their entirety as written. There is certainly some doubt as regards this, if we are to judge by certain old playhouse copies, formerly in the possession of Halliwell-Phillips, and now in the Edinburgh University Library.

In the Third Folio edition of 1663-64 there has been a liberal use of the pen, a great many liberties having been taken with the text. There are not only comments and names on the margins, but over three hundred lines of the text have been ruthlessly scored out to shorten the length of the play when it was acted. The same system is carried out in *The Midsummer Night's Dream* (1623), while *The Comedy of Errors* has been cut down by one-half!

Some of the interpolations, indeed we may say the major part, are by no means an improvement, and do not add to the interest of the play. Possibly the alterations may have been done for local effect, or to gain the applause of the 'gallery.' If the plays of Shakespeare were thus mutilated and cut down, there would likely be other pieces acted so as to give variety to the performances.

[1] I am indebted to Mr. David Cuthbertson, Edinburgh University Library, for the information contained in the above Appendix.—A.C.

APPENDIX E

INSCRIPTION ON TOMBSTONE OF SUSANNA HALL

Witty above her sexe but that 's not all,
Wise to Salvation was good Mistress Hall,
Something of Shakespere was in that, but this
Wholy of him with whom she 's now in blisse.
Then, passenger, ha'st ne're a teare,
  To weepe with her that wept with all ?
That wept, yet set herselfe to chere
  Them up with comforts cordiall.
Her Love shall live, her mercy spread,
When thou hast ne're a teare to shed.

APPENDIX F

JONSON'S 'EVERY MAN IN HIS HUMOUR'

In his excellent work, *Poets Laureate of England: Their History and Their Odes* (Pitman, 1914), Mr. W. Forbes Gray, F.S.A.Scot., writes (at page 21) of this famous comedy: 'When, in 1598, he (Ben Jonson) produced the revised version of his comedy, *Every Man in His Humour*, at the Globe Theatre, Elizabeth was impressed by its originality, and swelled the general chorus of praise which greeted the uprising of a new master of English comedy'—a statement avowedly based on Gifford.

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