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SHAKESPEARE

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SHAKESPEARE • & THE UNIVERSITIES

.And Other Studies in Elizabethan Drama

BY FREDERICK S. BOAS

M.A. (Oxon); Hon. LL.D (St. Andrews)

Oxford: Basil Blackwell, Publisher to
The Shakespeare Head Press
of Stratford-upon-Avon
1923

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PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN
BY THE SHAKESPEARE HEAD PRESS LTD
STRATFORD-UPON-AVON

P R E F A C E

THE general scope and purpose of this volume are set forth in the Introduction, and these prefatory words are therefore chiefly by way of acknowledgement.

Seven of the chapters are based, with considerable revision and enlargement, on contributions to periodicals, and I have to thank the respective editors for permission to republish them in their present form.

Chapters II and VII are expansions of articles in *The Fortnightly Review*, and chapter V of an article in *The Library*. Chapter IV appeared in *The Contemporary Review*, and chapters VIII, IX, and XI in *The Times Literary Supplement* but in every case these have been revised to bring the various sections of the volume into closer relation.

Chapters I, III, VI and X are new, except that in III I have 'lifted/ with the consent of Sir Israel Gollancz, a few passages from my contribution to *The Book of Homage to Shakespeare*.

I wish also to repeat my thanks to those who in various ways have helped or facilitated my investigations. Dr R.L. Poole allowed me to examine some of the documents in the Oxford University archives, and to reproduce in facsimile an extract from the Vice-Chancellors' accounts. The Town Clerk of Oxford made arrangements for me to inspect the accounts of the City Chamberlains, and to reproduce in facsimile an extract from them.

Mr C. H. Wilkinson permitted me to collate the manuscript of *The Cheats* in Worcester College library, and drew my attention to the library's unrecorded set of Shakespear-ean quartos.

Mr William Forster, C.I.E., allowed me to make extracts from minute-books of the East India Company and some of the logs of early voyages preserved at the India Office. He was also the first to identify 'W.M.', author of *The*

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Lanchinge of the Mary, as Walter Mountfort. Miss E. M. Thompson transcribed the manuscript of the play.

Two observations of a more personal kind may be added. In attempting to trace the relations between the University and the professional stage, from the time of Shakespeare downwards, I have felt my interest quickened by the events of my undergraduate days at Balliol. It was then, when Benjamin Jowett, Master of Balliol, was Vice-Chancellor, that the attitude of the academic authorities towards the professional theatre went through a momentous change. The significance of that change cannot be fully appreciated unless we follow the story back to the Elizabethan period. And now that theatrical art promises to be brought into closer contact with University studies, the chronicle of their unhappy estrangement may not be without its use.

In other chapters of this book I have been labouring, though on somewhat different lines, in a field where A. H. Bullen led the way. It is therefore, I hope, not unfitting that the volume should bear on its title-page the imprint of the Shakespeare Head Press. I venture to offer it as a modest wreath to the memory of the great Elizabethan scholar and man of letters who was the founder of that Press in the town of Shakespeare's birth. He would, I think, have welcomed in this year that marks the tercentenary of the publication of the First Folio any side-lights thrown by a study of Egerton MS. 1994—our chief manuscript volume of 'old plays'—upon the problem of Shakespeare's 'papers' and their relation to the early printed texts.

February, 1923.

F. S. B.

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ERRATA

- p. 27, l. 14, for *Venus, and Adonic* read *Venus and Adonis*.
 p. 36, line 18, for *Live for Love* read *Love for Love*.
 p. 74, l. 26, for *King Henry IV* read *King Henry V*.

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"CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

THIS volume deals with aspects of Elizabethan drama and theatrical history, if the term 'Elizabethan' be allowed to cover not only the period till the close of the playhouses in 1642, but the earlier years of the Restoration, when the influences from the great age were still living. The individual chapters, while ranging over a variety of subjects within these limits, are intended to have a general inter-relation. They illustrate, for the most part, the influence on the presentation by professional actors of stage-plays in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries of two external bodies—the Universities and the Office of the Revels. The former kept the theatrical companies at arm's length; the latter watched them with a critical and suspicious eye. From the consideration of their procedure some other more or less allied subjects have come up for discussion.

It needs an effort now to realize the traditional attitude of Oxford and Cambridge towards Shakespeare, whether on the stage or in the study, for some 250 years. During the past half-century we have seen the two Universities united in doing him honour. It was Cambridge that took the lead when in 1863 two of her representative scholars, W. G. Clark and W. Aldis Wright, began the publication of a nine volume *variorum* edition of the dramatist's works, based upon a collation of the folios and quartos. Since then Shakespearean research has been increasingly occupied with the problem of the *provenance* of the copy for the earliest printed texts. 'The New Cambridge Shakespeare,'

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of which the first three volumes appeared in 1921, seeks in the light of the most recent investigations to furnish a text reproducing, as far as possible, what was written by the dramatist in his own 'papers.'

The original Cambridge editors in 1868 issued the first of the 'Clarendon Press' series of single Shakespear-ean plays, which, though published at Oxford, were typical of the scholarship of the sister University. The one-volume 'Oxford' Shakespeare, published in 1894, was edited by W. J. Craig, an *alumnus* of Trinity College, Dublin, which has to its credit so much valuable work on the dramatist.

In the present century scholars either officially connected with Oxford, or publishing through the University Press, have contributed to every branch of Shakespear-ean investigation. Sir Sidney Lee's facsimile of the first folio (1902) and his census of the existing copies were followed by his facsimiles of the Poems and of *Pericles*, and by Miss H. Bartlett's and Mr A. W. Pollard's census of the quartos. With these may be classed Mr Falconer Madan's monograph on 'the original Bodleian copy of the first folio.' Sir Walter Raleigh's volume in the 'English Men of Letters' series, and Dr A. C. Bradley's *Shakespear-ean Tragedy* and *Oxford Lectures on Poetry* have enriched Shakespear-ean criticism. Mr Percy Simpson's *Shakespearian Punctuation*, Mr C. T. Onions' *Shakespeare Glossary*, and Sir G. Maunde Thompson's *Shakespeare's Handwriting* are important specialist monographs. The tercentenary year saw the publication of the two collections, *Shakespeare's England* and *The Book of Homage to Shakespeare*, with contributions from many experts, and of the Catalogue of the Shakespeare Exhibition held in the Bodleian Library.

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Shakespeare's works are now part of the officially recognized syllabus for the Oxford 'School' of English Language and Literature and the Cambridge English Tripos. Lectures upon them and upon the Elizabethan drama generally are included in the academic schemes of study.

The academic stage also has played its part. While the revivals by University amateurs at Cambridge have been chiefly of classical dramas, Oxford has been the scene, since 1883, of a remarkable series of performances of Shakespearean plays. And there are indications that before long the art of the Theatre, in its technical as well as in its literary aspect, may get academic recognition in England as it has already done in America.

It seems therefore at first sight incredible that for generations the predominant attitude of the University authorities towards Shakespeare and other professional actors and their plays was one of hostility or of contempt. A misinterpretation of the statement on the title-page of the first quarto of *Hamlet* that the play had been performed in the two Universities of Cambridge and Oxford, has fostered the false impression that Elizabethan Vice-Chancellors and Proctors looked upon the performances of travelling companies with a benignant eye. But recent investigation has shown that even the influential section of academic opinion that favoured acting by the scholars in college halls was hostile to touring players who performed for hire. These players, therefore, on their visits to Oxford and Cambridge had to appear under the auspices of the civic authorities. In Chapter ii of this book, I have tried to trace the dealings of Oxford Vice-Chancellors with professional actors during three centuries—from 1587-8, when the Earl of Leicester's company, of which Shakespeare may already have

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been a member, was paid to go away from the University, till 1886, when the wheel came full circle, and Benjamin Jowett invited Henry Irving to lecture in the New Schools and officially attended his address on four great Shakespearean actors.¹

It was not only on the stage that Shakespeare's plays, by a strange perversion of Renaissance humanism, were taboo to some of its leading representatives at Oxford. When Sir Thomas Bodley founded his great library in 1602, he scornfully dismissed plays as 'baggage-books.' It was only under the terms of a general agreement with the Stationers' Company that a copy of the first folio found its way to the Bodleian shelves. The second folio does not appear to have been received, and when the third, containing the additional Shakespeare 'apocrypha,' reached the library, the Curators sold for a song their original copy of the first folio with other superfluous books.

How is it then that Oxford and Cambridge, especially the former, have become the owners of such rich Shakespearean treasures? I have tried in Chapter iii, taking advantage of the results of recent bibliographical research, to show how this has happened. It has not been due to any keen interest on the part of either the Universities or of the Colleges in Shakespearean study, but to the benefactions of individuals, especially Edward Capell and Edmund Malone. The latter's magnificent bequest to the Bodleian was a remarkable windfall at a time (1821) when neither the publications of the University Press, the lectures from the Chair of Poetry, nor the writings of Oxford scholars showed any particular concern with the dramatist. In the previous two centuries academic opinion on his merits had

¹ Latei Vice-Chancellors have followed in Jowett's footsteps, though they have vetoed the performance of *Hindle Wakes* in 1913, and of the Grand Guignol plays in the present year (1922).

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fluctuated, and contributions to the study of his life and writings from within the Universities had been curiously fitful, though some of them had been "of first-rate value. I have tried to trace the varying phases of the academic attitude till the publication of Keble's Latin *Praelectiones* as professor of Poetry, which are the fine swan-song of Renaissance humanism in Oxford.

The Universities were concerned with Shakespeare's plays in print or as acted on the stage. The Office of the Revels had to do with them in an earlier state when they were submitted in manuscript to the Master for his approval. Those precious unblotted papers have vanished, with the doubtful exception of the three leaves in *Sir Thomas More*, which some palaeographers of the highest repute have identified as Shakespeare's script. Whatever view may be taken on this matter, it is evident that for any general conclusions on the treatment of Shakespeare's manuscripts by the Censor, and the uses to which they were afterwards put, we must fall back on analogy.

The number of extant manuscripts of Elizabethan plays written for professional performance is comparatively small, but larger than was once believed. The problems arising out of the composite manuscript of *Sir Thomas More* are so many and difficult that for the present purpose it may be left out of account except in so far that at least the original draft in Anthony Munday's hand was submitted to the Master of the Revels, Edmund Tilney, probably about 1596, and sent back with a peremptory marginal direction for drastic revision.¹ The probably

¹ Dr W.W.Greg is undoubtedly right when he states in the introduction to his edition of *Sir Thomas More* in the Malone Society Reprints that it is an error to suppose 'that alterations and substitutions now found in the manuscript are the result of an attempt to comply with the censor's demands.' His detailed proofs of this (pp. xiv-v) are cogent, and

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somewhat earlier play in Munday's autograph *John a Kent and John a Comber* contains no internal evidence of its stage-history. Tilney's successor, Sir George Buc, wrote on October 11, 1611, his licence for public performance with the prescribed 'reformations' at the end of the manuscript of *The Second Maiden s Tragedy*. These reformations, some in Buc's own hand, some probably adopted at his instance, are visible in the manuscript.¹ Other corrections of a purely literary character, are probably due to the author, the manuscript itself being the work of a scribe. After its endorsement by the Censor, it was evidently used as a playhouse copy, for there are additional stage-directions in the prompter's hand, including the names of two of the actors, Richard Robinson, a boy who played a woman's part, and 'Mr. Gough,' both members of the King's Company. The extant manuscript of *Sir John van Olden Barnevelt* (1619), ascribed by Bullen to Fletcher and Massinger, also evidently passed through Buc's hands, for it contains a marginal note (f. 5b), 'I like not this: neith^r do I think that the pr[ince] was thus disgracefully vsed, besides he is to much presented. G.B.' A line is drawn opposite about twenty of the offending lines, indicating that they should be omitted. In many other places a similar line has been drawn, or a cross has been placed in the margin by Buc, and a large number of changes and deletions have been made. The copy was then handed over to the prompter, who added many stage-

are, in my opinion, not invalidated by the attempt of Mr W.J. Lawrence (*Times Littrary Supplement*, July 1, 1920) to date the play back to 1589, when the authority of the Master of the Revels was less firmly established than later.

On the other hand I agree with Mr Lawrence that it is only in a prompt copy that the name of T. Goodal, the actor of the insignificant part of a messenger, could be found. I believe, therefore, that the play was acted, though with considerable deviations from the form in which it has been preserved.

¹See Dr Greg's introduction (pp.x-xi) to his edition of the play in the Malone Society's Reprints.

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directions, including the names of the actors of various parts, where they entered. Amongst them are Robinson¹ and Gough, who had appeared in *The Second Maiden's Tragedy*.

Sir George Buc's successor as Master was Sir John Astley, but after holding office for little over a year, May, 1662, to July 20, 1623, he sold his rights to Henry Herbert, who was knighted a month later. The earliest extant play endorsed with his licence is Massinger's autograph manuscript of *Believe as you List*, which Herbert sanctioned for performance on May 6, 1631. It was a revised version of a play that he had refused to license in January, 'because it did contain dangerous matter.'² The manuscript was used as a prompt copy, and contains unusually full notes of the actors' names and directions by the manager, e.g., f. 18^v, 'Gascoine and Hubert below: ready to open the Trap doore for Mr Taylor,' and f. 20', 'Harry Willson: & Boy ready for the song at y^e Arras.'

It would be interesting to know if *The Welsh Ambassador*, recently edited from a manuscript in the Cardiff Public Library, and apparently dating from about 1623,³ was submitted to Herbert. If so, he was less sensitive about jests at Wales and Welshmen than he became in his old age, when he had to deal with *The Cheats*.⁴ The only passages marked for omission, in the last scene, do not seem to be such as the Censor would have noted. The frequent marginal warnings to the various characters to 'bee redy' indicate that the manuscript was intended for playhouse purposes, but these entries seem to be in the same hand as

¹ He is evidently the 'Mr Rob' whose name is entered in the margin at the beginning of Act i, in and elsewhere, though Bullen did not identify him in his edition in *Old English Plays*, vol. II. ' See below, Chap. ix.

³ See the introduction (p. v) to Prof. Littledale and Dr Gteg's edition of the play (1921 in the Malone Society Reprints. ⁴ See below, Chap. xi.

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the text, and no actors' names appear. It is therefore not certain, though probable, that the piece was performed.

The manuscripts hitherto mentioned have all come to light separately, at different times and in various quarters. But since 1865 there has been lying at the British Museum a bound volume of fifteen manuscript plays (MS. Egerton 1994). Probably, as Sir George Warner first suggested, this collection of plays was bequeathed to Dulwich College by the actor, William Cartwright the younger, towards the end of the seventeenth century. In Chapter v of this volume I have sought to support this view from internal evidence, and to show the importance of the collection in any discussion of the *provenance* of the printed texts of Shakespeare or other Elizabethan dramatists. A. H. Bullen, as all students of the period know, printed four plays from this Egerton MS. between 1883 and 1885, *Dicke of Devonshire*, *The Lady Mother*, *The Distracted Emperor* and *The Captives*. Of these the third, under the more convenient title, *Charlemagne*, has been re-edited in 1920 by Professor Schoell of Chicago, and *The Captives* in 1921 by Professor Judson of Texas. Another play from the manuscript, which he entitled *A Tragedy of King Richard the Second*, was printed in a very limited edition by Halliwell-Phillipps in 1870, and reprinted from the manuscript by Professor Wolfgang Keller in 1899 in the *Jahrbuch* of the German Shakespeare Society.

Bullen and the other editors have been mainly concerned with the literary and linguistic features of the individual plays, and with questions of their authorship and source. They have given little or no attention to the interrelation of plays in the collection, or to their value as documents for stage history. In Chapter v I have attempted to deal with these aspects. Seven of the manuscripts, at any

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rate, *The Captives*, *Edmond Ironside*, *Charlemagne*, *Thomas of Woodstock* (the play hitherto called *Richard II*\ *The Lady Mother*, *The Two Noble Ladies* and *The Lanchinge of the Mary*, are playhouse copies. They contain marginal stage-directions added in other hands than those of the original scribes, and four of them supply the names of the actors of minor parts. The manuscript of *The Lady Mother* has' at the end the autograph licence of William Blagrave, Sir Henry Herbert's deputy; and *The Lanchinge of the Mary* has Herbert's own licence, with strict injunctions that all'reformations' be observed. In Chapter ix I have shown how extensive these 'reformations' were, and how they were carried out. Fortunately it has been possible to prove by comparison with another document in the hand of Walter Mountfort, author of *The Lanchinge of the Mary*, that the manuscript is written by himself. We have thus here an unquestionable copy of a play in the author's autograph submitted to the Master of the Revels, censured by him, altered to meet his requirements and used, as marginal annotations show, as a prompt copy. The last leaf of *Thomas of Woodstock* is missing, but there is strong reason for the view that it is the copy licensed by the Censor with the necessary 'reformations,' and afterwards used for playhouse purposes.

Another smaller collection of manuscript plays, five in number, has recently come into notice in the library of Worcester College, Oxford. It includes the copy of John Wilson's comedy, *The Cheats*, which was submitted to Herbert in his second period of office after the Restoration, licensed by him subject to numerous alterations on March 6, 1662, and thereafter used as a prompt copy. An account of the manuscript and of its importance in stage-history is given in Chapter xi,

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Thus the *corpus* of extant manuscripts of Elizabethan plays (in the sense already defined) belonging to professional companies seems to number about thirty.¹ It would be unsafe to generalize too confidently on this basis. But on the whole the evidence is in favour of Mr A. W. Pollard's contention that theatrical companies made a very economical use of their manuscripts, and turned one copy to as many purposes as possible. Massinger's *Believe as you List* and Mountfort's *Lanchinge of the Mary*, and most probably Wilson's *The Cheats*, are in their author's autographs, have the Censor's endorsement, and were used as prompt copies. *Thomas of Woodstock* makes the impression of belonging to the same class. *Sir Thomas More* was evidently submitted to the Master of the Revels in the autograph copy which was prepared for use by the prompter, whether it was finally acted or not. *The Second Maiden's Tragedy*, *Sir John van Olden Barnevelt* and *The Lady Mother* are apparently not autograph, but after being endorsed by the Censor they were used as prompt copies. Whether or not the copy of Heywood's *Captives* was that submitted to Herbert when he licensed the play, it appears to be in his autograph, and it was used as a prompt copy. *Edmond Ironside*, *Charlemagne* and *The Two Noble Ladies* were turned to the same use, though there is not sufficient internal evidence to show whether they are autograph or not.

When I began my examination of Egerton MS. 1994,1 was unaware of the conclusions to which Mr Pollard was being led through his investigation of the problems of the transmission of Shakespeare's text. I was, to tell the truth, not thinking of Shakespeare at all, but seeking to explore somewhat further in the field of 'old plays' where Bullen

¹ There are, of course, a considerable number of manuscripts of plays privately acted» like Ben Jonson's *Masques*, *The Twelfth Nights Revels* and *The Masque of Queens* (the latter of which is autograph), and dramas performed at the Universities.

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had blazed a trail. But the results at which I have arrived, imperfect though they be, go a good way to support the attractive thesis that some at least of the texts of Shakespeare's plays in the 'good' quartos and in the first folio are .printed direct from his autograph. Mr Pollard¹ lays stress on the statement by Heminge and Condell 'His mind and heart went together: And what he thought he vttered with that easinesse, that we haue scarce receiued from him a blot on his papers/ He points out that 'the absence of blots from a scrivener's copy would prove nothing at all; therefore the papers must have been autograph.'

It need not be assumed that all the plays were printed from these unblotted papers. If we want to visualize the materials on which Heminge and Condell laid pious hands, we cannot do better than turn over the leaves of Egerton MS. 1994. It is true that we have here the work not of one dramatist but of many, but the plays were part of the stock-in-trade of the Revels and other companies before they came, as is highly probable, into the younger Cartwright's hands. Here they are with the signs of theatrical wear and tear on them, some autograph, other fair copies by scribes, 'reformed' in obedience to the Censor, and annotated by the prompter for his own purposes. No one looking at them can be surprised that the names of actors instead of the parts they played got occasionally into the Shakespeare quartos or the folio, or that some of the prompter's curt directions became perpetuated by the printers.² Still less will there be need to explain why the deposition scene in *Richard II* was omitted from the quartos published during Elizabeth's lifetime. The Masters of the Revels did not trouble in the least about the morality of the plays submitted to them. But they were quick to scent danger in allusions to affairs of Church or

¹ *Shakespeare's Fight -with the Pirates*, pp. 61-4.

² See below, Chap. v.

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State. This finds convincing illustration in Herbert's treatment of the manuscripts of *The Lanchinge of the Mary* (Chapter ix) and of *The Cheats* (Chapter xi).

Apart from their bearing on the questions of stage-censorship and transmission of text, some of the less-known plays in Egerton MS. 1994 are of interest in other ways. Thus *Edmond Ironside*, of which I have given an account in Chapter vi, is one of the few Elizabethan chronicle-histories dealing with an Anglo-Saxon hero, instead of a legendary British king, a Lear or a Cymbeline. *Thomas of Woodstock* is one of the group of dramas founded on episodes in the reign of Richard II, and its chronological relation to Shakespeare's play presents, as I have tried to show in Chapter vii, a puzzling problem. Over *The Lanchinge of the Mary*, oddly inspired by a treatise on economics, lowers the shadow of 'the dismal science,' as yet in its infancy. But its contemporary echoes of the feeling produced by the Dutch outrage at Amboyna (Chapter ix) and its sketches of the 'grass-widows' of the East India Company's servants (Chapter x) redeem it in part from dulness.

The East Indies do not loom large in Elizabethan drama. The cry was still mainly 'Westward Ho!' When Shakespeare deserted the Mediterranean and laid his scene in an enchanted island, it was within hail of 'the still vext Bermoothes.' It is, therefore, of no slight interest that the manuscript of *The Lanchinge of the Mary* was written by an East Indian official during his return voyage on one of the Company's ships. Hence it has seemed worth while to follow in Chapter viii the adventurous career of this strange recruit to the army of Elizabethan dramatists, as it is unfolded in the records of the Company now preserved at the India Office.

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Among those archives there are also some of the early logs of the Company's ships. Captain Keeling's log of the voyage of *The Dragon* in 1607-8 is now unfortunately missing except for the first leaf. It was this log, according to Thomas Rundall, writing in 1849, that contained the remarkable entries about performances of *Hamlet* and *Richard II* on the ship when she was lying off the West African coast. The entries have too lightly been denounced as forgeries. In Chapter iv I have set forth the evidence in favour of their authenticity. Unless by some unlocked for miracle the missing log were to be recovered, the proof cannot be complete. But at the worst one is almost tempted to say that Rundall was *splendide mendax*. The entries open up an alluring vista. The scene of *Hamlet* is laid on the shores of the northern sea across which the forefathers of the English race sped in their longships to their new island home. *Richard II* contains Shakespeare's ringing panegyric on that island home as

This little world,
This precious stone set in the silver sea

With the dawn of the seventeenth century a new epoch was opening, wherein the sea-girt island was to become the mother of a far-flung empire. It was such adventurous voyagers as Keeling, such weather-beaten craft as *The Dragon*^ that all unknowing bore with them these majestic fortunes. What more fitting than that they should have carried into uncharted seas, which were to become the familiar highway of their countrymen, the plays of the dramatist who was to prove one of the strongest bonds of empire? Thus the performance of *Hamlet* on shipboard before a Portuguese-speaking negro may be taken as the presage of Shakespeare's dominion over men of every tongue and race.

CHAPTER II

'HAMLET' AT OXFORD: AND THE VISITS OF THE TRAVELLING COMPANIES

ONE of the many unique features connected with *Hamlet*, as every Elizabethan student knows, is, that it is the only play of Shakespeare for which there is contemporary evidence that it was acted at Oxford and Cambridge. The title-page of the first quarto, published by Nicholas Ling and John Trundell in 1603, runs as follows:

'THE/Tragicall Historic of/HAMLET/*Prince of Denmarke*/By William Shakespeare./As it hath beene diuerse times acted by his Highnesse ser-/uants in the Cittie of London: as also in the two V-/niuersities of Cambridge and Oxford, and else-where.'

The second quarto, issued in 1604, 'newly imprinted and enlarged to almost as much againe as it was, according to the true and perfect Coppie,' omits mention of the places where the play had been performed; but there is no reason to doubt the statement of the earlier title-page, even though, as I hope to show, wrong deductions have been drawn from it.

No play could have been more suitable for performance before a University audience. Hamlet is the typical thinker and scholar dragged unwillingly from 'school in Wittenberg' into the welter of State affairs at Elsinore. He embodies, alike in its strength and its weakness, the academic attitude towards life. He salutes Horatio as 'fellow-student'; he draws from Polonius reminiscences of his performances on a college stage:

HAMLET. My lord, you played once i' the university, you say?

POLONIUS. That did I, my lord; and was accounted a good actor.

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HAMLET. What did you enact?

POLONIUS. I did enact Julius Caesar: I was killed i' the Capitol; Brutus killed me.

HAMLET. It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf ther.e.
..

What more natural, therefore, than to conclude, both from the title-page of 1603 and the internal evidence of the play itself, that *Hamlet* was acted in the presence of the scholars both of the Isis and the Cam? It would be easy, starting from such a basis, to go further, and to think of the play as being performed before the Vice-Chancellor, or some Head of a College, who, like the Prince of Denmark, would give orders for the players to be well bestowed. Certainly the impression that *Hamlet* received some special measure of academic favour is widely spread.

It is now possible, by means of new documentary evidence, to show that all this is the 'baseless fabric of a vision/ and to prove that, though *Hamlet* was doubtless acted in the towns of Oxford and Cambridge during the reign of Elizabeth, the performance must have taken place, at any rate in Oxford, in defiance of the University authorities.

In the later sixteenth century both the defenders of the University stage like William Gager, of Christ Church, and its assailants like John Rainolds, of Queen's College, were united in strong opposition to the professional players. Soon after their correspondence on the subject at Oxford, the Cambridge authorities, in July, 1593, petitioned the Privy Council to renew an edict of 1575 prohibiting 'any open shewes ... wherein any manner of unlawful games shal be exercised' within Cambridge or five miles round. Accordingly, on July 29, the Council ordained 'that no plaies or interludes of common plaiers be

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used or sette forth' either in Cambridge or Oxford or within five miles of either of the University towns.

Oxford Convocation had already, in July, 1584, in consequence of representations from the Earl of Leicester, the Chancellor, forbidden 'Common Stage Players' to act 'within the precincts of the Universitye.' But the players had the city authorities on their side, and in spite of the thunders of Convocation and even of the Privy Council itself, the travelling companies continued their visits to the town, though they were not permitted after February 17, 1579-80, to perform in the municipal buildings. The minutes of the Oxford City Council for that date contain the following entry:

Hit ys inacted and agreed at this Counsaile that no Mayor of this Cytie or his Deputie from henceforth shall geve leave to any players to play within the Guilde Hall or the Lower hall, or in the Guilde hall courte without consent of the Counsell of this Cytie first hadd vppon payne of forfeiture of Tenne poundes for the w^{ch} hit shalbe lawfull for the Bayliffes to enter into his howsse and distreyne and the same to kepe vntyll the said some of Tenne poundes be fullie payed, eight poundes to the vse of this Cytie, and fortie shillinges to the vse of the said Bailiffes for the tyme being.

There is only one instance recorded of this prohibition being relaxed. In the minutes of the Council for May 11, 1586, this entry occurs:

Hit is agreed at this Counsell that the right honourable the Earle of Essex men shall playe onlie at this tyme in the Guylde hall courte at this Cytie, notwithstandinge an acte heretofore made to the contrarie the xvijth of februarie in the xxijnd yeare of the queenes maiesties Raigne that now ys. And that the same acte shalbe dispensed wth hall onlie for

Expensa Extraordinaria

Solut Discretionibus Conuictis Leicester p[ro]p[ri]is suis ludis sine maiore aduocatus multis diebus distans	xx ^o
Solut Discretionibus Honoratiss[im]i D[omi]ni Howard	xx ^o
Solut pro v[er]bo Registro quo p[re]s[en]tibus o[mn]ia ad p[ro]uinciam p[re]sentia	xx ^o
Solut pro alio libro continente o[mn]ia ad officium D[omi]ni p[ro]uinciam p[re]sentia & q[uod] ligamentis eiusd[em] libri ad p[re]sentia	xx ^o
Solut pro expensis h[ab]itis ad m[an]u[m] p[re]sentia Sigilla magna p[re]sentia & expensis	xx ^o
p[ro]uinciam p[re]sentia affixis	xx ^o
Solut pro libro p[re]sentia tam de officio D[omi]ni p[ro]uinciam qu[am] de d[omi]ni p[ro]uinciam m[ag]is p[re]sentia	xx ^o
Solut famulis D[omi]ni p[ro]uinciam h[ab]itis ad p[re]sentia p[re]sentia p[re]sentia ad p[ro]uinciam p[re]sentia	xx ^o
Solut p[ro]p[ri]is expensis pro p[re]sentia p[re]sentia ad p[ro]uinciam p[re]sentia p[re]sentia p[re]sentia	xx ^o
Solut pro libro p[re]sentia & q[uod] libro p[ro]uinciam p[re]sentia p[re]sentia p[re]sentia p[re]sentia	xx ^o
p[re]sentia p[re]sentia p[re]sentia p[re]sentia	xx ^o
Solut p[re]sentia p[re]sentia p[re]sentia p[re]sentia p[re]sentia p[re]sentia	xx ^o
h[ab]itis p[re]sentia p[re]sentia p[re]sentia p[re]sentia p[re]sentia p[re]sentia	xx ^o

Extract from the accounts of the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford, 1587-8, including payments to the Earl of Leicester's and Lord Charles Howard's (the Lord Admiral's) players to depart with their plays from the University.

[To face page 17]

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this tyme and afterwarde to be and remayne in his former strengthe and vertue.

The Earl of Essex, though at this time only about twenty, was already a royal favourite, but one wonders why the Ox/prd councillors granted a privilege to his players which was not extended to those of his stepfather, Lord Leicester, or other great personages.

The University authorities, unable to keep the travelling companies out of Oxford, fell back upon the policy of paying them to go away. This is made clear by a number of entries in the Vice-Chancellor's accounts in the University archives. These entries begin in 1587-8, and there is irony in the fact that the first payment is to the actors of the Earl of Leicester himself. It runs as follows:

1587-8.

Solut[um] Histrionibus Comit[is] Lecestriae cum suis ludis sine maiore Academiae molestia discedant. . . . xx.

[Paid to the actors of the Earl of Leicester to depart with their plays without further troubling the University. xx shillings.]

This visit of the Earl of Leicester's players to Oxford was, as will be shown below, on or about December 11, 1587. The company had visited Stratford earlier in the same year, and Shakespeare's departure from his native town, which must have taken place about this period, has often been supposed -to be connected with their visit. If he was with them in December at Oxford, his first experience of the University was to be paid by it to go away!

In the same year a payment was made 'Histrionibus Honoratissimi Domini Howard,' i.e., to the servants of Lord Charles Howard, who had been Lord High Admiral since July 4, 1585, and whose company was, therefore, known as the Admiral's players. The payment was

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doubtless to induce them to go away, though the purpose in this case is not stated, as it would be inferred from the entry being immediately below the similar payment' to Leicester's players.¹

Unequivocal evidence of the antagonism of the academic authorities towards professional actors is supplied by an item in the Vice-Chancellor's accounts for 1588-9, when a company received payment 'ne ludos inhonestos exercerent infra Vniuersitatem.' In 1589-90 the Queen's players were given 20 shillings 'vt sine molestia ab Academia discederent.' In 1590-1, when Dr Richard Eedes, Dean of Christ Church, and author of an academic play, *Caesar Interfectus*, was Vice-Chancellor, a similar payment was made to actors to depart 'sine perturbatione et strepitu.' Much the same formula is used in 1591-2, when 10 shillings was given⁴ 'histrionibus quibusdam,' in 1592-3, when 20 shillings was paid to 'diversorum nobilium histrionibus,' and in 1594-5, when both the Queen's players and Lord Morley's were bribed to go away. In 1595-6 the Queen's players were again paid 'vt abstinerent a publica actione.' In 1596-7 certain actors were paid 20 shillings to go away 'sine strepitu,' and in 1598-9 for the same purpose 25 shillings was given 'histrionibus Regiis et aliis.'

In 1603-4 the unusually large sum of 40 shillings was paid to the actors of the Queen to go away 'sine strepitu.' But as this was after the death of Elizabeth, the Queen was Anne of Denmark, wife of James I, who had taken into her service the Earl of Worcester's players.

This long succession of payments under different Vice-Chancellors proves that it was the settled policy of the University at this period to 'buy off' the travelling companies. Hence it follows that neither *Hamlet* nor any other Shakespearean play can have been acted at Oxford during

¹ See the facsimile of these payments, facing page 17.

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Elizabeth's reign with the consent of the academic authorities, much less under their auspices. And by the Statute of 1584 if any Master, Bachelor, or Scholar above the age of eighteen ventured to attend such a performance he did so at the risk of imprisonment, while younger students were liable to 'open punishment' in St Mary's Church. Thus, when the 1603 quarto speaks of *Hamlet* having been acted in the two Universities, we must interpret the words to mean nothing more than in the two University towns.

As the play must, therefore, have been performed under civic and not academic patronage, it was necessary to ascertain whether the municipal records would yield any further information. Extracts from the accounts of the town of Cambridge for this period had been published in Cooper's *Annals of Cambridge* and in Volume in of the Reports of the Historical MSS. Commission, but no extracts from the Oxford city accounts between 1584 and 1604 had hitherto been printed in the present connection.¹ They have been found, on examination, to record some two dozen visits of companies of actors or musicians, which had previously been unknown, and which are here given in full:

- 1584-5 f' the Erle of Oxfordes musytions ... vi^s viij¹.
- 1585-6 pd to the Queenes maiesties players ... x^s.
to the Erie of Leicester[s] musisions . .. vi^s viii¹.
- 1586-7 to Rowland Barber at M^r Mayo's request to geve
the Lord Admyrall's players . .. xx^s.
- 1587-8 to M^r Mayo^r the xith of december to geve to the
Earle of Leicesters players . .. vj^s viij¹.
- 1588-9 geven to the queenes ma^{cs} players ... x⁸.

¹Turner's *Selections from the Records of the City of Oxford*, which includes entries of payments to theatrical companies, ends in 1583. Halliwell-Phillips, in his *Stiffs of Shakespeare's Company of Actors to the Provincial Cities*, gives no entry from the Oxford accounts before 1604. Mr J. Tucker Murray, in his valuable work, *English Dramatic Companies, 1558-1642* (1910), merely draws upon Turner and Halliwell-Phillips so far as Oxford is concerned,

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- 1589-90 to the queenes players ... x⁸.
to my lord Admyralls men ... vi⁸ viii^d.
1590-1 geven to the queenes players ... xiii⁸ iv^d.
geven to the lord Admyralls players ... x^s.
1592-3 geven to the queenes players 25 ffebruar. x⁸.
geven to the Lord Stranges players the vi^{tn} of
October ... vi^s viii^d.
1594-5 geven to the L. Morleys players .., vi^s viii¹.
geven to the L. Admiralls players .., x⁸.
geven to the queenes players ... xx\
1595-6 geven to the Lord Admiralls players ... x\
geven to the earle of Darbies players ... xx⁸.
geven to the earle of Pembrookes players ... x^s,
1596-7 geven to one of the Earle of Essex players... vi^s viii¹
geven to the queenes players ... x^s.
geven to the queenes players ... x
1598-9 paid to the queenes mai^{ties} plaiers . . . x
1599-1600 to Baldwyn Hedges to geve the players ... x^s.
1600-1 to three companies of players ... xxx^s.

It will be seen that from these entries in the Oxford City Chamberlains' accounts we can recover the names of a number of the companies that were paid by the Vice-Chancellor to go away without troubling the University. Lord Leicester's players appear in 1587-8 in both the academic and the civic accounts, but it is from the latter that we get the date of their visit, December 1^T, 1587. The Earl died on September 4, 1588, and some of his principal actors then joined the company of Ferdinando Stanley, Lord Strange, whose players were paid by the City of Oxford 6s. *SJ.* on October 6, 1593,¹ and also doubtless had a share of the 20 shillings paid by the University in the same

¹ Possibly October 6, 1592, but as the entry follows that to the Queen's players on February 25 [i 593"] it seems to refer to the following, not the preceding, October. The City Chamberlains went out of office at Michaelmas (September 29), but the accounts were not audited till November, and in the 1592-3 accounts of the Keykeepers, who had a similar term of office, there is an entry as late as November 13, 1593. Lord Strange had become Earl of Derby on September 25, 1593, but his company would not be known at once by his new title.

Item for first lotten shute with bird and
 planked shute for sport the appearance. } xij^s viij^d
 Item to be payed to Northgate hundred
 for m^e mayors and forty of his company
 for their dinner at the shute the xxijth } x^s
 of October.
 Item to be payed and shute of the
 manors on the hundred for beading wine. } ij^s ob
 Item to be paid for make the fire to be. } xij^s
 Item given to the waste. } ob
 Item given to the shute of the shute. } ob
 Item for wine and sugar for him to be. } ob
 Item to be paid to the shute of the shute. } ob
 Item for the offering to be. } ob
 Item given to the shute of the shute. } ob
 Item given to the shute of the shute. } ob
 Item given to the shute of the shute. } ob

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year to 'diversorum nobilium histriones' to go away quietly. Soon after the death of their patron in April, 1594, they entered the service of Lord Hunsdon, the Lord Chamberlain, and under him, and afterwards his son, they were knp.wn except for a brief period as the Lord Chamberlain's servants, till the death of Elizabeth, when they became the King's men. As Shakespeare was certainly a member of this company in December, 1594, when he acted before the Queen on the 26th and 28th with Kempe and Burbage, and as he probably had been connected with it under its different patrons from the time that he left Stratford, it is of great importance to notice that neither in the City nor in the University accounts is it mentioned during Elizabeth's reign after October 6, 1593. This Oxford visit had hitherto been unknown, but from other sources we have been aware that Lord Strange's men included in their tour in 1593 Chelmsford, Bristol, Shrewsbury, Coventry and Leicester, and that acting with them was Edward Alleyn, the leading member of the Lord Admiral's company. This company, it will be noticed, visited Oxford on its own account six times between 1586-7 and 1595-6.¹ Even more frequent were the visits of the Queen's players, though we cannot be certain that all the entries relate to the company formed by Elizabeth in 1583. Between 1585-6 and 1598-9 they are mentioned nine times in the civic and four times in the academic accounts; in 1589-90, 1594-5 and 1598-9 they occur in both. A comparison of the two sets of accounts shows that the City Chamberlains do not record the advent of every travelling company. Nevertheless, we are indebted to them for a series of important entries which form a valuable contribution to the history of the Elizabethan theatre.

¹ The visit in 1587-8 is only mentioned in the academic accounts.

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But there is one tantalizing omission in the information that they give us. Though in previous years they specify the particular company to which payment is made, they fail to do so in 1599-1600 and 1600-1. Now it is in 1601 that Shakespeare's *Hamlet* is generally supposed to have been written and acted for the first time. The play was entered for publication in the Stationers' register in 1602, and the quarto editions published in 1603 and 1604. Contain, as is well-known, allusions which have been generally interpreted to refer to events in 1601. These allusions occur in Act n, Scene ii, where Hamlet is told that the tragedians of the city are on their way to Elsinore. In the first quarto the passage runs:

HAM. How comes it that they trauell? Do they grow restie?

GIL. No, my lord, their reputation holds as it was wont.

HAM. How then?

GIL. Yfaith, my lord, noueltie carries it away,
For the principal! publike audience that
Came to them, are turned to private plays
And to the humour of children.

In the second quarto the following is substituted:

HAM. How chances it they trauaile? their residence both in
reputation, and profit was better both wayes.

Ros. I think their inhibition comes by means of the late
innouasion.

HAM. Doe they hold the same estimation they did when I
was in the City; are they so followed?

Ros. No indeede are they not.¹

There is no doubt that Shakespeare is here referring to the enforced travelling of his own company, for which two

¹ The first folio (1623) repeats this passage from the second quarto, and largely amplifies the first quarto's allusion to the children, who are termed 'an aerie of children, little eyases that cry out on the top of question, and are most tyrannically clapped for't.' As this passage may have been 'written up' between 1604 and 1623 I refer here only to the quarto texts.

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reasons are given, the competition of children in 'private playes,' and an inhibition resulting from an innovation. The children are generally supposed to be 'the Children of the Chapel/ who were installed at the Blackfriars Theatre from -1597, and who in 1600 and 1601 were acting Ben Jonson's comical satires ridiculing Dekker and Marston. The 'inhibition' and 'innouasion' have been variously explained, but always in relation to the same period.¹

But the weak point in all these theories is that not a shred of documentary evidence has ever been found to show that the Lord Chamberlain's men did 'travel' in 1601. They may, of course, be included in the 'three companies of players' mentioned in the Oxford city account books for 1600-1, but, if so, we should have expected to find some trace of them in that year in the accounts of such towns as Coventry, Bath and Bristol, which they visited on other provincial tours. But no such entries have been found anywhere, even by Mr Tucker Murray in his researches, which have added so much to our knowledge

¹ We have hitherto missed, in my opinion, the key to the true meaning of 'innouasion' in the above passage. All commentators and biographers, as far as I am aware, though they explain the allusion in very different ways, have been agreed in giving 'innouasion' its modern meaning of 'novelty.' But in the only two other places where Shakespeare used the word, it means insurrection, tumult, commotion. In *Henry IV*, v, I, 76-80, the King tells Worcester that his defence of Percy's rebellion is intended to please the eye

'Of fickle changelings and pool discontents,
Which gape and rub the elbow at the news
Of hurlyburly innovation:
And never yet did insurrection want
Such water-colours to impaint his cause.'

In *Othello*, II, iii, 40-2, Cassio, as his head begins to spin, cries to Iago:

*I have drunk but one cup to-night, and that was craftily qualified too, and behold what innovation it makes here.'

The word must have the same interpretation in *Hamlet* as in the other two plays. A definite allusion, which an audience would understand, to a recent riot or insurrection, is much more natural than a reference to an unspecified 'innouasion' in the modern sense. We can thus demolish at a stroke the many theories built up on a misunderstanding of the word, though the question still remains open at what date the 'innouasion' which led to the 'inhibition' occurred.

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of the Elizabethan provincial stage. It is true that Laurence Fletcher, afterwards one of the King's men, is recorded as acting at Aberdeen in 1601, but he was not then a member of Shakespeare's company, which he joined after it came under the patronage of James I in 1603-. TWO other members of the company, Burbage and Kempe, are introduced into the Cambridge play, *The Return from Parnassus*, acted at St John's College during the Christmas festivities of 1602. Hence it was concluded that they must recently have visited the university town. But the scene in which they appear is not, as has been wrongly supposed, laid at Cambridge, and the St John's dramatist, who shows a wide knowledge of the literature and the stage of his day, may well have seen them performing in London.

As the stage-historians Cunningham and Chalmers did not mention any performances at Court during the Christmas of 1601-2, F. G. Fleay thought that no plays were acted then because actors were out of favour owing to Shakespeare's company having acted *Richard II* in connection with the conspiracy of Essex against the Queen. He argued further with great plausibility that this was the reason why the company had to travel in 1601. But fresh evidence from a formerly neglected source has cut away the basis on which his theory rested. Mr E. K. Chambers has shown (*Modern Language Review*, October, 1906) from payments recorded in the *Declared Accounts of the Treasurer of the Chamber* that nine plays were acted before Elizabeth during Christmas, 1601-2, and that three of these, on December 26, 27, and January I, were by the Lord Chamberlain's men. If, therefore, they went on tour in 1601, it must be proved by evidence different from that hitherto brought forward.

Moreover, the new documents published in 1912 by

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Professor Feuillerat and Professor C. W. Wallace from the Loseley MSS. show that the men's companies were faced by the competition of children long before the close of the sixteenth century. These documents prove that the dissolved monastery of the Black Friars was used as a theatre for performances by boys twenty years before Burbage leased it for that purpose to Henry Evans in 1597. Under the tenancy successively of Richard Farrant, Master of the Children of Windsor, William Hunnis, Master of the Children of the Chapel Royal, and Lord Oxford (whose boys were under the management of John Lyly), "little eyases" acted there from 1577 to 1585, producing *inter alia* Lyly's *Campaspe* and *Sapho and Phao*.

Such performances are, of course, too early to have inspired the passage in the first quarto of *Hamlet*, but with this remarkable proof of our imperfect knowledge of the history of the boy companies we should be cautious in assuming that Shakespeare is necessarily referring to the performances of the Children of the Chapel at Blackfriars in 1601.

Taking all these considerations together, I would suggest that until evidence can be produced to prove that the Lord Chamberlain's company travelled in 1601, and that its tour included Oxford and Cambridge, the question of the date of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* in its earlier form be reopened. It has been known from the Cambridge accounts that Lord Strange's men were there in 1591-2, and the Lord Chamberlain's men in 1594-5. We now know further that (unless the entry refers to 1592) Lord Strange's men "were at Oxford in October, 1593. Why should not *Hamlet* as it appears in the first quarto, have been written between 1592 and 1594? When all allowances have been made for imperfections in the text of this quarto, it pre-

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sents a crude version of the tragic masterpiece contained in the second quarto. The most reasonable explanation is that the first quarto represents Shakespeare's earlier revision of the semi-Senecan play on Hamlet, probably by Thomas Kyd, mentioned by Nash in 1589. It is a version far more characteristic of the dramatist's immature style of 1592-4 than of his consummate art in 1600-2.

It has already been mentioned that on their tour of 1593 Lord Strange's men were accompanied by Edward Alleyn, of the Lord Admiral's Company. After their return to London the two companies performed together from June 3 to 13, 1594, at Newington Butts. When we find from Henslowe's Diary that one of the seven pieces which they performed together was *Hamlet*, acted, not as a new play, on June 9, there is a strong presumption that it had been already staged at Oxford and elsewhere in the previous year. And till proof is forthcoming of a visit of Shakespeare's company to Oxford between 1593 and 1601, its a reasonable hypothesis that this *Hamlet*, which is mentioned again by Lodge in 1596, was the first quarto version, and not (as is the accepted view) the pre-Shakespearean play.

There is, of course, one serious obstacle to my suggestion of an earlier date than 1601. Francis Meres does not include *Hamlet* among the twelve plays which he mentions in 1598 in proof of Shakespeare's excellence 'in both kinds for the stage.' But he omits *King Henry VI*, where Shakespeare was also working on older material, and with his artificial balance of six comedies and six tragedies his list is not necessarily exhaustive. Moreover, there is strong reason for believing that in or shortly after the year in which Meres published his *Wifs Treasury*, Shakespeare's *Hamlet* was mentioned by a more famous Cambridge scholar. The recent re-discovery of Gabriel Harvey's copy

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of Speght's edition of Chaucer with his autograph *Marginalid* enables us to test, in relation to its full context, a remarkable piece of evidence bearing on the date of the play, hitherto only known to us incidentally through the allusions of Steevens, Bishop Percy and Malone.

Speght's 'Chaucer' appeared in 1598, and Harvey bought a copy in the same year, for he wrote his name and the date on the title-page and after the *Finis* on the last page. According to his custom he inscribed manuscript notes in the volume. One of these, on p. 394 (*verso*), deals with contemporary writers and their repute. It includes this statement:

The younger sort takes much delight in Shakespeares *Venus*[^] & *Adonis*: but his *Lucrece*, & his tragedie of *Hamlet, Prince of Denmarke*, have it in them, to please the wiser sort.

The note may not have been written in 1598, but the more closely it is examined, the weightier is the cumulative evidence that it was set down in or about this year.² Sufficient attention has not been given to the fact that the context suggests that Harvey is alluding to a printed version of the tragedy. If so, the inference would be that there was an even earlier edition than the extant first quarto, of which all trace has disappeared.

But he may have been referring only to the impression made on 'the wiser sort' by performances of the play. In any case his mention of it, presumably in 1598, supports my suggestion, based on an examination of the city archives, that it may have been in 1593, and not in 1601,

¹ The account of the re-discovery of the book, which passed in the eighteenth century into the collection of Bishop Percy, and is now owned by his great-grand-daughter, is given by Prof. G. C. Moore Smith in the Preface to his edition of *Gabriel Harvey's Marginalia* (1913). He prints Harvey's note, containing the reference to *Hamlet* on pp. 232-3, with a photographic facsimile.

² For the discussion of the evidence see Appendix I.

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that Shakespeare's company visited Oxford with *Hamlet* amongst their stock of plays.

Independent support has also been given to the theory from the bibliographical side. Messrs A. W. Pollard and J. Dover Wilson, writing about the four 'bad quartos' of *Romeo and Juliet*¹ *Henry V*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and *Hamlet*, have advanced the view that these pirated editions 'are primarily based on the abridgments which were hastily made' for the tour on which the company started in May, 1593, 'the longest provincial tour it ever took.' But whether in 1593 or 1601 it was by the good will of the Mayor and not of the Vice-Chancellor that *Hamlet* appeared on an Oxford stage.

After the accession of James I the tone of the Oxford City Council became increasingly Puritan, but during more than half his reign it continued to reward the travelling companies, the chief of which now appeared under new patrons. The Lord Chamberlain's men, the Earl of Worcester's men and the Lord Admiral's men became respectively the servants of the King, the Queen and Henry Prince of Wales. The visits of the King's players have been mentioned by J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps in his monograph, *Visits of Shakespeare's Company of Actors to the Provincial Cities*, but those of the other companies have hitherto been unknown.

The first theatrical entry in the new reign in the Oxford municipal accounts (which, as already mentioned, run from Michaelmas to Michaelmas, and were audited in November) is for the year 1603-4:

To Mr Nicolls [the City mace-bearer and Mayor's sergeant] for the Kinges players. . . . xx⁸.

The date is not given, but as the item occurs between pay-

¹ See *The Times Literary Supplement*, January 9, 1919.

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ments on May 7 and June 16, it probably relates to a performance in the early summer of 1604',

During the year beginning October, 1605, ^{as} many as four payments were made to travelling companies:

To y^o Kinges players, y^o ixth day of October, 1605. . . x^s.

To y^c Earle of Hartfordes players y^e ixth day of July [1606] by M^r Mayors appoyntment.... x^s.

To y^d Princes servauntes, the xvijth day of July [1606].
... xx^s.

To ye Kinges players.. .. xx^s.

In these cases the exact date is recorded, except in that of the second visit of the King's company, which, however, must have taken place about the end of July, 1606, for the payment is entered after one on July 28, and is almost immediately followed by another on July 31.

The entry concerning the Earl of Hertford's players is particularly interesting, as it is an addition to our scanty knowledge of the history of this company, which is first heard of in 1582, acted before Queen Elizabeth on Twelfth Night, 1592, and is mentioned about a dozen times in the accounts of various provincial towns. The latest reference to it hitherto known was in the Marlborough accounts for June 2, 1606; the Oxford entry, which evidently relates to the same tour, carries on its record six weeks later.

The entry of the payment to Prince Henry's servants is also noticeable, as it was ten years since this company, under its earlier title, the Lord Admiral's Players, had been mentioned by name in the Oxford accounts.

¹ Mr Tucker Mini ay, who had not seen the original entiy, is therelo.c mistaken in his view that 'the visit to Oxford was probably before April,' because 'the company did not reopen in London after the IMngue till about April, 1604,' and 'would hundry It leave London again in Mayv or June.' - *English Dramatic Companies*, II, 378.

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In 1606-7 the exact dates of two visits by companies are again recorded:

Given by M^r Mayor, the fourteenth of August [1607] to the Queenes players.... xx^s.

Given to the Kinges players, the vii^{fch} day of September xx⁸.

The Queen's players here mentioned were either the Earl of Worcester's men under their new title, or a second company under the patronage of Queen Anne, which was formed early in 1605, and which acted mainly or entirely in the provinces. Later visits to Oxford of the King's, Queen's or Prince's men are recorded in the accounts as follow:

1607-8, given to the Queenes players by the appoyntment of M^r Mayor.... x^s.

1609-10, paid to [M^r Mayor] for the Kinges players. ... x⁸.

1612-3, paid to M^r Nicolls for the Kinges players, given by Mr Mayor.... x.

1613-4, paid the 13th of Marche, to the Queenes players....xx⁸.

1614-5, delivered to M^r Mayor for the Princes players at Allhallowestyde..., xx³.

1616-7, paid to the Queenes players by M^r Mayors appoyntment.... xx^s.

to the Kinges players, by M^r Mayors appoyntment. ... x^s.

This last payment to Shakespeare's company was probably made in the latter part of July, 1617.¹ The visit of the company thus took place within little more than a year after the dramatist's death, and six months after William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, one of the incomparable pair

¹ As the visit took place after the dramatist's death, it was not mentioned by Halliwell-Phillips, and had not hitherto been known.

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of brethren to whom the first folio was subsequently dedicated, had become Chancellor of the University. The entry is of peculiar interest, for with it apparently closes the long series of payments made by the Oxford City authorities from 1556-7 onwards to travelling players. I have searched the audited accounts for the following twenty-five years, up to the outbreak of the Civil War, and for several years after the Restoration, without coming across a single item of expenditure on theatrical entertainments. If companies visited Oxford during this period the city apparently ceased to reward them, though she did not pay them to go away. The University continued the latter practice to the close of James Fs reign. The Vice-Chancellor's accounts record the following payments:

'1613-4, Solutum Histrionibus Dominae Reginae . . . xx^s.

1615-6, Solutum Histrionibus Domini Regis.... xl^s.

1616-7, Solutum Servientibus Illustrissimi Principis Caroli,
28 Aug. 1616 ... xxii^s.

1619-20, Solutum Histrionibus ut discederent ab Vni-
versitate ... xxii^s.

1621-22, Solutum Histrionibus Regiis vt discederent ab
Academia nee luderent... xx^s.

1623-4, Solutum quibusdam Histrionibus vt non luderent
...vV

It is curiously fitting that in the academic, as in the civic accounts, Shakespeare's company, the King's men, should be the last to be mentioned by name.

Thereafter for forty years the professional stage in Oxford, so far as we know, suffers an eclipse. Our information as to its revival comes not from the city archives, but from the pages of the prince of academic diarists, Anthony Wood.¹ In the last years of the Commonwealth, on July 6,

¹ My leferences are taken from Dr Andrew Clark's *The Life and Times of Anthony Wood*, in the Oxford Histotical Society publications.

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1657, July 17, 1658, and July 8, 1659, he mentions sums spent by him to see plays at *The Cross Inn*, *The Roebuck*, and *The Blew Anchor* respectively. It will be noticed that all three performances were in July. When the touring companies began to visit Oxford, as the Puritan regime was drawing to a close, they did not come, as before, at different seasons, but appear to have confined themselves to the period of the 'Act.' This was the crowning ceremony of the academic year, including the conferment of Doctorates and Master of Arts degrees. It was held in July, and drew a large number of visitors, to whom the plays were a special attraction. Wood gives no particulars about the actors in 1657 and the two following years. It is possible that they were citizen amateurs, not professionals, for in his account of the performances by the Duke of York's players¹ at *The Kings Armes* in Holywell from July 3 to 13, 1661, he says that they 'acted on the stage in the yard: first, to spite the Presbyterians.' He apparently means that this was the first visit by professional players to Oxford after the downfall of the Puritans, and the performances were intended to annoy them. It must have been an additional scandal to them that women were included in the cast, among them Mrs Davenport, known as 'Roxalana' from her impersonation of that part in Davenant's *Siege of Rhodes*. Wood himself admits that this innovation had evil consequences; it 'made the schollersmad, run after them, take ill courses.'

Performances were given by the company in the morning and the afternoon, and ten plays were staged, of which several were acted more than once. They included Cooke's *Green's Tu Quoque* (thrice), Shirley's *The Young Admiral* (thrice), Rowley's *ALPs Lost by Lust* (twice), Brome's *The*

¹ Wood does not give the name of the company, but it can be identified by his reference to 'RoxiUna' [sic] as one of its membeis.

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City Wit (twice), Middleton's *A Mad World, My Masters*, Heywood's *Rape of Lucrece*, Daborne's *The Poor Man's Comfort*, Tatham's *The Rump*, and two anonymous plays, *The Milkmaids* (twice), and *The Spanish Lady; or. The Very Woman*.

We are duly grateful to Wood for preserving these details, but we cannot help wishing that the Oxford City Chamberlains had given us similar particulars when recording the visits of theatrical companies in the sixteenth and earlier seventeenth centuries. They could have solved the problem of the date of *Hamlet*. And I may here mention that the Chamberlains' accounts contain no payment in 16601 to a theatrical company, nor (so far as I have tested them) in the other years wherein Wood chronicles his attendance at plays. But though the municipal payment of actors may not have been revived after the Restoration, the city authorities in one important matter showed themselves even more indulgent to theatrical performances than in the latter half of Elizabeth's reign. It will be remembered that in February, 1579-80, it was enacted, under severe penalties, that no players should be allowed to act in the Guild Hall, or the Lower Hall, or the Guild Hall Court; and that only on one occasion, in May, 1586, was an exception made for the servants of the Earl of Essex. I have not been able to find in the Minutes of the Oxford City Council any evidence that the enactment was ever repealed; probably during the Civil War it was simply forgotten. In any case, after the Restoration the municipal buildings were used both for amateur and professional performances. On New Year's Day, and again on Twelfth Night, 1663, Wood spent 6d. to see Jonson's *'Folponey'* acted at the Town Hall by prentices and tradesmen. On July 13, 1664, he saw a play in the lower Guild

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Hall, and on the following day 'the dancing of the rope' in the Guild Hall. As July was the month in which travelling companies visited Oxford, these entertainments were probably given by professionals. This was certainly so five years later, at the time of the 'Very great and splendid Act' in honour of the formal dedication of the Sheldonian Theatre in July, 1669. The Duke of York's players from Lincoln's Inn Fields acted in the Guildhall yard, giving at their first performance on July 8, Etherege's *The Comical Revenge; or, Love in a Tub*. On this occasion Wood had to pay for his seat the abnormally high price of 2s. 6d., so that it is not wonderful that the players carried away with them the unprecedented sum of £1,500. The performances evidently stirred the academic world to the same feverish excitement as in 1661. 'Scholars pawn'd books, bedding, blankets—laughed at at London—but afterwards they grew wiser.'

Wood, however, was not so open-handed when it came to 'treating' the wife of his brother Kit, with whom he dined on June 26, 1673. 'Talking of players and praising them, shee asked mee to goe with her and give her a play: "if I had money I would, I must be forced to borrow of my brother," I told her.' It was probably the King's players that the diarist's sister-in-law was anxious to see. They acted at Oxford in 1673, including in their *repertoire* Jonson's *The Silent Woman*, for which Dryden wrote a special prologue and epilogue, spoken by the famous player Charles Hart. In 1674 they repeated their visit, and again Hart recited a prologue by Dryden. An epilogue from his pen seems to have been twice delivered by the actresses, Mrs Boutell and Mrs Marshall. It contained an elaborate compliment to the Vice-Chancellor, Dr Bathurst, President of Trinity, 'a name the learned with reverence know,' and

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grateful thanks for his 'patronage.' It is the first record that we have of favour shown to a travelling company by the official head of the University. Wood, as it happens, makes no reference to this visit.

Acting was not confined to the Guild Hall and the inns, for Wood mentions a performance of Settle's *Cambises*, *King of Persia*, on July 12, 1671, at the New Tennis Court. And he also records that on July 8, 1680, the day before the Encaenia, the King's players began to act in his brother Robert's tennis court. This explains the otherwise puzzling lines in Dryden's prologue to Lee's *Sophonisba*, which was one of the plays performed there:

Athens never knew your learned sport,
Of tossing poets in a tennis-court.

Other prologues by Dryden, addressed to the University, were apparently spoken at performances in Oxford by one of the London companies in 1681 and 1682.¹ Wood makes no mention of these performances, which doubtless took place at the 'Act' time. But he states that in 1684 there was 'a few company' at the Act, 'because no plays.' It looks as if they had been forbidden by the University authorities, for in July, 1686, he records a reversion to a more popular policy by the Vice-Chancellor then in office, who gave leave to 'all players and puppets to shew purposely to please the people.'

This is the last reference by Wood to acting at Oxford, though his diary continues to 1695. But a hitherto unpublished letter by one of his friends and contemporaries

¹ The last of these prologues ends with Dryden's famous avowal, whether sincere or not, of his preference for Oxford over Cambridge:

Oxford to him a dearer name shall be
Than his own mother-university.
Thebes did his given, unknowing youth engage,
He chooses Athens in his ripe age.

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shows that even at the end of the seventeenth century a Vice-Chancellor could not patronize a theatrical company without some academic scandal.

Arthur Charlett, Master of University College, writing to Thomas Tanner on May 11, 1698, says in a postscript (Tanner MS. 22, f. 54):

I am heartily sorry for y^c [Vice-chancellor] being just now told he has allowed [*i.e.*, approved] some strolling Players. If true, he is lost beyond recovery. ... I am much concerned, because in general he is a very fair, Friendly, candid Man, but these Infelicitys will on a sudden destroy his credit, especially since some very considerable Men are resenting some things very loudly agst Him: and all his Friends will desert him.

Five years later Betterton with his company from Lincoln's Inn Fields visited Oxford during Act time, and on July 5, 1703, performed in the tennis-court Congreve's *Live for Love*, with a prologue written for the occasion by Joseph Trapp, a young fellow of Wadham.¹ But with powerful sections of the University keeping up the traditional hostility to professional actors, and with the patronage of the City authorities withdrawn, is it wonderful that the theatre at Oxford in the eighteenth century sank into the lowest depths? Even as late as the 'sixties and 'seventies of the nineteenth century in the city visited by Shakespeare and his fellows playgoers were offered, as their normal fare, the ribaldry of a low-class music-hall, which bore the delusive name of 'The Victoria Theatre.' Never was there a deadlier piece of unintended irony than the letter of the American visitor who wrote from Stratford-on-Avon to Matthew Arnold, then Professor of

¹This prologue, with a retort by the rival Drury Lane Company, and a coarse account, 'in merry metre', of Betterton's 'Oxford Expedition' is printed in *The Players turn'd Academiaks* (1703).

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Poetry in the University: 'I shall leave these classic scenes to-morrow, as I am looking forward to seeing our great Shakespeare worthily acted in the theatre you scholars of Oxford have dedicated to your gracious Queen.'¹¹ The only time when such a visitor could have seen at rare intervals what he wished was during the Long Vacation, when 'the scholars of Oxford' were far away. In the summers of 1864 and 1865^{the} company to which young Henry Irving belonged paid short visits to Oxford, and he appeared in the roles of Hamlet, Iago and Macduff. Some twenty years later, when, at the height of his fame, he lectured before the University, he expressed his regret that these early visits had been in the Vacation. They had necessarily been so, for the University in term time still turned actors with contempt from her gates.

When I entered Balliol in the autumn of 1881, I received a copy of the *Statuta Universitatis Oxoniensis*, which under the title *De ludis prohibitis* included this section (p. 189):

Item quod intra Universitatem Oxoniensem aut ejus praecinctum, absque speciali venia Vice-Cancellarii, nee funambuli nec histriones (qui quaestus causa in scenam prodeunt) nee gladiatorum certamina sive spectacula permittantur; nee academici eisdem intersint. Histriones vero, funambuli et gladiatores contravenientes incarcerentur, et scholares siquid hujusmodi spectacula confluentes deprehensi fuerint, arbitrio Vice-cancellarii vel Procuratorum puniantur.

It was three hundred years since Convocation, during the Earl of Leicester's Chancellorship, had forbidden 'common stage players' to perform within the University

¹ This letter is quoted in *The Oxford Amateurs* by Alan Mackinnon (p. 4.1). Chapters II and III of this book contain an interesting account of the attempts made by undegraduates to revive *amateur* acting at Oxford between 1845 and 1880.

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precincts, but actors were still classed with rope-dancers and prize-fighters, and the attendance of 'scholares' at their performances, unless these had been specially licensed, was a penal offence.

But the stirring of the waters had begun. The year 1880 had been signalized by two events from which the modern dramatic revival at Oxford may be dated. The Philothespian Society was founded by the Hon. James Adderley, of Christ Church; and the performance of the *Agamemnon* in Greek at Balliol marked a return to the Renaissance practice of acting classical plays in College halls. The originators of the revival were two New College undergraduates, Mr (now Sir) Frank Benson and the Hon. W. N. Bruce, but it was Jowett, as Master of Balliol, who encouraged them, and gave them the necessary facilities. A further important point was gained when in the summer term of 1883 Jowett, now Vice-Chancellor of the University, authorized the performance by undergraduates of Shakespearean as well as Greek plays. In the following December *The Merchant of Venice* was produced, with a prologue by F. E. Weatherley:

Stage plays in Oxford:—there I go again!
Another muddle in my foolish brain.
We used to think (belief of strange vitality)
The statute books the standard of morality.
We swore—nay don't be frightened—to obey
Each statutory detail night and day,
Tobacco, taverns, marbles to eschew,
And don but garments of a subfusc hue.
To cut our hair, to wear no ruffled satin;
All this and more we swore to—and in Latin;
And vowed all plays to be the devil's snares
To catch the guileless student unawares.
But time has changed that notion like the rest.
This change at least is surely for the best.

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These sprightly verses are an amusing offspring of the statute quoted above. But if they are taken seriously they are a libel on Oxford. The University had not looked on 'all plays' as 'the devil's snares.' She had banned professional actors, 'qui quaestus causa in scenam prodeunt,' but for the better part of two centuries she had encouraged the writing and performing of plays by her own *alumni*. In presenting a vernacular comedy the Victorian dons and undergraduates¹ were reverting to the practice of their predecessors under 'Eliza and our James.' But the performance was in two most important respects an innovation. For the first time (so far as I know) a play by Shakespeare was publicly acted by members of the University. And for the first time, by the permission of the Mayor, whose predecessors had rewarded Shakespeare's company on tour, the 'scholars' made use of the Town Hall as a theatre. Thus this academic performance of *The Merchant of Venice* within the precincts of the same municipal authority that had sanctioned the professional performance of *Hamlet* nearly three centuries before, symbolized the close of the historic feud between the University and the town concerning stage plays.²

The Philothespians were succeeded in 1884 by the Oxford University Dramatic Society, which revived the First Part of *King Henry IV* in the Lent term, 1885, and worked energetically to secure a permanent theatre in Oxford. This theatre was opened on February 13, 1886, with a performance of *Twelfth Night*. In the summer term of the same year Jowett invited Henry Irving to lecture before

¹ Among the caste were Mr Arthur Bourchier, Christ Chinch (Shylock), Mr W. L. Courtney, Fellow of New College (Bassamo), and Mr Alan Mackmnon, Trinity College (Gratiano). The ladies who, according to a stipulation made by the vice-Chancellor, acted the female parts, included Miss Margaret L. Woods (Jessica).

² I was present as an undergraduate on one of the five evenings (I forget which) from 4 to 8 December on which the play was performed. But I had then, like the majority of both actors and audience, no idea of the historical significance, in the light of earlier Oxford annals, of this academic theatrical production in the Town Hall.

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the University. The address given in the New Examination schools on June 26 was entitled 'English Actors: their Characteristics and their Methods. It dealt with Burbage, Betterton, Garrick, and Kean as *'the four* greatest champions, in their respective times, on the stage of Nature in contradistinction to Artificiality.'¹ In his prefatory remarks Irving alluded to the long-standing rift between the Universities and the professional stage:

I have not had the advantage—one that very few of the members of my profession in past, or even in present times have enjoyed—of a University education. The only *alma mater* I ever knew was the hard stage of a country theatre.

'In the course of my training, long before I had taken, what I may call, my degree in London, I came to act in your city. I have a very pleasant recollection of the time I passed here, though I am sorry to say that, owing to the regulation which forbade theatrical performances during term time, I saw Oxford only in vacation, which is rather like—to use the old illustration—seeing *Hamlet* with the part of Hamlet left out. There was then no other building available for dramatic representations than the Town Hall.

The Vice-Chancellor's speech at the close of the lecture may be taken as officially closing the ancient and unhappy feud. It contained a tribute to Irving himself and the stage of which he was the foremost living representative:

A great English actor lives in the best society, the society of Shakespeare and Goethe, and is a far better interpreter of them than a thousand commentators, for he thinks and feels with them, and studies them not out of a book only; they are his personal friends, and his highest ambition is to render back to the world as a living fire the thoughts which they long ago conceived. . . . The in-

¹ Hence, when the lecture was published in 1893 in a volume entitled *The Drama: Addresses by Henry Irving*, it was re-named 'Four Great Actors.'

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direct influence of the theatre is very great, and tends to permeate all classes of society, so that the condition of the stage is not a bad index or test of a nation's character. We in England are in part what we have been made by the plays of Shakespeare. Our literature, our manners, our religion, our taste have to a very great extent been affected by them. And those who, regardless of their own pecuniary loss or gain, have brought back Shakespeare to the English stage, who have restored his plays to their original form, who have quickened in the English people the love of his writings and the feelings of the greatness may be truly considered national benefactors.

Three hundred years ago, in 1587-8, an Elizabethan Vice-Chancellor had paid the theatrical company of which Shakespeare was possibly then, and certainly later, a member twenty shillings to go away with their plays without further troubling the University. Now a Victorian Vice-Chancellor was acclaiming the lineal successor of Burbage as a national benefactor, above all because he had 'brought back Shakespeare to the English stage.' So that if the Stratford actor and dramatist, like the Ghost of Hamlet the elder (a part probably played by him at Oxford), were to revisit the glimpses of the moon, he would find himself strangely welcome in the groves of Academe. With memories of the past thick upon him he would steal into the city, half fearful lest some new Marcellus might strike at him with his partisan. But where he had once, as a travelling player, to endure 'the insolence of office,' he would be greeted with reverent homage, and would be made free of the sanctuary of learning whose guardians had of old driven him and his professional comrades from their gates.

CHAPTER III

THREE HUNDRED YEARS OF SHAKESPEARE AT OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE

THE hostility of the authorities at Oxford and Cambridge to Shakespeare and his fellow-actors during his lifetime suggests an inquiry into the subsequent changes of the academic attitude towards the dramatist's work and reputation. Before tracing the main features of this curious and instructive story, something further may be said about Shakespeare's personal connexion with the two University towns.

Probably there was no place in England, after Stratford and London, so well-known to the dramatist as Oxford. It was the chief halting-place on one of the two high-roads between his birthplace and the Capital, and he must often have baited there on the professional visits already mentioned, or on private journeys to and fro. He would naturally put up at one or other of the local hostelries, and his intimacy with the family of John Davenant, the landlord of a tavern in Cornmarket Street, has been a well-established tradition from the time of Aubrey and Anthony Wood. They both call the tavern 'the Crowne,' but this name is of considerably later date than Davenant's tenancy. In a lease of 1613 it is called 'Tatleton's house'; in others of 1658 and 1663 the 'Salutation Tavern,' and not till 1675 the 'Crown Tavern.'¹ According to Mr Arthur Acheson it had been subleased to Davenant by William Hough in 1592 for a period of forty years; at that time it bore no specific name, but was regarded as an adjunct of the Crosse Inn, which it adjoined.²

Early in the same year John Davenant married Anne

¹⁴ Note on the Crown Tavern at Oxford,' by Mr E. T. Leeds in *A Catalogue of the Shakespeare Exhibition held in the Bodleian Library* (1916).

² Shakespeare and the Davenants': letters from Mr William Poel and Mr Arthur Acheson in *The Times Literary Supplement*, June 2 and July 28, 1921.

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Sackfielde, illegitimate daughter of William Bird, of Bristol. On her death before 1600 he married Jane Shepherd, of Durham, by whom he had four sons, of whom the second was the future Sir William Davenant, the poet and theatrical manager. Mr Acheson's recent discovery of these facts sets in a new light a theory he had previously put forth that John Davenant's wife was the heroine of the pseudonymous poem *Willobie his Avis*, first published in 1594. For if *Avisa* stands for Mistress Davenant, it is not (as had been suggested) Jane, the mother of Sir William, but this previously unknown first wife, Anne, whose paternal name was Bird. This would explain the allusion in *The Epistle to the Reader* to 'one A.D.,' who is proof against all temptation, and the statement that 'vertues birde' is the poet's theme. And the dating of the Epistle 'from my chamber in Oxford this first of October,' though the poem was published in London, would have a point, if Oxford was the scene of the episodes described.

It would not necessarily follow that 'W. S.' and 'H.W.' in canto 43 of *Willobie his Avis*, who are in turn enamoured of the dame, are William Shakespeare and Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton; still less that *Avisa* is the Dark Lady of the *Sonnets*. But Mr Acheson's researches and speculations have given a new orientation to the problem, and the fact remains that *Willobie his Avis*, purporting to come from Oxford, contains in a so-called *Hexameter to the Author* one of the earliest references to Shakespeare by name:

Yet Tarquyne pluckt his glistering grape,
And Shake-speare paints poor Lucrece rape.

Lucrece, thus mentioned in the year of its publication, was long to be a favourite with academic readers.

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But the chief importance, from our present point of view, of Shakespeare's intimacy with the Davenants is that through them, in spite of the taboo on professional players, he may have come into touch with University men and matters. For the Davenants were a link between 'town*' and 'gown.' John Davenant, who was Mayor of Oxford when he died in 1622, had migrated from London, where his family had long been connected with the Merchant Taylors' Company. He had been educated at the Merchant Taylors' School, had been apprenticed to Robert Kendrick in 1581, and became a Freeman of the Company in 1589. As a Merchant Taylor he had a special interest in St John's College, to the library of which he presented a MS. volume containing Richard Rolle of Hampole's *Prick of Conscience* and a Chronicle of London with lists of officials.¹ It was to the same College that he sent his eldest son, Robert, at the early age of fifteen. He matriculated on December II, 1618, having been elected a Merchant Taylor scholar on the previous St Barnabas' Day. He graduated in due course, and in July, 1623, was elected a travelling fellow of the College. It was of him that Aubrey wrote, early in 1680, though he afterwards scored out the lines in his MS., 'I have heard parson Robert say that Mr W. Shakespeare has given him a hundred kisses.' Another Oxford antiquary, Thomas Hearne, reported in 1709 the local tradition that Shakespeare was godfather to Robert's brother William, 'and gave him his name.' The boy was baptized at St Martin's Church, March 3, 1605-6, and (as Dr Hutton has pointed out)² Shakespeare might well have

¹ The volume is inscribed 'Ex dono Magistri Ioannis Davenet Oenopoli civitatie Oxon.' It is still in the St John's library, though a copy of Raleigh's *History of the World*, presented by Robert Davenant, has disappeared ('Shakespeare and Oxford,' by Dr W. H. Hutton in *A Catalogue of the Shakespeare Exhibition held in the Bodleian Library*, p. 83.)

¹⁴ 'Shakespeare and Oxford,' in *A Catalogue of the Shakespeare Exhibition held in the Bodleian Library*, p. 80.

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stood at the font. His company was on tour about this time, a visit being recorded to Marlborough after January 17, 1606, and to Oxford in July. It will be seen that Shakespeare had died before Robert Davenant entered St John's, but from the vintner himself, who evidently was a man of some culture, Shakespeare may have heard something of the affairs of the College, and especially of its dramatic activities. Davenant as a Merchant Taylor is not unlikely to have stood among the crowd outside the gate of St John's when three members of the College performed a device on August 27, 1605, in honour of the visit of James I to Oxford. As the King approached the north gate of the city they greeted him in turn 'quasi sibyllae':

1. Fatidicas olim famaest cecinisse Sorores
Imperium sine fine tuae, Rex Inclyte, stirpis.
Eanquonem agnuit generosa *Loquabria Thanum*
Nee tibi *Banquo*, tuis sed scepra nepotibus illae
Immortalibus immortalia vaticinatae:
In saltum, vt lateas, dum *Banquo* recedis ab Aula.
Tres eadem pariter canimus tibi fata tuisque,
Dum spectande tuis, e saltu accedis ad Vrbem.
Teq; salutamus: Salue, cui *Scotia* seruit.
2. *Anglia* cui, salue. 3. Cui seruit *Hibernia*, salue.
1. *Gallia* cui titulos, terras dant caetera, salue.
2. Quern diuisa prius, colit vna *Britannia*, salue.
3. Summe Monarcha *Britannice, Hibernice, Gallice*, salue.¹

Then the two saluted in turn Queen Anne and the Princes Henry and Charles.

Here the legend of the weird sisters foretelling to Banquo that he will not be a king but the ancestor of kings is put to semi-dramatic use, and James, in whose

¹ The lines, twenty-nine in number, are printed at the end of *fertutninus sive Annas Recurrent* (1607), acted by St John's men before King James on August 29, 1605. *Vertumnus* is by Matthew Gwynne, Fellow of St John's and Grrsh.im Professoi of Physic, whose initials are also appended to the twenty-nine lines.

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veins the blood of Banquo was supposed to run, is met by three 'Sibyls,' who give in turn an 'All-hail,'

What more natural than for the vintner to give an account of this performance to Shakespeare when he came with his company to Oxford in the following October, and for the dramatist thus to have his thoughts turned to the subject of *Macbeth*, which probably dates from the next year?¹ In any case Shakespeare's direct references to Oxford are meagre. The noble and prophetic tribute in *Henry VIII* to Wolsey's great foundation of Cardinal College, afterwards Christ Church,

though unfinished, yet so famous,
So excellent in art, and still so rising,
That Christendom shall ever speak his virtue,

is almost certainly from the pen of Fletcher, himself a Cambridge graduate. The creator of Hamlet, Brutus and Prospero must have divined much of the strength and the weakness of the academic attitude to life, but in his allusions to University education he seems curiously concerned with its expense. Thus in the conversation between the Gloucestershire justices in 2 *Henry IV*, III, ii, 10-3, Shallow says, 'I daresay my cousin William is become a good scholar; he is at Oxford still is he not?' and Silence answers, 'Indeed, sir, to my cost.' Silence has a fellow-sufferer in Vincentio, who complains (*Taming of the Shrew*, v, i, 69-71):

¹ This is as far, I think, as speculation can safely go. Dr Hutton suggests (op. cit. p. 85) that it is likely that Shakespeare stood among the crowd outside the gate of St John's with Davenant, and he further inquires whether the dramatist may not 'have been familiar with the College, dined in the hall, and sat with the fellows round the fire in the evenings.' It seems to me improbable that a professional actor should have been in Oxford during the King's visit, when the dramatic performances were entirely in the hands of the scholars. And considering the attitude of the University authorities, and of academic dramatists, towards professional players, it is hard to conceive of Shakespeare as a guest in a college hall.

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O, I am undone! I am undone! While I play the good husband at home my son and my servant spend all at the University.

Though it is nominally Padua to which Lucentio has come with Tranio as a 'nursery of arts,' yet a university which directs its scholars to 'Aristotle's checks' and to that part of philosophy,

that treats of happiness

By virtue specially to be achieved,

may well be identified with Oxford. And though no University could be eager to claim Polonius as an *alumnus*, Shakespeare knew Oxford so much better than Cambridge that he probably was thinking of College performances there in the Lord Chamberlain's reminiscences of how he enacted Julius Caesar.

Cambridge is never mentioned by name in Shakespeare's plays, though we know that his company visited it in 1591, 1594 and 1607, in spite of academic and government decrees to the contrary, and was welcomed by the civic authorities. There appears to be no record, as at Oxford, of payments made by the Vice-Chancellors to the players to take themselves off. But the hostile attitude of Cambridge scholars towards the touring companies found bitter utterance in the famous attacks in the St John's Parnassustrilogy (1598-1602) on Kempe and Burbage and Shakespeare himself.¹

Yet Kempe and two of his fellows in the first folio list of players were Cambridge graduates, while many of Shakespeare's dramatic predecessors and contemporaries—Marlowe, Greene and Nash, among others—had come from the same nursery of arts. This probably accounts for the

¹ See *The Return from Parnassus*, Part II, Iv, III, and *Urtfuetstty Dtamii in the Tudor Age*, by the present writer, pp. 343-5.

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curious fact that Shakespeare shows familiarity with certain distinctively Cambridge terms. Thus in *Timon of Athens* (Iv, iii, 253-6) Timon cries to Apemantus:

Hadst thou like us, from our first swath proceeded
The sweet degrees that this brief world affords ' .
Thy nature did commence in sufferance, time
Hath made thee hard in 't.

Here the misanthropist talks as if he had graduated on the banks of the Cam. 'From the earliest days to times comparatively recent a candidate for a degree at Cambridge was required to maintain a syllogistical dispute in the schools, which disputation was called "The Act." If he was successful and admitted to the full privileges of a graduate, he was said to "commence" in Arts or a Faculty, and the ceremony at which he was so admitted was, and is, called at Cambridge "the Commencement." If the candidate went to a higher degree he was said to proceed.'¹

And the terms come as aptly to the lips of the hedonist as of the misanthropist, for in Falstaff's praise of sack he declares that 'Learning is a mere hoard of gold till sack commences it and sets it in act and use' (2 *Henry IV*, Iv, iii, 24-6).² And even more peculiarly reminiscent of Cambridge is Lear's outburst to Regan:

'Tis not in thee . . . to scant my sizes.

'Size,' as defined by Minsheu, *Guide into Tonges* (1617), is a portion of bread and drink; it is a farthing which schollers in Cambridge have at the buttery.' To be 'scanted' of 'sizes' was a punishment for undergraduates, an indignity that might well stir Lear to a transport of rage.

¹ 'Shakespeare and Cambridge,' by the Master of Jesus College, in *The Book of Homage to Shakspere*.

² The Master of Jesus (op. cit.) and Sir John Sandys (in 'Education' in *Shakespeare's England*, i, 245); note also a similar connexion between 'commence' and 'act' in 2 *Henry IV*, Induction, I, 5, and 2 *Henry VI*, III, II, 118.

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There were severer penalties, as has been seen, than a scanting of 'sizes' for scholars who ventured to attend the performances of the travelling companies from London. Yet in spite of Vice-Chancellors and Proctors undergraduates, and even their seniors, must have sometimes stolen forth to see the shows of the Lord Chamberlain's or the Lord Admiral's men. Or they smuggled into college cloisters and rooms the quarto play-books that were turned out in such enticing form by the London printing presses. We need not include among them Francis Meres, Master of Arts in both Universities, for when in 1598 he published his *Palladis Tamia*, with its famous list of Shakespeare's published plays, and the eulogy on the dramatist as 'mellifluous and hony-tongued Shakespeare,' Meres was living in London. But another Cambridge Master of Arts, William Covell, a Fellow of Queen's College, in his *Polimanteia*, referred, as early as 1595, to the 'all praiseworthy Lucrecia' of 'sweet Shakespeare.' The writer of the *Parnassus* trilogy, performed at St John's College, was familiar not only with the two poems, '*Adon's love and Lucrece rape*',¹ but with *Richard III* and *Romeo and Juliet*, both of which were first printed in 1597. The anonymous author of *Wily Beguiled* (published in 1606), which is almost certainly a Cambridge play, quoted freely from *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Merchant of Venice*, of which the earliest edition dates from 1600. If the author of *Lingua*, a Trinity College play published in 1607, knew *Macbeth*? he must have seen it on the stage, as it was first published in the folio of 1623. Milton was still in residence at Christ's College when in 1630 he penned the lines on 'my Shakespeare,' the 'dear son of memory, great heir of fame,'

¹ For a discussion of his attitude towards them, see *University Drama in the Tudor Age*, pp. 340-1.

² See *The Modern Language Review*, iv, 517.

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afterwards prefixed to the second folio of 1632. But Milton was so much of a rebel against orthodox academic views that he cannot be taken as typical of contemporary Cambridge taste. A representative of it may be found in Thomas Randolph, Fellow of Trinity, whose play, *The Jealous Lovers*, was acted with great acceptance by members of the College during the royal visit of March, 1632. The play contains an episode inspired by the gravediggers' scene in *Hamlet*, as well as apparent echoes of lines in *Romeo and Juliet* and *Richard III*. But in his *Hey for Honesty*,¹ an adaptation of the *Plutus* of Aristophanes, Randolph coupled Shakespeare with Henry VIII's famous Fool, as both equally bent on money-making. One of the characters cries to the God of wealth:

Did not *Will Summers* break his wind for thee,
And *Shakespeare* therefore writ his comedy?

One of Randolph's chief Cambridge admirers and imitators, Henry Tubbe, who was in residence at St John's from about 1635 to 1642, does not mention Shakespeare, but plagiarizes in extraordinary fashion from *Hamlet*. In his poem, *The Roiall Martyr* (written, of course, after his Cambridge days) he applies to Charles I, with variations and additions, the phrases used by Hamlet to his father:

A graceful Aspect; a Brow smoothed with Love;
The Curls of *Venus* with the Front of *Jove*;
An Eye like *Mars* to threaten and command
More than the Burnish'd Scepter in his Hand:
A Standing like the Herald *Mercurie*;
A Gesture humbly proud, and lowly high;
A Mountaine rooted deepe, that kiss'd the skie;
A Combination and Formalitie
Of reall Features twisted in a string
Of rich ingredients, fit to make a King:

¹ Published posthumously in 1657.

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A manly mettall'd Purenesse that did mount
And towre like Hills of Gold above account:
Where all the noble Gods did seem to set
Their Vertue's Scales to render Him compleat:
To give assurance to the World of One
A Caesar to be paralell'd by None.

At Oxford the witty author of *Narcissus*, a Twelfth Night merriment staged at St John's in 1602-3, was familiar with 2 *Henry /v* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Nicholas Richardson, a Fellow of Magdalen, was probably the first person to use Shakespeare for pulpit purposes. In sermons preached at St Mary's Church in 1620 and 1621 he quoted the passage in *Romeo and Juliet*, II, ii, 176-81, beginning:

'Tis almost morning. I would have thee gone,
And yet no further than a wanton's bird:

Applying it to God's love to His saints either hurt with sin or adversity, never forsaking them.' Richardson must have possessed or made use of a copy of one of the quarto editions of the play.

When Richard Burton of Christ Church quoted from memory the final couplet of the same play in the second edition of *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, published at the Oxford University Press in 1624, his version,

Who euer heard a Story of more woe.
Then that of *Iuliet* and her *Romeo* ¹

is nearer to the first quarto (1597),

For nere was heard a Storie of more woe
Than this of *Iuliet* and her *Romeo*

than to the second quarto or the folio.

For neuer was a Storie of more Wo,
Then this of *Iuliet*, and her *Romeo*.

¹ *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1624), Part 3, sec. 2, Memh. 4, p. 427. Neither this nor any of Burton's other Shakespearean quotations is found in the first edition (1621).

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In the same edition of *The Anatomy* he quotes from Shakespeare's two narrative poems. In his prefatory address as 'Democritus Junior' to the Reader (p. 39) he illustrates that 'as the Princes are, so are the people' with the couplet from *Lucrece* (ll. 615-6):

For Princes are the glasse, the schoole, the booke
Where subjects eyes do learne, doe read, doe looke,

He does not name the author, nor do we know which quarto of the poem he used.

The quotation from *Venus and Adonis* (ll. 871-4) is to support the statement that even inanimate creatures are sensitive to the spell of beauty:

'When *Venus* ranne to meet her rose-cheeked *Adonis*, as an elegant Poet of ours sets her out

the bushes in the way
Some catch her necke, some kisse her face,
Some twine about her legs to make her stay,
And all did couet her for to embrace'¹

In the margin Burton gives 'Shakespeare' as the name of 'the elegant Poet.' He was quoting from memory, as the third and fourth lines are very inaccurate. The second line should also read, 'Some catch her by the necke, some kisse her face,' but here Burton was following his own copy of the 1602 quarto, which prints the line in this form.

In the third edition of *The Anatomy* (1628) Burton added one more Shakespearean reference. He had spoken in 1621 and 1624 of 'those which at the first sight cannot fancie or affect each other, but are harsh and ready to disagree, offended with each others carriage,' but who, through proximity, begin at last 'to dote insensibly one upon another.' In 1628 he gives in illustration '*Benedict and*

¹ *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1624), Pait 3, Sec. 2, Memb. 2, Sub-sec. 2, p. 371."

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Betteris in the Comedie,¹ and again names Shakespeare in the margin.

It will be noticed that Burton's quotations chiefly illustrate phases of love, and that his interest is in Shakespeare as an 'elegant Poet' rather than as a playwright. But he evidently had bits of him at his fingers' ends, and it was fitting that his copy of *Venus and Adonis* should be the first Shakespearean quarto to enter the Bodleian, after his death in 1640. It was, however, probably soon followed by a copy of the third edition of *Lucrece* (1600). This copy, without title-page and wanting the last leaf, is inserted in a volume which was probably bound in Oxford for the Bodleian about 1650. A copy of the seventh edition (1632) was presented to Corpus Christi College by John Rosewell, a Fellow, who graduated in 1655, took his B.D. in 1667, and was later a Canon of Windsor and Master at Eton.² In 1654, the Bodleian received for the first time a quarto edition of a Shakespearean play, the 1637 *Hamlet*, which had belonged to the jurist, John Selden.³

The founder of the library, Sir Thomas Bodley, had shared to the full the orthodox academic contempt for 'English plaies.' In his eyes they were 'baggage books' not worthy to be 'vouchsafed a rowme in so noble a Librarie.' Hence the two first Bodleian catalogues, those of 1605 and 1620, show no Shakespeare entry at all. Even the first folio, when it appeared in 1623, would not have been bought for the library.

But Sir Thomas had fortunately made an agreement in

¹ *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1628), Part 3, Sec. 2, Memb. 2, Sub-sec. 4, p. 443.

² Sidney Lee, *Facsimile of Lucrece*. Introduction, pp. 45 and 50.

³ In the Balliol College library there is a copy of the 1619 quarto of *The Merry of wives of Wmdior*, with the note 'Extracted from a book of plays, Arch M, 6, 12, and bound April 1864/011 the title of this copy there is an entry 'Thomas Skvnnr 1621.' There was a seventeenth-century Balliol graduate of that name, but he did not matriculate till 1679. There has also been extacted from the same book of plays a *Hamlet* quarto of 1611. Cf. Bat tlctt and Pollard, *A Census of Shakespeare's Plays in Quarto*, pp. 3 and 60.

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1610-11 with the Stationers' Company by which the latter bound itself to present to his foundation a perfect copy of every book printed by its members. Under this agreement a copy of the folio in sheets was sent to the Bodleian, and after being bound by William Wildgoose, was chained for the use of readers in the 'Arts End.' From an examination of the pages, some of which are more worn than others, it is possible to identify the plays that were the favourites of young Oxford in the Caroline period.¹ At the head stands *Romeo and Juliet*. The page that faced the Balcony scene (from which Richardson of Magdalen had quoted before the publication of the folio) shows more signs of wear and tear than any other in the volume. Next in order of popularity seems to have come *Julius Caesar*, *Macbeth* and *Henry IV*. There is no entry in the early Bodleian catalogues of a copy of the second folio (1632). It was probably regarded as a reprint, and not sent to the University library. But St John's College acquired a copy, presented by Henry Osbaston, a Fellow of the College, in 1637.²

It is astonishing that among the many readers of the folio in the Bodleian only one (so far as has been discovered) paid a tribute to Shakespeare in an Oxford publication. In 1640 *Sicily and Naples*, a tragedy by Samuel Harding, B.A., of Exeter College, was issued with the customary verse prefaces by admiring friends. Among them was Nicholas Downey, of the same College, who declared that 'sad Melpomene'

Casts off the heavy buskins which she wore,
Quickens her leaden pace, and runnes before,
Hyes to pale Shakespeare's vrne, and from his tombe
Takes up the bayes, and hither is she come.

¹ See *The Original Bodleian Copy of the First Folio of Shakespeare* (1905), pp. 6-7.

-See *A Catalogue of the Shakespeare Exhibition held in the Bodleian Library* (1916), p. 88.

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Whatever may be thought of Downey's critical perception in looking upon *Sicily and Naples* as the lineal successor of *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*, he at any rate recognized that Shakespeare was the great exemplar of tragic art. He thus showed greater discernment than an eminent Oxonian contemporary, William Cartwright, of Christ Church, whose early death in December, 1643, at the age of thirty-three, plunged the whole University in gloom. Himself a poet-playwright, he had won a triumph with *The Royal Slave*, acted before Charles and Henrietta Maria on their visit to Oxford in the summer of 1636. His love of the drama is further shown in his splendid eulogy of Ben Jonson contributed to *Jonsonus Firbius* (1638), and his two commendatory poems included in the 1647 folio of Beaumont and Fletcher's plays. Yet he has no word for Shakespeare except as a foil to Fletcher's 'pure sprightfull wit':

Shakespeare to thee was dull, whose best jest lyes
I' th' Ladies questions and the Fooles replyes.
Old fashion'd wit, which walk'd from town to town
In turn'd hose, which our Fathers call'd the Clown,
Whose wit our nice times would obsceanesse call,
And which made Bawdry pass for Comickall:
Nature was all his Art, thy veine was free
As his, but without his scurility.

A later versifier in a miscellany 'by Oxford hands' (1685) coupled Shakespeare with 'matchless Jonson' and 'lofty Lee,' and promised him immortality, unrefined as was his art:

Shake'spear, though rude, yet his immortal wit
Shall never to the stroke of time submit.

But before these lines were written the first folio had left the shelves of the Bodleian. When the third folio of 1664 appeared, with its seven additional plays (of which *Pericles*

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alone had any claim to be included in the canon) the Bodleian authorities sold their presentation copy of the first folio, among other superfluous books, to Richard Davis, an Oxford bookseller, who paid £24 for the lot. Early in the eighteenth century the volume found its way to the library of Richard Tarbutt, of Ogston Hall, in Derbyshire, a collector of plays. Here it remained till January, 1905, when a descendant of Richard Tarbutt, ignorant of its earlier history, showed it to the Bodleian authorities. Its identification by Mr S. Gibson through the original Oxford binding and its recovery in 1906 at a cost of £3,000 for its first home form a recent and familiar chapter in the romance of books.¹

But if Oxford, by the sale of her greatest Shakespearean treasure 'threw a pearl away, richer than all her tribe/ she made some amends soon afterwards by laying the basis of the dramatist's biography. Among the MS. *Brief Lives*, Part I, in the Bodleian, compiled by John Aubrey, mostly in February, 1680, there is a short memoir and character-sketch of Shakespeare, based no doubt in part on the local traditions of the city in which he had been a frequent visitor. Aubrey's piquant gossip has long been incorporated, with or without reservations, in subsequent 'Lives' of the dramatist.² What is, however, of more moment from our present point of view is that Aubrey in a couple of pregnant sentences is the first academic writer

¹ *The Original Bodleian First Folio of Shakespeare*, pp. 5-8, and *A Catalogue of the Shakespeare Exhibition held in the Bodleian Library* (1916), pp. 13-5.

² A facsimile of Aubrey's 'Life' is given in plate VII of *A Catalogue of the Shakespeare Exhibition*. For his closing statement (probably added as a postscript) that Shakespeare 'understood Latine pretty well: for he had been in his younger years a Schoolmaster in the Countrey', Ward quotes the authority of the actor, William Beeston, son of Christopher Beeston, who had been a fellow of Shakespeare in the Chamberlain's company about 1598. On the further jotting by the antiquary (Aubrey MS. 8, fol. 45 verso) beginning 'the more to be admired q[uia] he was not a company keeper,' which may well refer to Shakespeare, see 'A Jotting by John Aubrey,' by Mr E. K. Chambers in *Malone Society's Collections* I, 341-7; also Sir S. Lee's *Life of Shakespeare* (1916), p. 276 n.

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to fasten on the secret of Shakespeare's immortality as a comic dramatist:

His comoedies will remaine witt as long as the English tongue is understood, for that he handles *mores hominum*. Now our present writers reflect so much upon particular forms and coxcombeities that twenty years hence they will not be understood.

When Cartwright had contemptuously dismissed Shakespeare as old-fashioned in comparison with Fletcher and Jonson, he was blind to the fact that satire of contemporary humours and foibles inevitably loses its edge with the flight of years, and that dramatic art can keep its freshness only if it deals with permanent types of character.

Aubrey, it will be noted, speaks only of the comedies, and makes no mention of the other plays. A warmer and more comprehensive tribute came from the pen of another Oxford writer in 1691, when Gerard Langbaine issued through the Clarendon Press (of which in the same year he became Architypographus) his account of the *English Dramatick Poets*:

Few persons that are acquainted with *Dramatick Poetry* but are convinced of the excellency of his compositions, in all kinds of it; and as it would be superfluous in me to endeavour to particularise what most deserves praise in him, after so many great Men that have given him their several Testimonials of his Merit; so I should think I were guilty of an Injury beyond pardon to his Memory, should I so far disparage it, as to bring his wit in competition with any of our Age. . . .

I esteem his plays beyond any that have ever been published in our Language; and tho' I extremely admire *Johnson* and *Fletcher*; yet I must still aver that when in competition with *Shakespear*, I must apply to them what *Justius Lipsius* writ in his letter to *Andres Schottus*, con-

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cerning *Terence* and *Plautus*, when compared; *Terentium amo, admiror, sed Plautum magis*.

Langbaine proceeds to give an alphabetical list of the individual plays included in the fourth folio, and adds *The Birth of Merlin* (attributed by Francis Kirkman in 1662 to Shakespeare and Rowley), and the two Parts of *The Troublesome Raigne of King John*, which bore Shakespeare's name in the reissues of 1611 and 1622.

While he was thus misled by publishers into false attributions, in his discussion of the sources of the plays he displays learning and candour. Thus after mentioning that, according to Dryden, most of Shakespeare's plots are to be found in Cinthio's *Hecatommithi* he adds: 'I must confess that having with great difficulty obtained the book from London I have found but two of those mentioned by him [*Measure for Measure* and *Othello*] tho' I have read the Book carefully over.' He mentions some of the most popular Shakespearean impersonations of his day, such as the Falstaff of Lacy, which 'never fail'd of vniversal applause,' and the part of Henry VIII 'extreamly' well acted by Mr Betterton.' He further records that *Othello* 'is still an entertainment at the Theatre-Royal.' His bibliographical accuracy has in recent years been strikingly vindicated. He records the first edition of *Titus Andronicus*[^] printed in 1594. The earliest extant edition known was that of 1600 till in 1905 a copy of the quarto mentioned by Langbaine was discovered in Lund in Sweden.

The foundation of the Chair of Poetry at Oxford by Henry Birkenhead in 1708 provided the University with an official literary mouthpiece. The first Professor was Joseph Trapp, Fellow of Wadham, whose prologue written for Betterton on his visit to Oxford in 1703 has been already

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mentioned, and whose tragedy, *Abramule, or Love and Empire*, was acted at Lincoln's Inn Fields in 1704. He held the post from 1708 to 1718. His lectures were published in three editions, 1711, 1722, 1736. As in the statute establishing the Chair reference is made to the reading of the old poets, and as the lectures were delivered in Latin, there is only incidental mention of native writers. But Trapp shows himself bitterly hostile to English Romantic drama, with its mixture of grave and gay. In a passage in his lecture 'De Dramate in genere' he condemns it unsparingly:

Tragicomoediam . . . rejiciendam potius et penitus ablegandam existimo. Non est enim Species a duobus modo memoratis distincta, sed utriusque potius Abusus et Corruptio. Quid enim absurdius quam actione trium horarum mentem dolore et laetitia ita distrahi ut Passiones contrariae se invicem frangant et debaelitant? . . .

Omnino neotericum videtur hoc portentum Poeticae et nobis *Britannis* fere proprium: hujus enim generis non pauca extant, lingua nostra et saeculo praesertim praecedenti conscripta.¹

Nevertheless in his one specific reference to the works of Shakespeare, 'celeberrimi illius Poetae nostratis,' he speaks warmly of his history plays, in spite of their violation of the unities:

Annales quorundam Regum Britannicorum in scenam produxit, neglectis regulis locum et tempus dramaticum respicientibus, Sed ad caetera

Spirat tragicum satis et feliciter audet

¹In the English translation of Trapp's lectures, with additional notes, by William Clarke and William Bowyer (1742) the passage is thus rendered, p. 239: 'Tragi-comedy I don't reckon one of them, because I think it is the greatest Absurdity in Nature, and is not so properly a species distinct from the other two I have mention'd, as the Abuse and Corruption of them. For what can be more ridiculous, than, in the Compass of the three Hours, to distract the Mind with Joy and Grief, in such a Manner, that the two contrary Passions, may debilitate or wholly extinguish each other ... \ his poetic kind of Prodigy, I think is altogether modern, and chiefly of *British* extraction for it was the last Age produc'd Multitudes of them in our own Tongue.'

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imo felicissime; et istis etiam operibus, multo magis veris et propie dictis, quas composuit Tragoediis multam laudem meretur.¹

The lectures of Trapp's successor, Thomas Warton, the elder (1728-38), were never published. His younger son and namesake, who succeeded to the Chair in 1757, three years after the publication of his *Observations on the Faerie Queene*, would have been well-qualified to deal with Shakespearean subjects. He had shown his interest in the dramatist by helping to get subscriptions for Johnson's edition, to which he had also contributed a few notes. But Warton's lectures dealt only with classical subjects, of which one, on the pastoral poetry of the Greeks, found its way into print.²

Before Warton ended his ten years' tenure of the Chair of Poetry, Oxford had lost as a resident a scholar well qualified to succeed him. In 1762, Thomas Tyrwhitt, Fellow of Merton, was appointed Clerk of the House of Commons, and moved to London. But his official duties left him enough leisure to publish anonymously through the Clarendon Press in 1766 *Observations and Conjectures upon Some Passages of Shakespeare*. The pamphlet was prompted by the publication of Johnson's edition in the previous year, 'This,' says Tyrwhitt, 'threw a temptation in my way, which I had no desire to resist, of looking over once more the enchanting scenes of that admirable Poet.'

¹'Of which Sort are many of the Plays of our celebated Countryman, who has crowded together the Annals of some of our Kings without any Regard to the dramatical Rules of Time or Place. But in other Respects he

Spiral tragicum satis et feliciter audet.

With happy Boldness draws a Tragic Scene.

Yes, extremely happy, and in *these* works, but more especially in his truer Tragedies, has, dcscerv'd well of Posterity.'

²The five essays on *The Tempest* and *King Lear* contributed by his elder brother Joseph, to Johnson's *Adventurer* in 1753-4. are of interest as among the earliest criticisms of individual plays. But they do not come within the scope of this study. When they were written, Joseph Warton held a country living.

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As he had 'formerly read him with more attention to his text than is usually given to the works of a modern author,' he had hoped that Johnson's 'more penetrating acuteness' would have restored passages which had baffled himself. In this he had been disappointed, and he takes a somewhat malicious pleasure in charging Johnson with slovenly critical methods. 'Collating is certainly dull work, but I doubt'whether upon the whole an Editor would not find it the nearest and shortest, as well as the surest, method of discharging his duties.' Conjectural emendation is a sorry substitute. It 'is pleasant enough to the Critick himself and may serve to amuse a few readers, so long as it only professes to amuse. When it pretends to something higher . . . the acute Conjecturer becomes an object of pity, the stupid one of contempt.'

Tyrwhitt, however, is far from practising what he preaches, and though he is never 'stupid/ he is often perversely absurd. Thus in *Othello*, i, i, 21, he reads 'A fellow almost damn'd in a fair life,' on the ground that 'Shakespeare alludes to the judgment denounced in the Gospel *against those of whom all speak ivell*' In *Antony and Cleopatra*, m, xii, i, when the Queen asks, 'What shall we do?' and Enobarbus answers 'Think and die,' Tyrwhitt would substitute 'Wink and die,' as 'insinuating that she was afraid to meet death with her eyes open.' Even more whimsical is his proposed change in *Winter's Tale*, v, iii, 57-9:

If I had thought the sight of my poor image
Would thus have wrought you (for the stone is mine),
I'd not have shew'd it,

where he suggests 'for the stone i' th' mine'

But if the Chair of Poetry did not concern itself with Shakespeare, the University Press made good use of an

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opportunity of doing him editorial service. Sir Thomas Hanmer, a wealthy and cultivated county gentleman, who had been Speaker of the House of Commons from 1713 to 1715, devoted himself, after his retirement from public affairs, to Shakespearean study. At first he had done so without any thoughts of publication,

One of the great Admirers of this incomparable author hath made it the amusement of his leisure hours for many years past to look over his writings with a careful eye, to note the obscurities and absurdities introduced into the text, and according to the best of his judgment to restore the genuine sense and purity of it. In this he proposed nothing to himself, but his private satisfaction in making his own copy as perfect as he could.

But he was urged by friends to give the results of his labours to the public, and he chose the Clarendon Press as his channel. At the end of 1742 he wrote:

The works are gone out of my hands, and lodged with the University of Oxford, which hath been willing to accept of them as a present from me. They intend to print them forthwith, in a fair impression adorned with sculptures; but it will be so ordered that it will be the cheapest book that ever was exposed to sale.

The University certainly made the most of Hanmer's 'present' which appeared without the editor's name, and hence became known as the 'Oxford' edition. It was printed in six sumptuous volumes, adorned with engravings by Gravelot after designs chiefly by Hayman. It was seen through the press by two Heads of Colleges, Joseph Smith, Provost of Queen's, and Robert Shippen, Principal of Brasenose, and the Vice-Chancellor, Walter Hodges, Provost of Oriel College, wrote his *imprimatur* on the title-page on March 26, 1744. What a revolution had taken place in academic feeling since the Elizabethan Vice-

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Chancellors had boycotted Shakespeare's company, and Sir Thomas Bodley had banned the 'baggage books' 1

In the Preface it is no light claim that is advanced:

What the Publick is here to expect is a true and correct edition of *Shakespear's* works cleared from the corruptions with which they have hitherto abounded. . . In correcting them this rule hath been most strictly observed, not to "give a loose to fancy, or indulge a licentious spirit of criticism, as if it were fit for any one to presume to judge what *Shakespear* ought to have written, instead of endeavouring to discover truly and retrieve what he did write.

It cannot be said that these lofty pretensions are made good. As Johnson acutely pointed out in the Preface to his own edition of Shakespeare, some twenty years later, Hanmer suffered from too assured a belief in the critical faculties not only of himself, but (what is much more uncommon) of his predecessors.

His confidence, indeed, both in himself and others was too great: he supposed all to be right that was done by Pope and Theobald; he seems not to suspect a critick of fallibility, and it was but reasonable that he should claim what he so liberally granted.

He follows the lead of Pope in the arbitrary rejection of passages as spurious, and adds some others, e.g., the dialogue between the Fretich Princess and her waiting-woman in *King Kenry V*, 'foisted in by the Players after his death, to please the vulgar audiences by which they subsisted.'

In the emendation of words and phrases he was guided mainly by Theobald, and he did not undertake the work of independent collation of the original texts. But he brought to his task the sagacity and cultivation of a widely read man of the world. These were qualifications that

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Johnson was exactly the man to appreciate, and his tribute to them is generously unreserved:

He had what is the first requisite to emendatory criticism, that intuition by which the poet's intention is immediately discovered, and that dexterity of intellect which despatches its work by the easiest means. He had undoubtedly read much; his acquaintance with customs, opinions and traditions seems to have been large; and he is often learned without shew. . . .

As he never writes without careful enquiry and diligent consideration, I have received all his notes, and believe that every reader will wish for more.

In addition to the notes Hanmer supplied a glossary of 'all those terms which have hitherto been so many stumbling-blocks to the generality of readers.' This glossary was incomplete, and some of the explanations of phrases are fanciful. But in the main they are terse and to the point, and Hanmer's experience had made him specially familiar with law terms. In words of foreign derivation he gave the source in the original tongue.

With reference to the erection of a statue to Shakespeare in the Poets' Corner at Westminster in 1741 the hope was expressed that this Oxford edition would be looked upon 'as another small monument designed and dedicated' to the honour of one

who hath attained an high degree of perfection in those two great branches of Poetry, Tragedy and Comedy, different as they are in their natures from each other; and who may be said without partiality to have equalled if not excelled, in both kinds, the best writers of any age or country who have thought it glory enough to distinguish themselves in either.

This eulogy—the most high-pitched and comprehensive that had yet come from an academic source—may well

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have been ringing in the ears of William Collins, then a Demy of Magdalen, when in his *Verses Humbly Addressed to Sir Thomas Hanmer on his Edition of Shakes-pear's Works. By a Gentleman of Oxford* (1743), he hailed the dramatist as 'the perfect boast of time.' combining 'Tuscan fancy' and 'Athenian strength.' Cartwright's attack upon Shakespeare, as compared with Jonson or Fletcher, had its answer in Oxford after a hundred years, when Collins, following Dryden, declared with true critical insight that Shakespeare's fancy lifted him above one of his great contemporaries and his strength above the other:¹

Too nicely *Jonson* knew the Critic's Part;
Nature in him was almost lost in Art.
Of softer Mold the gentle *Fletcher* came,
The next in Order, as the next in Name.
With pleas'd Attention 'midst his scenes we find
Each glowing Thought, that warms the Female mind...
His ev'ry Strain the Loves and Graces own;
But stronger *Shakespear* felt for *Man* alone:
Drawn by his Pen our ruder Passions stand,
The unrivall'd Picture of his early Hand.

We can be grateful if the genius of Collins drew from Hanmer's volumes the inspiration for the exquisite *Dirge in Cymbeline*, but his tribute to the Editor's services is grotesque in its extravagant and unhistorical eulogy:

Those 5/[^]y-Leaves, the Sport of every Wind
(For Poets ever were a careless kind)
By thee dispos'd, no further Toil demand,
But, just to Nature, own thy forming Hand.
So spread o'er *Greece*, th'harmonious Whole unknown,
Ev'n *Homer's* Numbers charm'd by Parts alone,
Their own *Ulysses* scarce had wander'd more,

¹ I quote from the original twelve-page folio copy, published by Cooper of Pater-noster row, at the price of sixpence.

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By Winds and Waters cast on every Shore:
When, rais'd by Fate, some former *Hanmer* join'd
Each bounteous Image of the tuneful Mind:
And bade like Thee, his *Athens* ever claim,
A fond Alliance with the Poet's Name.

When Hanmer's 'Athens' re-issued his work in 1771, the *Epistle* 'by the late ingenious *Mr Collins*' was recommended as worthy to be prefixed to it. Other additions were lists of various readings from Theobald's and Capell's editions, and new notes by Bishop Percy, Thomas Warton and John Hawkins, while the glossary was considerably amplified.

The new edition was in the same sumptuous form as that of 1744. In 1786 another Shakespeare in homelier dress was issued from the Oxford Press. It consisted of six volumes, well printed, but without illustrations. The editor was Joseph Rann, M.A. and B.C.L., of Trinity College, who was vicar of Trinity Church, Coventry, from 1773 till his death in September, 1811.¹ In his dedication to Lord Sheffield he speaks of his tumble attempt to render the dramatic works of Shakespeare as universally understood as they are deservedly admired.' There is no preface to the edition, nor throughout his notes, which are much more copious than those even in the second edition of Hanmer, does he make any reference to previous commentators. But he was evidently well acquainted with their labours, both textual and explanatory. His text is sounder than that of Hanmer, and the edition, though not marked by originality or by independent research, was a careful and scholarly piece of work. It has received less recognition than it deserves, especially considering the fact that

¹ An extract from the records of the Clarendon Press, kindly made for me by the late Secretary, shows that the Delegates gave Rann leave to have his edition printed at Oxford. It was therefore not an official Clarendon Press publication.

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for more than eighty years no other Shakespearean publication was issued from the Clarendon Press.

From the middle of the seventeenth to the middle of the eighteenth century Cambridge seems to have contributed little to Shakespearean criticism or biography. But they were now to be enriched by the taste and poetic insight of Thomas Gray and the scholarship of Richard Farmer. In April, 1742, Gray sent to his friend West a long speech from *Agrippina*, a poetic tragedy which he never completed. West criticized the style of the speech as being 'too antiquated':

Racine was of another opinion; he no where gives you the phrases of Ronsard: His language is the language of the times, and that of the purest sort; so that his French is reckoned a standard. I will not decide what style is fit for our English stage; but I should rather choose one that bordered upon Cato than upon Shakespear. One may imitate (if one can) Shakespear's manner, his surprising strokes of true nature, his expressive force in painting characters, and all his other beauties; preserving at the same time our own language. Were Shakespear alive now he would write in a different style from what he did.

Thus West revives, in respect of Shakespeare's language, the charge that he is old-fashioned. Gray's reply is conclusive, and is the more striking because the design of his tragedy was modelled on the *Britannicus* of Racine, which he had seen performed in Paris:

As to matter of stile I have this to say: the language of the age is never the language of poetry; except among the French, whose verse, where the thought or image does not support it, differs in nothing from prose. Our poetry, on the contrary, has a language peculiar to itself; to which almost everyone that has written has added something by enriching it with foreign idioms and derivatives: Nay some-

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times words of their own composition or invention. Shakespear and Milton have been great creators this way. . . . And our language not being a settled thing (like the French) has an undoubted right to words of a hundred years old, provided antiquity have not rendered them unintelligible. In truth, Shakespear's language is one of his principal beauties; and he has no less advantage over your Addisons and Rowes in this, than in those other great excellencies that you mention. Every word in him is a picture.¹

It is again of the dramatist's mastery of language that Gray is thinking when he wrote later, with reference to the Letters prefixed to Mason's *Elfrida*, that 'Shakespeare is particularly admirable in his introduction of pure poetry, so as to join it with pure passion, and yet keep true to nature.'²

'True to nature'—we see that when Gray in *The Progress of Poesy* called Shakespeare 'Nature's Darling/ to whom

the mighty mother did unveil
Her awful face,

it was no mere flourish of phrase, but a deeply held belief. And his friend Norton Nicholls records that 'he placed Shakespeare high above all poets of all countries and ages; and said that the justest idea of the historical characters he treated might be taken from his pages.'

As we gather these illuminating *obiter dicta* we cannot help the wish that instead of his sinecure Chair of Modern History Gray had been able to hold at Cambridge a Chair of Poetry, like that at Oxford. The sensitive and subtle Shakespearean criticism of the Romantics might have been anticipated, with a leavening element of scholarly restraint. That Gray was not satisfied with the work of

¹Gray's *Letters*, ed. D. C. Tovey, i, 97-8.

²Gray's *Letters*, ed. Tovey, n, Appendix, 296.

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previous commentators is clear from some doggerel that he puts into Shakespeare's mouth:

Much have I borne from canker'd critics' spite,
From fumbling baronets and poets small,
Pert barristers, and parsons, nothing bright.¹

But, as it is, it was not he but a contemporary who made the chief eighteenth century Cambridge contribution to Shakespearean investigation.

In January, 1767, Richard Farmer, Fellow, and afterwards Master, of Emmanuel College, addressed to Joseph Cradock, who had been a member of the College, *An Essay on the Learning of Shakespeare*. It was reprinted, with additions, later in the year, and again, without further change, in 1789. Its re-publication was well merited, for it was the most scholarly and acute contribution to Shakespearean criticism that had hitherto come from either University. Farmer's essay dealt primarily with a subject which had been hotly debated since the publication of Rowe's *Account of Shakespeare* in 1709. Charles Gildon in his *Essay on the Stage*, John Upton in *Critical Observations* (1746), Zachary Grey in *Notes on Shakespeare* (1754), and Peter Whalley in his *Enquiry into the Learning of Shakespeare* (1748) had claimed for the dramatist an intimate familiarity with the classics, and had based this chiefly upon the citation of parallel passages. Rowe, Dennis and Johnson had minimized his knowledge of the ancients; Pope had not committed himself, and Theobald had wavered.

The subject was one specially suited to an academic pen, and Farmer brought to his task an unusual width of reading in varied fields, and a sagacity that could turn it to the best account. His 'Conclusion' at the close of his essay reminds us of one of Johnson's knock-down blows:

¹Gray's *Letters*, ed. Tovey, III, 76-7.

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He remembered perhaps enough of his *school-boy* learning to put the *Hig, hag, hog* into the mouth of Sir Hugh Evans; and might pick up in the writers of the time or the course of his conversation a familiar phrase or two of French or Italian; but his *Studies* were most demonstratively confined to *Nature* and *his own Language*.

No wonder that the Doctor declared, 'Dr Farmer, you have done that which was never done before; that is, you have completely finished a controversy beyond all further doubt.'

From one point of view Johnson's characteristic verdict cannot be upheld. Farmer did not say the last word on a subject which, from its nature and from the necessarily imperfect evidence, does not admit of conclusive settlement. And there can be no doubt that he under-estimated Shakespeare's linguistic attainments, partly because he did not realize the full content of schoolboy education in the later sixteenth century. It included not only Latin Grammar and phrase books, but selections from the more familiar Roman authors and some of their Renaissance imitators. Parts of Ovid and 'good old Mantuan,' from both of which he quotes lines, must have been known to Shakespeare in the original, and it is probable that he knew something of Seneca, Plautus and Virgil.

The only part of the essay in which Farmer gives way to heat and prejudice is his attack on Aubrey. The antiquary, as already mentioned, had asserted that Shakespeare understood Latin pretty well: for he had been in his younger years a schoolmaster in the country. In order to undermine Aubrey's credit, Farmer makes a series of 'animadversions' not only on this statement, but on other details of Shakespeare's early life put forward in the Bodleian MS. For his particular purpose the Cambridge Doctor wastes his efforts, for Shakespeare might have 'understood Latin

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pretty well,' not as a schoolmaster, but as a schoolboy in the country.

Farmer also under-estimated the dramatist's knowledge of modern languages. London was more cosmopolitan in the later sixteenth than in the later eighteenth century, and in the Court and Bohemian circles, with which an actor was in touch, French, Italian and Spanish phrases were current. Shakespeare had doubtless a working knowledge of French, which must have been improved during his period of residence with the Huguenot refugee, Christopher Montjoy, in Silver Street, about 1604. The French dialogue in *Henry V* is enough to prove this, but Farmer, like Hanmer, arbitrarily dismissed it as a later interpolation. 'Every friend to his memory will not easily believe that he was acquainted with the Scene between Catherine and the old Gentlewoman; or surely he would not have admitted such obscenity and nonsense.'

His familiarity with Italian was probably slighter, but had he known nothing of it, he would scarcely have made Hamlet say of the story of Gonzago that 'it is extant and written in very choice Italian.'

Thus Farmer's 'Conclusion' must be modified in the light of the wider knowledge of Elizabethan education that we now possess. But he demolished once and for all the edifice of fantastic pedantry that Upton Grey and their fellows had laboriously compiled; and he set forth in words for ever memorable the golden rule for Shakespearean investigation:

Nothing but an intimate acquaintance with the Writers of the time, who are frequently of no other value, can point out his allusions, and ascertain his Phraseology.¹ The Re-

¹ The extent of Farmer's 'acquaintance with the Writers of the time' may be inferred from the Catalogue of his Library (of which there is a copy in the British Museum), which was sold in May 1798. Among his Shakespeareana were copies of the folios, and numerous quartos. In 1779 he had given to Edmund Malone the volume now in the Bodleian, containing the only perfect copy of the 1600 edition of *Lucretius* bound up with a unique copy of *Venus and Adonis* which lacks the title-page.

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formers of his Text are for ever equally positive and equally wrong. The Cant of the Age, a provincial Expression, an obscure Proverb, an obsolete Custom, a Hint at a Person or a Fact no longer remembered, hath continually defeated the best of our *Guessers*.

Throughout his essay Farmer applies these principles with scholarly precision. He emphasizes the fact that contemporary translations and adaptations account for much in Shakespeare's works that seems at first sight of classical or foreign derivation. From a comparison of some of the peculiarities in the text of Shakespeare's Roman plays and Sir Thomas North's translation of Amyot's French version of Plutarch he proved conclusively that North was the dramatist's original source. He showed that *Measure for Measure* was based not on Cinthio's Italian tale, but on Whetstone's adaptation of it either in his prose *Heptameron* or in his play, *Promos and Cassandra*. Similarly the plot of *All's Well that Ends Well*, though its ultimate source was the *Decameron*, was shown to have been accessible in Painter's *Palace of Pleasure*. The source of *As You Like It* was found in Lodge's *Rosalind* and not in the more recondite Coke's *Tale of Gamelyn*, which 'was not printed till a century afterwards.' In some other cases he failed to hit the mark because he had not the full *data*. He did not know of Arthur Brooke's poem *Romeus and Juliet*, and therefore found in Painter the chief source of the love-tragedy. Similarly not realizing that there had been a pre-Shakespearean *Hamlet* he thought that the dramatist had got his materials from the *Hystorie of Hamblet*, a translation from Belleforest, of which no edition is known before 1608. And some lost play was more probably the source of *Much Ado About Nothing* than Turberville's *Genevra*. But even in these cases Farmer established his main point that it was

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not necessary for Shakespeare to have recourse to Banello, Saxo Grammaticus or Ariosto.

In points of textual detail his confirmation of the readings *Proface* (2 *Henry IV*, v, iii, 28), *Rivo* (i *Henry IV*, II, iv, 124), *Monarcho* (*Love's Labour's Lost*, iv, i, 102), and *Baccare* (*Taming of the Shrew*, II, i, 73), on which much misplaced ingenuity had been expended, is a capital instance of how indispensable to Shakespearean commentators is a familiarity with the by-ways of Elizabethan literature.

Incidentally Farmer helped to settle the Shakespearean canon. He vindicated the claim of *Pericles* to have been 'retouched and polished' by the dramatist, and Malone consequently included it in his *Variorum* edition. He recognized that *The Taming of the Shrew* was only partly Shakespearean; he realized the debt of the underplot to Gascoigne's *Supposes* and divined that of the main plot to the *Taming of A Shrew*, though he only knew it by name. He held that Shakespeare had no hand in the 'horrible Piece,' *Titus Andronicus*, and he repudiated his authorship of *Lochrine* and *The Yorkshire Tragedy*, two of the pieces attributed to him in the third folio; and of *The Double Falsehood* which Theobald had declared to be an unpublished play of the dramatist. From his knowledge of Thomas Heywood's *Troia Britannica* (1609), he was able to show that it was in this work that the Epistles from Paris to Helen and Helen to Paris (translated from Ovid's originals) were published, which Jaggard ascribed falsely to Shakespeare in *The Passionate Pilgrim*, and from another of Heywood's works, *The Apology for Actors*, he retrieved the forgotten reference that proves Kyd's authorship of *The Spanish Tragedie*.

In the spirit that distinguishes the true scholar from the

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pedant Farmer wears his learning lightly, and puts his case with an urbanity that scarcely ever fails, and that can rise at times to an exquisite touch, as in the compliment to Garrick, 'a *Gentleman* who will be always allowed *the first Commentator* on Shakespeare, when he does not carry us beyond *himself*'

Farmer's essay strongly influenced the trend of subsequent Shakespearean criticism and exegesis, as is shown by the work of Steevens and Malone. But within the Universities themselves it seems to have awakened little response. The century following its publication was the most barren in the annals of academic Shakespearean scholarship. This is the more remarkable because it so happened that owing to a series of gifts and bequests Oxford and Cambridge acquired during the earlier part of this period their chief Shakespearean treasures. Even as late as the middle of the eighteenth century they had little to show. A unique copy of the tenth edition of *Venus and Adonis* belonging to Antony Wood had passed to the Ashmolean on his death in 1695. The only additions in the fourth Bodleian Catalogue of 1738 were the *Tempest* as adapted by Davenant and Dryden (Lond. 1674), *Macbeth* of the same date and kind, and a *Lucrece* imperfect at beginning and end.²

The Bodleian had at this time been outstripped by Worcester College with its nine quartos, of which the earliest is *King Henry IV*, with the imprint 1608, but in all probability one of Thomas Pavier's falsely-dated issues of 1619. The others are *King Richard III* (1629) and 1634), *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1630), *The Taming of the Shrew* (1631), *King Henry IV, Part i* (1632), *King Richard*

¹This copy is now in the Bodleian.

²A. Catalogue of the *Shakespeare Exhibition*, &c., p. xiv. The *Lucrece* is the copy of the 1600 edition already mentioned (p. 53). It is not entered in the 1674 Catalogue, but as it was bound up with other pamphlets it may have been in the library and overlooked.

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// (1634), *Romeo and Juliet* (1637), and *The Merchant of Venice* (1637). They appear to have been included in Dr George Clarke's extensive bequest of books and MSS. to the College in 1734. But valuable as it is the collection does not contain any of the quartos printed during Shakespeare's lifetime.¹

It was in the last quarter of the eighteenth century that Shakespearean gifts of first-rate importance began to reach the two Universities. In 1775 Wadham College, Oxford, acquired a copy of the first folio, bequeathed to it by Richard Warner. Another copy was left to Oriel in 1786 by Edward, Lord Leigh. But through the munificence of Edward Capell in 1779 Cambridge became possessed of a wealth of Shakespeareana with which Oxford at the time could make no comparison. Capell's gift to Trinity College included copies of the four folios and fifty quarto editions of the plays.² Of these as many as fourteen, according to the classification of Miss Bartlett and Mr A. W. Pollard, 'rank as first editions, making up a complete set save for the *Hamlet* of 1603, the 1597 and 1599 editions of *Romeo and Juliet*, the *Titus Andronicus* of 1594, and the later variant of the *Henry* iv, *Part II*, and earlier of *Troilus*'? There were also copies of *Lucrece* (1598 and 1607), *The Passionate Pilgrim* (1599), the *Sonnets* (1609), *Venus and Adonis* (1620), and the *Poems* (1640).

The balance between the two Universities was more than redressed when in 1821 Edmund Malone's great collection of 'Early English Poetry' passed into the Bodleian. Never was there a more singular windfall. As Sir

¹These Worcester College Quartos are not included in Miss Bartlett's and Mr A. W. Pollard's 'Census.' My attention was drawn to them by Mr C. H. Wilkinson, Librarian of the College, and I gave a list of them in *The Times*, 27 April, 1920.

²The complete list is given by Dr W. W. Greg in his *Catalogue of the Books presented by Edward Capell to the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge*, pp. 116-37.

³A *Census of Shakespeare's Plays in Quarto*, p. xxv.

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Sidney Lee has pointed out, Malone, though an honorary D.L.C. of Oxford, had no close personal relation with the University. At his death in May, 1812, he bequeathed his library to his elder brother, Lord Sunderlin, expressing the wish that it might be handed over ultimately to Trinity College, Dublin. But Sunderlin, who had been incorporated at Oxford, offered it to the curators of the Bodleian in July, 1815, with the stipulation that James Boswell should retain the books until he had completed the *Third Variorum* edition of Shakespeare. When they arrived in 1821 they made the Bodleian one of the chief Shakespearean treasure-houses in the world. They included a copy of the first folio with the Droeshout portrait in its very rare original state¹. There were about forty quarto editions of the plays, apart from late seventeenth or eighteenth century adaptations. Among the editions were the 1597 and 1599 *Romeo and Juliet*, the 1598 *Love's Labour's Lost*, the 1598 and 1608 *Richard II*, the 1599 *I Henry IV*, both the 1600 quartos of *II Henry IV*, the 1600 and 1608 *Henry V*, both the 1600 quartos of *The Merchant of Venice* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the 1600 *Much Ado About Nothing*, the 1602 and 1619 *Merry Wives of Windsor*, both the 1608 quartos of *King Lear*, the 1609 *Troilus and Cressida*, and the 1622 *Othello*. Malone's collection was also especially rich in copies of the poems. It included the 1593 quarto of *Venus and Adonis*, 'the only copy of the first edition of Shakespeare's first publication'; one of two copies of the third edition, 1596, which Thomas Warton had bought for 6d. in 1760, and which his brother Joseph had given to Malone; a unique copy, lacking its title-page, bound with the 1600 quarto of *Lucrece*, which had belonged to Dr Richard Farmer; and a

¹A facsimile of the portrait in this state forms Plate III in *A Catalogue of the Shakespeare Exhibition*, &c.

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copy of the 1675 edition, the last issued in the seventeenth century.¹

Lucrece was represented by a copy of the first edition (1594), and the only perfect copy of the third edition (1600).² Of *The Passionate Pilgrim* there was one of the two extant copies of the third edition (1612), with the unique feature of two title-pages, one with, and one without, Shakespeare's name. There were also copies of the first edition of *The Sonnets* (1609) and *The Poems* (1640).

A dozen years after the arrival of the Malone books the Bodleian collection of Shakespeareana was enriched by a bequest of very rare volumes by Thomas Caldecott, at one time fellow of New College. They included one of three copies of the second edition of *Venus and Adonis* (1594); and a unique copy of the seventh edition (1617). With the 1594 edition of *Venus and Adonis* were bound up copies of the first edition of *Lucrece* of the same year, and of the 1609 edition of the *Sonnets*. There were also in Caldecott's bequest copies of the 1616 and 1655 editions of *Lucrece*. In its collection of early texts of Shakespeare's poem the Bodleian now stood pre-eminent.³

Thus the Universities had now the materials at hand for a critical *Variorum* edition of Shakespeare's works. But their interest in textual studies was as yet almost completely confined to the elucidation of the writers of Greece and Rome. The magnificent gifts of Capell, Malone and Caldecott had come to them more by good fortune than by desert. Yet the stirring of the waters had begun, and the impact of the Romantic movement upon academic criticism is manifest

¹ This copy is mentioned in the Catalogue of Malone's books in the Bodleian, and in the Bodleian printed Catalogue (1835-4) but it seems to have disappeared. See *Lee, Venus and Adonis*, Introduction, p. 73.

² On the imperfect copy of this edition in the Bodleian see above, pp. 53 and 74.

³ Burton's copy of the 1602 *Venus and Adonis*, and Anthony Wood's unique copy of 1630, both now in the Bodleian, have been mentioned above, pp. 53 and 74.

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in the *Praelectiones* delivered by Keble as Professor of Poetry from 1832 to 1841, and published with a dedication to Wordsworth in 1844. The lectures had still by statute to be given in Latin,¹ and the subjects of Keble's *Praelectiones* were the great classical poets and dramatists from Homer to Virgil. But in the opening lectures and incidentally in the treatment of individual writers Keble discussed a number of the larger questions bearing on poetic theory and practice, and drew illustrations from modern as well as ancient literature. Dante, Spenser, Cowley, Byron and Burns are among those who figure in his pages, but it is Shakespeare among the moderns who holds pride of place. Keble's unqualified admiration of 'Tragedorum ille princeps' ('Shaksperus noster, Anglorum Kar' *ἔξοχόν* vates jure nominates' is in the truest romantic vein. He defends the mingling of the comic and the tragic as in the porter's speech after Banquo's murder and the gravediggers' chatter before Ophelia's funeral; and he justifies it by deeper than purely artistic considerations:

I do not believe that this effect of contrast is due to poetic insight alone and stage artifice. Assuredly, not only are our minds forcibly appealed to and stimulated by these contrasts, but they are also touched with a certain profounder feeling as to human fate; we recognise a faithful reflection of our mortality, with its painful and abrupt changes and chances. . . . It adds a new sting to the unfortunate (who are certainly always highly sensitive) as if the higher powers were mocking them, when anything happens, perhaps at the crisis of their sorrow, which is common, trivial, or humorous.²

¹ In 1912 an excellent translation of the *Praelectiones* by Mr E. K. Francis was issued by the Clarendon Press in two volumes. The quotations that follow are taken from this translation, but the reference to the original Latin text is added. •

²*Praelectione*, i. 338: Neque vero cam rem . . . ridiculum occurrat.

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These reflections were suggested by the speeches of the watchman and the Pythian prophetess at the beginning of Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* and *Supplikes*, which seemed to Keble to belong to the comic rather than the tragic sphere. Similarly with reference to the jejune proverbial philosophy of the Theban Herald in the *Supplikes* of Euripides, he argues that 'even frigid and ill-timed speeches in a tragedy are not invariably to be condemned. For it may well be that even at some serious moment there is present some foolish and garrulous person whose trivialities nevertheless contribute not a little to the total effect of the pathos: for the very contrast makes the situation harder to bear, and makes it jar more upon our feelings. . . . On this ground we may find excuse for many passages, both in Shakespeare and Euripides, which would otherwise seem irrelevant and insipid/'

Thus Keble recognized, as every adequately equipped critic must do, that there is an essential affinity between Greek and Shakespearean drama, and he repudiated the doctrine of 'modern French critics' based upon neo-classic tradition that comic characters should be entirely banished from tragedy. He rated Sophocles below Aeschylus and Euripides because his 'taste was, it would seem, too severe, his fastidiousness too great to allow him to admit such a blending, such a hotch-potch of opposite qualities.' This characteristic of the art of Sophocles Keble connected with his 'almost complete disregard of those who play the minor parts' in his dramas. And the contrast in this respect between him and Shakespeare calls forth from the Oxford critic an eulogium pitched in the key of Coleridge himself:

On the contrary, in Shakespeare's plays, as we all know,

¹ *Praelec(tones, a, 589 : 'apud Tragæcios.. . aliena atque insulsa.'*

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even the characters playing the most insignificant parts successfully claim their author's interest—not, of course, in equal degree, but in a similar way. With him we never find a countryman who happens to be standing by, or a soldier, or a common jester, or any other whosoever, but has assigned him, in the word or two he has to say, something which suggests a character of his own. Thus we accord to Shakespeare as of pre-eminent right the high commendation of holding nothing that is human alien to himself, seeing that he was able to enter into the mind, the character, the very features of all classes of men in all parts of the world. In this respect he may be compared to Nature herself, which is wont to frame and adorn with minute detail, not merely regions which are, by reason of their striking beauty, visited and admired by all, but even obscure nooks not easily penetrated by the rays of the sun or by the eye of the sightseer.

But Keble is at pains to prove that throughout all variations of treatment Shakespeare had a moral end in view, and is thus a 'splendid example of consistent inconsistency':

Recall your impressions on reading through the plays for the first time: while your sympathies were throughout the development of the whole play enlisted on the side of such characters as were pure and good, did you not, especially at the final scene, find yourself inwardly stimulated to nobility of mind? and not that nobility merely which by a certain attractive and enthusiastic quality excites youthful minds, but the more austere qualities of purity, integrity, strenuousness, goodness?²

As a broad summary of the general impression made by Shakespearean drama this may pass, though it credits the playwright with a consciously edifying intention which

¹ *Praellectiones*, II, 564-5, 'Quod contra... facile tangendos.'
² *Prælectione* I, 58-9, 'Sed memoria repetatis... pietatis.'

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was far from him. But it is merely special pleading to add, 'as for his looser and broader scenes, we easily perceive that they were, in great part, due to the taste of the time, not to his own inclination, and sometimes presented by way of warning, as drunken helots were shown to the youth of Sparta/

This is not the only passage where Keble's prepossessions coloured his criticism. In the interesting passage in which he compares the treatment of ghosts by Aeschylus and Shakespeare, and discusses at length the appearances of Hamlet's father, he asserts that the English dramatist, like the Greek, was taught by his instinctive reverence that strictest reserve was due to all that borders on religion.¹ The origin of the Shakespearean reticence, it may be safely said, was aesthetic not religious.

And in the closing lecture, where Keble discusses in lofty vein the relations between poetry and religion, he does a disservice to his general argument by claiming that Shakespeare and Spenser were heralds of seventeenth century Anglicanism, of the 'healthier religious spirit which was destined to prevail in the reign of Charles.'

Shakespeare, the greatest of them all, the delight of all the world, especially of young England, did he effect nothing, who sometimes by jest, sometimes by bitter satire, lashed chiefly those Very mischiefs which, in the age immediately following, were to work such fatal harm in our State? who always seems to be in his best and happiest mood when some hypocrite in religion, or some disloyal subject is being put to shame.³

And though Shakespeare was a Tudor royalist, it is a profound misinterpretation of his attitude to cite him in support of the dictum that 'the poet, being little in har-

¹*Praelectiones*, II, 404-7.

²*Praelccthes*, II, 812: 'Quid Shaksperusille ... majestatem.'

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mony with the ignorant many, will more naturally lean towards the political party which is furthest removed from them.' When Keble quotes from *Richard 77*, Act iv, i, 121-3, the lines in which the King repudiates the right of subjects to judge God's anointed,¹ he wrests to his own political purposes a passage which has a purely dramatic significance.

With Keble's lectures the epoch in the history of the Oxford Chair of Poetry begun by Trapp came to a memorable close. He had thrown over the first Professor's hostility to tragi-comedy, and he had recognized the essential kinship of Shakespeare and the tragic poets of Greece. But we are sensible of the eighteenth century academic tradition in the weight given in the lectures to other than literary values as well as in the compulsory use of the Latin tongue. This compulsion had been abolished before 1857, when Matthew Arnold began his historic tenure of the chair. The writer of the Sonnet on Shakespeare beginning

Others abide our question. Thou art free,

which had appeared in *The Strayed Reveller and other Poems* (1849), might fitly have taken the dramatist as the subject of his lectures. But his chosen themes *On Translating Homer* and *On the Study of Celtic Literature* were as far removed as those of Trapp or Keble, under the older dispensation, from the study of Shakespeare, though he used passages from the dramatist to illustrate 'the grand style.'

It was at Cambridge in 1863, almost exactly 300 years after the dramatist's birth, that the modern era of academic Shakespearean interpretation was begun. In that year W. G. Clark and W. Aldis Wright issued the first

¹ *Praelecttione*, I, 222-3. Keble gives a paraphrase in Greek iambics of the Shakespearean lines.

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volume of the 'Cambridge Shakespeare/ with a text based 'on a thorough collation of the four folios, and of all the quarto editions of the separate plays, and of subsequent editions and commentaries/ At last one of the ancient Universities had recognized its special obligations and opportunities. 'It was thought says the Preface, 'that Cambridge afforded facilities for the execution of the task such as few other places could boast of. The Shakespearian collection given by Capell to the Library of Trinity College supplied a mass of material almost unrivalled in amount and value and in some parts unique/ The edition was completed in nine volumes in 1866, and two years later the same editors, enlisting in the service of Oxford,¹ began the publication of the 'Clarendon Press' single plays which was continued after 1874 by Aldis Wright alone. In 1894—exactly 300 years after the publication of the 1594 quarto of *Titus Andronicus*, the earliest known issue of a play included in the first folio—there appeared the Oxford one-volume Shakespeare, edited by W. J. Craig, and furnished, like Hanmer's earlier Oxford edition, with a glossary. With the inclusion of this volume among the series of 'Oxford Poets' and 'Standard Authors' the University has made an official palinode to the shade of the dramatist for its earlier hostility or neglect. Its extensive and fruitful twentieth century contributions to Shakespearean study, which have been glanced at in the Introduction, fall outside the scope of this survey.

¹ Four years previously, in 1864, the Bodleian had acquired the Aldine edition of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, with an abbreviated form of Shakespeare's signature of doubtful authenticity, and a note signed T.N. (? Thomas Nash) 1682, stating 'the book was once Will. Shaksperes.'

CHAPTER IV

'HAMLET' & 'RICHARD II' ON THE HIGH SEAS

THE last play in MS. Egerton 1994, *The Lanchinge of the Mary or The seamans honest wyfe*, was written by Walter Mountfort, an official of the East India Company, during his return voyage from the East in 1632 on the good ship *Blessing*. While searching the India Office records for details of Mountfort's career, I have been led to re-examine the evidence for connecting another of the Company's ships with the performance of two plays by a greater dramatist than Mountfort. The records of the acting of *Hamlet* on September 4, 1607, and (probably) March 31, 1608, and of *Richard II* on September 30, 1607, on board Captain William Keeling's ship the *Dragon* have been denounced as forgeries. I wish to set forth here the very strong case for their authenticity gathered from manuscript sources at the India Office and the British Museum.

The entries concerning the performances were first published by Thomas Rundall in 1849. He edited for the Hakluyt Society a volume of *Narratives of Voyages towards the North-West*, with an 'Appendix of Supplementary Notes'. The first of these Notes was on 'Shipping' under the four heads of 'Ships, Officers, etc.' 'Discipline' 'Stores' and 'Armament.' Rundall ends the section on Discipline as follows:

Opposed to gaming, the drama appears to have been considered a beneficent source of recreation; and the following curious and interesting entries connected with the subject occur in the journal of the *Dragon* (Captain Keeling), bound with the *Hector* (Captain Hawkins) and the *Consent* towards the East Indies.

1607.

SEPTEMBER 4.—[At Serra Leona.]—Towards night,

' HAMLET AND 'RICHARD IF

the kinges interp'ter came, and brought me a letter from the Portingall, wher in (like the faction) he offered me all kindly services. The bearer is a man of maruailous redie witt, and speakes in eloquent Portugues. He layt aboard me.

SEPTEMBER 5.—I sent the interpreter, according to his desier, aboard the *Hector*, wher he brooke fast, and after came aboard mee, *wher we gaue the tragedie of Hamlett*.

SEPTEMBER 30.—Captain Hawkins dined with me, *wher my companions acted Kinge Richard the Second*.

SEPTEMBER 31.—I envited Captain Hawkins to a ffishe dinner, *and had Hamlet acted aboard me: wch I p'mitt to keepe my people from idlenes and vnlawfull games', or sleepe*.

It is evident that September 31 is a misprint. In the India Office copy of the Hakluyt Society volume, which originally belonged to the East India Company, and contains the official note: 'Received from the Marine Department, 1849,' the date has been corrected (probably by Rundall himself) to March 31, 1608.

In a footnote to p. 231 of his volume Rundall gives 'East India MSS.' as the reference for these extracts, and adds that Keeling's journal 'is printed in Purchas, but with many omissions, of which the above extracts form a part/ Purchas himself tells us that in including in his *Pilgrims* (i, iii, 188) Keeling's Journal, 'written at sea-leasure, very voluminous,' he has 'beene bold to so shorten [it] as to expresse only the most necessary observations for Sea or Land Affaires.' References to dramatic performances would certainly not come under this head.

The extracts quoted by Rundall show correspondences in diction and other details with the abbreviated version of Keeling's diary printed by Purchas. 'The Portingall,' i.e. the Portuguese sea-captain, offered Keeling all kindly services, 'like the faction,' i.e., after the manner of that set of

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persons. Similarly in the entry given by Purchas for May 31, 1609, Keeling tells that the emissaries of the Dutch Vice-Admiral 'after many Italian-like complements,' delivered him a note of an unsatisfactory type. In both cases the insincere professions of individuals are noted as typical of a foreign class or race.

The bearer of the letter, it is noted, 'speakes in eloquent Portugues.' Similarly on July 26, 1608, Keeling notes that a messenger from the Governor of the Priaman islands 'spake good Portuguze.' He mentions later that this man lay 'aboord me,' i.e., stayed the night in his ship. The same phrase is used of the bearer of the letter from the Portingall, except that the form is 'layt' instead of 'lay'. The different parts of 'lie' and 'lay' are not infrequently confused in Elizabethan English, but more probably Rundall, as in the case of 'September 31,' left a misprint uncorrected.

The point has to be emphasized that Rundall quoted the extracts merely to illustrate a feature of 'discipline' on board ship. He was making no attempt to contribute to dramatic history or to win reputation as a Shakespearean discoverer. Though he called the entries 'curious and interesting,' he probably did not fully realize their unique character. If he invented them, there was never a more motiveless forgery or a more dishonourable one. He would have been flagrantly disloyal to the East India Company, of which he was an official, by falsifying its records, and to the Hakluyt Society, of whose Council he became a member in the year when this volume was published. Nor was the log of a sea-captain the kind of document likely to have been tampered with by any earlier Shakespearean forger.

Twenty-eight years after the publication of Rundall's book, and about seventeen years after his death, Sir

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Clements Markham edited for the Hakluyt Society (1877) *The Voyages of Sir James Lancaster*, with 'Abstracts of Journals of Voyages to the East Indies during the Seventeenth Century preserved in the India Office. Among these abstracts were three relating to the voyage of Keeling and Hawkins. In his introduction (pp. ix-x) Markham quotes Rundall's extracts, and adds:

Now it is obvious that these entries are of very great literary importance. . . . *They have been abstracted from the manuscript volume since 1849*, together with all the pages containing entries between August 30, 1607, and February 19, 1607 (8). . . . Owing to the robbery of these leaves of the manuscript, there is now no contemporary evidence of the interesting fact that the play of *Hamlet* was acted by Captain Keeling's sailors at Sierra Leone in the autumn of 1607. The only evidence is the quotation from the original document made by Mr Rundall before the robbery took place.

Markham evidently thought (mistakenly, as will appear) that the mutilated MS. was Keeling's own journal. His use of the word 'robbery' suggested some sort of foul play, but he did not cast any doubts upon the authenticity of Rundall's extracts. In a footnote he says that the *Hamlet* quarto of 1605 'was no doubt the one used by Captain 'Keeling's men.' It was, however, apparently on the basis of Markham's statement that Sir Sidney Lee in his *Life of William Shakespeare*, p. 369 (1898), included Rundall's extracts among nineteenth-century Shakespearean forgeries. Keeling's manuscript journal,' he stated, 'is still at the India Office, but the leaves that should contain these entries are now, and have long been missing, from it.¹ This imputation of forgery was challenged by Mr William Foster, who in *Notes and Queries*, July 21, 1900 (pp. 41-2), made it clear that the manuscript from which the entries between

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August 30, 1607, and February 19, 1607 (8), are missing is not Reeling's log on the *Dragon* but the journal of a merchant on board Hawkins's ship the *Hector*. The loss of the leaves from this book is doubtless accidental and has no bearing on the authenticity of Rundall's quotations from Reeling's log, the fate of which will be discussed below. Mr Foster also pointed out that there was no reason to question Rundall's good faith or competence, and that deception on his part would have been purposeless.¹ His important article apparently escaped Sir Sidney Lee's attention, for in the 're-written and enlarged' edition of *The Life of William Shakespeare* (1915) the paragraph branding Rundall's quotations as forgeries reappeared unaltered.² A disbelief in their authenticity is thus becoming established as part of the orthodox Shakespearean tradition.

I have therefore thought it necessary to examine the problem in more detail than has hitherto been done. Who was 'the Kinges interpreter' before whom *Hamlet* is stated to have been acted by Reeling's companions on September 5, 1607? Who was 'the Portingall' (i.e., Portuguese) from whom he brought a letter? These questions, so far as I know, have not yet been asked, and the answers to them are remarkable. They are to be found by a collation of the manuscript journals of Reeling's and Hawkins's voyage. Of these the following are preserved at the India Office.

I. *The first leaf of keeling's log on the 'Dragon'* (March 3 to April 17, 1607), mutilated and only partly legible.

¹ Mr Foster further drew attention to the interesting fact that on a spare sheet at the end of the journal by Benjamin Greene, a factor on board the *Darling* on Sir Henry Middleton's voyage, 1610-13, the dramatis persona and opening lines of a play entitled *Corns* appear. But the date and circumstances of the entry are unknown, and it may have been added to the journal after it had left Greene's hands.

² In the latest edition (1922) Sir Sidney mentions that the authenticity of the entries has been upheld by Mr Foster and myself, and adds that they 'lack extent documentary authority, and their modern phrasing gives an impression of spuriousness.' But, as I have pointed out above, their phrasing is similar to that in passages of Reeling's log quoted by Purchas.

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In a catalogue of 'Damaged Papers' compiled in the East India House Register Office, and dated April 25, 1822, this leaf is called a 'Remnant.' But the bundles of 'Damaged Papers' were in the library of the East India House, and with its water-tight arrangements the rest of the log or a transcript may have been in the Marine Department where logs were kept, or it may have turned up between 1822 and 1849, when Rundall made use of it,¹ and afterwards 'formed part of those papers of the East India Company whose luckless fate it was to be destroyed or cast out of their homes in Leadenhall Street to wander through the world.' Thus the diaries of Richard Cocks and William Hawkins, formerly among the East India House MSS., have found their way into the British Museum, the latter *via* second-hand booksellers in Ipswich. The journal of John Knight (1606) was found, as Markham relates, 'in the India Office amongst a heap of waste paper, and was thus rescued from destruction.' Rundall himself had been allowed to keep documents in his own house for many years, and some of them were missing after his death.

2. *The journal of John Hearne and William Finch, two merchants on the 'Dragon'* (March 8, 1607, to June 19, 1608).

3. *The journal of a merchant on the 'Hector'* (March 4, 1607, to March 12, 1608).

It is from this journal that the leaves for the period between August 30, 1607, and February 19, 1608, are missing. Markham must have examined it very superficially when he identified it with Keeling's log. On the first leaf the diarist asks his readers:

to expecte noe other matter than that which by right

¹ The diary of Richard Cocks was not identified till 1824. 'Accident... had distributed the fragments to different catalogues, where they lay concealed under mistaken titles.'

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may be challenged from one of my breedinge, beinge a stranger to sea affayres and a sojourner only in my owne native soyle, out of which I entendinge by the permission of God to departe towards the Easterne endes of the earth I came aboard the good shipp called the *Hector* at Eryth, wheare she Rode at anchor the 4th day of March, 1606, being Wednesday, where I delivered dyveres goodes belonging to the Company of marchantes tradinge to the Easte Indeies, which weare committed to the charge of Mr Symon dyckinson and my self, with order to lade the same a board the *Draggon*, *Hector* and *Concent*.

There are also two logs at the British Museum:

4. *Captain Hawkins's log on the 'Hector'* (March 28, 1607, to September 28, 1609), much damaged and partly illegible.

The log is that of a typical sailor, interested primarily in navigation. He dismisses in a few curt words the memorable incidents of the ships' six weeks' visit to Sierra Leone. The last thing he would mention is a theatrical performance.

5. *The journal of Anthony Marlowe, a merchant on the 'Hector'* (March 12, 1607, to June 22, 1608), with the leaves for the period March 12, to July 14, 1607, missing.

It is 2 and 5 that are most helpful for our present purpose, and, as Hearne and Finch were on board the *Dragon* with Keeling, who was 'General' of the expedition, their narrative is of primary importance. They record that on August 18, 1607, while the ships were lying off Sierra Leone, Keeling sent one of his men, John Rogers, who spoke Portuguese, with presents to the principal native Chief or King, 'their great commander called Captain Borea.' On the 20th Rogers returned, 'having beene by him very well interteyned' and having 'mett with a negro called *lucas fernandez* which spake the portingall language verry well, and was interpreter to the Kinge, by

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whom hee learned many things.' On the 2yth Hawkins visited King Borea in the hope of procuring 'some cattell,' and was informed by Lucas Fernandez 'that there was neyther cattell, sheepe nor goates to bee hadd, but ffor hens and plantins hee would procure all that he could; also that he could helpe vs with some eliphants teeth but no quantity/.

The merchant on the *Hector* adds in 3 some important details about this visit: 'Our captaine had much speech with Boreah by Lucas the Interpreter, which Interpreter seemed very sensible and plentiful! in Spannish complementes both in speech and action, and verey humaine in his cariage, whose sister was wife to Boreah , . . this Lucas ffernandus sat with him at meate, though his owne brother was not permitted to doe, at supper with our Captaine/ On the following day, the 28th, the English voyagers were much excited by the advent in the bay of a 'small sayle,' which tried to avoid them. Keeling on the 2gth sent Hippon, the master of the *Dragon*, to ask the vessel whence she came. What followed may best be told in the words of Hearne and Finch:

They answered that shee was a portingall barke belonging to the Isles of Cape Verde, of the burthen of 40 tonns, laden with ryce and sauk comminge from St Jago. The master of hir was *Bartolmew Andrea*, this portingall doth use continuall trade in this place and may goe on land as freely as the country people, hee hath in sondry places built him houses for himself. . . . Mr Hippon would gladly have gone aborde him to have talked with him about conveyance of letters ffor England, but the portingall desired him not to come aborde him vntill hee was come to his houses within the bay, and then hee should bee welcome.

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Accordingly, on September 1 Hawkins and Hippon tried to find Andrea, but in vain, 'the place beeinge so ffull of small Islands that it was a thinge impossible.' They therefore

put over to the southwards to the town of Captain *borea*[^] and at our coming ashoare *lucasfernandez* mett vs att the water syde promising the Captain to come over to our shipps and eyther to bringe the portingall with him, or a letter ffrom him whereby we should know what to trust vnto, so we retourned to our shipps.

This *negro lucas* is a Xian and cann argue well of his ffaith, only hee is ledd by the delusions of the ffryers accordinge to the popish religion.

On September 4 towards evening Lucas, with three negroes came aboard the *Dragon*. 'Hee brought with him a letter from Bartolmeo Andrea vnto our gennerall. he with the rest hadde very kynde interteynment aborde.' Anthony Marlowe in his journal says that in his missive Andrea 'offered curtesye, requyringe by letter to vnderstand the Generall's mynde.' This is very like the phrase used about the letter by Keeling, 'Wher in . . . he offered me all kindly services.

We are now able, in fact, to interpret the entries for September 4 and 5 quoted by Rundall from Keeling's log in the light thrown upon them by the foregoing extracts from other journals of the voyage. Lucas Fernandez, the Christian Portuguese-speaking negro, had from the first shown himself friendly to the English visitors, and had given them valuable information, though the Portuguese had already a footing in Sierra Leone, and had established trade relations there. He was now rendering Keeling a service of the highest importance by trying to induce the captain of the Portuguese barque, who was avoiding con-

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tact with the English, to convey to Europe letters for the East India Company reporting 'the estate of our voyage to this day.' He was also the brother-in-law and favourite of King Borea. It was natural that Keeling should receive him with all honours when he came aboard the *Dragon* on the evening of September 4. And it was quite in the fashion of the period that the 'Very kynde interteynment' of a semi-royal personage should include the performance of a play. The expedition consisted of over 300 men, including well-educated officers of the Company and merchants, some of whom doubtless (like Walter Mountfort on a later voyage) had theatrical interests, and had taken part in the school plays which were so prominent a feature of Tudor life. Three quartos of *Hamlet* had already been published, and even a single copy on board could supply 'parts' for the actors. *Othello* would perhaps have been more appropriate to the occasion, but no edition of it appeared till 1622. It may be assumed that Lucas had John Rogers or some other linguist near him to interpret the action in Portuguese. In any case it would have been as intelligible to him as a Latin play, acted at Oxford or Cambridge, to many a courtier in the train of Elizabeth or James. Has there ever been a stranger episode in stage-history than this shipboard performance of *Hamlet*, 'breaking the silence of the seas'⁷ near Sierra Leone in honour of Keeling's dusky guest? It is incredible that anyone should have invented such an incident, had it not actually taken place.

It is not surprising that Hearne and Finch, though they were on the *Dragon*, do not mention the performance. The diarists of the voyage are almost completely silent about life on shipboard. They confine themselves, as a rule, to recording facts and experiences of importance to seamen,

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traders and explorers. It is only Keeling, as responsible for the general discipline of his company, who mentions a domestic event of this kind. The sole episode chronicled by Hearne and Finch on September 5 is an afternoon elephant hunt. It is curious that Keeling (if Purchas quotes him correctly) puts this exciting event on the 7th, while Marlowe, though his journal is a full one at this time, does not mention it at all—a proof that little is to be made of the *argumentum a silentio*.

Similarly Marlowe, as well as Finch and Hearne and Hawkins himself, has only entries about wind and weather and the position of the ships on September 30, when Keeling records that Hawkins dined with him, and that *Richard II* was performed. It was, of course, a very popular play, of which three editions (including the one recently brought to light by Mr A. W. Pollard) had already appeared,¹

It has been mentioned that the correction in the East India Office copy of Rundall's volume dates the second performance of *Hamlet* on the *Dragon*, March 31, 1608, after Hawkins had been entertained to fish dinner. Both Hawkins and Marlowe relate that on November 27, 1607, a rationing scheme had been instituted on the ships by which 'from that day forward 2 meales of flesh euery week should be abated, and instead thereof other meate allowed which would not so well keep as the flesh.' Marlowe also states that on March 30, 1608, he was sent by Hawkins to ask Keeling to come on board the *Hector* 'to eate parte of dolffynes we had taken,' a sign 'of the mercye of God to vs in sending vs ffreshe ffishe to refresh vs longe seabeaten travellers.' He further mentions that on the following day,

¹ There were, of course, various plays on *Richard II*, and there was an old play on *Hamlet*. But there can be little doubt that in 1607 Keeling's references are to Shakespeare's dramas.

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March 31, Hawkins with the Master of the *Hector* and himself (though Hawkins has no entry on that date) went aboard the *Dragon*. How natural that Keeling in his turn should give them a fish dinner followed by acting, which he permitted 'to keepe my people from idleness and vn-lawfull games or sleepe.'

These words were doubtless written for the benefit of the Directors of the East India Company, who in their commission to him had forbidden 'diceing or other vn-lawfull games,' and who would read his log on his return. He had not, however, to trouble himself about King James's company of actors, who would not have tolerated unauthorized performances of their plays on English soil. But on the high seas *Hamlet* and *Richard II* could be staged without interference. Keeling's companions were thus probably the only amateurs who acted any of Shakespeare's plays during his lifetime.

The long-lost entry by Gabriel Harvey about *Hamlet* in his copy of Speght's Chaucer, the genuineness of which had been widely doubted, has recently been rediscovered by Dr Moore Smith. The entries in the Revels Account books noting Court performances of *Othello* and *Measure for Measure* in 1604, and of *The Tempest* and *The Winter's Tale* in 1611, which were thought to be forgeries by Cunningham, have been proved to be authentic by Mr Ernest Law.¹ I believe that the suspicion cast on Keeling's entries is equally groundless. And at a time when our mercantile marine has been covering itself with glory on every sea, it is an act of *offpitas* to reclaim for it the proud distinction of having been the pioneer in carrying Shakespearean drama into the uttermost parts of the earth.

¹ Mr Law's case is not invalidated, in my opinion, by the attack of Mrs Slopes in *The Seventeenth Century Accounts of the Masters of the Revel* (1922).

CHAPTER V

A SEVENTEENTH CENTURY THEATRICAL REPERTOIRE

THE British Museum Egerton MS. 1994, a folio volume of 349 leaves, containing fifteen plays, is well-known to scholars. Their attention was first prominently called to it by A. H. Bullen in the second volume of his *Collection of Old English Plays* (1883). In this volume Mr Bullen printed two of the plays in the manuscript, *Dicke of Devonshire* and *The Lady Mother*, and in an appendix he gave an account of the contents of the manuscript as a whole, with short illustrative quotations. In the third volume (1884) he printed from the manuscript a Charlemagne romance-drama, to which he gave the title of *The Distracted Emperor*. In the fourth volume (1885) he included another play from the manuscript, *The Captives*.

It must always rank as one of Bullen's greatest services to Elizabethan scholarship that he was the first to recognize the importance of this Egerton MS. But he was concerned with it, in a sense, incidentally. He was not dealing with the manuscript as a whole (except for the summary of its contents in the appendix), but merely using it as one of the sources of his collection. He, therefore, did not enter into any detailed examination of the problems raised by it from the point of view of bibliography or of stage history.

It is somewhat surprising that in the forty years that have passed since Bullen's Collection began to be issued, the manuscript has attracted so little attention from scholars. So far as I know, only one further play from it has hitherto been printed. In 1870, Halliwell-Phillipps had issued eleven copies of a historical drama, which has no title in the manuscript, but which he called *A Tragedy of King Richard the Second, concluding with the Murder of the Duke of Gloucester at Calais*. In 1899 this Play was

EGERTON MS. 1994

printed from the manuscript by Prof. Wolfgang Keller in the *Jahrbuch* of the German Shakespeare Society, under the title of *Richard II, Erster Teil*, with an introduction and textual notes. Two of Bullen's plays have recently been re-edited by American scholars. In 1920 Prof. F. L. Schoell of the University of Chicago, published, under the title of *Charlemagne*, a new edition of the play which Bullen had called *The Distracted Emperor*. In 1921 Prof. A. C. Judson, of the University of Texas, brought out an edition of *The Captives*, with a number of variations from Bullen's text.

From an examination of the volume as a whole, I believe that I can now throw some additional light on its *provenance* and its place in stage history. The manuscript was bought by the Museum at the sale of Lord Charlemont's library in 1865. Sir George Warner thought that it was one of the volumes of manuscript plays bequeathed to Dulwich College by the actor, William Cartwright, the younger, towards the end of the seventeenth century. His theory was that it was among the documents borrowed from the college for long periods by Edmund Malone, and that Malone had lent it to his friend, Lord Charlemont, who never returned it. I think that from internal evidence I can now bring some support to the view that the volume was one of Cartwright's legacies.

The volume contains the following plays:¹ (i) *The Elder Brother*, (2) *Dicke of Devonshire*, (3) *The Captives*, (4) *Calisto*, (5) *Edmond Ironside*, (6) *Charlemagne*, (7) *The Fatall Maryage or A second Lucreatya*, (8) *Thomas of Woodstock?* (9) *The Lady Mother*, (10) an allegorical Masque,

¹ Titles are wanting in the manuscript for 1, 3, 6, 8 and 10. Each play is written in a different hand except 3 and 4.

² This is the play edited by Halliwell-Phillips and Keller, which I prefer to call by the name of the chief character. See chapter vii.

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(i i) *The Two Noble Ladies*, (12) *The Tragedy of Nero*, (13) *The Poors Mans Comfort*, (14) *Loves Changelinges Change* (15) *The Lanchinge of the Mary or The Seamans honest wyfe*. All are anonymous, but in the case of the concluding piece, the dramatist's initials (W. M.), are given, and we have thus been able to identify him as Walter Mountfort. There is no doubt about the authorship in several other cases. *The Elder Brother* is Fletcher's comedy, first printed in 1637. From Sir Henry Herbert's office-book we learn that *The Captives* was by Thomas Heywood and was acted by the Cockpit Company on September 3, 1624. *Calisto*, which follows it in the manuscript in the same hand, is a cento of episodes from Heywood's *The Golden Age* (1611) and *The Silver Age* (1613). *The Poore Mans Comfort*, printed in 1655, is by Robert Daborne. Bullen claimed *Dicke of Devonshire* doubtfully for Heywood, and *The Lady Mother* certainly for Glapthorne. He also suggested Chapman as the author of *Charlemagne*, and Prof. Schoell has supported this attribution with many parallels of thought and style from Chapman's works.¹

Although the Egerton MS. itself is no guide to the authorship of the plays, it contains, in certain cases, important information about the performances. At the end of *The Lady Mother* there is an official note in the handwriting of William Blagrave, the Deputy to the Master of the Revels: 'This play call'd the Lady Mot[her]²(the Reformacons obseru'd) may [be] Acted October the xvth, 1635.' the *Masque*, which (as Bullen has pointed out) includes a passage from Chapman's *Byron's Tragedy*, has beneath the *nomina Actorum* the date, 'August 5, 1643.' This is after the outbreak of the Civil War, and can

¹ But see below, p. 101.

² Part of the leaf is torn away.

EGERTON MS. 1994

scarcely be that of a first (if of any) performance. *The Two Noble Ladies* is described as 'A Tragecomicall Historic often tymes acted with approbation At the Red Bull in St Johns Streete By the Company of y^e Reuells.' The last piece in the volume. *The Lanchinge of the Mary*¹ or *The Seamans honest wyfe*, has at the end the following official notes by Sir Henry Herbert:

This Play called 'y^e Seamans Honest wife,' all y^e Oaths left out in y^e action as they are crost in y^e booke & all other Reformations strictly obserud may bee acted, not otherwyse. This 27th June 1633. Henry Herbert.

I commande your Bookekeeper to present mee with a fairer Copy hereafter and to leaue out all oathes, prophanness & publick Ribaldry as he will answer it at his perill H. Herbert.

It is evident from the official notes by Blagrave and Herbert, and the consequent alterations that have been made in the manuscripts, that we have here the original play-house copies of *The Lady Mother* and *The Lanchinge of the Mary*. And this is the case, also, I believe, with at least five other plays in the volume, *The Captives*, *Edmond Ironside*, *Charlemagne*, *Thomas of Woodstock*, and *The Two Noble Ladies*. All these pieces contain a number of annotations by hands other than those of the original scribes, bearing upon the performances at the theatre. In the first place many passages are marked for omission, either by being bracketed or being scored through. In some cases this has been done to meet the objections of the Master of the Revels,² in others to shorten the piece for the 'two hours' traffic of our stage.'

Additional entries and exits have also been marked, and directions have been inserted about music, properties and

¹ Sullen reads by mistake *the May*; *Old Plays*, II, 432.

² See below, Chapters VII and IX.

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stage paraphernalia generally. Thus in *The Captives*, at the beginning of Act I, Scene ii, a 'chaire' is entered in the margin, doubtless for the Abbot, who here enters 'with his covent of Fryars.'¹ At the beginning of Act i, iii, where the original manuscript has the stage-direction 'A greate Tempestuous Storme,' a later hand has added in the margin 'Thunder,' and has repeated it about a dozen lines lower down. At the opening of Act II the same hand has added 'Storme contynewed.' Towards the close of the scene the original stage-direction is 'The bell ringes to mattens.' The later hand has inserted 'Bell ring. as an instruction to the member of the company responsible, two lines higher up. At the beginning of II, ii, 'Tempeste' and 'Thunder' have been added. In III, i, Lord de Auerne (f. 61) calls for 'Som pen and inke.' To make sure of their being to hand, the theatrical manager has added a note about sixteen lines before (f. 60), 'Ink: paper ready,' and, when the servant Dennis enters at Auerne's call, has added 'with pen Inke & paper.' At the beginning of iv, ii, Dennis enters with a Friar, who has been strangled, on his back. The direction is added 'from aboue,' and there are further marginal additions in the same scene connected with this episode, e.g., 'carry him vp,' and 'Fryer sett vp and left.'

In *Charlemagne*[^] where the original stage-direction (f. 119^v) is 'Loude musique,' another hand has added 'Hoboyes.' On folio 125 'Softe musique' has been added, on folios 119 and 134^v 'fflorish,' and on folio 135, towards the close of the piece, 'Deadmarche.'²

¹ This marginal entry is omitted in Bullen's edition. Prof. Judson, in his edition, records it wrongly in his textual notes as 'Chaires.' In a number of these notes Prof. Judson, working from photographs, has failed to distinguish between the author's stage-directions and those added by the prompter.

² Neither Sullen nor Schoell, in their editions of the play, has made any distinction between the original stage-directions, presumably inserted by the author, and these additions by the theatrical manager.

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Some of the original stage directions have been duplicated by the prompter, e.g., on f. 131^v, 'Enter Ganelon alofte,' is repeated on the opposite margin as 'Ent[er] aloft Ganelon.'

In Act in, i (f. 127), there is a marginal note, either by the Censor or at his direction, 'Read Preists/ and in the text 'preists' is substituted for 'reverend prelatts.' A few lines above a passage is bracketed and crossed out:

O nowe religion teache me to beleieve
Another god; or I must forfayte heauen
And worshypp what I see, thys happye creature.
Nowe courtiers flatterye cannot keepe my sence
From knowinge what I feele, for I am weake.

This deletion is probably also due to the Censor. But there are other passages bracketed, apparently only for the sake of brevity.

The scribe's own corrections are comparatively few. The most striking is near the end of Act iv (f. 131'), where the word 'musquett' is altered (in different ink but by apparently the same hand) to 'crossbowe/' on account of the anachronism. On f. 127^v 'alowe' has been altered to 'will take,' also apparently an author's correction. But the script bears no resemblance to that of the receipt by Chapman on July 17, 1599 (B.M. MS. Addit. 30262, f. 66), nor are the italic stage directions like his italic signature of an IOU to Henslowe on October 24, 1598. If the MS. is autograph, Chapman can scarcely be the author.

In *Thomas of Woodstock*, at the beginning of Act II (f. 166), where the original direction is 'Trumpetts sound,' in the margin 'fflorish' has been added, and the same addition is made elsewhere in the manuscript. In the same scene (f. 166^v) there is a marginal addition 'Booke.' This is explained about twenty lines lower, where King Richard

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turns to his favourite, Busshey, and asks him: 'How now what readst thou, Bushey?' and he answers, 'The monument of English Cronicles my lord.' The manager of the company evidently intended that there should be no mistake about Busshey having the book at the proper time. In the following scene 'Petitions,' a 'Mace' (f. 167") and a 'Paper' (f. 168) are noted in the margin as properties that are successively required, and in Act in, i, 'Blankes' (f. 170") are a similar reminder of the 'blanke charters' that are shown by the Chief Justice to the King. In Act iv, ii, before the entrance of a 'mask,' there have been added the marginal directions 'Anticke flourish Cornetts: Dances musique: Cornetts/ After the mask, before the entrance of a troop of soldiers, there is the note (f. 179) 'A Drome afare of,'⁷ and there are two later notes of a kindred type. At the top off. 179^v the note 'Shreevs Ready' is a direction to the actors impersonating the Shreeves of Kent, who enter about a dozen lines later.

In *The Lady Mother*, Act i, ii, the opening dialogue between Bucket and Crackby is marked for omission, perhaps because of references to warlike operations and a jeering allusion to the Dutch. Hence the stage-direction 'Enter Sucket and Crackby' is altered to 'Enter Sir Gefferie and Bunch.'

In *The Two Noble Ladies*, which contains unusually full stage directions by the original scribe, a number of these directions are duplicated (for no obvious reason) by the later hand, which also adds a few further notes, e.g., 'Thunder,' 'Low Larum,' 'Low March within.'

But what is of greatest interest is that four of the plays, *The Captives*, *Thomas of Woodstock*, *The Two Noble Ladies*, and *Edmond Ironside*, contain, in addition to the other notes and directions, the names here and there of actors who played

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minor parts. In his edition of *The Captives* Bullen quotes the entries in the margin of that play, but curiously misinterprets one of them. In Act in, ii (f. 61^v), some 'country fellowes' are introduced. A few lines above in the margin there is the entry 'Gib: Stage: Taylor,' i.e., the players who are to impersonate these 'fellowes.' Then follows another marginal note, now mutilated, which appears to be '[G]ibs. cunt[rymen]' following. 'Gibs'. or 'Gibs/ is an abbreviation of 'Gibson,' whose full name is given in Act v, i (f. 69), where he appears as a 'Factor'¹ Bullen, who is followed by Mr Tucker Murray,² prints 'Stage Taylor' as if it were the name of one actor. But 'Stage' is an abbreviation of the 'Stagekeeper' (or Stagekeepers), who, in addition to his other services, took 'mute' parts. In v, ii (f. 70), we have the marginal note 'Stagekeepers as a guard/ Here the word is spelt in full. Taylor was a minor member of the company.

In *The Two Noble Ladies* the names of the actors mentioned in *The Captives* reappear with several others. In II, i (f. 228^v) Tay[lor] and the Stagek[eeper] form a 'guard,' and in in, i (f. 233), with the addition of Gib[son], they are 'souldiers.' In the same scene 'a Lord of Babilon with his sword drawn' is impersonated by Anth[ony] Brew. It is he who as 'Anth[ony]' had appeared with Gibs[on] in i, 4 (f. 227) as two of three soldiers who are mentioned; and again in in, iii (f. 235[^], 'Anth[ony]' and Gib[son] enter as 'two souldiers dragging' a lady. In III, iii (f. 234^v) a 'Spirrit' is impersonated by Geo[rge] Stut[field],³ and

¹ I have also found Gibion's name in an earlier scene, I, II, where Bullen has overlooked it. The marginal note is 'Jack: Gibsen' (f. 54). As several characters enter, I think that 'Jack:' (whether a Christian name or an abbreviation of Jackson) stands for another actor. Gibson's Christian name seems to have begun with 'H.' See below p. 104, note.

² *English Dramatic Companies*, I, i, 259.

³ I have to thank Mr D. T. B. Wood, of the Manuscripts Department of the British Museum, for help in interpreting this and some other abbreviations.

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later in the scene (f. 235'), Stutfpeld] and M[^r] Bond' appear as ²'Tritons.'

In *Edmond Ironside*, Act II (f. 104^v), Stutf[ield] and Grad[ell] are the young sons of two English nobles. In Act in (f. 107) the latter actor appears as Herald, and his name is given in full as 'Mr. Gradell.' On the same leaf 'May' is noted as playing the part of a 'Balife,' and both in Acts ii and III (ff. 105' and 107) Gibs[on] is a messenger.¹

In *Thomas of Woodstock* i, i (f. i62)G[r]ad[ell] has been written over part of the direction prefixed to l. 124. He evidently played the small part of 'Lord Mayre'. In III, ii (f. 172^v), 'George' (who may be identified with George Stutf-field) is noted in the part of a servant, and in iv, ii (f. 178'), where the marginal stage direction is Ser:[vant], the later hand has erased 'Ser:' and substituted the name of the actor, 'Toby.'²

It is clear from the interlacing of the actors' names that at any rate *The Captives*, *The Two Noble Ladies*, *Edmond Ironside* and *Thomas of Woodstock* were played by the same company. It does not, of course, follow that the actors, whose names have been preserved, were the original creators of their (usually very minor) roles. It will be shown that those of them whom we can identify 'flourished' in the third and fourth decades of the seventeenth century. But on internal evidence of style *Edmond Ironside* and, more doubtfully, *Thomas of Woodstock* seem to belong to a considerably earlier period.³ *The Two Noble Ladies* states on the title-page that it was 'often times acted . . . At the Red Bull . . . By the Company of y^e Reuells.'

¹ In both cases H [cnry?] seems to be prefixed, but the eailie entry is indistinct, and the latter slightly torn.

² Probably, like George, a Christian name, but 'Edward Toby' is mentioned among the members of the Queen's Revels Company' in a licence granted by the Deputy Master of the Revels on April 9, 1623. Cf. Tucker Murray, *English Dramatic Companies*, I, 362.

³ See below, Chaps VI and VII.

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But none of the actors' names quoted above appears in the list of 'the chiefe players at the Red Bull called the players of the Revels,' given by Sir H. Herbert in his office-book under the date 1622.¹ In the same year Herbert speaks of the Princess Elizabeth's men as the players of the Cockpit or Phoenix in Drury Lane. They were probably acting there in September, 1624, when Heywood's *Captives* was produced, but it does not follow (as Mr Tucker Murray infers²) that Gibson and Taylor, whose names appear in the manuscript, were members of the original cast. In any case they are not mentioned by Herbert in a list of 'the chiefe of them at the Phoenix in 1622.'³

It is not till ten years afterwards that we find the names of some of the actors mentioned in the Egerton MS. appearing in a play-list. Shackerley Marmion's *Holland's Leaguer* was entered on January 26, 1632, as having been 'lately and often acted' by Prince Charles's men at Salisbury Court Theatre. Prince Charles was the infant heir to the throne (born May 29, 1630), who had become nominal patron of the famous company known successively as The Lord Admiral's, Prince Henry's, and the Palsgrave's men. *Holland's Leaguer* contains a list of sixteen actors and their parts, among them:

Capritio, <i>a young Novice</i>	Henry Gradwell
Miscellanio, <i>his Tutor</i> •	Thomas Bond
Fidelio, <i>friend to Philautus</i>	Edward May

Gradwell, who here is a 'young Novice,' is evidently the 'Gradell' who appeared as the Lord Mayor in *Thomas of Woodstock*, and as a nobleman's son and afterwards as a herald in *Edmond Ironside*. May was a bailiff in the same

¹ Boswell-Malone, iii, 59; quoted by J. Tucker Murray, *English Dramatic Companies*, 1, 198.

³ *English Dramatic Companies*, i, 258-9,

³ Boswell-Mdlone iii, 59-60; quoted in *English Dramatic Companies*, I, 255.

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play, and Bond was one of the Tritons in *The Two Noble Ladies*. The Prince's men, though they afterwards moved to the Red Bull, continued to act till 1641, when they visited Dover. Their place at Salisbury Court was taken by the King's Revels Company, which in 1635 acted there Richard Brome's *The Sparagus Garden*. In the same year, on March 10, 1635, we get a list of this King's Revels Company from the Mayor's Court Books at Norwich, where they applied unsuccessfully for leave to act.¹ Twenty-eight names are given, including the leader of the company, 'George Stutvile.' This is the George Stutfield who acted a 'Spirrit' and a Triton in *The Two Noble Ladies*, a nobleman's son in *Edmond Ironside*, and probably a servant in *Thomas of Woodstock*. Edward May, who had been associated with Stutfield in *Edmond Ironside*, is now found in the Norwich list, having migrated from the Prince's men to the King's Revels Company. And the Antony Bray who ends the list, may probably be identified (taking into account the variants in Elizabethan nomenclature) with the Anthony Brew who had enacted a 'Lord of Babilon' and a soldier in *The Two Noble Ladies*.

But what is specially important is that the Norwich list includes the names of William Cartwright, senior, and William Cartwright, junior. The former was in 1635 one of the veterans of the stage. As early as April 21, 1598, Henslowe had mentioned him in his *Diary* as the recipient with Richard Jones of a loan of 10 sh. Jones was one of the Lord Admiral's men and Cartwright appears to have recently joined the company. His name appears in the plots of *The Battle of Alcazar* (c. 1598), *Fortune's Tennis* (?) c. 1599, and *7 Tamar Cam*, 1602. On the death of Prince

¹ Tucker Mun ay, *English Dramatic Companies*, i, 279-80. The name of the company is not given in the Norwich list, but five of the actors in the list are found in the cast of Nathaniel Richard's *Metsalltna* (printed 1640) 'acted .. divers times, by the Company ofhi' Majesties Revells.'

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Henry, who had succeeded the Lord Admiral as patron, the company received a new patent (Jan. 4, 1612-3), as the Palsgrave's men, and Cartwright is one of the fourteen players mentioned in it. When the company leased the Fortune from Alleyn on October 31, 1618, his name appears as one of the ten lessees. He is mentioned as dining with Alleyn on various occasions till August 18, 1622, but otherwise there seems to be no record of him till the Norwich list of 1635. He was then a member of the King's Revels Company, and it is probable that he had joined it when it began to perform at the Salisbury Court Theatre, built in 1629.

We have at any rate the authority of Wright in his *Historic' Histrionica* (1699) for the statement that his son, William Cartwright, junior, acted at Salisbury Court, while the Norwich list shows that father and son were associates in the Revels Company. During the Civil War the younger Cartwright became a bookseller and publisher, and among the works issued by him was a new edition of Hey wood's *Apologte for Actors*, under the title *The Actors Vindication* (1658). After the Restoration he joined the company formed out of 'the scattered Remnants' of players belonging to the older Houses that in 1663 established itself in the new theatre in Drury Lane under the management of Thomas Killigrew. This company, known as the King's servants, had a rival in the Duke of York's servants, under the management of Sir William Davenant, which acted at Lincoln's Inn Fields from 1662 to 1673, and afterwards at Dorset Garden. In 1682 the two companies amalgamated under the leadership of Betterton, and Cartwright's name is mentioned second by Downes among those of the King's servants who continued to act at Drury Lane after the fusion. He died in 1687.

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Thus the careers of the two Cartwrights cover almost a century of stage history. They form a link between Edward Alleyn of the Fortune and Thomas Betterton of Drury Lane. And from the data set forth above we learn that almost in the middle of the period—when the father was ending and the son beginning his professional work—they both acted with some of the players whose names are found on the margins of the Egerton MS. This is not only interesting in itself, but it helps to confirm Sir George Warner's theory that the volume originally belonged to the younger Cartwright, and was one of his bequests to Dulwich College.

As an actor and a bookseller Cartwright had a double interest in theatrical documents, and his republication of Heywood's pamphlet proves his devotion to stage history. Thus, when the companies were broken up during the Puritan regime, he probably got possession of the theatre-copies of some of the plays in which he and his fellows had been acting. Among these were not only recently written dramas, but older works like *Edmond Ironside*, which seem to have been part of the theatrical stock-in-trade since the days when his father first trod the stage. Doubtless he would get hold at the outset of manuscripts that had belonged to the Revels Company, but the theatrical chaos due to the Civil War, and the fission of the old companies after the Restoration would bring into his hands plays that had been the property of other Houses. Thus it is significant that *The Elder Brother*, the first play in the manuscript volume, originally acted at Blackfriars by the King's men in 1637, was performed in 1678 at Drury Lane by the company of which Cartwright was a member.¹ *The Cap-*

¹ See the title-page of the quarto of 16785 quoted by Dr. W. W. Greg, *Hand-List of English Plays*, p. 10.

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fives and *Calisto* would be of special interest to him as works of Heywood, whose pamphlet he had republished. *The Captives*, as has been seen, had been first produced at the Cockpit: so also (as we learn from the 1655 quarto) was *The Poore Mans Comfort*. *The Lady Mother* was probably staged at the Salisbury Court Theatre, Whitefriars.¹ From all these quarters Cartwright 'conveyed' the documents which now form Egerton MS 1994.

The world of scholars has been thrilled by the revival, with increased authority, of the view that three folios of *Sir Thomas More* are in Shakespeare's own handwriting. Egerton MS. 1994 does not furnish any problem of such universal interest. But to the student of the Elizabethan and Stuart stage few volumes should appeal more than this collection of plays, precious flotsam and jetsam that has been salvaged from the 'waves and weathers of time.' Here plays of Fletcher and Heywood keep company with the amateur production of Walter Mountfort written in his voyage back from East India. Here the Censor is seen at work, cancelling, altering, threatening pains and penalties. Here, above all, are the memoranda of theatrical managers—short practical directions about music or properties, cues for the entrance of actors, of whom we get fleeting glimpses that whet our curiosity. As we turn the leaves of the manuscript we are back in the Red Bull, the Cockpit, or Salisbury Court, not with the gallants or the 'prentices in the auditorium, but in the tiring-house with the Cartwrights, Stutfield and May, and the whole 'cry of players.'

And thence our thoughts fly backwards to a yet more illustrious company of actors, with their stock of plays for

¹ This is the inference, as Fleay pointed out, from the passage in II, i. *Crackby. Wovi on my life this boy does sing as like the boy at the Whytefryers as ever I heard : how say you Captain? Bucket; I, and the Musicks like theirs.*

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performance at the 'Theater,' The Globe, or the Blackfriars. We can see in our minds's eye the manuscript of Shakespeare's *Richard II* returned to Burbage with the scene of the King's deposition marked for omission by the Master of the Revels, and his licence for performance granted on condition that 'all reformatiōns are strictly observed/ We can see the prompt-copy of *Romeo and Juliet* with the manager's jotting in Act Iv, 'Enter Will Kempe,' in the part of Peter, which found its way into the second and third quartos. We can see too a prompt-copy of *Much Ado about Nothing*, with the names of Kempe and Cowley prefixed to speeches of Dogberry and Verges in Act Iv, ii, and retained in both the quarto and the first folio, the latter of which also makes Claudio enter in Act II, iii, not with Balthazar, but with 'lacke Wilson.' It is clear that the printers, when setting up their type from the manuscript, did not trouble to distinguish between Shakespeare's writing and the prompter's marginalia. And if we combine such evidence with that furnished, on a more extensive scale, by Egerton MS. 1994, as well as by the manuscripts of *Sir John van Olden Barnavelt* and *Believe as you List*, we find support for the view that Elizabethan theatrical companies made an economical use of the 'papers' supplied by their playwrights, which often had successively to serve the turn of Censor, prompter and printer.

CHAPTER VI

'EDMOND IRONSIDE'

A CHRONICLE-HISTORY PLAY

'EDMOND IRONSIDE' is the fifth of the fourteen plays included in the Egerton MS. 1994. It is convenient to call it by this name, though it should be noticed that the title at the head of the play is *A trew Cronicle History called \Warr hath made allfreindes*, and that *EDMOND IRONSIDE, The English King*, may have been prefixed on the present title-page by a later hand or hands. The play is written on leaves 97-118 of the MS., and is in a different script from any other in the volume. Its author is unknown, but he was evidently a man of good education. He quotes from the classics and the Bible, and shows some knowledge of legal technicalities. His source was Holinshed's *Chronicle*, of which the first edition appeared in 1577 and the second in 1587; but he uses it, as will be seen, with much freedom. The date of the play offers an interesting problem, which can be more profitably discussed later.

Whatever view may be taken of its merits, *Edmond Ironside* deserves recognition as the most elaborate extant Elizabethan play on a subject taken from the Anglo-Saxon period. It was probably owing to the Welsh blood that ran in the veins of the Tudors that dramatists of the sixteenth and seventeenth! centuries quarried so freely in the legendary chronicles of ancient Britain. Not only were Lear and Cymbeline and Bonduca made immortal by Shakespeare and Fletcher, but Gorboduc and Arthur, Caradoc and Vortigern, Locrine and Elidure found lesser playwrights to stage their fortunes on the boards of the Inns of Court or the public theatres. Meanwhile the Anglo-Saxon royal house suffered dramatic eclipse. It is astonishing that even Alfred is the theme of only a

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Latin play by William Drury acted by his pupils at the English College in Douai in 1619 and published in 1620. Another Latin play, *Sanctus Edwardus Confessor*, remains in manuscript in the Heber collection. Henslowe in his *Diary* mentions *Hardicanute*, acted by the Admiral's, and Pembroke's men in the autumn of 1597; and *Earl Godwin and his three Sons*, in two parts, by Drayton, Dekker Chettle and Wilson, acted by the Admiral's men at the Rose in the spring and summer of 1598. Of these plays nothing is known but the name. Another play mentioned in the *Diary*, *Old Fortunatus*, revised by Dekker in 1596 and again in 1599, and printed in 1599, lays its later scenes in the England of Athelstan. And *A Knack to know a Knave*, which Henslowe enters as first performed by Lord Strange's men at the Rose on July 10, 1592, and which was printed in 1594, introduces King Edgar and Dunstan. But both *Old Fortunatus* and *Knack* contain a medley of episodes, romantic, scenic-allegorical, supernatural and farcical. Neither of them is a chronicle-history play. Nor does the newly-printed piece, *The Welsh Ambassador*, belong to the chronicle-history type. Written apparently about 1623, it has as its central figure King Athelstan. But it is an Athelstan unknown to historians, who spends his time in amorous intrigues instead of fighting Scots and Northmen or making laws. His brothers Edmond and Eldred (as Edred is called) take part in a mythical campaign in France, and a young lord, for whom the King designs the fate of Uriah the Hittite, bears the name of Penda, the seventh-century pagan King of Mercia. The only historical element in the plot, the payment of tribute by Wales to Athelstan, is turned to 'a comedy of disguises.'

¹ See above, Chap. I. pp. 7-8

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This fantastic treatment of one of the greatest figures of the Anglo-Saxon period, throws into stronger relief the serious attempt to portray in *Edmond Ironside* both the patriot English King and his great Danish rival, Canute, and also the intriguing statesman, Edric, Duke of Mercia.

The play opens shortly after the death of Egelred¹ on April 23, 1016. Canute is discovered sitting at a table surrounded by his chief English and Danish supporters. They include the Archbishop of Canterbury; the Earl of Southampton; Edricus, Duke of Mercia; Leofricke, Earl of Chester; Turkullus, Duke of Norfolk and Suffolk; Uskataulf and Swetho.

The playwright makes Canterbury a partisan of Canute, because Holinshed states that Edmond was crowned by the Archbishop of York. According to the Chronicler Canute was ordained king at Southampton by the bishops and abbots. Hence the invention of an Earl of Southampton as one of his supporters. Leofricke of Chester appears to be another fictitious Earl. Turkullus, on the other hand, is the name of a historical personage, a Danish leader, who had landed in England in 1009, had mastered Norfolk and Suffolk, 'and so continued in those parties as chiefe lord and governour.' But the playwright makes him an Englishman.

Canute asserts that the crown of England is his, both by conquest and election, and that Edmond, the eldest son of Egelred, who has claimed the succession, is a usurper:²

¹ It is by this name, taken from Holinshed, or its Latin forms, Egeliedus and Egleredus, that Ethelred the Unready is called throughout the play. Canute and Edric ate also Latinised into Canutus and Edricus.

² In my quotations from this and other plays in Egerton MS. 1994, I have retained the original spelling, except for the occasional expansion of contractions, the substitution at times of lower-case letters for capitals, *andvice-vfrsd*, and the use of a capital letter at the beginning of each line. The punctuation has been modernized.

'EDMOND IRONSIDE¹

Archbishope and you other English peeres,
I heare how Egleredus, late your kinge,
My trybutary, is departed life,
And how his sonne Prince Edmond weares the crowne,
Wthout the notice of yo¹ free consent.
Or homage vnto mee his Soueraigne.
Yo¹ selves lordes Spirituall and Temporal!,
Besides the due my ffather's conquest claymes,
Have chosen mee;
And by a vniversall sound decree
Have sollomly throughout this little world
Proclaymd mee heire aparant to the crowne
When Egleredus livd.
Then lett not this younge vpstart prince of prates
Curb yo¹ proceedinges wth vntutored wordes,
But finish boldly what yo¹¹ have begunne;
Resist his pryvate coronacon.

The Archbishop takes the lead in proclaiming the national fidelity to Canute:

Whose vallo¹ wee have proved vnto our cost,
Whose love vnto the Church we neede not doubt,
Whose care for all we may relye vppon;
And whose true bounty is soe notable
That even his fooes admire and honor him.

He declares that but for his cloth he would take the field on Canute's behalf against Edmond:

Weare I myself
Profest a souldior or a man at armes,
As I am one deprived from the world,
I would with launce approve his tytle naught
And plead your coronacon wth my sword.

Southampton and Leofricke follow with protestations of loyalty, and then Edric strikes a different, half-jarring note. To grasp the significance of his speech it is necessary to

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understand something of his historical character, as depicted by Holinshed, and the lines on which the playwright develops it.

Edric Streona (the Grasper) is first mentioned by the Chronicler in 1003. Enraged by Egeldred's murder of their countrymen in England on St Brice's Day (November 13, 1002), the Danes in the following year invaded and harried the West Country. Thereupon Egeldred 'sent vnto Edricus to assemble a power to withstand the enimies. Hereupon the people of Hampshire and Wiltshire rose and got together: but when the armies should come, carle Edricus feigned himsele sicke, and so betraied his people, of whom he had the conduct: for they perceiuing the want in their leader, were discouraged, and so fled.'

Yet his treachery did not prevent his rapid advancement. In 1007 he was created Duke of Mercia, 'who, although he had married Edgiua, the King's daughter, was yet noted to be one of those which disclosed the secrets of the readme, and the determinations of the Councell vnto the enimies. But he was such a craftie dissembler, so greatlie provided of sleight to dissemble and cloake his falshood, that the king being too much abused by him, had him in singular fauour, whereas he vpon a malicious purpose studied dailie how to bring the realme into vtter destruction, aduertising the enimies from time to time how the state of things stood, whereby they came to knowledge when they should giue place, and when they might safelie come forward. Moreover being sent vnto them oftentimes as a commissioner to treat for peace, he perswaded them to warre.'

After the death of the Danish King Sweyn, and the invasion of England by Canute in 1015, Edric actually went over to the enemy. Egeldred was disabled by sickness,

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but 'his sonne Edmund had got together a mightie hoast, howbeit yer he came to ioine battell with his enimies, he was aduertised that earle Edrike went about to betraie him, and therefore he withdrew with the armie into a place of suertie. But Edrike to make his tratorous purpose manifest to the whole world, fled to the enimies with fortie of the kings ships, fraught with Danish souldiers.'

Such are the main episodes in the career of Edric, as recorded by Holinshed previous to the period at which the action of the play opens. Upon such incidents and others of later date the dramatist based his conception of a character which has the stamp of Renaissance Italy rather than of Anglo-Saxon England. The traitor earl becomes in his hands a Machiavellian intriguer, a Kingmaker, to whose piping Canute and Edmond dance in turn. In the elaboration of his portraiture he dwarfs all the other personages. And by a legitimate dramatic device crafty or dark deeds of other historical characters are attributed to him as well as his own. According to the chronicler it was Archbishop Siricius who first advised Egelred to pay 'Danegilt' and it was Alfrike, earle of Mercia, Edric's predecessor, who in 992, being 'high admerall' of the English fleet, gave warning to the Danish invaders and afterwards joined their side. But in his opening speech Edric claims these among his own services to the Danish dynasty:

Twas I that first did councell Egelred
To paye you trybute and to buye your league.
Where by wee emptied all the treasurye;
And had not gould fayld, you had neare bin Kinge.
I had a Navye once, the time when twas
In Egelredus daies, your father lyveinge,
Wh w^oh I should have mett yo^u on the seae
W^hin the straighes of England, and I wis

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Had then no lytle vantage on yo^r shipes.
Yet I as favoringe your party moste,
Gave waye and lett you land w^hout resistance,
And for that fact rest foul^ye scandalizd.
Was yt not I that gave intelligence
Of all the counsellis of kinge Egelred
Vnto yo¹ father? did not I, I praye,
. Fayne sickness, weaknes, disadvantages,
Whenas the Kinge sent mee to fight w^h him.
Was I not causer of yo^r good succeſse
In all yo¹ accons sence yo^r father's death.
As Namely in that battale lately fought
Betwene yo^r selfe and Edmond Ironside
Where I fled from him and did succor you.
Then sence the onely ladder vppon w^h
Yo^r father clymed to gett, you to hold
This gotten kindome was my dilligence,
I hope you will not the least motion
Of an ill thought creepe in to hinder mee.

This speech is the outcome of an irritable conscience. It is just because Edric is ready to betray Canute if it serves his purposes that he cites his past services as proof of his loyalty. Canute is frankly astonished at this protestation:

Whie, what need all this repeticon?
Good fayth I meant noe harme in sayinge soe.
Whie should I doubt you, wherefore should I feare?
You never yet deceyved mee.

Whie by my troth, my lord, I meant not you
But those that cleive to Edmond Ironside.

Southampton then asks him to prove his trust in the English lords by visiting him at his castle. Canute assents, and the earl goes before to prepare for his coming. Thereupon enter'a companye of cuntrymen makinge a noyse.'They

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are Danes, who call upon their leader to restore to them the mastery they enjoyed when Sweyn lived:

Wee then did yoake the Saxons and compeld
Theire stoborne neckes to eare the fallow feildes.
Wee then did force them honor vs as lordes,
And bee o^r slaves o^r drudges and o^r dogges.
But now I know not what the cause shold bee
Vnles the instigacon of their prince,
Younge Ironside, or ells their stoborne nature,
They all rebell, and w^h conioyned force
Assault vs manly, and from every p[ar]te
Of this perturbed Hand banish vs.

Canute promises to redress their wrongs, and Uskataulf warns him that their complaints show the mettle of his English foes:

Stoborne, vnwildye, feirce and wild to tame,
Skorninge to bee compeld against their wills,
Abhoreinge servitude as hauinge felt
The over lodinge burden of the same.

Edric urges the Danes to use all severity:

Curbe them, my lord, and brydle but their wills,
And you shall find them myld and tractable.

But yf you lay the teame vppon their neckes,
And lett them have but any gcope to rune,
Whye then be sure they gad as they weare gald
And neither know themselves nor yet yo^r grace,
For Lynitie doth cause them to rebell,
Cause they are Ignorant of lyveinge well.

Uskataulf, though not of English birth, counsels for otherwise:

I am a Daine, renowned Soueraigne,
Yf I weare wise enough to give advice,

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You should not prove a tyrant but a kinge.

A Tyrant is abhord of god and man,

When as a kinge loved and honored.

Accomptest thou, Edricus, the Saxon fooles,

Or rather hardy wise¹ and vallowrous?

- Their names discover what their natures are,
More hard then stones, and yet not stones indeed.

For they are Englishmen, easye to rule,

Wth lynitie, soe they bee vsed like men,

Patient of right, impatient of wronge,

Brookeinge noe tyranie in anie sorte,

But hateinge and revengeinge yt w^h death.

Therefore I counsell yo^r, yf yt might stand,

To wine their hartes not by severytie,

But by your favo^r, love, and lynitie.

Canute declares that he will act on his countryman's advice:

I will therefore soe moderate myself

As Englishmen shall thinke mee English borne.²

I wilbee mild and gentle to my foes

Yf gentlenes cann winn their stoborne hartes.

He then sets forth to Southampton with his followers, but 'Leofricke pulls Turkullus by the sleeve, as hee is goinge, and stayes him,' Leofricke has guessed from the other's 'discontented gate' that he shares his indignation at their present treatment:

Oh what a greefe is yt to noble bloodes

To see each base borne groome promoted vppe,

Each dunghill brat arreard to dignitie,

Each flatterer esteemed vertious;

When the true noble, vertious gentlemen

Are scornd, disgraced, and held in oblique.

² wisie'm MS.

² These two lines, with twopieceding, are marked for omission in the MS.

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Bace Edricus, a traytor to his kinge,
Is held in hono^r: wee two trustye subiectes
Are feard, suspected, and have libertye
Only to live: yet not in libertye.
For what is yt but prisonment or worse
When as o¹ children, blood of o^r owne blood
Are kept close prisoners, pledges for o^r faithes.

We thus learn the surprising fact that though Canute had professed complete confidence in the loyalty of the English lords at his court, he had seized the sons of Leofricke and Turkullus as hostages. And he had good cause for his action, for Leofricke openly proclaims his adhesion to Ironside:

Kinge Edmond, whoe indeed is o^r trew Kinge,
For good regard of merritt and desarte,
For hono^r, fame, and true nobilitye,
Is rightly termd mirroure of maiestie¹

But I will tell yoⁿ this as long as wee
Take p[ar]te against o¹ Soueraigne *Ironsides*
Wee are but trayto^{rs}.

Turkullus lends a ready ear:

I saye Amen to yo^r intencon,
W^h is to leave Canutus and his courte
And fly to Edmond o^r true lawfull Kinge.

But what shall then become of our Two boyes
Whoe are our pledges? they shall surely dye.

This prospect has no terror for Leofricke; he contemplates it with a composure which is less lofty than callous:

Tutt! tis no matter! Yf they dye, they dye.
They cannot suffer in a better tyme,
Nor for a better cause, theire cuntryes good.
Wee gave them life; for vs they sheed theire blood.

¹ These four lines are maikcd for omission.

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Turkullus shows a no less unpleasantly pious resignation:

Hee that sent them can send vs more againe,
Then lett vs hence; delaye of tyme is vaine.

Their open desertion of Canute is, in any case, less heinous than the double-dealing of Edric, who re-enters after their flight, and expounds his aims and methods in a long soliloquy. He chuckles at the thought that he, though base-born, has been Canute's chief counsellor, while his betters are exiled from the Court and out of grace:

They cannot so desemble as I can,
Cloake, cosen, cogge and flatter w^h the kinge,
Crouch and seem courtious, promise and protest,¹
Say much, doe naught, in all things vse decept,
Tell troth to noe man, carry tailes abroad,
Whisper close secrets in the giddy ayre,
Bee a newes monger, feede the kinge with soothes,
Please all mens humors w^h humilitie,
W^h hee must doe that is a courtier,
And minds to keepe in favor w^h the kinge.

Here we have the whole catechism of a courtier, according to the orthodox Elizabethan 'medel. But what disturbs Edric is the uncertainty as to who will win the crown:

I vnderstand Prince Edmonds vppe in armes,
Layes hold vppon occaswns sluggie locke,
And whilst Canutus here securely sleepes,
Hee wines w^h ease what wee w^h paine have gott.
Mas yf hee doe and fortune favor him,
I will soe worke as Ile bee in his grace
And keepe my liveinge and my self vnhurte.
But yf Canutus chaunce to gaine againe,
Then I am his for I can glose w^h all.

He confesses that of the two rivals he loves Canute best,

¹ This line is marked for omission.

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and for the ignoble reason that the Dane does not know of his base origin, while the sight of Edmond always reminds him that Ironside's father, Egelred, promoted him 'from a Plowman's son' to be a Duke:

Yet I can play an *Ambodexters* parte,
And sweare I love, yet hate him wth my harte.

In the next scene Ironside enters with his chief general, Alfricke. His first words prove him to be a true patriot-King, whose main concern is for the common soldier:

But are ye sure, my Lo: that all is fitt,
Are all my souldiers furnished for this warr,
What, have they meate and drincke to their contente?
Doe not the capitaines pince them of their paye?

Alfricke assures the King that he sees that 'the meanest souldier' gets the full measure of all he needs:

For th' only meanes to mare a souldiers fight,
Pinch him of meate and paye, and pinch his might.

Edmond applauds his zeal:

Then doe yee well, for I am of this minde,
He that for private bace comodetie
Will starve his souldiers, or keepe backe their paye,
Hee that to decke himselfe in gorgious tire
Will see his men goe naked, dye for cold,
Ys a plaine cutthroat to his cpnionwealthe.
A worthye capitaine seeinge a tall souldier
March barefoote, haultinge, pluckt off his own showes,
And gave them to the souldier, saying 'fellow
When I want shooes then give mee theis againe.'
But capitaines now a daies
Plucke offe their souldiers shooes, naye sell their lives
To make them ritche and gallant to the eie.

There is no sufficient dramatic reason why such emphasis should be laid here on the treatment of soldiers by their

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officers. It is as if the playwright were speaking out of some personal experience.

At this point Turkullus and Leofricke rush in, and, kneeling before Edmond, declare that 'in remorce of conscience' they have come either to suffer death for their adhesion to the Dane, or to receive a pardon which they will justify by their deeds. Edmond welcomes them with religiousunction:

Rise vppe, Turkillus; Leofricke, arise!
Give me yo^r hands, and with yo^r handes your hartes.
I more esteme the life of one trew subiect
Than the distruction of a thousand foes.
One sheepe that was lost I more reioyce to find
Than twenty other w^h I never mist,
A frinde of whose retorne I stood in doubt
Is more welcom to mee than ffortie other.

And he laments the evils that spring from internal disunion—that theme so dear to Elizabethan playwrights:

Oh that when Strangers cannot conquer vs,
Wee should conspire w^h them against our selues.
England yf ever warr thy face doth spoyle
Thancke not thy outward foe but inward frind,
For thou shalt never perishe tell that daye
When thie right hand shall make thie harte awaye.¹

And then, perhaps to prove that Alfred was not the only highly-educated Anglo-Saxon king, he ends with a classical allusion:

Goe in, brave lords, your sight doth mee more ioye
Than *Agamemnon* when hee conquerd Troye.

In the opening scene of Act n Canute is being entertained at a banquet at Southampton by the Earl. The Danish King insists upon the Earl's daughter, Egina,

¹ The last four lines are maiked for omission.

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sitting at table with him, and is so pleased with her conversation that he decides to marry her that evening, if the Archbishop will perform the rite. His Grace does not insist upon thrice asking of the banns.

ARCH. I am prepaired if every p[ar]te be pleased.

CANUTUS. ffaith, I am pleased,

ARCH. But what saye you?

EGI. I saye a Woemans silence is consente.

Canute may well congratulate himself, if in no very kingly fashion, on the success of his brusque wooing:

Whie heers a match extempore; small adoe
Aboute a waightie matter, some perhapes
Would have consumed milions to effect
What I by some spent breath have compassed.

This scene has, of course, no historical basis, Canute, though he had illegitimate children, had no wife before Emma, the widow of Ethelred. And the next scene is also a pure invention of the playwright, intended to provide comic relief. Edric's father and mother, two old peasants, accompanied by their man Stich, come to Southampton in quest of their high-placed offspring. But he repudiates all knowledge of them:

[FATHER]. God save yee, sonne!

EDRICUS. A pox vpon him, 'tis the knave my father.

Good fellow hast thou anie suite to vs?

Deliver vppe thy suplicacon.

[FATHER]. Oh S^r yee knowe mee well enough. I am good-man Edricke, your father.

Edric replies with a volley of abusive epithets, and has a second set of them for his mother, when she claims acquaintance with him. But he sees in Stich a serviceable tool:

Wee that by slie devices meane to mounte,
And creep into opinion by decepte,

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Must not of all things have a scholler knowe
Our practices; we must suppress good witts.

But such loose-braind, windy-headed slaves,
Such blockheades, doltes, fooles, dunces, idiotts,
Such loggerheaded rogues are best for vs.
For wee may worke their wills to what wee will,¹
Aijd winn their hartes w^fh gold to anie thinge.

So he appoints Stich his 'chamberlaine,' and orders him to begin his duties by beating 'their two beggers,' his parents, off the stage.

From the lowest of comedy there is a swift transition to crude and gruesome tragedy. News is brought to Canute of the flight of Turkullus and Leofricke. He is beyond measure incensed because

they have disturbd

The settelled solace of our marriadge day,
And daunted o¹ determind merriments
With causeles flight.

He determines, therefore, to take revenge on the traitor Earls by cutting off the hands and noses of their eldest sons who have been left in his power as 'pledges/ The source of this episode is evidently a statement by Holinshed that Canute, enraged by Egelred's slaughter of some of his English supporters, Commanded that such pledges as had beene delivered to his² father by certeine noble men of this realme, for assurance of their fidelities, should have their noses slit, and their eares stuffed, or (as some write) their hands and noses cut off.' The playwright not only transfers the incident to the period after Egelred's death, but he draws it out at intolerable length. When Edric declares that death is too light a punishment for traitors, Canute argues that mutilation is worse than death:

¹ This and the preceding three lines are part of a passage marked for omission.

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These nothinge fearinge hotspures that attend
O^r Royall Courte, tell them of hanginge cheare,
Theile saye yⁱ is a tricke or two aboue ground.
Tell them of quarteringe or the headinge Axe,
Theile sweare beheading is a gallant death,
And hee is a dastard that doth feare to die.
But saie to them yo^u shalbee branded
Or yo^l hands cutt offe, or yo^r nostrilles slitt,¹
Then shallow feare makes theire quivering tongues
To speake abruptly: rather lett vs dye
Then wee should suffer this vild Ignomie.

He turns a deaf ear to the spirited appeal of one of the boys to let them fall in however unequal combat:

Suffer vs first to trye o^l striplinge force
Wth anye Giant of your Ciclopes Sise,
And lett o^l armes fight once before o^l Deathes
To reake their mallice on theire masters foes.
So lett vs perish like to Gentlemen,
Like to our selves and like to Englishmen.

Stich acts as executioner—a curious role for the clown of the play. No detail of physical horror is spared; the atmosphere is as foul and asphyxiating as in the notorious scenes in *Titus Andronicus*. Nor has the dramatist even the excuse that he wishes to paint Canute as the typical bloodthirsty tyrant in contrast with the patriot King Edmond. This, as will be seen, would have been inconsistent with the d&-nouement of the play. He even misses an opportunity of showing how Canute's barbarous act provokes an immediate nemesis. A messenger rushes in with evil tidings:

Renownd Canutus, thy forces in the North
W^{eh} thou didst send gairst Edmond Ironside
Are clene disperst and peecemeale overthrowne.

¹ This and the piece-ding lines .ue parts of a passage marked for ornis&jon,

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This announcement seems to have no historical basis. It was, perhaps, suggested by Holinshed's statement that not long before Egelred's death, Edmond had 'got him to Utred, an earle of great power, inhabiting beyond Humber, and persuading him to ioine his forces with his, forth they went to waste those countries that were become subject to Canute, as Staffordshire, Leicestershire and Shropshire.' But Utred had been afterwards defeated by the Danish leader, and Edmond had been forced to fall back on London. As Ironside's victory is thus virtually invented by the playwright, he might have turned it to effective purpose. He could have shown Canute conscience-stricken by this instant proof of divine displeasure at his unnatural deed. But the Dane is troubled merely by the loss of his father's inheritance:

Shall yt be said hereafter when Report
Shall celebrate my noble fathers actes
That Canutus did lose what noble Swanus gott.¹

Edric seeks to comfort him with Senecan commonplaces:

Dispaire not, noble kinge, tyme comes in tyme.
Know yee not tis a deede of pollecye
In fickell Chaunce to cross yo^r myghtienesse
For else in Tyme you myght dismounte the Queen,
And throw her headlqnge from her rowlinge stone,
And take her whirlinge wheele into your hand.²
I tell yo^r grace Chaunce ever envies wise men,
And favors fooles, promotinge them aloft.
But as for this fleaspott of dishonor,
The greatest monarches have indured more,
Even blinckinge Phillippes sonne and manie more.

But Canute is in no mood for proverbial philosophy, and

¹ These lines are marked for omission.

² This and the two previous lines are marked for omission.

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sternly rebukes Edric as an 'all sothing sicophant' who needs to learn to speak the truth.

Act in opens with a short scene, which is unique in Elizabethan drama. It is an exceedingly plain-spoken 'flyting' between the Archbishop of Canterbury, who supports Canute, and his brother of York, who had crowned Ironside. Canterbury enters at one door, and thus welcomes York, who comes in at the other:

Whie bends not the presumptuous knee of Yorke
When Canterbury] speakes? Cannot the curse
Of god and mee, the metropolitan
Vnder the *Pope* of all *Dominions*
Whin this realme of England cause thee feare?
Prowd, irreligious prelate, know my power
Stretcheth beyond thie compasse even as much
As *Rome* doth mine. Then quiver when I curse,
And like a child indeed prostrate thie selfe
Before my feete, that thie humilitie
May move mee to absolve thie former sinnes,
And sett the free from Hell's damnaco'n.

Yorke's reply proves him an equal expert in the *odium iheologicum*:

Traytor to god and to thie lawfull Kinge,
Where thou dost blese I curse, where curse I blesse.
As thou art Bishope, my cormsion
Stretcheth as farre as thine...'

Noe, Canterbury, noe.

I humble me to God, and not to thee,
A traytor, a betrayor of his Kinge,
A rebell, a prophane preist, a Pharesie,
A parrasite, an enemie to peace,
A foe to trewth and to Religion,¹
I saye I will not bend myself to him,
And such a one arte thou, and therefore heere,

¹ This and the preceding lines ate marked for omission.

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Vnles repentance bend thie stobborne harte,
I heere p[ro]nounce the curse of god and man
Vppon thie soule and soe farwell and mendl

After a further interchange of such ecclesiastical courtesies, Canterbury feels moved to employ more carnal weapons:

Oh, I could eate thee! Now my crossier stafe
Longes to be peltinge that old hory pate.
My hands doe quake wth rage.

YORK. You are a champion for the Devell and Canutus.
I flye not from thie curses but thie strokes.

[Exit YORK.]

CANT. lie follow thee with curses and with clubbes.

The next scene is laid outside the walls of London, where Canute is besieging Edmond by sea and by land. He sends a Herald to summon the city to surrender on pain of destruction by fire and sword. But the 'Balifes' appear on the walls with a defiant challenge:

Goe, tell yo^r Master thus we answer him:
His shippes that proudly ride vppon the Thames
Shall anccor to the ground wher hee abides,
Born by the bloodshed of o^r carcasses,
And wee compeld by thirst to sucke the streame
Of this faire river drye, soe that his men
May dryeshod march over the flottinge deepes
Ere wee will lett him enter in theis gattes.

Scarcely has the Herald brought this answer back when Edmond sallies forth at the head of his troops and routs Canute. The Dane, therefore, according to Holinshed, withdrew westward, and was again defeated at Gillingham in Dorsetshire. He then retired to Winchester, and subsequently marched to Scoraston in Worcestershire, where an obstinate two days' battle took place between him and Iron-

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side. The playwright felt the difficulty of handling such episodes on the stage, and like Shakespeare in *Henry* ^he introduces a Chorus as a supplement to the dramatic machinery. The Chorus enters 'attired in black, and thus addresses the audience:

The fight is hot, *Canutus* is ore come,
And *Edmond* hunteth him out from place to place.
Hee flyes to *Worcester*, *Edmond* foilowes him.
The waye is longe, and I am waxen faint.
I faine would have you understand the truth,
And see the battailes acted on the stage,
But that theire length wilbe to tedious,
Then in dumbe shewes I will explaine at large
Theire fightes, their flightes and *Edmonds* victory.
ffor as they strivd to conquer & to kill,
Even so we strive to purchase yo^r good will.

Thus the playwright not only makes use of the Chorus, but of the primitive device of dumb-shows. The stage-direction for the first of these shows is as follows:

Alarum. Enter *Canutus* flyinge, *Edmond* followinge. They fight. The two kinges parley, sounde a Retreate and parte.

The Chorus then interprets:

Canutus is beholdinge to the gracios sune,
Whoe, greeved to see such heapes of carcases
Lye mangled & besmered in theire gore,
Made hast & went to rest before his tyme.
Soe that the kinges for want of light agreed
To parte vntell *Aurora* raise the larke,
And now tis morninge & they ioyne to fight.

Then follows another dumb-show:

Alarum. Enter *Canutus* at one doore and *Edmond* at the other. They fight. *Canutus* giues backe and flies. Enter the

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souldiers of *Edmond* pursuing *Canutus* and his lords. *Edricus* takes a dead [mans]¹ head vppon his swords poynt, holdinge yt vppe [before] '*Edmonds* souldiers; they flie. Enter *Edmond* [again] cheeringe them vp and makes *Canutus* flie.

Again the Chorus interprets. *Edric*, according to *Holinshed*, had practised a primitive form of *camouflage* by holding up on his spear point the head of a soldier whom he had slain, and crying to the English that their King was dead. *Edmond's* followers had thereupon begun to fly, till he rallied them by showing himself to them alive and conquering. The Danes finally run away, and are denounced by *Canute* when he reappears after the dumb show as 'arrant cowards.' In vain *Edric* again tries to console him with *Senecan* platitudes.

Fortune in turninge will exalt yo¹ state,
And change the countenaunce of her cloudy browe.

A lowringe morninge proves a fayer daye.

Canute retorts angrily:

What telst thou me of ffbrtune and her frownes,
Of her sower visage & her rowlinge stone.
Thy tongue rowles headlonge in to flattery.

Edmond is blest, oh, had I but his men,
I would not doute, to conquer all the world,
In shorter tyme the[n] *Alexander* did,
But all my Daines are *Braggadochios*.

Edric thereupon changes his tune, and privily suggests a stratagem by which *Edmond* may be discomfited:

He goe write to *Ironsides*,
Craveinge forgiueness and insinuate
His yealdinge favor; hee is pittifull,

¹ The MS. is here mutilated at the edge, and the bracketed words are conjectural.

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And I am rare in moveinge passion.
I knowe the prince will quickly creditt mee
And putt affiance in my smooth pretence.
But what soere hee doth or minds to doe,
Ye shall be sure to haue intelligence.¹

The business of the writing of the letter is elaborated first by some poor fooling with Stich, who fetches paper and an inkhorn, and then by Edric's self-reproaches at his feeble epistolary efforts. At last, however, the missive is finished, and Edric resolves to deliver it himself, disguised in Stich's clothes. But when he appears before Edmond at the beginning of Act iv the King sees through his disguise, and unmasks him by pulling 'the velvet patch of his face.' Edric is at once ready with a plea of justification:

I came thus plainly to yo¹ maiestie
Disguised in clownes attire, to sound the truth,
What oppinion, yf good or bad,
You had of me. And yf I found yt good,
I had determind to bewray myself,
Yf otherwise, I meant wth secret speede
To leave my native cuntry, and to exile
Myself from England, saylinge into *Spaine*,
Whereas I meant in contemplacon.
In pilgramage and prayers for yo^r grace
To end my life.

At this moment there enters 'a messenger runninge,' who delivers a speech on the approved classical pattern:

Hast, hast, King Edmund, to releee thie land,
Which is opprest by multitudes of Daines.
They swarme along thy costs like little gnates
Ouer a river in a Summers night,
Or like to bees when they begine to flight
Soe comes theis Daines prepared fitt to fight.²

¹ The last four lines are marked for omission.

² This and the previous line marked for omission.

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Theire flagges and Banners, yellow, blew, & red,
Resembles much the weeds in ripened corne.
Theire Drumes and Trumpitts wth a dredfull sound
Of clashinge armo' & fyer brethinge steedes
•Soundes like the fearefull Thunder sent from heaven
Mixt with *AEolus* boystrous northern breth.
They praye vppon thie subiectes cruelly.
Like hungry Tigers vppon silly kidds,
Sparing not Ancient men for reverence,
Nor weomen for imbisillitie,
Nor guiltles babes for their vnspoted life,
Nor holy men; their maddnes is so rife.

The speech is more picturesque than precise, and the dramatist here sits very loosely to his source. He omits the victories of Ironside, recorded by Holinshed, over the Danes at Brentford and at Oxford, and thus misses an opportunity of further exalting him as the national hero. The messenger's narrative apparently relates to the period after the battle of Oxford, when Canute, rallying his forces, 'passed over the Thames into Essex, and there assembled all his power together and began to spoile and waste the countrie on each hand.' Edmond advanced to meet him, and a battle took place at Ashdown in Essex, 'where after sore and cruell fight continued with great slaughter on both sides a long time, duke Edricke fled to the comfort of the Danes, and to the discomfort of the Englishmen.' The result was an overwhelming defeat for Ironside, but the dramatist minimizes the disaster. He is mainly concerned with the successful scheming of Edric. The wily intriguer first persuades Edmond to appoint him captain-general; he leads the vanguard aside in the battle till he sees that it is safe to help Canute privily; he thus gains the gratitude of the Dane, but afterwards returns to

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the camp of Ironside, at the beginning of Act v, 'with his hand in a skarfe,' and halting. When reproaches are flung at him for his desertion, he shows his counterfeit wounds, and declares that they were got in conflict with the Danes, after the main English forces had fled. Ironside is again credulous, and declares:

Lett this suffice; thou hast confirmed o^r love
And Edricus wee mind to honnor thee
Wth publique notice of thy Loyaltie.

Intermingled with these scenes of battle and intrigue is one of more tender and pathetic interest. Emma, the widow of Egelred, takes a weeping farewell of her two young sons, Alphred and Edward, whom she is sending to Normandy, to the protection of her brother, Duke Richard. The elder boy, Alphred, begs her not to sorrow, as they are going to a haven of safety:

Heere wee are ever in continuall broyles,
There in tranquillitie, in peace & rest:
Heere in the midst of vnknown enimies,
There in the armes of true approved frinds.

The younger brother makes a more childish plea:

Good mother, weepe not, yf yee doe, He crye.

But the mother's tears only fall the faster:

Ah, my prettie harte,
Hast thou a feelinge of my passion?
Then will I weepe the more to ease my harte.

At last she commits them to the charge of Gunthranus, who is to be their escort across the sea, and according to the stage-directions 'they offer to departe.' But she calls them back.

Yet come againe, yee shall not soe departe,
If that wee dye, wee le chose to dye together,
Dyeinge or livinge wee wilbee together.

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Fond woeman, blesse them, and then lett them goe.
That is the saffest waye to keepe them safe.
Then farwell once againe, God blesse you both.

Again 'they offer to departe'; again she bids them stay:

' But Softe a while, I have not sayd my minde.
First lett me wash your face in mothers teares,
Then sobb out sightes to overload the earth
And cast a mistie fogge vppon the ayre
That no inquiringe foe may finde you out.
She embraceth them.

Oh lett yo^r sanctuary bee my lappe,
Yo^r refuge, yo^l sepulchers & your graves.
A cradle fitts you better than a shippe.

She sits down, and setting Edward on her knee takes
Alphred in her arms. The spectacle moves Gunthranus to
exclaim:

See, see, Dame *Naturs* operacon!
What force yt breedes w^hin a mothers mind.
None feelles a mothers sorrow but a mother.

Even when once again Emma has bidden her 'sweet Boyes'
godspeed she cannot tear herself from them:

Come hether A[l]phred, Ned, I prethe staye.
I will goe w^h you to the foaminge haven,
And take my farwell of my Darlinges there.

From the dramatic point of view the playwright sounds
the note of maternal solicitude too monotonously—the
boys themselves speak only once—yet we hear the authen-
tic *vox humana*, and the anonymous author shows here a
truer sense of pathos than he does elsewhere of the tragic
or the comic.

In the final scene Edmond and Canute, accompanied by

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their armies and full retinue, male and female, meet face to face. Each claims England as his own:

EDMUND. Canutus!

CANUTUS. Edmund!

EDMUND. The ground thou standst vppon is Ironsides.

I saye I am a Kinge, soe arte not thou.

Therefore I am thie better: I saye more.

I have a Kingdome, this I stand vppon

Is mine; thou standst vpon my ground.

I saye this Land is mine, Canutus yt is mine.

CANUTUS. By vsurpacion thine, by conquest mine.

Whoe knows not conquest is inheritage?

EDMUND. Soe rape and theft is true possessio[n]

Yf malifactors goe vnpunished

CANUTUS. It seames indeed possession is of force,

For by possession you w^hould my crowne.

They call upon their followers to uphold their claims by arms, when Edric intervenes. He is afraid of the victory of Ironside, and he sees an opportunity of making capital for himself out of the situation, whatever the issue:

Faine would I have Canutus wine, and he is wea[ke.]

I would have Edmund loose and he is stronge.

For can I bringe them to a single fight

Hosoever hath the better, yett shall I

Be gracious in his eie as whoe should saye

I was the causer of his victory.

Besides I shall insinuate myself

Into the bosom of opinion,

And be esteemed my cuntries buckler.

The playwright partly follows Holinshed, who writes:
Herevpon, both the armies being readie to giue the onset
... by the drift of duke Edrike, who then at length began

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to shew some token of good meaning, the two Kings came to a communication, and in the end concluded an agreement, as some have written, without anie more adoo. Others write that when both the armies were at point to have ioined one of the capteines (but whether he were a Dane'or an Englishman, it is not certeinlie told) stood up in such a place, as he might he heard of both the princes, and bqldlie vttered his minde in forme following.

The dramatist, by what is, of course, a legitimate device, puts the captain's oration into the mouth of Edric. Its gist is that the two kings should either agree to divide the land between them, or avoid further slaughter by a personal combat. Intriguer though Edric be, his language catches for the moment the accent of genuine emotion:

What then is thend of this yo^r en[d]les grudge?
 None other but when all yo¹ men bee slaine,
 You then must fight alone or els accord,
 And hee that then is kinge shall rule noe men,
 Nor governe nations, for consuminge warr
 Will quite devoure this solatary He,
 Not leavinge anie over whome to rule,
 [Nor] to resist forraine invacons.
 Yf love of Kingedomes bee the cause of this,
 Suppress the boyleinge of yo¹ haughtie mindes.
 You have approved yo¹ souldiers forwardnesse;
 Then now at last shaKe hands and ioyne in league,
 Agree like noble Kinges and p[ar]te the Land.

But yf yo^r emulacon bee soe greate
 That either skornes to have competitors,
 And Brooke not equalls in yo^r dignities,
 Fight then alone that would bee Kings alone.
 Lett not all perish for the wills of Twoe,
 But Lett yo^r swords decide whose tytles best.

¹ This and the preceding six lines are marked for omission.

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The two kings are eager to try the wager of battle, but their womenfolk seek to restrain them. Emma urges upon her son, Ironside, that Canute is not his peer:

Yt is vndecent you should fight with him
Beinge no Kinge nor havinge ought to loose,

Edmond's answer is worthy of an English king:

Madam, his life is even to him as deare
As mine to mee: besides hee is a prince
Of noble blood and high resolved sprite.
And yf hee weare not, yet my cause beinge [right]¹
And lustice on my side I would not feare.

Then madam be content & you shall see
The god in whome I trust will svccor mee.
Were hee Golias, I the little Kinge,
I would not feare him on his knees to bringe.
But hee hath rather cause to doute of mee,
I being bigge, and fare more strong then hee.²

Egina tries to keep back Canute, but he flings her off with mocking banter:

CANUTUS. I had rather fight wth him then should wth you.

EGINA. I cannot speake but straight you saye I should.

CANUTUS. Then sweetinge, you must learne yo^r tongue
to hould.

Nay, now youle blubber; goe too, take this kisse
And pray for mee. Whie staye you, Ironside?

EDMOND. Beecause I thinke thou art not fitt to dye,
But rather with Egina fitt to crye.

In the duel that follows Edmond gets the upper hand and 'drives *Canutus* backabout the stage' till the Dane cries out:

Stay, Edmond, staye; Canutus yealds to thee.

¹ MS. mutilated at edge. ² The last four lines are marked for omission.

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Edmond responds with generous ardour:

Brave Canutus in yealdinge thou hast wone
That w^{ch} thie sword could never doe.

Canutus, take my hand; heere lyes my sword,
Edmond is thine, his thine, himself & all.

The Dane is so moved by this whole-hearted self-surrender of his rival that he breaks out with aureate phrases which sound strange upon his lips:

How plesant are theis speeches to my eares.
dSolian musicke to my dauncinge harte,
Ambrosian dainties to my starved mawe,
Sweete passinge *Nectar* to my thirstie throate.

Edmond thereupon seals the contract of amity by offering Canute priority of choice in the 'particSn of this noble He.'

Yo^r selfe shall choose w^{eh} parte yoⁿ thinke is best,
The East or West, the Right hand or the left.
My courte is yo^{rs}, my counsellors are yours,
My frinds yo^r frindes, thie foe my Enimie;
My people yo^{rs}, my treasure, & myself,
All are yo^r owne, for yo^u shall all coniaund.

Well may Canute cry:

Thanks, noble brother, and my second self,
In all thy acts thou dost excell thie self.

On behalf of the assembled nobles Alfricke declares their joy unspeakable,

To see warr bringe forth love and amitye,
To see Two mortall foes prove faithfull frinds,
And *Mars* drincke milke in stead of purple blood.

But three figures stand grimly aloof. Turkullus whispers to his companion:

Remember, Leofricke, o^f childrens losse.

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And Leofricke mutters back:

Turkullus, I doe and must serve the tyme,
And waite vppon occasion for revenge.

Edric, as he watches the Kings embracing, curses them:

Bloode, Death and vengance light on both of you.

And when Edmond and Canutus go hand in hand *off* the stage, he follows them, 'leadinge the Druiiii,' with dark threats upon his lips:

Thus wise men can desemble what they th[inke]
And till occason fitts them sleeping win[ke.]
But I have sworne and I will keepe my vo[we]
By heaven He bee revengd on both of yo^{ll}.

Shakespearean tragedy always ends with a ray of light piercing the gloom. This play of reconciliation holds within it the seed of woes to come.

The mention of Shakespeare is a reminder that we have been moving in a sphere outside genuine tragedy or comedy or even of the fully developed history play. *Edmond Ironside* is, as its original title claimed, a chronicle-history, with the naivete and the inconsecutiveness of the type. In one feature, however, it transcends the limitations of its class. The conception of Edrie's character, though marred by much that is trivial-and monotonous, shows a true psychological instinct, a realization that personality moulds events. Ironside, too, shows more than a touch of creative power. But his credulous trust in Edric and his quixotic exuberance after Canute's surrender are inconsistent with his role as a patriot King. Canute's character is a medley of irreconcilable elements, and the other personages are merely lay figures.

The playwright shows some skill in his choice and dis-

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position of incidents from the chronicle. Many of the individual scenes move briskly and with a crude vigour. But there is no structural unity or organic cohesion. Such episodes as the marriage of Canute, the quarrel between the Archbishops, and Emma's farewell to her children are introduced at random, and have no bearing on the action that follows.

Were we to accept Halliwell-Phillipps's suggested date for the play, 1647, we should have to look upon its author as a theatrical Bourbon who had learned nothing and forgotten nothing, who at the very close of the great dramatic period was reverting to the style and the methods of its dawn. But on internal evidence of style alone I would have made bold to say that Halliwell-Phillipps was probably about half a century out in his guess. The end-stopped and monotonous versification; the archaic vocabulary; the use of dumb-show; the stressing of the 'revenge' motive; the introduction of such neo-classical features as the moralizing about Fortune, the Chorus, the Messenger, and the good and evil counsellors of princes;—all are characteristics of the semi-Senecan school of drama, of which Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy* is the leading example, and which flourished round about 1590.

Against this approximate date for *Edmond Ironside* there is to be set one very important and interesting piece of evidence. A number of the plays in Egerton MS. 1994 are prompt copies with marginal notes by the stage-manager. *Edmond Ironside*, as has been already stated,¹ belongs to this group, and against several of the minor characters are written the names of the actors who impersonated them. The two 'pledges' murdered by Canute were acted by Stutfield and Gradell, the latter also appear-

¹ See above, Chapter V, pp. 99 ff.

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ing as a Herald. One of the 'Balifes' was acted by May, and the Messenger by Gibson. George Stutfield was leader of the King's Revels Company which acted at Salisbury Court in 1635, and appeared at Norwich in May of that year. Edward May also formed one of the company at Norwich, and previously he and Henry Gradwell, as members of Prince Charles's company, had acted in Mar-mion's *Holland's Leaguer* in 1632.' Thus the actors whom we can associate with performances of *Edmond Ironside* flourished in the fourth decade of the seventeenth century. There is no reason to suppose that they were the original performers of their small roles. But as all the other plays collected in Egerton MS. 1994, with the doubtful exception of *Thomas of Woodstock?* belong to the Stuart period, it is somewhat difficult to trust entirely to the evidence of style and to assign the piece to the period of *The Spanish Tragedy* and *Titus Andronicus*.

But whenever it was written, and however long or short its life on the boards, cuts were found necessary, as is shown by the number of lines bracketed for omission. Some of these, containing references to religion or to policy, may have been deleted by order of the Censor, but most of the cuts were evidently for theatrical reasons only. There must have been a curiously old-fashioned section of play-goers, perhaps chiefly in the provinces, that could enjoy such a crude handling of a historical theme after *Edward III* and *Henry V*¹ after *Bonduca* and *Bussy d'Ambois*. The closing of the theatres at the outbreak of the Civil War doubtless gave *Edmond Ironside* its *coup de grace*.

¹ See above, Chapter V, pp. 104-6.

² See below, Chapter VII.

CHAPTER VII
' THOMAS OF WOODSTOCK¹
A NON-SHAKESPEAREAN 'RICHARD II'

SHAKESPEARE'S *Richard II* is not the only drama dealing with the tragic fortunes of the last of the Plantagenets. As Sir Roger de Coverley, in the *Spectator*, held that there was 'fine reading in the casualties' of the reign of Henry IV, so the Elizabethan playwrights seem to have thought about that of his predecessor. For we know of three, possibly four, plays besides Shakespeare's in which Richard is a leading figure. First, there is the rough but vigorous piece (of which the first quarto is dated 1593), *The Life and Death of Jack Straw*, dealing with the insurrection of 1381 and the King's successful dispersion of the rebels. Secondly, there is the lost play seen by Dr Simon Forman at the Globe Theatre on April 30, 1611, which (as we learn from the entry in his diary) handled not only, like *Jack Straw*, the Commons' rising, but later events, such as the misgovernment of Richard's favourite, the Duke of Ireland; the murder of the Duke of Gloucester; and John of Gaunt's intrigues to set his son, Bolingbroke, upon the throne. Thirdly, there is the famous play of *King Harry IV and of the killing of King Richard II*, performed at the Globe on February 7, 1601, on the eve of Essex's abortive rising in the City. This was probably Shakspeare's drama, with its elaborate picture of Richard's deposition and murder in prison; but the actor Augustine Phillipps's description of it as 'so old and so long out of use as that they should have small or no company at it,' and Camden's still stronger phrase, 'exoleta tragoedia,' seem scarcely applicable to Shakspeare's work, and point to a more antiquated piece.

Finally, another play on Richard's reign, different from all the foregoing, has now been made accessible to students

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of Elizabethan literature. It is the eighth of the fifteen plays in Egerton MS. 1994, and, as stated above¹ was printed by Halliwell-Phillipps in a limited edition in 1870, and by Prof. W. Keller in the *Jahrbuch* of the German Shakespeare Society in 1899.

The MS. is not quite intact, as it contains no title, and breaks off in the middle of a speech, but probably only the first and last leaves, which formed the covers of the MS. before it was bound up with others, are lacking, and for critical purposes the play may be considered as practically unimpaired. To distinguish it from other plays relating to the reign of Richard II we may conveniently name it after the principal character, *Thomas of Woodstock*. The problem of its date is difficult and will be discussed later. About the source there is no doubt. Holinshed and, in a minor degree, Stow are the dramatist's authorities, but they are treated with a very free hand, and historical accuracy is ruthlessly sacrificed to secure a symmetrical balance of scenes and characters. The piece opens in January, 1382, on the eve of Richard's marriage with Anne of Bohemia, or 'Ann a Beame,' and it covers the chief events of the reign till shortly after the murder of Thomas Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester, in September, 1397. Its *leit-motif* is the struggle between the old nobility, full of true patriotic spirit, and the King's low-born favourites, eager only for the spoils of office. With a na'ff disregard of the shifting of parties and the complex constitutional issues of the reign the dramatist represents the contending factions as headed throughout by Richard's uncles, the Dukes of Gloucester, Lancaster and York on the one side, and by the Lord Chief Justice Tresilian and the three knights, Greene, Bushy and Bagot, on the other. Historically

¹ See above, Chapter V, pp. 96-7.

A NON-SHAKESPEAREAN 'RICHARD II'

speaking none of these personages except Gloucester and Tresilian played the parts here assigned to them till the closing years of Richard's rule.

The opening scene, which immediately arrests attention by its energetic, almost abrupt movement, plunges us into the heart of the civil conflict. It introduces the peers in wild consternation at the discovery of a plot to poison them at supper, which a Carmelite friar, the favourites' agent in the design, has through scruples of conscience just revealed.

[Enter¹ hastily at severall doores, DuKE OF LANCASTER, DUKE OF YORKEJ the EARLES OF ARONDELL AND SURRYE, with napkins on their armes and knives in their hands, and SIR THOMAS CHENEY, with others bearing torches, and some with chokes and rapiers."]

OMNES. Lights, lights, bring torches, knaves!

LANG. Shutt to the gates;

Lett no man out untill the house be searcht!

YORKE, Call for our coches, lets away, good brother!

Now, byth blest Saints, I feare we are poysond all.

AROND. Poysond, my lord?

LANC. I, I, good Arondell, 'tis hye tyme be gon.

May heaven be blest for this preventione!

YORKE. God for thy mercye! would our cussen King

Soe cussen us, to poysen us in our meate?

LANC. Has no man here some helpeing antedote,

For feare already we have tayne some drame?

In these opening lines Lancaster (John of Gaunt) stands out boldly, fiery of spirit and speech, deftly discriminated from his milder, more self-controlled brother, York, who tries to check his furious outbursts:

LANC. By blessed Mary, He confound them all!

YORKE. Your spleene confounds your selfe.

¹ In the quotations in this Chapter V is substituted for Elizabethan V and vice-versa.

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LANC. By kingly Edward's soule, my royall ffather,
He be revengd at full on all their lives.

YORKE, Nay, if your rage breake to such hye extreames,
You will prevent yourself, and loose revenge.

But it is the third brother, Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester, whose portrait the playwright elaborates on the most original lines, and who out-rivals the king for the part of protagonist in the piece. Holinshed describes him as 'a sore and a right severe man,' and 'a man of high mind and stout stomach/ yet beloved by the commons. In the play his sterner features disappear, and he is idealized into the type of the upright, unsophisticated patriot-statesman, who dresses in 'freese' and is known to all men as 'plain Thomas/ Deeply mortified by Richard's infatuation for his unworthy favourites, he yet trusts that his approaching union with 'Ann a Beame' will work a reformation in him:

Afore my God,
I have good hope this happie mariage, brothers,
Of this soe noble and religious princesse
Will myldly calme his headstrong youth, to see
And shune those staynes, that blurs his maiestie.
If not, by good King Edwards bones, our royall ffather,
I will remove those hinderers of his health.
Tho't cost my head 1

In the next scene we are shown Greene, Bagot and Tresilian 'in a rage' at the failure of their plot, but consoling themselves with the news of Tresilian's appointment as Lord Chief Justice. He explains to his confederates how he intends to discharge his new duties:

Zounes, I will screw and wynd the stubborne lawe,
To any fashione that shall like you best.
It shalbe lawe, what I shall saye is lawe,
And what's most suitable to all your pleasures.

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And when Greene and Bagot, delighted with these assurances, take their leave, he calls in his 'man' Nimble, who is the clown of the piece, and gives a vulgar exhibition of his upstart pride in his new dignity.

The rival factions, having thus been separately introduced, are confronted in the third scene, which opens immediately after the marriage ceremony. Ann a Beame is greeted by Lancaster and Woodstock with characteristic addresses of welcome, the latter describing Richard to his bride as 'a wildhead, yett a kingly gentleman/ The Queen answers in a speech brimming with enthusiasm for her newly adopted country:

My native country I no more remember,
But as a tayle tould in my infancye,
The greatest parte forgott, and that which is
Appeeres to Englands faire Elizium
Like brambles to the ceadars, curse [*i.e.* coarse] to fine,
Or like the wyld grape to the fruitfull vyne.
And haveing left the earth, wher I was bread,
And english maid, lett me be englished.

The King then retorts upon Woodstock for his 'double' or equivocal 'praise' by rallying him upon the unwonted finery of his wedding-dress—a 'goulden metamorphosis' from the 'home-spune huswiferye,' of his usual freese coat and 'tother hose.'¹ This banter is skilfully contrived to lead up to a violent indictment of Richard's misrule, for Woodstock, nettled by his nephew's taunts, bursts forth:

Tother hose! did some heere weare that fashione,
They would not taxe and pyll the commons soe ...
Scoff ye my playneness? lle talke no ryddles,
Playne Thomas will speak planely:
Thers Baggott ther, and Greene—

¹ By 'tother hose' is meant Hhehoae of a peasant or labourer.'

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GREE. } And what of them, my lord?
BAG. }

WOOD. Upstarts, come down, you have no places there!
Heeres better men to grace King Richard's chaire.
Ift please him grace them soe.

KING. Uncle, forbear—

WOOD. These cutts the collomes that should prop thy
house!

They taxe the poore, and I ame scandalld for itt.

The other lords echo these charges with cries of 'cankours, caterpillars,' 'worse than consuming fires/ but the infatuated King, with insolent defiance, showers new offices upon his minions, and departs abruptly with threats against the Dukes.

At the opening of the second Act the favourites are seen inflaming Richard's arrogant self-love by reading to him extracts from the English Chronicles which celebrate the exploits of his father and grandfather, and which further prove that he is himself a year past his majority, and thus entitled to full sovereign power. Hence when Woodstock, as Lord Protector, summons a Parliament to deal with the national grievances, Richard, by way of countercheck, claims his royal birthright, and bids his uncles deliver up their staves of office. The reply of each is characteristic. York hands his staff to his 'good cussen' with words of mild warning: 'Thou leanst on staves that will at length deseave thee.' Lancaster flings his angrily on the ground with the cry:

Therly the burthen of old Lancaster,
And may he perish that succeeds my place 1

Woodstock, as he sees the surrendered symbols bestowed on Greene and Bushy, gives eloquent voice to his patriotic anguish:

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Shall England that so long was governed
By grave experience of whiteheaded age,
Be subject now to rash unskillful boyes?
Then force the sune rune backward to the east,
Lay Attlas burden on a pigmies backe,
Appoynt the sea his tymes to ebb and flowe;
And that as easly may be done as this.

And therewith he breaks his own staff in pieces, as an emblem of the coming disruption of the realm.

In the scenes that follow we get a vivid picture of Richard's misrule at its height. He and his 'flattering minions,' as one observer relates,

Sitt in counsel! to devise strang fashions,
And suite themselves in wyld and anticke habitts,
Such as this kingdome never yett beheld:
Frenche hose, Italian cloakes, and Spanish hatts.
Polonian shoes with pickes a handfull longe
Tyde to ther knees with chaynes of pearleand gould;
Ther plumed topps fly waveing in the ayre,
A cubitt hye above ther wanton heads.

The dramatist here, and in other passages descriptive of the King's extravagances, is elaborating hints from Stow, but it is his own imagination that supplies the charming, though entirely unhistorical, episode of Ann a Beame trying, by her own industry, to counteract the effects of her husband's evil courses. In Act II, Scene iii, she and her attendant ladies enter 'with shirts and bands and other lyneing,' which she orders to be packed in trunks and distributed among the poor. Richard, in Act in, i, makes mock of her philanthropic labours good-humouredly enough:

Now, Ann a Beame, how cheeres my dearest queene?
1st hollydaye, my love? Beleeve me, lords,
'Tis strange to take hir from hir semsterye,

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She and her mayds care all for huswifery.

Shalte work no more, sweete Nan, now Richards
Kinge.

But he turns a deaf ear to her pleadings to recall his uncles
and amend his ways.

It is, however, in the scenes in the third Act dealing with
'the blank charters' that the dramatist shows his ripest
powers. This ingenious system of raising unlimited supplies
is thus described by its author, Tresilian, in his instructions
to his agents:

Goe, spread those severall blancks throughout the
kingdome.

And heere's comission with the counsell's hands,
With charge to every shreeve and officer,
T' assist and ayd you. And when th' are seald and
sign'd,

See ye note well such mens abillitye
As sett ther hands to them. Inquire what rents,
What lands, or what revenys they spend bith yeare,
And lett me straight receive intelligence.
Besids, Ide have you use your selves soe conningly,
To marke who grudges or but speakes amiss
Of good King Richard, myself, or any of his newe
counsellours.

Attach them all for privey whisperers,
And send them up. I have a tricke in lawe
Shall make Kinge Richard sease into his hands.
The forfeiture of all ther goods and lands.

The Chief Justice's 'man' Nimble, and two other of his
creatures, Crosby and Fleming, are entrusted with the
carrying out of these orders, and the description of their
operations is full of the raciest humour. The incidents are
doubtless of the playwright's own invention, but they illus-
trate with convincing realism the reign of terror created by

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this scandalous method of taxation. We are shown the commissioners at work in the market-town of Dunstable where the Bayle (i.e. Bailiff or Mayor) Master Simon Ignorance has set an example to his fellow-citizens by putting his markka sheephooke with a tarbox at end on't', at the'foot at one of the blanks. This 'Bayle' might well be a kinsman of Dogberry, for he has something of the same pride of office. 'I knowe my place and calling, my name is Ignorance, and I am Bayle of Dunstable'; and he has the same trick of misapplying long words, especially the epithet 'pestiferous' with which he makes constant play. Whilst Fleming and Crosby parade the town 'noteing the carriage of the people/ the Bayle and Nimble, with an attendant force of 'billmen,' station themselves in ambush to pounce upon country bumpkins returning home from the market. There soon enter 'a farmar, a butcher, and a graysher, very hastily,' whom the Bayle pronounces in an 'aside' to be 'all ritch chubs.' The conversation of these yokels brings before us, with startling vividness, the atmosphere of panic and suspicion created by the new-fangled impostos.

FAR. Tarry, tarry, good neighbours, take a knave with ye.
What, a murren, is ther a beare broake loose eth towne,
that ye make such hast from the markt?

GRAS. A beare? No, nor a lyon bayted neither. I tell ye, neighbour, I am more afrayd of the bee then the beare. Thers wax to be used to day, and I have no scale about me. I may tell you in secret heeres a dangerous world towards. Neighbour, your a farmar, and I hope heeres non but God and good company: we live in such a state ... Heere's my other neighbour, the butcher, that dwells at Hockley, has heard his landlord tell strange tydings. We shalbe all hoysted, and [i.e. if] we tarry heere, I can tell ye. . .

FAR. Ah, sirra! and what sayd the good knight, your landlord, neighbour?

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BUTCH. Mary, he sayd, but He not stand to anything, I tell ye that aforehand, he sed that King Richards new counsellours (God amend them) had crept into honester mens places then themselves were; and that the Kings uncles and the old lords were all banisht the courte, and he sed flatly we should never have a merry world as long as it was soe. . , And then he sed that there's one Trissilian, a lawyer, that has crept in amongst them, and is now a lord forsooth, and he has sent dowrie into every country of England a sorte of blacke chapters.

FAR. Blacke chapters? A Godsname, neighbour, out of what blacke booke were they taken?

GRAS. Com, com, they are blanke charters, neighbours, I heard of them afore, and therefore I mayd such hast away.

But the farmer's haste is to avail him nothing. Nimble now steps forth from hiding, and forces him and his companions to sign and seal copies of the blank charters. This done, he has them arrested by the billmen on the charge of being 'privvey whisperers,' while the subservient Bayle chimes in with his parrot-cry, 'Their offences are most pestifferous. Away with them!'

The trio having been marched off in custody, a school-master and his serving-man appear. The former is glowing with professional pride over some verses which he has written about the Government, and which he boasts he will have sung to their faces by one of his schoolboys. Meanwhile, he recites them to the serving-man, dilating on the cunning device by which he, as he flatters himself, hides their libellous intent:

Will ye buy any parchment knives?

We sell for little gayne.

Who ere are weary of ther lives,

Theyle rid them of ther payne.

A NON-SHAKESPEAREAN 'RICHARD II'¹

Blanck charters they are calld.
A vengeance on the villayne!
I would he were both flead and bauld:
God bless my lord Tressilian!

1st not rare? . . . Nay, looke ye, Sir, there can be no exceptions' taken, for this last lyne helps all, wherin with a kynd of equivocatione I say God bless my lord Tressilian! Doe you marke, Sir? Now heere, in the next verse, I rune ore all the flatterers eth courte by name. Ye shall see else:

A poyson may be Greene,
But Bushey can be no fagott.
God mend the King and bless the Queene!
And tis no matter for Baggott.
For Scroope, he does no good,
But if youle knowe the villayne,
His name is now to be understood:
God bless my lord Tressilian 1

But the schoolmaster's recitation, with its accompanying gloss, has had a larger audience than he bargained for. Nimble pounces upon the 'traitors,' and when the man of learning protests his innocence, the Bayle retorts in the true Dogberry vein: 'Be not so pestifferous, myne ears have heard your examinations, wher in you uttered most shameful treason: for ye sayd "God bless my lord Tressilian." '

Yet another victim falls into the clutches of these unscrupulous jacks-in-office. A country-fellow enters whistling, and is forthwith arrested for having 'most eroniously and rebelliously whisled treason.' His amazement at so unheard-of a charge is met by Nimble with a characteristic piece of pettifogging logic.

WHIS. Whisselled treasone? Alas, Sir, how can that be?

NIM. Why, easily, Sir! Ther's a peece of treason that flies

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up and downe the country in the liknes of a ballad, and this being the very tune of itt you [whisselled.]¹

WHIS. Alas, Sir, ye knowe I spake not a word.

NIM. Thats all one. if any man whissells treason, 't is as . ill as speaking [it.] Markeme, Master Bayle: the bird whissells that cannot speake, and ther be birds.in a manner that can speake too; your raven will [call ye rascall,] your crow will call ye knave, Master Bayle; ergoe, he that [can whissell] can speake, and therfore this fellowe hath both spooke and whissled [treason].

Equally characteristic is the Bayle's formal examination of the culprit:

BAYL. My good fellowe, be not pestifferous, but say and tell the truth: who did sett you aworke, or who was the cause of your whissling, or did any man say to you, 'goe whissell?'

WHIS. Not any man, women or child, truly, sir.

BAYLE. No? How durst you whissel then? or what cause had ye to doe soe?

WHIS. The truth is, Sir, I had two lost calves out of my paster, and being in serch for them, from the topp of the hill, I might spye you two eth bottome heere, and tooke ye for my calves, sir; and that made me come whissling downe for ioy, in hop I had found them.

NIM. More treason yett! he take a courtier and a Bayle for two calves! To limbo with hime! He shalbe quarterd and then hangd.

WHIS. Good Master Bayle, be pittifull!

BAYLE. Why, law ye, Sir, he makes a pittifull fellowe of a Bayle, too! Away with hime!

In these grimly humourous episodes the dramatist portrays the working of Tresilian's scandalous system, and in the following scene, which opens the fourth Act, we are made witnesses of the crowning infamy of the reign, when

¹The bracketed words are conjectural.

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Richard, for a payment of £7,000 a month, leases to Greene, Bagot, Bushy and Scroope his entire lands and revenues, and thus becomes the landlord of England instead of its King.

But Richard and the favourites cannot feel at ease while Woodstock is in retirement, out of their sight, at his country-seat of Plasshy. Fearing that the commons, enraged at the blank charters, may appeal to him for protection, they send a courtier to summon him to London. The episode (in, ii) gives the dramatist another opportunity for the display of his racy humour, though here it is lighter, more nearly farcical than in the incidents at Dunstable, with their serious undertone. The spruce envoy is 'sworn-brother' to Osric in *Hamlet*. He will not dismount, 'for fear of fouling his feet,' till the inner gate of the house is opened, and when 'plain Thomas' comes forth to meet him he mistakes him for a servant, and offers him a 'testar' to hold his horse. The Duke, entering into the spirit of the situation, closes with the offer, and when afterwards the dumbfounded courtier has learnt who he is, he insists upon the payment of the fee, the first money he has earned this forty year. He has his revenge by bantering his visitor upon his fantastic attire, especially the 'most fashionable chayne that linkes, as it were, the toe and knee together/ The courtier out-Osrics Osric in his explanation to his mystified host of the chain's function:

'These two parts being in operatione and quallity different as for example the tooe a disdayner or spurner, the knee a duetyfull and most humble orator: this chayne doth, as it were, soe tooefy the knee, and so kneefye the tooe, that betweene boeth it makes a most methodicall coherence or coherent method.'

How Teufelsdröckh and his creator, one may remark

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we are so full of woe/ bids them welcome. The episode, for parenthetically, would have rejoiced in this gifted exponent of the 'philosophy of clothes' 1

But the envoy's fine words are wasted. The Duke declines to come to court on the plea that it is too fine for his English plainness. Thereupon Tresilian, who figures throughout as Richard's particular evil genius, proposes that some of the King's friends should ride down, disguised as masquers to Plasshy, offer their sports to Gloucester to make him merry, and at the close of the performance 'singell the Duke alone, thrust hime in a masking suite, clap a *vizard* on his face, and convey hime out oth house at pleasure.' In the second scene of Act iv we see the carrying out of this design. The scene opens with what proves to be, though they know it not, the farewell dialogue between the Duke and his wife. The latter is just starting to visit the Queen, who is at the point of death; but, troubled by evil dreams about her husband, she is loth to set out on her journey. The skies, too, as the Duke's attendant Cheney reports, portend disaster:

The lights of heaven are shutt in pitchey clowds,
And flakes of fire rune tylting through the skye,
Like dim ostents to some great Tragedye.

With a stroke of tragic irony, Woodstock, whose own fate is thus foreboded, is made Yo interpret the omens as pointing to the Queen's approaching doom:

God bless good Anne a Beame! I feare hir death
Wilbe the tragicke sceane the sky foreshowes us.
When kingdomes change, the very heavens are
troubled.'

When the Duchess has at last taken her leave, the disguised masquers, who include the King himself, crave admission, and Woodstock, crying 'some sports does well,

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which there is no historical warrant, and which is an invention of the dramatist, is of peculiar interest. Like the play-scene in *Hamlet* and Hieronimo's play in *The Spanish Tragedy*, it is a conspicuous example of the introduction of an 'interlude' which serves as a factor in the development of the main plot. We are reminded further of *Hamlet* by the Duke's anxiety that the actors, though here they are amateurs, not professionals, should be 'Veil bestowed.' As soon as they are announced he bids prepare a banquet, calls for light and music, and orders his servants to 'sturr, sturr' and get the hall ready for the performance. It begins with the sounding of a 'florish,' followed by 'a great shout and winding a homes' which herald the appearance of Cinthia, who speaks the prologue:

From the cleere orbe of our etheryall sphere
Bright Cinthia comes to hunt and revell here.
The groves of Callidon and Arden woods,
Of untamed monsters, wylde and savadge heards,
We and our knights have freed, and hether come
To hunt these forrestes, where we heere there lyes
A cruell tusked boare, whose terror flies
Through this large kingdome, and with feare and
dread
Strickes her amassed greatnes payle and dead.
And haveing viewd from farr these towers of stone,
We heard the people midst their ioy and mone
Extoll to heaven a faithfull prince and peere,
That keepes a courte of love and pittie heere;
Reverent and myld his lookes: if such ther bee,
This state derects, great prince, that you are hee.

Thereupon enter the King, Greene, Bushy, and Bagot 'like Dianas knights, led in by four other knights in greene, with homes about ther necks and borespeares in their hands.' They go through a country dance before the

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unsuspecting Duke who, at its close, invites them to the banquet. But Cheney rushes in to announce that it is no time for banquetting, as the house is round beset with armed soldiers. Even then Woodstock fears no personal danger:

Ha, souldiers? A-fore my God, the commons all are
up then!

They will rebell agaynst the kinge, I feare me,
And flocke to me to backe ther bould attempts.

But he is quickly undeceived. Richard gives the signal to his confederates:

Guard fast the doores, and sease him p[re]sently
This is the cave that keepes the tusked boore,
That rootes up Englands vinards uncontrould,
Baggott arest hime; if for help he cry,
Drowne all his words with dromes confusedly!

Struggling and protesting the Duke is arrayed in a visard and masking suit and borne away by ship to Calais, of which Lapoole is wrongly represented as at this time the Governor.

Richard has thus taken the leading part in the plot for his uncle's arrest, and he has given orders for his secret murder. But in the present play he exhibits traces of that mercurial temperament which Shakespeare makes his distinguishing characteristic; and alarmed by the death of his wife, which he interprets as heaven's judgment upon his sins, he is within an ace (as Bushy informs Bagot and Tresilian) of disclosing the whole design to the Duchess of Gloucester:

He takes hir in his armes, weepes on hir breast
And would have ther revealed hir husbands fall
Amidst his passions, had not Scroope and Greene
By violence borne hime to an inward roome,

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Wher still he cryes to gett a messenger,
To send to Callys to repreeve his uncle.

And when shortly afterwards Richard enters from this 'inward roome,' he is still plunged in the very delirium of grief and self-reproach:

O God, I feare even heere beginns our woe.
Hir death's but chorus to some tragicke sceane,
That shortly will confound our state and realme.
Such sadd events blacke mischeife still attend.
And bloody acts, I feare must crowne the end.

Send post to Callys, bid Lapoole forbear
On payne of life, to act our sad decree.
For heavens love, goe, prevent the tragedie!

But the King's revocation of his previous order comes too late, and in the first scene of Act v we are witnesses of Woodstock's murder. With deft touches the dramatist heightens our impression of the foulness of the crime. Lapoole himself is torn between his scruples of conscience, and his loyalty to the King's commands. How deeply he has been impressed by his captive's mien and bearing appears from his warning to the pair of villains who have undertaken the deed:

One thinge lett me tell ye:
Thinke not your worke contrivd soe easely,
As if you were to match some common man.
Beleeve me sirs, his countenance is such,
So full of dread and lordly maiestie,
Mixt with such myld and gentle haviour,
As will (except you be resolved at full)
Stricke you with feare even with his princly lookes.

Even the spirit world is stirred by the coming tragedy, and the ghosts of Edward III and of the Black Prince appear to their sleeping kinsman to warn him of his fate. He

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starts from slumber as the murderers enter, but it is only for a moment that he is saved; for as—'plain Thomas' to the last—he bends down to write a reproving letter to the King, he is set on from behind and strangled. Yet the very assassins show an uneasy sense of the enormity of their deed by hurling at each other, during its performance, such damnatory epithets as 'slave,' 'hellhound,' 'cannibal'; and they expiate their villainy immediately at the hands of Lapoole's soldiery.

But the murder of the patriot-statesman in which, from the dramatist's point of view, Richard's misrule culminates, brings a nemesis upon more highly-placed offenders than this pair of hirelings. This is briefly dealt with in the two closing scenes of the play. At the entreaty of the widowed Duchess of Gloucester, Lancaster and York rise in arms to avenge their brother's death, and to call Richard to a strict account for 'his realm's misgovernment.' A battle takes place in which Greene is killed, Bagot forced to fly, and the King himself, with Bushy, Scroope and Lapoole made prisoner; while the arch-oppressor Tresilian is betrayed, and surrendered to the peers by his apt pupil in villainy, his own 'man' Nimble.

These closing scenes cover roughly the same period of Richard's reign as the first two Acts of Shakespeare's play, and we are thus brought to the question of the relation of the two pieces. Halliwell-Phillipps, when he printed the anonymous play, called it 'A Tragedy of King Richard the Second... A Composition anterior to Shakespeare's Tragedy on the same Reign.' Bullen dates it about 1593. Prof. W. Keller, who calls it *Richard II, Erster Teil*, takes a similar view, placing it after *King Henry VI, part II* and Marlowe's *Edward 77*, and before Shakespeare's *Richard 77*.

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The parallelisms of phrase that he quotes between the MS. play and 2 *Henry VI* and *Edward II* are striking. Taken by themselves they suggest that the piece belongs to the group of Chronicle-histories, in which the years following the defeat of the Armada were so prolific. The somewhat monotonous end-stopt verse and the considerable proportion of rhyme are also in favour of an early date.

Hence it was tempting to conclude that the play preceded *Richard II*, and that Shakespeare was acquainted with it. Some of his lines seemed to be echoes of passages in *Thomas of Woodstock*. Thus, in Act iv, Scene i, of the anonymous play, Richard speaks of himself as renting out his kingdom—

like a pely[n]g ffarme,
That erst was held as fair as Babilon,
The mayden conquerris to all the world.

And in Act v, Scene ii, Lancaster cries reproachfully to him:

And thou no king, but landlord now become
To this great state that terroured christendome.

Might not Shakespeare have had these lines in his memory when he too makes Lancaster lament—Act II, Scene i—

This dear, dear land . . .
Is now leased out, I die pronouncing it
Like to a tenement or.pelting farm.. .
That England that was wont to conquer others,
Hath made a shameful conquest of itself;

and upbraid Richard with the words,

Landlord of England art thou now, not king!

And when, in the same scene, Lancaster alludes regretfully to 'my brother Gloucester, plain, well-meaning soul,' we seem to have a reminiscence of the kindly 'plain Thomas' of the earlier play—a character, as we have seen,

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essentially different from the stern Duke of the chronicles.

The conclusion that Shakespeare knew the anonymous piece and could count upon his audience's familiarity with it, would go far to explain some puzzling features in his own work. It would, to begin with, solve the problem why, out of the rich dramatic material offered by the 'casualties' of Richard's reign, he confined himself to those of its last eighteen months. And it would suggest a reason why the element of popular humour, present, more or less, in all his other historical plays, should be so curiously lacking in his *Richard II*. For even Shakespeare might have hesitated to work again over the ground covered so admirably by the anonymous writer in the comic prose scenes of the earlier piece.

Elizabethan theatre-goers, moreover, to whom this piece was known, would appreciate much in the first half of Shakespeare's play that, taken by itself, hangs in the air. It has always been a *crux* to commentators on *Richard II* how its hearers or readers could be expected to be much moved by its opening scenes, of which the recent murder of Gloucester is the pivot, when the Duke himself was nothing more to them than a name. Again the sting in John of Gaunt's reproach to Richard for having become landlord of England instead of king is not fully comprehensible, when the strange transaction of leasing the kingdom has never been described. And even the execution of the favourites excites little interest, when we have had no concrete evidence of their misdeeds, and their most memorable utterance has been Bushy's fanciful comparison between the illusions of grief and of perspectives.' But all these episodes, to which Shakespeare merely alludes, are fully dealt with, as has been shown, in *Thomas of Woodstock* and would be deeply significant to those who knew it.

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There are, however, considerations in favour of dating the play considerably later than *Richard II*. Even the metrical evidence does not all point one way. There is a frequent succession of lines with double endings, e.g. iv, ii, 68-73.

God bless good Ann a Beame! I feare hir death
Wilbe the tragicke sceane the sky foreshowes vs.
When kingdomes change, the very heavens are
troubled.

Pray God, King Richards wyld behaviour,
Force not the powres of heaven to frowne vppon vs.
My prayers are still for hime. What thinkst thou,
Cheney?

This and similar passages have the ring of Jacobean rather than Elizabethan blank verse.

It has, moreover, to be borne in mind that all the plays of known date in Egerton MS. 1994 belong to the xvth century, and with the doubtful exception of *Thomas of Woodstock*, only one of the fifteen, *Edmond Ironside*, seems from internal evidence of style to be of earlier origin. Both *Thomas of Woodstock* and *Edmond Ironside* contain, as has been seen, marginal entries of the names of actors who flourished in the third and fourth decades of the xvth century.¹ These names were added to the MS. by the play-house manager, and were probably not those of the first performers of the parts. But they are *pro tanto* an argument against either of the plays having been written some thirty or forty years before the entries were made.

Was it also the manager who scored through or bracketed a number of passages in *Thomas of Woodstock*, or have we here the hand of the Censor? Had the last leaf of the MS. been preserved, we might perhaps have found a note

¹ See above, Chapter V, p. 104.

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by the Master of the Revels or his Deputy, similar to those at the end of *The Lanchinge of the Mary* and *The Lady Mother*. But the Censor's comments were not always limited to his final annotation. Thus in *Sir John van Olden Barnaveit* (Add. MS. 18653) Act i, Hi, Sir George Buc, Master of the Revels 1601-22, has added the marginal criticism quoted above (p. 6). So when in *Thomas of Woodstock* we find the curt direction 'out' written twice in the margin of the MS. against a speech by King Richard, and the eight following lines, it is presumably from the hand of the Censor. In the course of the speech Richard cries (iv, i, 126-30):

All forrayne Kings will poynt at us,
And of the meanest subiect of our land
We shalbe sensurd strangly, when they tell
How our great ffather toyld his royall p[er]sone
Spending his blood to purchase towns in France.

Here objection may well have been taken to the first three lines of the quotation; and even the reference to Edward III's triumphs in France may have been banned, if at the time it was thought inexpedient to offend the French Government. This is the more probable because a passage near the beginning of the play, i, i, 30-36, celebrating the victories of the Black Prince 'in mournfull France' is also crossed out.

Among other passages bracketed for omission are several alluding to extortion by the King, or to treachery and rebellion on the part of his subjects, e.g. v, i, 277-80:

The gentlemen and commons of the realme,
Missing the good old duke, their playne protectour,
Brake ther allegiance to ther soveraigne lord
And all revolt uppon the barrens syde.

and v, 1, 34-5:

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Horror of conscience with the Kings command
Fights a fell combatt in my fearefull breast.

Such references would have been unacceptable to either a Tudor or a Stuart government, but it was under the latter that stage censorship became stricter and more systematic. And there is one significant omission that must have been made after James VI of Scotland became also King of England. In Act n, ii, 127 ff., Richard proclaims that he is of age and asserts his full rights as sovereign:

heere we clayme our faire inheritance
Of fruitfull England, France, and Ireland,
Superiour lord of Scotland, and the rights
Belonging to our great dominions.

The words, 'Superiour lord of Scotland,' have been crossed out. This may have been a precaution on the part of the manager, but if (as is more probable) that erasure was made by the Master of the Revels when the manuscript was presented to him for his licence, there can be little doubt that the play dates from after the union of the English and Scottish crowns.

However this may be, and whether *Thomas of Woodstock* or *Richard II* was the earlier play, Shakespeare has the advantage of the anonymous dramatist in historical accuracy. He follows Holinshed in representing not Lapoole but Mowbray as Governor of Calais at the time of Gloucester's murder, and opens his drama with Bolingbroke's accusation of Mowbray as being privy to the crime. It is Bolingbroke, too, not his father John of Gaunt, whom he exhibits as punishing the favourites, and he omits the imaginary battle in which Greene is slain. In mastery of rhythm and wealth of rhetoric Shakespeare, too, is far ahead; and the portrait of the King in the manuscript play, effective though it is, cannot compare in psychological

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subtlety and wistful charm with the great dramatist's marvellous picture of Richard as the crowned sentimentalist whose character causes his ruin. But in its breadth of canvas, its insight into popular feeling, and its abundant comic relief, the anonymous work supplies the very elements that are most to seek in Shakespeare's drama, to which henceforth, in the study if not on the stage, it should be regarded as an indispensable fore-piece.

CHAPTER VIII
WALTER MOUNTFORT
EAST INDIA COMPANY'S OFFICIAL
AND DRAMATIST

THE *Lanchinge of the Mary or The Seamans honest wyfe* is the last of the fifteen plays contained in the British Museum Egerton MS. 1994. It is described on the leaf that contains the title and the Actors as 'written by W: M: gent in his returne from East India, a^o 1632.' The Prologue lays stress on the fact of the play having been written during a sea-voyage:

The limbecke of our author hath distilld
Salt water into fresh: Each sceane is filld
With various distillations. To extract
Fresh out of salt (though common) is an acte
Of a good chymist. This was done at sea;
On land tis facile. Without further plea
He dyd it which did doe yt to reviuie
His stupid sences; not thereby to thrive
By settinge yt to sale. The sea made this.
And you must blame the sea, yf ought's amisse,

These lines also inform us that the author was an amateur dramatist, who did not aim at making money out of his play. The Epilogue adds that he was not seeking fame, and that he had never before written for the stage:

Our feareless author (for what needes he feare
That neuer looks a laurell wreath to weare)
Thinke that some ill affected will gaynsaye
The truth alledged, and so dislike the playe.
Such leaues he to themselues, but vnto you
Whose iudgments canne discerne twixt false
and true,
He humbly yeilds him selfe. This I averre
Tyll now he neuer tracte the theater.

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Such are the facts about the composition of the play supplied by external evidence. But internal evidence yields some further information. The play (as its first title indicates) celebrates the launch of the East India Company's ship *The Mary*, named after Queen Henrietta Marja on the 26th of October, 1626, and is further an enthusiastic *apologia* for the activities and commercial policy of the Company, mainly based on *The Discourse of Trade from England into the East Indies*, a treatise published in 1621 by Thomas Mun, one of the Directors. The inference therefore is that 'W.M.' was a servant of the Company. A passage in Act Iv, Scene iii, on 'Detraction,' introduced somewhat irrelevantly, denounces it as the prolific source of evils in public and private life, and especially as the 'haracan' (i.e. hurricane) that makes shipwreck of a man's good name. The lines have a ring of personal bitterness evidently inspired by the author's belief that he had himself been the victim of calumny.

It happens that in the Public Records Office there is preserved a petition by Walter Mountfort, an official of the East India Company, presented to the Court of Directors on March 21, 1634. His initials are those of the author of the play, and it is known from the Court minutes that he went out to India on the *Charles* in March, 1629, and returned on the *Blessing*, which set sail in April, 1632 and arrived home about a year afterwards. In his petition, in phrases that echo some of the lines of the play, he protests against the false aspersions on his character. At an earlier period, between 1621 and 1624, he had been in trouble with the Company and had been for a time dismissed from its service. His object in writing a dramatic defence of its commercial policy would therefore not be to win fortune or fame but to reingratiate himself with the

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Directors, and there is no trace of his having written any other play before or after. Thus the facts of Mountfort's career tally exactly with what is known from external and internal evidence about the *provenance* of the play. And the fact of his authorship has been established beyond all doubt by a comparison of the script of the petition in the Record Office with that of *The Lanchinge of the Mary*. They are in the same autograph, though the writing in the official document is naturally of a somewhat more formal type.

As Mountfort's play has its origin in his connexion with the East India Company, it is interesting to trace the chief episodes of his career as they are recorded for a period of about twenty years in the Court minutes and correspondence of the Company. They are not lacking in the highly-coloured interest that marks the adventurous fortunes of so many of the Company's servants. Mountfort was evidently, in the phraseology of his time, a ruffler, hot-tempered and unscrupulous, constantly getting into trouble, yet sufficiently versatile and plausible to keep himself from ever going completely under. It is quite of a piece with his other restless activities that he should have beguiled the tedium of a long sea-voyage by writing a play intended as a sop to the employers whom he had alienated by previous misbehaviour.

Of his early life nothing is known. His name does not appear on the matriculation lists at either Oxford or Cambridge, but he had received a classical education. He quotes in Act iv, iii, the epigram 'Nulli credere, et omnibus credere, vtrumque est vitium,' and in the same scene he declares that to write a satire against 'Detraction' would be a work fitting 'a Perseus or a Juuenall.' In Act v, iii, he quotes from a post-classical source:

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Non audet Stygius Pluto tentare quod audet
Effroenis monachus.

Two of the personages in the play are 'Naupegus' and 'Locuples.' In Act II, i, there are references to 'Chast Camilla and adulterate Thais' and to 'Chast Penelope', and in II, ii, the prospect (not realised) of the Queen being present at the launching of the *Mary* produces a shower of classical allusions:

Candy could not receave old Saturne's daughter
With better welcome: greate Semiramis
And stately Cleopatra should attend
Her sacred person. Pallas should give waye,
Zenobia wayte, and all the nimphs obaye.

Apart from the mention of *The Discourse of Trade*, the only contemporary writer named by Mountfort is Joseph Swetnam (or Swetman), author of *The Araignment of lewd, idle, forward, and unconstant Women*, to whom there are references by two of the chief characters, in Act iv, iv. The heroine cries:

I know there are a packe of Satyrists
Malignant Swetmans, drunken poetasters,
Which farce and bumbast out theyr spurious lines
With raylinge language 'gaynst our feeble sex.

And when she rebukes one of the men in this scene, he bursts out:

Yf I proue not as malevolent a writer agaynst that ruinous, ambitious, iniurious, lascivious, discurteous, preposterous, pestiferous, seditious, luxurious, licentious sex of women as ever was Swetman, then ...

The exact date of Mountfort's entry into the service of the East India Company is unknown, but it was probably not long after October 8, 1613. The Court of Directors

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then allowed Richard Mountney, 'husband' of the Company, the services of an assistant. Either at that time or subsequently he chose for this office his kinsman, Walter Mountfort. The first entry of Mountfort's name in the Court minutes is on August 4, 1615, when it is stated that Mountney employs him at two shillings a day, and the question is raised whether the Court 'would thinke fitt to have his service contynued still, or putt of till some shippes returned The Court being 'satisfied of the honestie, sufficiencie and civilitye of the said Mountford, and that Mr Mountney employeth him dailye and cannot want his service/ agreed to continue the arrangement. On the 30th of the month, upon the arrival of the ship the *James*, from Bantam, he was sent down, with another official, with letters from the Governor to those on board, and with instructions to attend on the Committees (*i.e.* Directors) who had gone to meet the ship.

Hereafter there is no mention of him for about three years and a half.¹ Then he is heard of at Deal, whence on March 13, 1618-9, he wrote to the Court,

giuing notice of the greate expence of fresh prouisions aboard the shippes. And therefore aduised to haue Bread Butter Cheese and fish from London, w^{ch} in his opinion might be had better Cheape from London than in those p[ar]tes.

The Directors, however,

distasting the mocon, knowing that all these thinges (except fish) may be had at as reasonable rates there as from London, And that it is to be hoped the shippes may be gone before these p[ro]uisions can be sent downe, And dislikeinge that Mountfort feedeth there humours to prouide what they will call for,

The Couit Minutes from November 10, 1615, 10 Septembe 19, 1617, are missing.

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rejected his proposal. In this letter we have the first sign of the self-willed temper which was afterwards to bring Mountfort into disfavour with his employers. But for the present they remained well disposed towards him. In the Court minutes for December 17, 1619, he is described as 'a sufficient man for any employment he shalbe put to.'

It was in the summer of 1621 that Mountfort's serious troubles with the Company began. On July 6 an official named Robinson was charged with 'short accompting' to the extent of £1,300. He laid the blame upon other servants of the Company, including Mountfort; and an investigation followed. On August 1 'Mr Munnes' (i.e., Thomas Mun, one of the Directors, whose *Discourse of Trade* was afterwards to be one of the chief sources of Mountfort's play), set forth the case against him:

That Montfort giues no Accompt and that when he hath binn askt it, there haue come strange wordes from him and in his speeches he is ouerbould with the Companie. That of late beeing required to Accompte for Beefe Porke &c. answered he cann giue no other Accompt then he hath giuen, wherein it maie seeme the Companie hath bin wronged manie hunderd poundes sterlinge.

The Court thereupon 'suspended his elleccion vntill he had fairely accompted.' After the lapse of nearly a month, on August 29, it was reported that there was 'a great slackness in Mountfort to giue in his Accompte in that faire manner as was meete to contente the Companie, and as he had binn directed, and not so only but that he had spoken ruddily to some of the Committees, contemptuously of the Courte, and had refused to attend them vpon summons.' It was also confidently affirmed that 'when soeuer his accompte shall appeare to the Companie they will find one third to be wantinge.'

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At a later meeting of the Court on the same day a new charge was brought against Mountfort from a different quarter.

Thomas Parker complainid to the Court by waie of peticpn against Walter Mountfort, that beeing in one of the Companies warehouses the said Walter came and stroke him violentlie downe and spurned him and beate him so as he was in ill case therewith, and desired that either he might be righted by the Companie or that they would giue him leaue to take his remedy by lawe. Some of the Committees weare of opinion that the beating of Parker was plotted betweene Mountfort and some others, for that there was a crew of them met with att a Taverne that morning, and Parker hath had much ill will amongst them ever since be begunne to discover the abuses of the yarde. The Courte held the example to be pernicious that the Companies seruants should one beate another.

Mountfort and Parker were accordingly summoned to attend the next meeting of the Court, two days later. They were brought face to face, and an angry dialogue ensued.

Parker maintained the truth of his peticon. Mountfort denied to haue giuen him more than two Boxes on the eare and denied to haue stroake him downe at all. the other affirmed with a stronge asseveracon. Mountfort being demaunded why he stroke him att all made answeare that Parker by the space of 3 yearse past reproacht him with iniurious [*i.e.*, insulting] speeches euen among his neighbours, in so much as not being longer able to beare it, and thincking it had binn a base Course to complaine, he resolved to right himself this waie, wherein if he had giuen offence to the Court he was sorrie for it. Herevnto it was answeared that his assault uppon Parker was not soddaine but had binn consulted vppon betweene him and Lee, Together with some others, for prooffe whereof it was said that Mountfort and Lee had binn in a Tauerne together

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the same morninge, and that this Lee was one that went about to deliuer false Inuentories to the Companie, which Parker discoveringe must therefore be beaten.

Here we get a vivid glimpse into the turbulent underworld of the riverside in Jacobean London. It would be interesting to know if the tavern at which Mountfort and his gang laid their plans for the assault on Parker was one of those frequented by Isabel Nutt, the boatswain's wife in *The Lanchinge of the Mary*:

Fayth I neuer keepe one constant house: sometymes at Whittingtons venture by the six wyndmills; sometymes at the 3 Goates heads in Ratcliffe highwaye; sometymes at the Windmill beyond Milend; sometymes at the White Lyon in Blackman Streete; sometymes at the Shippe in Wappinge; sometymes at the Hoope at Lymehouse Corner; sometymes at the Man in the Moone at Whitechappell; sometymes at the Queens head in the little Minories.

After the Court had heard further evidence against Mountfort in respect of both charges, the Deputy-Governor delivered a short homily. He told him

that men that are honest neuer flyethe light, but for their discharge will followe those to whom they are to accompte; but he that must be haled to his Accompte giues iust cause to suspect his honestie, he said he knew Parker to be a p[ro]uoking man, and men cannot allwaies beare, but allwaies the giltie p[er]sonn cann least beare.

The Governor was less sententious and told him roundly that 'he must suppress his humors for if the Companie find him stuborne, they will not beare it.'

On September 5 there was a further report on the state of his accounts, and after the Court had 'allowed all deduccons with the largest,' there 'was wanting to the valed

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of many Oxen and Hogges.' Mountfort 'made deepe protestacon of his innocency, but could not devise how to make a better account then he had donn.' The inquiry was postponed, and no action appears to have been taken at the time. But, considering Mountfort's equivocal reputation with the Company, it is surprising to find him employed by the Directors early in the following year on an important mission abroad. On February 22, 1621-2, the Court determined to send letters to Sir Dudley Carleton, the English Ambassador to the States-General, relating what had passed 'in this last Treatie betweene this Companie and the Dutch.' It ordered that Mountfort should be 'sent expressly' with these letters, and with others directed 'to the Mayors or directors of the Netherlands Companie, demanding restitution of 'Nuttmeggs, Maces, and other goods and merchandizes taken from the Companie by the Dutch at the Islands of Polleroone and Lantore, and likewise of Pepper bought at Ligore.' He was allowed ten pounds 'vppon Accounte' for his travelling expenses, and it was probably on this journey that he picked up the scraps of Dutch which occur in his play.

Nothing more is heard of him till July, 1623, when on his return from a voyage to Ireland he is again in trouble with the Directors about his accounts.

Mountfort beeing demaunded the reason why having received divers summes of money to be disbursed for the Companies vse att severall times and in severall places as in the downes, att Milforde, and elce where, he had not given an accompt thereof to the Companie, his answeare was that his employm[en]ts had bene so thyk one vppon another as he could not have time to do it. But he praied he might now have 14 daies time, and he would accompt for all that he had receyved and not Accompted for, wth he

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gessed to be about 700¹¹. The Courte blamed him much for his slackness and gave him the time he desired, but withall they ordered that he shalbe no more employed for the Companie vntill he had accompted.

On November 21, two of the Directors reported that they had Viewed the accomptes of Walter Mountfort, and do find them so intricate and oute of order as that it will aske a longe tyme to audyt them, also they find in his discharge very extraordinary disbursements, neither are his layings out vouched by the Purser as they should be/

On this occasion the Court dealt more summarily with Mountfort than two years previously. It ordered him to 'satisfy the Auditors as well by his vouchers and otherwise' and Vntill this be done, no more money either for sallary or other employm[en]t to be paid vnto y^e said Walter Mountfort.' Mountfort was thus for the time dismissed from the Company's service; and on February 13, 1623-4, John Young was appointed in his place.

Mountfort was not the man to sit down lightly under his dismissal. He continued for several years to present ineffectual petitions for arrears of wages, and he also begged for employment in India. This request was considered by the Court on 13 February, 1623-4: 'It was conceyved that to beare office in one of the intended ffortes in thindies wilbe fitt for him, but nothing was therin resolved/

Mountfort was therefore not in the Company's service when the *Mary* was launched on October 26, 1626. There is only a brief reference to the event in the Court minutes for October 25.

Mr Steevens came into y^c Court, and acquainted them that hee entended by God's grace to launch the new great

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Shippe to-morrowe, and did therefore desire the Court to give vnto her a name. The Court remembring that the Queene had beene in Blackwall Yard, and had seene the said Shippe, and called it by her owne name, did therefore order that shee should be called the *Mary*.

The details of the ceremony as given by Mountfort in Act v of his play are doubtless imaginary, but he is probably speaking from his own observation when he makes Trunnell, the leading dockyard workman, cry: 'Why, heeres a day for concourse of coaches, courtiers, cavaliers, ladies, gentlemen, citizens, and common people, never the like to behold the lanchinge of a shippe.'

Mountfort never sailed in the *Mary*, but he eventually achieved his aim of service overseas. In the Court minutes for March 9, 1628-9, it is recorded that he is 'enterteyned Leiuetenant in the *Charles*' at 30 shillings a month, and that an advance of wages is allowed him 'to furnish him to sea.' He appears to have in mind his persistent solicitations to be sent abroad when he makes the Captain of the *Mary* say to the 'honest wife,' who is lamenting her husband's absence in India:

Did not your husband by petition
Implore imployment? Did the merchants want
Your husband more than did your husband them?
The fayre imployment that's conferred on him
Had been supplyde by better abler men
Had not his importunitie been such
As would take no denyall.

The *Charles* arrived with other smaller ships at Gombroon on January 20, 1630. Here the Company's agents at Ispahan engaged Mountfort and some others from the fleet for service in this important centre of the Persian silk trade. They proved themselves (as the agents reported on

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September 26, 1631) 'honest and well-governed men, especially Mountfort, who was given charge of the warehouse, and who travelled up and down from Ispahan to the port of Gombroon with goods.

His sojourn in the East came to an end in April, 1632, when he set sail homewards in the *Blessing*. The voyage took almost a year; and during it Mountfort, who must have had a copy of Mun's *Discourse of Trade* on board, wrote his play round it. He probably doubted whether the Court of Directors would employ him again in England, and thought that the production of an *apologia* on the stage for the Company would get him again into favour. The impassioned outburst against *Detraction* is inserted to vindicate his sadly damaged reputation:

This, this detraction is that haracan
Which makes more shipwracke of a mans good
name
Than any violent or impetuous storme,
Doth make at sea, of shippes, of goodes, of men.

And a good name once lost, is past all hope
To be re-gaynde: so credulous are some
To beleue all which a detractor speakes.
But weare men wise (as I could wish they weare)
(Especially the merchant who hath trade
In parts remote) seldome br neuer should
Theyr eares stand open to a base reporte
Without apparent prooffe: how many men
Have been vndone by priuate manuscripts
Both in theyr reputation and estate.

If these lines (as would appear from the manuscript of the play) were written on the voyage, they must refer to the charges which had previously led to Mountfort's dismissal from the Company's service. But they read like a prophecy

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of the new scandal in which he was involved as soon as he had set foot again in England. It is an intricate business, not easy to disentangle fully from the references in the Court minutes and the Company's correspondence.

The *Blessing* had brought home a large number of bales of silk from Ispahan. When they were unshipped two of the bales were found to contain not silk but stones and baked earth. At the same time it was discovered that Francis Stockton, purser of the *Blessing*, had had two bales of silk conveyed ashore by secret warrant, in contravention of the regulations of the Government and the Company against private trading. Stockton, when examined by Thomas Mun, confessed that he bought the two bales from Mountfort at Gombroon. The natural inference was that Mountfort had embezzled the Company's two missing bales and had sold them for his own profit to Stockton. He was interrogated by the Court on May 22 and 24, 1623. He admitted that he had sold two bales of silk to Stockton, but declared that they had been bought by him in Persia from a Dutchman, 'one Almaine,' and that they were not the Company's property. The Court, disbelieving his story, sequestered the bales, which Stockton under threats of a Star Chamber prosecution, confessed were now 'in Fenns' lodging at Blackfriars.'

On June 5 Mountfort was further examined by the Court, which declared it was impossible for him, with his small salary, to have bought the bales. But he protested that 'with his owne meanes which he carried out,' with loanes and gifts from friends, and 'with the investments hee had made therewithall' he was enabled 'to purchase the said silke.' 'For the two bales of trash returned in Hew of silke he doth admire [i.e., wonder] how and by whome it should bee done—he was at the packing of them all at

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Spahan, and is sure that between Spahan and Gombroon all the bales were silke.' He delivered them at Gombroon to Gove, the steward of the house, who had all the silk in his custody thirty days, and 'is confident that the abuse was committed there by Gove.'. But the Court remained sceptical, and on June 21 declined to surrender the two sequestered bales to Stockton.

It was a week later, on June 27, while the charge of embezzlement still hung over him, that Sir Henry Herbert, the Master of the Revels, licensed Mountfort's play for performance, subject to the changes with which I deal in the following Chapter. One wonders if Herbert knew anything of the 'shady' antecedents of this new aspirant for dramatic laurels. His case dragged on while the Company sought to get further evidence; and on March 21, 1634, he presented to the Court, through his wife, the petition preserved in the Record Office which has enabled us to identify him as the author of *The Lanchtng of the Mary*. It is a rhetorical and sanctimonious document, in which he solemnly protests 'with teares in myne eyes, vpon the bended knees of my soule, that I never wronged your worshippes in an ounce of silke in my life, nor did I ever know of the alteration of the propertie of those two bayles so basely and villainously abusde and so vniustly layd to my charge.' If Mountfort was really guilty he must have been a thorough-paced perjurer and blasphemer. But, in spite of the *prima facie* case against him, the affair began to take a turn more in his favour. On April 30 the Court heard 'the delacon and report of Mr Alman, a Dutchman lately returned out of Persia, who sold the said silke to the said Mountfort.' The details of the report are unfortunately not given, but it is implied that Alman corroborated Mountfort's statement. The Court, there-

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upon, on May 21, went so far as to pay him the balance of his wages, which had hitherto been withheld, and also 'the value of a bale of course callicoes brought home by him as a private trader/ But they still declined to let Stockton have the two bales bought by him from Mountfort.

They intend to sell the said 2 bales of silke and likewise to write into Persia to bee more fully satisfied then yett they are whether the said Bales be his or the Companies, And if it appeare that Mountfort came honestly by them and that they are not the Companies, they will then pay vnto Stockton what they shallbe sold for, with interest for his forbearance.

To a further petition from Stockton on June 11 they answered that they were waiting to hear from their factors in Persia, being yet induced to think it rather the Companies than [Mountfort's], in regard they want the like number in their proportion brought home at that time/

The reply of the agents came in two letters from Ispahan, written on October 13 and November 27, 1634, and both received on May 12, 1635. They attributed the fraud to the vendors of the silk, and admitted that they ought to have examined 'all the bales as well as some,' but 'the good usage of merchants made them too confident.' To Mountfort they gave a handsome testimonial:

God forbid that wee should say hee was faulty heerein in y^e least, or in any waies suspected by vs; both his caradge and actions in y^e tyme of his beeing heere shewed him to bee a man of another stampe. . . . Wee must confesse that those 2 bal[es] silke your worshippes have attached was bought of S¹¹⁰ Alman by Mountfort, as himself confesseth and for ought wee can say to y^e contrary with his owne money. What y[our] w[orshippes] may have observed in y^e mans carradge formerly when in your service in England wee know nott, but trewly in the tyme of his

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beeinge hiere, his demeanour was soe faire that wee neu[er] had the least suspition of any such matters in him as now y[our] w[orshippes] are jealous of.

They repudiated, however, his attempt to fasten the responsibility on Gove or others at Gombroon.

But whereas hee layes y^c fraude on those that had y^c imbaling of y^c silke at Porte after hee brought it downe, hee doth himselfe wronge and vs too, for wee are sure, if not hee alone, hee was one that was at y^o imbaling theerof, for twas his place becing warehousman alwayes to doo that businesse, and did doo it soe longe as hee was heere, w^{ch} hee cannott denye.

This appears to be the last reference to Mountfort in any of the Company's records; but as, on December 4, 1635, the Court resolved to pay Stockton 200 in satisfaction of his demands, they seem to have been at last convinced, sorely against their will, that Mountfort had come honestly by the two bales.

In any case his service in the East was the most reputable episode in his career. He evidently belonged to the type of Englishman better fitted for an adventurous career in far-off lands than for the routine work in keeping 'accompts' or superintending stores in offices or docks on the banks of the Thames. Had he lived a generation earlier, the London in which he would've been at home was the Bohemian underworld frequented by Marlowe, Greene and Kyd, who would have found in him a congenial tavern-haunter, though they would not have rated highly his efforts to rival them as a dramatist.

CHAPTER IX

STAGE CENSORSHIP UNDER CHARLES I

SIR HENRY HERBERT AND MOUNTFORT'S

PLAY

IN the preceding Chapter an account has been given of Walter Mountfort's career, and of the circumstances that led him, on his voyage home from India in 1632-3, to try his hand as a dramatist. His play, *The Lanchinge of the Mary or The Seamans honest wyfe*, is, as has been shown above, a panegyric on the East India Company, and an enthusiastic defence of its activities. Doubtless it did not occur to Mountfort, who had been away from England for over three years, that it was impossible to undertake such a task without raising delicate questions which the Government of Charles I did not wish to see handled on the public stage.

Mountfort arrived home on the *Blessing* in May, 1633, and in spite of the troubles with the Company in which he was at once involved, his play was submitted in June to the Master of the Revels, Sir Henry Herbert, for his licence.

It was a critical time both in domestic and in foreign affairs. In July Wentworth became Lord Deputy of Ireland, and in August Laud succeeded to the Archbishopric of Canterbury. With the elevation of his chief advisers to these offices the personal government of Charles entered upon the fatal course that was to end with the loss of his crown and his life. Abroad he was pursuing the 'futile diplomacy,' as Gardiner has called it, by which he was seeking to regain the Palatinate for his relatives without ranging himself effectively on the side of any of the belligerents in the Thirty Years' War.

It was a time when the Master of the Revels would scrutinize jealously the manuscript of any play which

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touched on matters of State. Two years before, in January, 1631, he had refused to license the first draft of Massinger's *Believe as you List*, 'because it did contain dangerous matter, as the deposing of Sebastian, King of Portugal, by Philip II, and there being a peace sworn betwixt the Kings of England and Spain.' Before Herbert would sanction its performance, Massinger had to submit another version, in which the plot was disguised by a wholesale alteration of *locale*, period and names.

With *The Lanchinge of the Mary or The Seamans honest wyfe* Herbert took a less drastic course than with Massinger's play. He licensed it, but conditionally on certain omissions and changes. At the end of the manuscript he wrote the following notes:

The Play called y^c Seamans honest wife, all y^c Oaths left out in y^e action as they are crost in y^c book and all other Reformations strictly observed may bee acted not otherwyse. This 27 June 1633.—Henry Herbert.

I command your Bookekeeper to present me with a fairer copy hereafter and to take out all Oathes, prophanness, and publick Ribaldry as he will answer it at his peril.—H. Herbert.

It is to be presumed that Herbert got the 'fairer copy' which he so peremptorily demanded. But the manuscript that has been preserved is fortupiatly Mountfort's original draft, with the passages marked by the Censor for omission and with the 'reformations' written over the original text in the dramatist's own hand. In two of the longer revised passages he had to write his new version on slips which were pasted over the censored lines. But these lines can still be deciphered; and an examination of the earlier and later drafts here, as well as of passages which had to be left out in performance, reveals in a singularly interesting way

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the workings of the stage censorship under the Stuart absolutism.

Mountfort's play consists of three parts—they can scarcely be called 'plots'—which have little connexion with one another, except that they all relate to the East India Company and its servants.¹

The section of the play which gives it its main title. *The Lanchinge of the Mary*, deals with the building and launching in October, 1626, of a new ship for the Company, which is to be christened the *Mary* after the Queen, Henrietta Maria. In the opening scene the 'stately modell of the ship has just been shown by the 'Naupegus,' or ship-builder, and by Captain Fitzjohn, who is to command her, to old Admiral Hobab, a hero of the Armada. While Hobab is praising the ship and her owners a bell rings and a set of workmen enter. They are the most original figures in the play, being the personifications of a number of the materials used in shipbuilding. Trunnell² leads the way, and his fellows are Okum, Tallow, Tarre, and Sheathing nayle.³ Before resuming their labours on the nearly completed 'modeir they order drinks and exchange repartees, in the course of which Tarre and Tallow nearly come to loggerheads. Their comrades seek to calm them, and it is at this point that the Master of the Revels first begins to detect 'publicke Ribaldry.'¹

SHEATHINGE NAYLE. Hold your peace, neighbours, hold your peace! yf any *Dutchemen* [drunken thrum cappe] should heare you, they would make a treason of this.

TRUNNELL. Treason, neighbour Sheathing nayle! marry, God shield——

SHEATHINGE NAYLE. Why, *they* [there are people in the

¹ They are discussed in detail in the following Chapter.

² A corruption of 'treenail,' a pin of hard wood used for fastening planks in ships.

³ A nail used for fastening wood or coppci sheathing on a ship's bottom.

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world that] will make treason of any thinge right or wrong. I am sure . . . [there have been some that have suffered] *for lesse treason then eyther drinkinge or speakinge, or that Harman van Speult is een schellam in Zyn Hart.*

TALLOW. Hush, good Sheathinge nayle! You pricke too hard, you pricke too hard, *yfayth.*

SHEATHINGE NAYLE. Pricke too hard, quotha? I would all my box of sheathinge nayles weare prickinge in his hodge-podge mawe.

TARRE. No more of that at this tyme.

▼ ▼ ▼ ▼

OKUM. *For this business of Amboyne fayth we'll have a daye to discourse of yt priuately by ourselues ...* [so all quarrells layd aside].

In the above quotation the words in italics are those originally written and erased or marked for deletion by the Censor.¹ The dots represent some phrases so heavily crossed out that they are undecipherable. The words enclosed in brackets are those inserted by the playwright in place of the banned passages. It is evident from a consideration of the changes that Herbert was resolved to prevent any allusion on the stage to the 'business of Amboyne/

To understand the significance of the Censor's action it is necessary to take a brief glance backwards. Amboyne, the richest of the clove islands in the Southern Moluccas, was occupied by the Dutch, who in 1623 had there a garrison of two hundred of their own troops and about twice as many natives. There was a small agency of the East India Company on the island and in the neighbourhood,

¹ In Sheathmge nayle's second speech the Censor has not actually undeiscored the woids after 'drinkmge or speakinge,' but it is obvious that he meant the rest of the sentence to be omitted.

In Tallow's speech 'yfayth' is crossed out as an oath, and this is done wherever it occurs throughout the play.

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numbering about eighteen men. In the middle of February, 1623, the Dutch Governor, Harman van Speult, acting on false evidence extracted by torture, seized Captain Towerson, the chief English agent, and his companions on a charge of conspiracy. They were put into irons, cruelly tortured, and executed on February 27.

The news of the outrage did not reach England till May 29, 1624. The East India Company urged the King to exact reparation. But James, angered at the collapse of the Spanish marriage project, was on the point of a breach with Spain, and this involved an alliance with Holland. In spite of the popular cry for vengeance, he therefore temporized. So, after his accession in March, 1625, did Charles. The Dutch had really nothing to fear from a King who could not get Parliamentary supplies and whose foreign policy was dominated by the desire of regaining the Palatinate for his family. It was eventually for this object, and not to obtain satisfaction for 'the business of Amboyna,' that Charles in 1633 began secret negotiations with Spain for an alliance against Holland.

It was important at such a time that the Government should not arouse the suspicions of the Dutch Ambassador in London by allowing the popular feeling on the unavenged outrage to find expression on the stage. Hence Herbert's insistence on the revision, as shown above, of Sheathing nayle's and Okum's speeches. Nor did he stop there. When the workmen go out, the Admiral, who has overheard them, cries out:

What Jerkinge call you this? my selfe haue heard
Of the vnmatcht vile, miserable torture
Those Dutch inflicted on some English men
At that Amboyna, and my soule hath ernd
To here the dire relation; but, alas,

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My sorrow cannot helpe afflictions past.
I cannot but admire how such a crew
Of beastly drunkards, baser than the sire
Which first begot them (and he base ynough),
Durst spend theyr censure, or once dare to touch
The honest subjects of a mighty monarch.
Oh that I weare as young as when I mett
Iberias's great armado in the west.

This speech of old Hobab's probably gave offence to Herbert not only because of its plain speaking about the business of Amboyna, but because of its reference to the defeat of the Armada. Charles, as has been shown above, was coquetting with Spain in 1633, and allusions to her *debacle* in 1588 had to be frowned upon. So the playwright was obliged to erase the above lines, and substitute for them on a label pasted over the original speech the following colourless and enigmatic utterance:

Something these fellowes would but dare not saye.
Theyr teethe canne hardly keepe their slippery
 tongues
Wthin theyr mouthes: like fire in embers hid
They smother vp theyr wordes, which fayne would
 burst
Into an open flame, but ys suppress
By an o're ponderous waight. I cannot diue
Into their thoughtes: but by the language spoke
I may suppose hard measure to be vsed,
In places farre remote, gaynst some of note
And other some of meaner qualite.
What ys allready past cannot be helpt,
But I doe hartely wish that circumspect
May futurely be had, that no such errour
Hereafter be committed: may the guilt
Light on his head, by whom man's blood is spilt!

In the second Act the Censor was to find even more

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perilous stuff. The quaintly named company of shipwrights resume their suddenly broken off discussion of the business of Amboyna after the following fashion:

TARRE. Doste heare me, Sym Sheathing? I prythee tell us a little of the story of Amboyna; and first what weare the names of the Dutchmen that caused our men to be so cruelly tortured, and most inhumanely murdered?

SHEATHING NAYLE. Well at your request, and in hope that no body heares me, Ile tell you: The commander was Harman van Speult.

TALLOW. What mought he be for a man: that Harman van Spewd?

SHEATHING NAYLE. I thinke his father was some blinde crowder, or certes little better: for gentleman or merchant would haue shewd more humanitie: the rest were his vnderlinges as

Laurence de Maerschallcke

Klement Kerseboome

Harman Crayvanger

Peter van Zanten

Leonart Cloco.

In all six persons, the best inferior to the very basest of our nation,

OKUM. In what manner was theyr torture?

SHEATHING NAYLE. Fire and water, two merciles elementes inflicted in such abundant measure as heretofore hath beene vnheard of; and last of all followed death, the very period of theyr longe sustayned miseries.

TARRE. What might the Dutch suggest?

SHEATHING NAYLE. Treason, and that mighty treason. For eleuen English merchants, one steward of the house, one taylor, and one barber with 3 swords, 2 hand gunns, and halfe a pound of powder, should haue taken the castle of Amboyna with 3 or 4 hundred men in yt, besides many great peeces of ordnance.

TARRE. Ha: ha: ha: now thou makest me laugh to thinke

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that eyther our men should be so simple, or the Dutch so base.

SHEATHINGE NAYLE. As I dare mayntayne the simplicitie of the one, so I dare averre the basenes of the other, to the best burghers teeth in Amsterdam: vnder the rose be yt spoken.

OKUM. Horrible, horrible, horrible: dare not a man, a freind, or a kinsman—doe—doe—doe—

SHEATHINGE NAYLE. Doe nothinge: not so much as speake your opinion: nor would I haue spoke so much but—silence, the boye comes [*enter boye*] Shavinge, let me ask thee a question.

BOYE. Quickly and freely, goodman Sheathing naye, for time slipps away a pace.

SHEATHINGE NAYLE. Suppose that we fiue weare suspected to vndertake to take the castle of Antwerpe.¹

BOYE. If I weare one of your Beardles Judges (such as the Dutch weare at Amboyna) I would torture you wth water and fire, and then (snap St. Magnes) cutt you of as round as a whirlegigge.

TALLOW. But, Shavinge, I hope you would be more mercifull.

BOYE. Trust not to that. I would be as mercifull as the Dutch weare; but no more of this.

It is needless to say that Herbert, who had vetoed the references to Amboyna in the first Act, cut out the whole of this dialogue, with its much more explicit details. Had it been performed, the Dutch representative in London would no doubt have protested. But it is a noteworthy revelation that forty years before Dryden wrote his *Amboyna*, a less illustrious playwright sought to make capital out of the Spice islands tragedy.² Yet in what a different spirit

¹ Altered from 'weare so simple to vndertake to take the tower of London,'

² Mountfort was himself not the first to try to exploit the subject on the stage. Thomas Locke, writing to Sir Dudley Caileton, the English Ambassador in Holland, on February 21, 1625, states that the East India Company would have had the Amboyna business 'all acted in a play, but the Council was appealed to by the Dutch ministers and stopped it, for fear of disturbancethis Shrovetide.'—*State Papers Domestic 1623-5*, James I., p. 481.

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and by what diverse methods! Mountfort had come into close touch with the questions at issue between the Dutch and English in the East as early as February, 1621-2, when he had been sent to the Low Countries with letters to Sir Dudley Carleton, the English Ambassador, and to the Mayors and Directors of the Netherlands Company. He had just returned from the East Indies, which still rang with the echoes of an unprecedented outrage by the Dutch upon the servants of the English Company. He was passionately moved against the perpetrators of the crime, and he voiced the indignation against the Government which for political reasons had left it for ten years unavenged. By putting the recital into the mouths of 'base mechanicals' like Sheathing nayle and his fellows, he gave a thoroughly popular complexion to his indictment. And the very naïveté of their whispered comments, and their dread of being overheard, lend a singular impressiveness and actuality to the seemingly artless dialogue.

When Dryden 'sharked up' his tragedy in 1673, the conditions had completely changed. The Amboyna outrage had been partly atoned for by the States-General, and, though not forgotten, was fading into a distant memory. The ambitions of Louis XIV had become a European menace, and the right policy for England was an alliance with his enemies. But Charles had negotiated the secret Treaty of Dover with Louis, and in 1672 the Cabal Ministry declared war against Holland, with the cry 'Delenda est Carthago!' The war, however, had no widespread popular sentiment in its favour, and Dryden set to work in cold blood to stir it up by his crude and garish stage-pictures of the 'cruelties of the Dutch to the English merchants,' grotesquely mingled with conventions of 'heroic drama' in its most debased form. He knew and cared

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nothing about the East Indies, and was ready later to denounce the policy which the play was written to support. If the Master of the Revels in 1673 had refused to license it for performance, as Herbert had deleted the Amboyna passages from Mountfort's manuscript, he would have saved Dryden's reputation as a playwright from its darkest blot. But of course, alike in 1633 and 1673, the Censor had no concern with the literary or dramatic merits of the pieces submitted to him. All he had to do was to veto anything likely to give offence, or cause embarrassment to the Government of the day.

There were other matters, besides the references to the Amboyna outrage, that called for Herbert's attention, in *The Lanchinge of the Mary*. Its second theme is a detailed *apologia*, based on Thomas Mun's treatise *The Discourse of Trade*, for the commercial activities of the East India Company, which, it is argued, are in full accord with the mercantile system of political economy.

Mun's pamphlet was published in 1621, two years before the business of Amboyna. But that outrage had been the climax of a series of Dutch aggressions in the East Indies which had resulted in the loss of numerous English ships and seamen. This loss is thus referred to by Mun:

Concerning the decay of our shippes in the Indies, it cannot bee denied, but there hath beene great spoyle of them in these three last yeeres; not by the dangers of the seas, or by the strength of Enemies; but by unkind and unexpected quarrels with our Neighbours the Hollanders, who have taken and surprized twelve of our ships at severall times, and in sundry places, to our unspeakable losse and hinderance; together with the death of many of our worthyest Mariners, who have beene slaine and dyed Prisoners under their hands.

¹ See the following Chapter.

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This is paraphrased in the play as follows in a speech put into the mouth of the Deputy-Governor of the Company:

It cannot be denyde (I speake wth greife
As fellow feeler of the detriment)
But that the spoile and havocke of our shippes
In orientall India hath beene greate,
Not by the vsuall danger of the sea,
Nor by the strength of a knowne enymie,
*But by the vnkinde and unexpected quarrelles
Of afo-freind, the neighbouringe Hollander,¹
Who gainst the law of nations or offwinds.
In sundry places and at seuerall tymes,
Surprysde and took twelve of our proper shippes,
To our no little hinderance and losse,
Togeather with the death, the barborous death
(An acte of wonder to a modest earth),
Of many of our worthy maryners
And other men of eminence: some slaine,
Some tortured, some prisoners, massacred
And sufferinge death vnder theyr bloodie hands.*

It will be noticed that the playwright has by a few touches greatly heightened the poignancy of the original passage. When he speaks of 'barborous death' of torture, and of 'bloodie hands/ he doubtless had the Amboyna affair in mind as well as the earlier outrages referred to by Mun. It is not surprising that Herbert drew his pen through the italicized lines and a few of less significance that immediately follow.

But we are less prepared for the exercise of his veto upon certain other passages relating to ships and their uses. It had been made a charge against the Company that it consumed an undue amount of timber and other materials in the building of so many ships for Eastern trade. To this Mun had retorted:

¹ The last three words of this line are heavily erased; but this appears to be the reading. Mun speaks above of 'our Neighbour' the Hollanders.'

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I pray you observe (besides the East India Companies buildings) the many goodly ships which are daily made for other private Merchants (such as England never had before) and that which is most remarkable, is the continuall late buildings of his Majestic, thereby yearely adding more strength and glory of great ships to his Royall and matchlesse Navy.

In the play this passage is put into the mouth of one of the Company's committee as follows:

And doe none build but wee? He that hath eyes
(Yf he will see) maye see such goodly shippes
Assidually built for priuate marchantes,
As England neuer had before the like.
And that thais aboue all remarkable
The late most stately buildinge of brave shippes
By our most gracious ... Soueraigne
Ofeuer blessed memorie deceast,
Addinge thereby no little strength and glory
Vnto the ... royall...

The six italicised lines were so effectually erased by the Censor that they cannot be completely deciphered. During the diplomatic negotiations of 1633 it was evidently thought inexpedient to permit stage references to the increase of the Navy, even though made in the previous reign.

And equally unpalatable to the Government were allusions to the resources that the East India Company could put at the Navy's disposal. It had been made a charge against the Company that their ships were never at home, ready 'to serve the Kingdome upon occasion. To this Mun had replied in a passage which Mountfort closely paraphrased as follows:

In case of trade & merchandise all shippes
Must goe and come, they are not made to staye

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At home to rott in muddie moorish docks.
*And though our shippes abroad yet we at home
Are euer furnisht & prepared to serue
His majestic andkingdomes with all sortes
Of such provisions as are fitt for warre,
As tymber, plancks, masts, cordage, ironworkes,
Anchors, caske, ordnance, powder, shott, beefe, porke
Packt up & pickeld, sydar, wine, whatnot,
Fitting the present buildinge and despatch
Of shippes to sea: all which his majestie
Cannot with more authoritie command
Then wee with willinge minds will see performe,
To be at his dispose and royall vse.*

The italicized lines with their detailed enumeration of 'munitions of war' ready for the King's service had an ugly sound in Herbert's ears. They were crossed out, and the playwright on a label pasted over them substituted these innocuous platitudes:

Take a materiall from his proper vse,
And yt will serue to little or no purpose.
Leaue scarlett folded in a Cyprus chest.
The mothes will eate yt: and what luster makes
A diamond within a painted boxe?
So ys yt with a shippe yf still endockt:
Yt giues content to nothinge but the eye,
Nor much to that, for doth the eyes content
Content the totall man? sure nothinge lesse.
A shippe is but a pile of plancke and timber,
Yf not imployde in trade: sett her to sea,
And sinke or swimme shees in her element.

It is a most remarkable sidelight on the foreign policy of Charles, seeking vainly to attain its ends by tortuous negotiations without the use of force, that it was thought necessary to prevent the patriotic declarations of the Com-

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pany's representative from being spoken on the stage. And by an ironic fate the King's need of an increased fleet was to lead in the next year to the issue of the first of the writs of ship-money that were to set England in a flame.

The third theme of the play, which gives it the sub-title of *The Seamans honest wyfe*, is the virtuous resistance of Dorotea Constance, wife of a mariner in the Company's service, to all temptations to be unfaithful to him during her husband's prolonged absence,

In this part of the play there is little reference to public affairs; yet even here the Censor seems to have found some 'ribaldry.' In one scene Dorotea is tempted in person by a captain of the Army, and through letters by a courtier and a cleric. It is not quite clear whether the whole of this scene was (at any rate sometimes) omitted in performance, but marks on the manuscript suggest that Herbert objected to the dialogue between the captain—who describes himself as

bred a souldier:

Batauia knows me, France hath felt my force,
Iberia knew me for her mortal foe—

and Dorotea, who urges him vehemently to return to the field of battle.

The heroine's outburst against 'the vicious vicar, painted priest,' who sends her dishonourable proposals by letter, is erased. With Laud's influence becoming predominant, no Censor could be expected to pass lines like the following:

What Cacodemon, Carolique of hell
Thus wrestes a sacred text? Helpe, angels, helpe
To thrust this diuell from your oracles,
This forbids whoredom, lust, adulterie,
And yet perswades to vilifie the bed

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Of holy wedlocke, wth authentique proofes,
As he suggests, but I will nere belieue
Base pseudo-teacher, nullifidian,
Thou diuellish doctour in an angells shape.

Similarly, attacks on members of Roman Catholic religious orders were doubtless expunged in deference to the Queen's susceptibilities. Thus when the *Mary* has been launched, the Governor of the Company cries:

Blest be she whose royall name she beares.
Nor is there any but blood-thirstinge monkes,
Or hell-bred Jesuites will wish otherwyse,
But as they swimme in synne so lett them sinke
Fnto perdition'

The italicized lines are crossed out. And the omission in another passage of compliment to the Queen of twenty-four lines tracing her descent from 'Great Capett' is doubtless due in part to the inclusion of the following lines:

Charles of that name the ninth dyes issuelless
And leaves the crown to Henry Kinge of Poland,
In whose vntymely ende (for he was slayne
By a damnd nurslinge of sanguineous monkes)
The house of brave Valois and second branch
Of the third race of Capettes is extinct.
Henry the third thus murtherd by a monke
(Non audet Stygius Pkito tentare quod audet
Effrcenis monachus) leaues the diadem
By a direct line masculine to Henry,
Kinge of Navarre.

Not content with expunging passages in which ecclesiastics are held up to opprobrium, the Censor deleted with meticulous care every religious reference or expression, however innocent. The exclamation 'yfaith,' of which Mountfort was particularly fond, is everywhere bracketed

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for omission. 'Troth,' 'Slife,' and 'by the Lord' are similarly treated. When Captain Fitz John cries:

*Next to the sole redeemer of my soule,
How am I bound, obliged, engagde, devoted
To my much honored masters*

the first line was crossed out; and when later in a panegyric on the Queen he vows

*This stammering tongue shall send her orisons
To the supernall throne for the encrease
Of iocs internall, and externall peace
Vnto her sacred person*

the Censor again found it necessary to cancel the passage. His alertness in discovering 'prophaness and publick Ribaldry*' in such lines contrasts singularly with his laxity in respect of some of the dialogue, which is frankly indecent. But about questions of morality he did not trouble himself, so long as there was no offence in matters touching Church or State.

After Herbert had dealt with the manuscript he returned it to the book-keeper of the Company that had applied for permission to act the play. It was then sent back to Mountfort, who made the necessary 'reformations'. Thereafter it was used as the theatrical prompt-copy. For in addition to the somewhat detailed stage-direction in Mountfort's autograph, there are additional notes in the playhouse manager's hand. Several of these refer to the 'Musick' which was played 'aloft', i.e. in the gallery over the stage, while the Admiral partakes of 'a small banquet and wine' in Act i, i, and at the beginning of Acts III and in the end of Act m. At the beginning of Act v, ii, the more precise directions 'Trompets' has been inserted. Other notes are in Act in, iii, 'Offers a paper. The Ad[mir-

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al] refuseth the paper'; and in Act iv, ii, 'Knocke within' repeated several times.

Thus the manuscript of *The Lanchinge of the Mary* is of exceptional interest. Written on shipboard, censored by the Master of the Revels, revised by the author, annotated by the playhouse manager, it exhibits all the stages through which the 'copy' of a play passed before (if ever) it was sent to the printer's. No publisher thought it worth his while to secure the rights of Mountfort's work. But the manuscript, in the condition in which it has come down us, is a document that lends support to the view that in the case of Shakespeare and the other great Elizabethan dramatists the author's autograph copy was used and annotated in the theatre, and that it was from this copy that the printer set up his text.

CHAPTER X

'THE LANCHINGE OF THE MARY'¹

A DRAMATIC APOLOGIA FOR THE EAST INDIA COMPANY

IN Chapter VIII it has been briefly shown that the longest section of *The Lanchinge of the Mary or The Seamans honest wyfe* (though not mentioned in either title) is a defence of the East India Company's activities, closely based upon Thomas Mun's tract *A Discourse of Trade from England vnto the East Indies. Answering to diuers objections which are usually made against the same*. The playwright recasts the pamphlet into the form of dialogue, in which the old sea-dog Admiral Hobab states the Objections,' and is answered, in turn, by the Governor, the Deputy, and two Committee men of the Company. Mountfort follows Mun, as a rule, so faithfully that it is only necessary to quote from the prose pamphlet, when there are differences of detail, or other features that require comment.

Thus Mun begins with a brief statement of his economic theory that a country flourishes through its export trade, which brings it a return of treasure':

The trade of Merchandise, is not only that laudable practise whereby the entercourse of Nations is so worthily performed, but also (as I may terme it) the very touchstone of a Kingdomes prosperitie, when therein some certaine rules shall be diligently observed. For, as in the estates of private persons, we may account that man to prosper and grow rich, who being possessed of revenues more or lesse, doth accordingly proportion his expences; whereby he may yeerely advance some maintenance for his posteritie: So doth it come to passe in those Kingdoms, which with great care and witnesse do ever vent out more of their home commodities, then they import and use of forraine wares; for so undoubtdly the remainder must returne to them in

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treasure. But where a contrary course is taken, through wantonnesse and riot; to overwaste both forraine and domesticke wares; there must the money of necessity be exported, as the meanes to helpe to furnish such excesse, and so by the corruption of mens conditions and manners, many rich countryes are mad exceeding poore.

The Kingdome of England [he proceeds] is endowed with such abundance of rich commodities that it has not only great plenty, but, also, through a superfluitie, hath beene much enriched with treasure brought in from forraine parts; which hath given life unto so many worthy trades, amongst which that unto the East India by name.

All this general preamble is omitted by the playwright. He introduces Admiral Hobab, deftly enough, on a visit to the Company's shipyard to inspect the new vessel that is on the point of being launched. Here he is found by the Governor and his colleagues, who wish that they had known beforehand of his coming, so that they might have made 'some slender preparation' to bid him welcome. But Hobab is absorbed in wonder at the profusion of supplies and equipment that he sees lying aboard:

such anchors, tymbers, planks,
Masts, yards, sales, cordage, trunnels, okum, nayles,
Brasse shiners, shiners coakte, clocks great and small,
Oares, deales, greats ordnance, powder, fire workes,
Shott crosbarre, chayne shott, clappe shott, langrell,
round,
Muskettes, swordes, targettes, crosspittes, halbertes,
pickes,
Beefe, porke, bread, beere, wine, syder, oatemeale,
pease,
Meale, butter, cheese, rice, vinegar, sweet oyle,
A surgeons chest well furnisht, & what not,
That eyther shipps or men may stand in need of.

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The Deputy informs him that 'to provide these needfull vtenses,' the Company

keepe in annuall paye
Of men well knowne for truth and honestie
Not a small number,

who form 'a little but well governed commonweale.'

It is at this point that Mountfort begins to borrow directly from Mun's treatise.

The Admiral, while expressing the hope that the Company may ever flourish, reminds its representatives that it has enemies at home who accuse it of injuring, instead of benefiting, the national interests:

But yet some grumblinge rumours fly abroad
That you do much impouerish the State

First by an excesse transportation
Of siluer, gold, & coynes of Christendome
And more particularly of this our Kingdome.
Next by the prodigall wast of tymber, plancke,
& other needful vtenses for shipping.
Thirdly by death of men, and profuse wast
Of victualls, w^{ch} causeth beggerie
& lastly by the small or no employment
The mint hath had, since this East India trade.

The Governor declares that they are ready to answer all and each of these charges, but he fears that the discourse 'would be too tedious.' The Admiral however (who is evidently on the retired list) answers breezily:

Not a whitt.
My idle houres afford me as much tyme
To heare, as your more serious occasions
Canne giue you tyme to speake.

The Governor thereupon, before he and his colleagues

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start upon their *apologia*, thoughtfully offers their guest some refreshment. As the stage-direction has it, 'enter a small banquet & wine, musique aloft, after a small respitt of tyme all taken away.' The Admiral then settles himself to listen but asks that the arguments should be adapted to the simple comprehension of a sailor:

In the discourse (good syr) let me request
No dark aenigmaes past my vnderstandinge.
I knowe commerce ys a deepe misterie
Beyond a courtiers reach; playnenes of speeche
Will please me best.

The case for the Company is first presented by one of the 'Committees/ who deals with the charge that

the gold & coynes of Christendome
& more particularly of this our Kingdome
Is much exhausted to buy needles wares.

His argument, borrowed almost word for word from Mun, is of formidable length and is divided into three heads. He first demonstrates

The needful and the necessary vse
Of all such wares w^(th) vsually are brought
From Orientall India into Europe:
To witt, drugs, spices, raw silke, Indico
& Callicoës.

The 'Stoick snarlers' who

Oppose the moderate vse of healthfull drugs
And comfortable spices

might as well object to the bringing into England

Of sugars, wines, oyles, raysons, curands, prunes,
Figgs & the like; nay with farre greater reason
Exclayne wth bitter language gaynst Tobacco,
Gaynst cloth of Gold & silver, cambrickes, launes,

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Gaynst gold & siluer lace, gayns Taffaties,
Veluettes & sattens, yearely, dayly brought
Into this Kingedome for excessive summes.

Here we get a valuable list of seventeenth century imports, and the Committeeman's plea for the use of 'Indico.' and rawe silkes contains interesting references to contemporary industries:

For Indico yt ys so excellent
For the well dyinge of our woollen clothes
So much esteemed allmost through out the world
For ornament & weare that take awaye
The goodness of the dye, small sale of cloth
Will be in vse, & what will follow then
But beggery to thousands in the land?
And for the importation of rawe silkes
London cannot deny but many hundreds
Of poore decayed tradesmen & theyr wyues
(Wth otherwise might suffer cold & hunger)
Are euery day imployde to get theyr lyvinge
By windinge, twistinge, weauinge of the same.

The speaker refers to the recent remission of import duties on raw silk, with the object of building up an industry to rival that of foreign countries:

Yea & to cherish this great busines
His maiestie hath graciously beene pleasd
For to remitt the impost of such silkes,
So that yt may be hoped yet ere longe
That Industrie will make that art to flourish
Wth no lesse profitt to this coiiionwealth
Then yt hath done to diuerse other states
As Italye, the monarchic of France
& the vnited Belgique provinces.

With regard to 'Callicoes' the chief advantage from the trade in this eastern commodity is that it brings down

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the high rayسد price
Of Holland, Cambrickes, lawnes & lynnē cloth
Of sundry sortes by shipping yearely brought
Into this Kingdome for greate summes of mony

The .Committeeman has thus dealt with the first of the three heads of his argument; he has proved the utility of all the materials imported by the Company from the East, and the Admiral declares that he is completely convinced on this score.

The Company's apologist then proceeds to show that the shipping of goods from India *via* the Cape of Good Hope is beneficial to England and Christendom generally, because it has interfered with the overland trade of the East with Turkey; and thence with Europe:

Before discovery of the foresayd Cape
This traffique had his ordinary course
By shippes to Mocha in the Arabian sea
& to Bolsora in the Persian gulfe
From both w^{ch} places all the foresayd wares
Weare overland transported through the Turkes
On caitiells to Aleppo, & Alexandria:
From whence agayne they were by sea disperst
As well by Turkes & Christians into Europe.
By w^{oh} continuall entercourse The Turke
(The common enemie of Christendome)
Was master of the trade, enricht his subiects
& filld his coffers wth high-rated customes.

He illustrates his argument by comparing the prices of various articles when bought at Aleppo and in India:

1 00000 ^{li} of pepper at Aleppo at 2 ⁸ per li. is	10000 li.
The same quantitie in India at 3 ^d per li. is	1250 li.
20000 ^{li} of cloues at Aleppo at 5' per li. is	5000 li-
The same quantitie in India at 1 ^d per li. is	1000 15.

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400000 ["] nutmeggs at Aleppo at 2 ^s 4 ["] per	
li. is	46666 13 ^s 4 ^d
The same quantitie in India at 4 ["] per li. is	6666 13 ["] 4 ^d
i ooooo ["] rawe silke at Aleppo at 12 ^s per li. is	60000 li.
The same quantitie in Persia at 8 ⁸ per li. is	40000 li.
50000 ^h Indico at Aleppo at 4 ["] per li. is	10000 li.
The same quantitie in India at 1 ^s per li. is	2500 li. ¹

From these 'small accounts' it can be seen

what massie summes of starlinge coyne
 Have been exported out of Christendome
 W^{ch} now are saued by fetchinge the selfe wares
 From India now w^{ch} then Aleppo sold.

The bluffold Admiral's comment on these figures is some^T what disconcerting to the Company's spokesmen:

Then yt appeares your gaynes must needs be greate,
 Buyinge the selfe same wares for neare one third
 Of that they cost in Turkeic & resellinge
 The selfsame wares at foure or five for one.²

The Governor, who has long been silent, now intervenes to repudiate this charge of 'profiteering,' which evidently was widely made against the Company:

Herein your honour (pardon me my lord)
 & many other w^{eh} conceaue the like
 Are much mistaken: all the mentioned gayne

¹ There are some curious variations in details between tin' figures here given by Mountfoild and those in Mun's treatise. Mountford may be quoting the prices current in the East in 1632. Man speaks of 'sixe thousand thousand pounds of Pepper,' costing two shillings the pound at Aleppo, and 'two pence half pennie the pound' in the East Indies; 'fouie hundred fiftie thousand pounds of Cloves' costing 'foure shillings nine pence the pound' at Aleppo, and nincpence the pound in India; 'three hundred fiftie thousand of Indico' costing 'foure shillings foure pence the pound' at Aleppo, and fourteen pence the pound in India. The prices for nutmegs and raw silk arc the same in both lists, but Mun also includes 'one hundreth and fiftie thousand pounds of Mace' costing 'foure shillings nine pence' the pound at Aleppo and eight pence the pound in India.

² Mountford thus deftly turns to dramatic purpose Mun's remark that 'by the substance and summes of these accounts it doth plainly appeare, that the buying of the said quantities of raw Silces, Indicos, and Spices may be performde in the Indies for neere one third part of the readic moneys, which were accustomed to be sent into Turkey to provide the same.'

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Ys not the merchantes only: Christendome
In generall hath a greate part thereof
In cheapnes of the wares: next you must note
The interest & forbearance of the merchant
Is very longe: the adventure & assurance
Exceeding dearer: & the dayly charge
Of shipping, victualls, mariners & factors
Farre greater then by voyage into Turke.
So that the difference thus decides it selfe,
That the materialls of the conion wealth,
Togeather wth the imployment of the subiects
(In lieu of readie monies) doth become
A greate and ample portion of the price
Payd for those Indian wares: w^{ch} cannot hurt
(As many most erroneously suppose)
The conion wealth but greatly helpe the same.

The Governor is followed by the Deputy, who deplors the fact that even yet Exceeding wealth in gold and silver¹ from Christendom pours through Turkish hands into the East, including

For raw silke onely yearely at the least
Five hundred thousand pounds.

And the second Committeeman urges that the Company can render no greater service than to deflect this traffic in the raw silk of Persia from its accustomed channels into the direct route to England *via* the Cape:

How matchles worthy is the enterpryze
Of our East India English Companie,
Who by theyr good endeavours, doe, & hope,
Still more & more to turne no little part
Of this most wealthy trade, by shipps directly
From out the Persian gulfe into our Kingdome,
Whereby the trade and customes of the Turke
May euery daye be more & more impayred
And Europes treasure lesse & lesse consumde.

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As four of the Company's officials have now been expounding the second head of the first indictment that they have to meet in one hundred and thirty lines, bristling with names and figures, it is no wonder that even the much-enduring Admiral begs for mercy:

You all cohere in one . . .
Therefore no more of this; my memorie
Will fayle in all to heare too much of any.¹

Hereupon the first Committeeman turns without a pause to the third head. In answer to the charge that the East India trade wastes the gold and silver of the kingdom, he shows that only a small amount of currency can be exported, and even that in the form of foreign coinage:

The transportation
Of any gold or silver of this Kingdome
By kingly power is prohibited
To the East Indian marchants: onely thus
A certayne summe is yearely limited
Of forrayne coyne, as ryalls or the like,
W^{ch} as they neuer did nor dare exceede,²
So haue they neuer yet fullfild the same.²

Moreover the exported coin must be replaced by 'an equivalent amount of precious metal:

Ney whatsoever summes of forrayne coyne
Haue been transported into India
His maiestie hath carefully provided
By his authentique letters patentes graunted

¹ Mountford thus covers his omission at this point of seven paragraphs in Mun's pamphlet, with additional details on how the trade of the East Indies has bene, and now is brought into Christendome generally, what money is yearly sent out, by whom, and the possibilitie or meanes which they have to perform it.

² Mountfort here omits some statistics from the Company's books given by Mun of the foreign coinage and wares exported by them between 1601 and 1620. He also omits a comparative list of the cost of certain articles 'laden clere aboard the ships in the East Indies' and their sale price in England. The totals are respectively, £100,000 and approximately £\$00,000,

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Vnto the brethren of that companie
That they shall yearely import as much silver
As they export, w^{oh} trewly is performd
Wth ouerplus to the no small encrease
Of this our kingdomes treasure.

And the expenditure, in any case, is to the national advantage:

Saye that wee grant one hundred thousand poundes
In ryalls, dollars or like forren coyne
Yearely to be exported, yet tis certayne
The trade thus dryuen with such summes of money
Will not consume, but rather much augment
The Kingdome's treasure, w^{eh} is truly proude
In the discourse of trade, a booke sett forth
To make all mistie doubts serene & cleare.

It is the fortunate reference in these lines to Mun's pamphlet by name that has enabled us to trace the source of the economic theories which Mountfort exploits in his play, not (it may be fairly assumed) from any deep-seated conviction of their truth, but because it suited his personal ends. Mun, he doubtless reckoned, would use his powerful influence with the Company on behalf of a dramatic propagandist of his views on public policy.

It is at this point that the Admiral, who has hitherto unreservedly accepted the arguments on the Company's behalf, for the first time makes any demur:¹

This seemes to me a misterie indeed,
For I myselfe may thus obiect and saye
You bringe vs wares from India into England.
Where are those wares consumde? where are they sold?

¹ His speech is a spirited amplification of the following passage in Mun's pamphlet: 'But if any man object and say, that the said Commodities being brought into England ... they are either consumed in the Land, or being transported into forraine parts, they are changed into other wares: so thit still we want our hundred thousand pounds in readie money.'

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Are they not sold in England? or transported
To countryes farre remote, and there exchange
For other wares? this cannot be denyde
In my opinion: w^{ch} yf not denyde
Yt consequently followes, that wee still
Doe want one hundred thousand poundes in monyes.

The Deputy thereupon takes up the running, and contends that the 'whole value' of the Indian wares is returned not in other wares but in 'readie monies from abroad.'

For I knowe
In Italic and Turke, where those wares
To best advantage are most vendible
There likewise is the moneye allwayes free
To be exported without countermaund.
And as yt ys a truth without controule
That other wares exported weare the meanes
For to bringe in the hundred thousand poundes
Imployde (by supposition) in East India:
So is there the same efficacie & power
In Indian wares to bringe in & procure
A like or greater summe of ready monies
Into this Kingdome.

And he winds up by formulating his financial creed:

For let no man doubt
That mony still attends on marchandize.
Mony's the price of wares & wares agayne
The proper use of coyne. I then conclude
That theyr coherence is inseparable.¹

The first Committeeman presses the argument home by indicating the chief markets where English merchants dispose of their Eastern imports for cash:

¹ Mun's words are, 'For let not man doubt, but that money doth attend merchandize, for money is the prize of wares, and wares are the proper use of money; so that their coherence is unseparable.'

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And doe not wee by sale of Indian wares
In Turkey, in Ligorne, in Germanye
& in Marcelles purchase ready monies
Freely brought thence sans danger of the lawe
No prohibition to the contrary?
All w^{ch} sayd coyne, or any part thereof,
Yf happily diuerted from this realme,
By any new employment or affayres,
Yt natheles must be graunted (maugre spite)
That the sayd Indian wares and merchandize
In ready monies had theyr finall ende.

And he concludes triumphantly:

Yf search weare made, yt doubtless would be found
That the surmount of all our other trades
loynde all togeather would not aequalize
The ouerballance of our Indian trade
In ready monies.¹

Awestruck by the argumentative display of these financial pundits, the Admiral surrenders at discretion:

A misterie and such a misterie
That's past all vulgar apprehension,
How aenigmatique vnto common-sense,
Haue you explaynde a longe suspected truth.

He acknowledges that he is satisfied that the first charge against the Company has Ijeen rebutted, and asks for a respite before the discussion of the others:

Let this suffice for one days serious taske.
Another day or two Ile gladly spend
To hearethe rest resolute; till then here ende.

¹Mun puts this point more fully. The sentence paraphrased by Mountfort is preceded by the following words: 'The East India trade alone ... is a meanes to bring more treasure into the Realm than all the other trades of this Kingdoms (as they are now managed) being put together. For if the rule be true, that when the value of our commodities exported doth over-balance the worth of all those foreigne wares which are imported and consumed in this Kingdome, then the remaynder of our stocke which is sent forth, must of neccssitie leturue to us in trcasuie.'

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The symposium is not resumed till Act in, Scene iii, by which time the Admiral is again eager for verbal fray. The Governor enters with apologies for the 'tardancie' of himself and his colleagues:

Your honour ryseth wth the earely larke,
Whilst wee lye tumblinge in our beds of downe.

The Admiral courteously retorts that he has risen betimes because of his 'ernest willingnes' to hear the other charges against the Company refuted 'with arguments as energetical!' as those used before. He then formally states the second charge:

They saye that tymber, plancke, and most materialls
As well for makeinge as repayre of shippe
Is mightely decayde, and made much dearer
By buildinge of so many goodly shippes
Yearely sent out to trade in India.
Nor hath the state vpon occasion
Least vse of them, for eyther they are absent
Or else returne weake & vnseruiceable.

In refutation of this objection the first Committeeman begins by showing that timber must be put to use, and that its highest use is for shipbuilding:

Shall wee keepe our woods
& goodly trees onely to look vpon?
Doe we not knowe that trfees doe Hue & growe
& being greate haue space to rott & dye
Yf not imployde to more commodious vse,
& what more noble or commodeous vse
Then proper shippes for warre and merchandize?
Are they not walls for peace, & barnes for wealth?

The building and repair of ships, moreover,

Give mayntenance to thousands w^{ch} might starve
Wanting the like imployment,

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and they increase the number of artificers and 'worthy artsemen.'

Much of the wood, too, used in the industry is not of home growth:

Observe our providence
To import the planck & tymberw^{eh} wee spend.
Doth England yeild vs all, of all conditions?
Doth England yeild spruse deals, & doth not Ireland
Afford pype staues & tymber in abundance?

This emphatic avowal of the difference between the economic interests of England and Ireland is noteworthy.¹ Nor is timber dearer than heretofore:

our bookes expresse
But little difference; yf one yeare exceede
A little summe, the next yeare falls as much.

In any case the East India Company is not the only builder of ships, as is shown in the passage previously quoted concerning the increase of the Navy, which was deleted by the Master of the Revels.² The Admiral in a speech which owes nothing directly to Mun expresses his conviction that the Company has been libelled:

Well & succinctly cleered! I cannot iudge
Why above others you are thus traducde,
Others as well as you 4oe build, repayre,
Yet more than others you are still condemned
Others haue not the same materialls
To serue the Kinge and state, yf neede require,
Yet your good actions scarsely are remembered,
But what are you the worse, goe fayrely one,
Leaue not your good, for ill report, vndone.

¹ Mountfoit here gives, from his personal observation, more details than Mun, who merely asks, 'And is not all *tins* good performed also (with great providence) by bringing in yeerely store of Timber, and other provisions from Ireland?'

² See above, Chapter IX, p. 194.

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This viperous broode, these Hippopotami,
Have ouercharged theyr crude digestions
Wth false opinions, or some worser garbedge,
Nor canne they finde least ease (as they suppose)
Till they haue spued yt out (to theyr owne shame)
Agaynst the good endeauoures of such men
Whose actions tend to benefit a state.
Skarre-crowes are euer drawinge, but nere shopte;
These alwayes carpinge, but to little boote.

Hobab now asks the Company's spokesmen to grapple with the 'third obiection.'

Victualls & mariners greatly are consumde,
Widowes & widowes children unreleued,
Many shippes yearely sent & few returne;
The fertile trade into the straights decayde.
Nor doth the conionwealth finde benefitt
By buying spice or druggs, or Indico
At any cheaper rates than heretofore.

Well may the first Committeeman exclaim ironically:

Heauns, what a masse of mischeifs haue wee here!

Dearth, Death, Destruction, Beggerie, and last
The commonwealth is never a whit the nere.

In dealing with the first head, the allegation that the Company causes a dearth of victual!', he repeats some interesting details given by Mun:

The provisions
Yearely prepard for shippes to India
Ys not vnknowne to many; the proportion
Ys for eighteene monthes, a little more or lese;
The voyages are thirty months or more:
W^{ch} ouerplus of tyme is furnished
Wth victualls of other parts abroade.

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And in a passage with a curiously modern note he tells how the farmers had raised the cry that they were being ruined by the competition of foreign corn, and how the Company had thus been forced to buy in the home market:

The farmers lately hould (and naye they still
Howie in that keye) that corne was growne so cheape
They could not paye their rents; to help that crye
Wee bought our corne at home, w^{ch} formerly
Was brought from France, of purpose to preserve
The plentie and abundance of our owne.¹

He claims that there is a slender allowance of any drink byt water on the ships' voyages, and that the rationing would satisfy a food-controller of to-day:

Thames is our bruar for the better part²
Some wine, some sydar, & but little beere.
The flesh that's killd for sea, is beefe and porke,
& that at most but three dayes in a weeke.
The rest is fish, cheese, butter, oatemeale, pease,
& other victualls that may well be sparde;
Nor have they these vnto satietie,
But are proportioned to a sparing dyett.

This satisfies the Admiral as to 'Dearth,' but there follows the graver charge of 'Death,' the using up of the lives of seamen. The Governor tajces up this head of the 'objection,' using at first the *ipsissima verba* of Mun, but scarcely comes to close quarters with it. He contends (somewhat after the fashion of King Claudius of Denmark):

¹ Mun does not state so definitely that the Company had reversed its policy of buying corn abroad: 'And likewise for the Bread and Bisket which is shipped from hence, hath it not alwayes bin made of French Corne, purposely brought ovei hither (and that at a deare rate) only to piescrve the plentie of our ownegraine Puntill now of latr dayes that the Farmers heere begmne to cry out and say, that the cheapness of Corne doth disinable them to pay their deare Rents.'

² Mun says simply, 'And further concerning their Drinke, is it not a very great part water?'

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that the whole course of lyfe
Is nothinge but a passage vnto death.
The shorter liuer runnes an equall course
Wth he that liueth longe: they both enioye
An equall tyme of passinge, howbeit
The first hath not so longe a race to runne
As hath the latter.

Nature and the State seek to preserve 'this length of lyfe' in worthy-minded men, those who labour in their own functions for the public good and their private profit. Such are good mariners, as long as they are engaged in

theyr laudable employments,
& theyr accustomed voyages to sea,

and not turned adrift to desperate courses. It is, therefore, not enough to breed and train expert mariners; it is necessary to provide, as the Company does, for their maintenance.

True that on the long voyages Death claims his toll of the seaman, but so likewise, says Mun, 'in Nature's course many shuld dye by length of time though they stayed at home.' Mountfort makes the Governor elaborate and press home there simple words:

In Nature's course
By length of tyme many that dye abroad
Would end theyr dayes at home, though clad in silke
Fed wth dayntiest meates, inveloped
Wth finest linnen in softe beds of downe,
Or drawinge the most temperate ayre of heauen.
And shall the tymely or the tymeles ends
Of a few men subvert or ouerthrow
The honorable actions of a state?

He does not prove that there are no additional risks in the East Indian service; but he suggests that the risks are

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worth running. This goes home straight to the heart of the old sailor, Hobab, who cries:

What are the woundes, the scarrs of bloodie warre
But emblems, trophies of a valiant heart?
And what are vnforcte voyages to sea
(For so are yours, you no man doe compell)
But banners, tokens of courageous mindes?
Death claimes his due, his interest to man,
Alike in England as in India.
He that will want because he feares to dye
Deserues to suffer endles penurye.

This speech is an addition by Mountfort, who had himself taken the risks of an Eastern voyage to avert 'endles penurye.'

The next head is the 'Destruction' of ships on the voyages to the East. The Deputy, who here takes up the defence, first admits in the passage deleted by the Censor,¹ that there has been a serious loss of ships owing to the action of their 'fo-freind,' the Dutch. To this there have to be added some other casualties. But if in thirty years thirty ships out of ninety miscarry, the loss does not deserve to be called 'destruction.' So far the Deputy has been borrowing from Mun, with some modifications, but he adds some pertinent queries, which come from Mountfort's own pen:

Doth not a souldier cfye, as well as lye
In open field, though neuer shott or maymde?
Would the obiectors have vs build such shippes
To ride in smooth-facte pooles or rott in docks?
Have not our neighbouringeseas the Goodwin sands?
Nay Thames yt selfe been ruine vnto some?
A ship may suffer wracke on Barking shelve,
Much more in Bantam rode.

¹ See above, Chapter IX, pp. 19Z-J.

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This point satisfactorily disposed of¹ the Admiral turns to the next head, 'Beggerie,' the allegation that the Company leaves the widows and orphans of its seamen in destitution. In answer to this the second Committeeman gives interesting details supplied by Mun of provision made by the Company for its sailors and their dependents:

When all doores of Charitie are shutt
The East India gates stand open, open wide
To entertayne the needie & the poore
Wth good accomodation: two monthes paye
They haue beforehand, for to make provision
Needfull provision for so longe a voyage.
And two monthes paye theyr wiues are yearely payd
The better to mayntayne their poore estate
Duringe the discontinuance of theyr husbands.
If in the voyage he doe chance [to]² dye
The widow doth receave what e'res found due
(If not by will disposed otherwise)
W^{ch} often happeneth to be such a summe
As they togeather neuer sawe the like.

He calls the riverside habitations to witness the truth of his words:

And when did any of these widowes begge
For mayntenance in churches as some doe?
Blackwall proclaymes theyr bountie; Lymehouse
speakes
(Yf not ingrate) their liberalitie.
Ratcliffe cannot complayne nor Wappinge weepe,
Nor Shadwell crye agaynst theyr niggardnes.
No, they doe rather speak the contrary
Wth acclamations to the highest heauens.³

¹ Mountfort omits some paragraphs by Mun dealing with the fortunes of the money and goods sent by the Company to the East Indies, 'MS. has 'doe'.

³Here again Mountfort elaborates the simple words of Mun: 'Are not many poor Widdowes, Wives, and Children of Black-wall, Lime-house, Ratchffe, Shadwell, and Wapping often relieved by the East India Company?'

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And he dilates on the Company's other benefactions:

Besides theyr large munificence & doales
Of beefe, porke, biskett & some readie monie
Are not there diuerse children sett at worke
To doe some labour, such as may befitt
Theyr tender age, & weake capacitie? "
How maye I (without boasting) intimate
Repayre of churches, mayntenance of schollers,
Relief of needy preachers.

There does not seem anything in this passage to call for the Censor's attention; but for some reason it has been crossed out.

The Admiral is again fully satisfied, and in rhetorical phrase likens the Company to an orb shining more brilliantly after a momentary eclipse:

The darkned body of the change moone
Hinders the radiant brightnes of the sunne
But a small beason, & the sunne re-shines
In a more glorious luster, nor can these
Doe ought to dimme your worth but interpose.
Interpositions vayle once taine awaye,
Your glory gaynes a more resplendent daye.

He then propounds the last of the 'fiue scandalls' in the third objection. It is that

The common wealth receaues
By cheapness of your spice & Indico
No more advantage then in former tymes.

'Commonwealth' is evidently far from being a 'blessed word' to the first Committeeman, who bursts out in lines interpolated by Mountfort himself:

This word, the Common wealth, is a pretext
For diuerse innovations: yf the vulgar

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Saye this or that is eyther good or bad,
Whether they know yt good or bad or no,
Yt must be as they saye, or good or bad.

And to refute the charge he produces a schedule of 'the lowest prices' of goods, according to whether they have been brought from Turkey, or direct from India.

In Turkic

400,000 ^{lh} of pepper at 3" 6 ⁽¹⁾ the lb.	11		
mony	70000	0	0
4000 of cloues at 8 ^s	16000	0	0
2000 of mace at 9"	9000	0	0
160000 of nutmeggs at 4" 6 ⁽¹⁾	36000	0	0
150000 of Indico at 7"	52500	0	0
Summe totall	183500	0	0

In England thus a little more or lesse

40000 ¹¹ of pepper at 20d per lb.	11	s	d
mony	33333	6	8
4000 of cloues at 6	12000	0	0
2000 of mace at 6	6000	0	0
160000 of nutmeggs at 2 6 ^d	20000	0	0
150000 of Indico at 5"	37000	0	0
	108333	6	8

The difference, as the Committeeman points out, is no less than £74,266 35 4d,' which is thus saved to the public. But it is instructive to compare this list of sale prices with the list given by the same speaker on a previous day of the prices paid in India for these commodities. Thus pepper retailed in England, for is 8d per lb. cost 3d; cloves, nutmegs and indigo fetch 6s, 2s 6d, and 5^s per lb. respectively, as compared with the cost prices of is, 4d, and is.

¹ The figure should be £75,166 138.41!.

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So that old Hobab had not been far out when he had spoken of the Company reselling its wares at 'foure or five for one'! And it is clear, on the *data* furnished by its own apologists, that it must have made a handsome profit, as it was fully justified in doing.

The Admiral, however, does not raise this delicate issue again. Instead he denounces the Company's detractors:

Hath tyme no jurisdiction ore the tonges
Of euill speakers gaynst a publique good?
I would it had. But what are you the worse,
Or what the better, yf they should surcease?
They'le end theyr dayes in sorrow, you in peace.

He then proposes that further discussion should be postponed till the next day. Accordingly in Act Iv, scene iii, the interlocutors reassemble, and the Governor propounds 'the last but not the least obiection':

Our adversaries saye, and dare affirme
That since the birth of our East India trade
The mints imployment hath been wondrous small
And oft tymes none.

But it looks as if between Acts in and Iv it had occurred to Mountfort that he was treading on dangerous ground, for the Admiral makes the unexpected retort:

The mints an edge toole, meddle not with that,
For what's the mint to you, or you to yt,
Or yt to your obiectors ...

matter of state

Canne brooke no dalliance; then no more of that.

Accordingly Mountfort omits Mun's short statistical discussion of this topic, and also his concluding general observations on the four causes that lead to the exportation

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of gold and silver, and the consequent impoverishing of the kingdom. Instead he puts a rhetorical declamation into the mouth of the first Committeeman, who declares that as the Admiral is satisfied, he will not attempt the 'endless labour' of a reply to public calumny. It would need 'a Perseus to a Juuenall' to portray Detraction in her true colours:

Such satyrists would paint her to the lyfe,
Would call her strumpet, busie-bodie, gossip,
Gaddinge from house to house to throw aspersions
Vpon the iustest man, the vpright cause,
The actions of a State, & commonwealth;
Vpon arts, armes, commerce, church, government,
The courts of justice temporall and ciuill,
Vpon the honour of the noblest blood,
Vpon the iustice of the magistrate,
Vpon the doctrine of the best devine,
Vppon the lawes & statutes of a realme,
Yea, vpon all that eyther doth or maye
Concerne the good of man or commonweale.
Her study is invention, how to plott,
Conspire, or acte the overthrow of any.
Her mother enuy huggs her in her armes,
& calls her darlinge, daughter of her hopes,
To stirre vp strife, debate, contention,
Twixt man & wyfe, twixt servants & theyr masters,
Twixt parents & theyr children (though obedient),
Twixt friend & friend, twixt brethren, sisters, kindred,
&, to be playne, twixt all of all degrees.

Then follow the lines, inspired by Mountfort's personal experiences, on Detraction as a 'haracan' that makes shipwreck of a man's good name.¹

Finally the Admiral gives his summing up:

¹ See above, Chapter VIII, p. 178

THE SEAMAN'S HONEST WIFE

Your iudgments are entire,
Your answeares solid; and your resolutions
In euery point emphaticke: there shall need
No more amplification....
Fayre fare you well, and may the suffrages
Of all good men attend your voyages!

And with an invitation from the Governor to old Hobab to attend the launching of the Company's new ship on the morrow, the long-drawn symposium comes to an end.

Thus closes one of the most extraordinary *tours-de-force* in our dramatic literature. Even with our knowledge of the personal motives that influenced Mountfort, it is astonishing that he should have set about to adapt such unpromising material as Mun's economic treatise to stage purposes. He certainly shows some deftness in the doing of it. His pedestrian but lucid verse reproduces Mun's closely-reasoned advocacy with a minimum of verbal change. He omits such passages in the treatise of 1623 as were out of date in 1632, or otherwise beside his special purpose. And the breaking-up of the economist's smooth periods into the dialogue between the Company's officials and old Hobab lends touches, if not of dramatic, yet of forensic interest. Occasionally, as has been seen, there is a flash of personal feeling. But one wonders how Mountfort writing on deck or in his cabin, with 'the long wash of Australasian seas' in his ears, has not caught one throb of their tempestuous music throughout the glassy roll of his monotonous periods.

II. THE SEAMAN'S HONEST WIFE

MUN'S treatise was a reply to the charges levelled against the Company on grounds of public policy. But it evidently had become the mark for a good deal

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of popular odium for reasons of a more domestic kind. Owing to the length of time that a voyage to the East took in the early seventeenth century, the seamen and others in the service of the Company were separated for many months at a stretch from their families. Doubtless some of the wives thus left alone in the not highly reputable surroundings of the riverside fell into evil ways, and the Company's enemies made the most of the scandal. Mountfort, therefore, devoted part of his play to showing it was much exaggerated, and that there was no need for the wives of absent seamen to forfeit their good name. He had himself an interest in the matter, as it was more than three years since he had set sail as a lieutenant in the *Charles*, and had left a wife behind him. We know this from the Court minutes of the Company for May 22, 1633. There it is reported that after the arrival of the *Blessing* in port, the purser, Francis Stockton, accused Mountfort's wife of helping to carry some goods out of the ship which he had brought home for purposes of private trade. Ten months later on March 22, 1634, it was his wife who brought to the Court his petition,¹ which they refused to consider till he appeared in person.

She was evidently quite loyal to her husband in spite of his faults and evil fortunes. But he probably had her trying situation in mind when, writing, on shipboard, he penned the opening lament of his heroine, Dorotea Constance, which she pours into the ears of Captain Fitzjohn, whom she encounters in the early morning (Act II, i):

Would I had neuer knowne a marryed state,
Or else would India had been neuer knowne!
How solitary do I spend my days,
Encarcared like a forlorn wretch;

¹See above, Chapter VIII, p. 180.

THE SEAMAN'S HONEST WIFE

Not once frequented, visited or scene
By those who whilst my husband liude at home,
Made solemn oathes, deep protestations,
To see me daylie.

She complains that these erstwhile friends now slander her without cause:

Am I suspected for incontinent,
Because sometye to recreate myselfe,
I see a play; yea such a one perhapps
As makes me feare both shame and punishment?
Doe not good women thus? and more then thus
Wthout suspicion? yf this must be granted,
Why am I then an alien to the sight
Of those that knowe me, and should comfort me.
Oh! India, India, hadst then nere beene knowne
I should have had no cause to make this mone.

The Captain rebukes her for exclaiming against India:

India hath made you husbandle a while.
What then? Is India therefore blameable?
Did not your husband by petition
Implore imployment?

It was only by importunity and influence that he obtained the employment which might have gone to better men, and she should be ashamed to cry out against it.¹ Dorotea at first flings off indignantly, but turns back to listen further:

Youle not make
So deepe a wound (I know your goodness such)
But youle apply some balsumum to heale.

The Captain, thereupon, gives the dialogue a more personal turn, and after sundry other comparisons, exclaims:

¹This passage as has been shown above, was inspired by Mounttort's personal experience. See Chapter VIII, p. 177

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Thy beauty is most like a Basiliske
W^{ch} kills at sight, •

Dorotea retorts with an analysis of the effects of beauty,
and a demonstration that in itself it is harmless:

Beautie is like a fire or sharp-ground sword;
One cannot burne, nor can the other cutt
Any that come not nere them.

Let him complayne that hath been once deceaud;
Let him despayre, whose promysde hopes haue faylde :
Let him confesse yt, whom I haue ever calld,
And let him vaunt, whom I haue once admitted:
But to be calld a Homicide by him,
Who neuer yit was promised, deceaued
Calld or admitted, ys selfe-crueltie.
He that calls me a killing Basiliske
Let him eschew me as a dangerous thinge.

No wonder that the Captain cries out admiringly:

You would become the Academic well
Since you are grown so good a disputant.
How quaintly you dispute wth pro and con,
What aenigmatique questions you can aske,
And make replyes as Hieroglyphicall!

But leaving argumentative subtleties Dorotea protests
passionately against the slandering of her class:

Must sea mens wyues, especially those
That trace the seas to vtmost India
Be table talk, nay tauerne-talk to all?
Admit there are some base ones mongst that crew
(As doubtles there are many, too, too many),
Yet should you finde (yf true enquirie made)
Ermines as well as others, some pure white
That would not stayne her soule with inkie synne.

THE SEAMAN'S HONEST WIFE

Her words move the Captain to an ecstatic outburst:

Wonder of women, mirrour of thy sex,
Fayre Dorotea, pardon my amisse.
Here, here, yee wyues whose husbands spend theyr
dayes
In want and danger whilst like prodigalls
You spend what they laboriously have gott....
You, you luxurious dames (yf such there be
Wth in this circled orbe) whose husbands sayle
To Orientall India: here's a patterne
For rich, for poore, for beauteous, & deformd.
Liue, Hue by this example: o my soule,
Who would not trace the furthest verge on earth
For such a wyfe? who would thinke any thinge
Too hott or cold for such a constant spouse.

And therewith he offers Dorotea his purse, which she gratefully accepts, though in her lamentations she has not hitherto complained of poverty.

As he goes out there enter with handbaskets two other seamen's wives, Mary Sparke and Isabel Nutt, who play the part of foils to Dorotea, and supply the element of gross humour in the drama. They are a pair of wantons, who while their husbands are abroad give free rein to their desires. Nutt, the elder of the two, is the wife of a boatswain's mate, and Sparke, the newly-wedded bride of a quartermaster, is an apt pupil of the more experienced sinner:

SPARKE. When and wth whome dost meete to -daye?

NUTT. Fayth I neuer keepe one constant house: sometymes at Whittingtons venture by the six wyndmills: sometymes at the 3 goates heads in Ratcliff highwaye: sometymes at the Windmill beyond Milend; sometymes at the White Lyon in Blackman Streete; sometymes at the Shippe in Wappinge; sometymes at the

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Hoope at Lymehouse Corner: sometymes at the Man in the Moone at Whitechapell: sometymes at the Queens Head in the little Minories; but every day likely at a seuerall house.

SPARKE. And where todaye merry Tibb? where todaye?

NUTT. To-daye I must meete 3 or 4 grocers prentises at a taverne in West Smithfield: they bring sugar & nutmegge, w^{ch} wee infuse into white wine & rosewater, and then a barrell of pickled oysters to rellish our liquor, and soe wee are mighty merrie an hour or two and awaye roundly for Ratcliffe.

Dorotea's attitude of unctuous rectitude towards these prodigals is scarcely the readiest way of leading them back into the strait path; and when they go off unrepentant she appeals to the women in the audience not to judge all seamen's wives by

these thriftless, wittles, shameles, faythles creatures.

They reappear in Act III, Scene iv. Sparke has in her basket 'a bricke batt wrapt in a cleane napkin,' which she declares to be 'cappes and sleeves for children,' on which she is working for a young milliner. Nutt is similarly carrying '3 or 4 peeces of painted cloth' which she pretends to be some work got from a silkman. They are encountered by Trunnell, the shipwright, who enters singing:

My father's high constable, and I his owne so-ne
And wee be merry once agayne spight of Lon-done.

He sees through their pretence of being 'poor neighbours that take paynes night and daye earely and late, tyme and tyde for a poore lyvinge.' He knows them for what they are, 'two feminine Hyenaes, that by their counterfeyte voyces are able to drawe 20 younge men to destruction;

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worse then Torpedoes for they benumme the ioyntes but for a tyme, but these bewitch the senses foreuer,' In a scene doubtless suggested by Mountfort's own tavern experiences¹ Trunnell invites them to have a drink with him. Nutt at once calls for 'Alligant':

I am somewhat bold, but I assure you for a mornings draft no better wine in the world than Alligant. Yt corroborates, man, it corroborates.

The ship's workman offers to pledge a health to their husbands, 'to the old boyes homewards bound,' but it is coldly received. He then calls for a quart of canary, and while the two wantons are pledging absent lovers, they are overpowered by their potations and sink into a drunken stupor. Trunnell then empties the contents of their baskets before the spectators, and breaking suddenly into blank verse (which sits ill upon his lips) he declares that only two such women are to be found among a thousand, and that their place on the stage will be taken by 'objects of better, more validitie.'

We are thus prepared for the reappearance of Dorotea at the beginning of Act iv. Her virtue has now to sustain a series of assaults. First a courtier woos her by letter. Then a Captain, who has seen service in Batavia, France and Spain, asks a kiss from her. 'sweet roseall lipps.' In rejecting his advances and bidding him return to the field of war she shows a surprising familiarity with military technicalities:

Hence to the leager, valiant Martialist.
The leager waites your worth; there putt in practice
Your fire pottes, your granadoes, your potares,
Your mortar pieces, your ascending ladders,

¹See above, Chapter VIII, p. 174

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Your mines, your countermines, your counterscarpes,
Your trenches, your retreates, your batteries,

There let your valiant nigrandowes be seene
To giue the onsett, with best might and mayne.

Overpowered by her appeal to his soldierly instincts, the Captain retreats 'to seek another warre.' But a new temptation immediately follows in a letter from a cleric, 'wresting Scripture to justify his unholy purpose. The revelation of such unexampled wickedness makes Dorotea first shake with fear, and then burst into rage:

What Cacodemon, Carolique of hell
Thus wrestes a sacred text?...
Basepseudo-teacher, nullifidian,
Thou diuellish doctour in an angells shape!

To complete the circle of temptation comes the ironically named Captain Goodman, a sea-commander, who though white-haired and with a wife of his own does not scruple to become the rival of another seaman and to seek Dorotea's love. Well may she cry:

Nor court nor church, nor sea,
Nor land, nor rich, nor poore, but all alike
Brethren in evill;

and ask for the prayers of the audience:

That during lyfe
My embleme be 'The Seamans Honest Wyfe.'

It is in a similar spirit that, in Scene iv, she appears, poorly clad 'in a petticote and wastcoate, with her worke in her hand,'; and exhorts herself:

Worke, worke, poor Dorotea, worke to Hue,
And Hue to worke: preserue thy honest name.
Honest endeavours are devoyd of shame.

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While she is occupied with her task Trunnell and his fellow shipwrights enter. Trunnell is in high chafe:

Shall a man studdy a whole month to make but poore 20 lynes, and then be crost in the rehearsal of them?

Okurn and Tallowjeer at him, but Tarre is sympathetic:

I knowe my neighbour Trunnell is a prime man amongst vs, and enters as well into his worke as any whatsoever: nay and speakes well, with commars, middle distinctions & full stopps.

Thus encouraged Trunnell bursts into verse:

As pitch doth boyle in kettle on the fire,
So boyles my breast with choler and with ire,
Nor will my choler coole, nor heat be quencht
Tyll in some liquor I be soundly drencht.
And therefore to prevent these scortching flames
He drowne myselfe in Amwell or in Thames.

He thereupon 'offers to runne out,' but is stopped by Tarre. Trunnell's grievance is never explained, and the whole thing seems like a parody of some theatrical episode. Could there have been running through Mountfort's brain, as he sat writing on shipboard, some jumbled memory of Hamlet's some dozen or sixteen lines written for the players, his madness, and Ophelia's death by drowning in a river?

After a time the workmen catch sight of Dorotea at her labours, and Trunnell cries, 'poore soule, I pittie thee.' But the word 'pittie' rouses her to indignant rage:

Who pittie
A wantinge woman but such miscreantes
As seeke the conquest of her chastitie?
Such pittyers have I manye .,. but was I borne

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To pittie such base pittyers? No, I scorne
Theyr best of pittie.

Okum is persuaded that 'she's a little beside herself, for yst possible for a petticoate and wastcoate woman to be honest that hath so many golden offers?'

This provokes an outburst from Dorotea, which shows that Mountfort knew something of the anti-feminist writings of the time:

I know there are a packe of Satyrists
Malignant Swetmans, drunken poetasters
Which farce and bumbast out theyr spurious lines
With raylinge language 'gaynst our feeble sex.
Others there are which out of Idiotisme,
And shallow apprehension speake theyr pleasure. '

Such pestleheads, such silly sots as you
Are of the number which I named last.

Her invective is interrupted by a burst of laughter from all the workmen, and a cry 'Shee's mad, shee's mad, starke mad/ Some further pleasantries follow which are cut short by the entrance of Captain Fitzjohn, who has come to see how the arrangements for the launching of the ship are progressing. He is distressed to see Dorotea at her homely task:

Must vertue sitt at shop wprke? gett a liuing
By hard hand-labour? Whilst vice (like a lady)
Ruffles yt out in luxurie and state?

As he approaches her she starts back, thinking that he is yet another tempter; but when he tells her that his 'ayme' is better,' and pities her state, she retorts that her lack of means does not afflict her half as much

As do the scoffes, reproches, taunts and checks
Of these ill bred, ill manered canvas coates.

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Thereupon Fitzjohn, with a cry of 'untutord pitch potts, tallow-buckettes, sponges,' turns on the workmen, and kicks them off the stage. To help her to keep 'the name of honest wyfe' he then gives her his purse, and with a prayer for her welfare he departs. After thanking heaven on her kneesj Dorotea points the moral to her erring sisters:

Marke,marke, lasciuious wantons, light-heeld dames,
House-troublers, gaddinge gossipps, foxes, apes,
Wolves, vultures, scorpions, crocodiles, hyenaes,
Man-eaters, and what not? marke, marke, I saye,
The eye of heaven vpon the well-disposde.
When did you euer see a spotless woman
In longe-contynuinge want? O I could wish
That all our sex (and those especially
Which properly to seamen doe belonge)
Weare as myselfe: but I should wish in vayne.
Some will be wild despight of all the world.

But in the monologue with which Dorotea at the end of Act v winds up the play she lays stress on the fact that these 'wild' women are exceptions:

Am I alone the seaman's honest wyfe?
No there are thousands more that may, canne, will,
Mayntayne yt to my face that they (as I)
Are spotles, free from action, nay from thought
And may the number of that number more
And more encrease vnto the seaman's ioye.

It was, of course, part of Mountfort's *apologia* for the East India Company to uphold that the long separations between the seamen engaged in its service and their wives did not lead, save in the case of a few wantons, to immorality. Even a more practised dramatist would have found it difficult to make such a theme theatrically effective. But the lack of action, the sameness of the feeble

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efforts to lead Dorotea astray, and the shrill monotony of her complacent declamation on her own virtues betray the prentice hand of the amateur playwright. Dorotea is a figure stuffed with sawdust, and from a dramatic point of view is far less effective than Isabel Nutt and Moll Sparke or Trunnell and his fellows.

III. THE LAUNCHING OF THE SHIP

THE workmen appear again at the beginning of Act v in the scene from which the play takes its first title, *The Lanchinge of the Mary*. It is of particular interest because there is no similar episode in any contemporary play. Mountfort, though he was not at the time in the service of the Company was¹ probably present when the ship was launched on October 26, 1626, though he has evidently introduced fanciful details into his treatment of the episode. From the point of view of Elizabethan stage arrangements it is instructive to see how the action is handled. It was, of course, impossible to represent the actual launching of the ship. But the preparations for it are shown on the stage, and it is supposed to take place 'within/ As the stage-direction puts it, the scene consists

more in action than speech, as setting of 2 Crabbs, the heaving at the Capsten, the whistlinge of the Boteswaine, with the wordes sometymes 'heaue,' sometymes 'launche,' to lengthen the tyme as shall be shewed before the daye of action. After the settinge of the Crabbs and bendinge of the Cables, there must appeare aloft as many gallantes and ladies as the roome canne well hold.

Among the noble company who thus witness the ceremony from the upper room or gallery above the inner stage are

¹ See Chapter VIII, pp. 176-7.

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Admiral Hobab, the Governor and Deputy Governor of the Company, and two of the 'Committees.' When they are assembled there enters 'alowe,' i.e. on the stage, 'in haste at one doore Trunnell and Tallow, and at another Tarre, Okum and Sheathing nayle.' Trunnell reports the unprecedented concourse to see the launch, and cries cheerily, 'well, a fayre daye, a loftie tyde, a slicke shippe, strong cables, & good helpe will quickly ende the busynes.' Some cantankerous sparring amongst the workmen does not promise well for the success of the ceremony till the Boatswain enters blowing his whistle, and they fall to their task. The audience hear alternately the orders of the Boatswain and the shouting of those 'within,' where the ship is supposed to be leaving the stocks:

BOTE[SWAYNE]. Man capsten good fellowes, man capsten —within bord. Ho!

WITHIN. Holla.

BOTE. What, shall wee heaue, shall wee heaue?

WITHIN. Hold fast a while (*pause*'). Heaue, a god's name, heaue.

BOTE.(whistles). Heaue, good men, heaue. Cherily, cherily, good fellowes.

WITHIN. Lanch, Ho! Heaue agen, men, heaue agen, the westermost capsten the best.

RoTE.(whistles"). Heaue, heaue, heaue, good fellowes, heaue! Give her but a start, and wee are made men: well heaud of all, well heaud of all, yfayth (*a great shout within*). round, round, round, good men, lustily, lustily, there she goes.

WITHIN, Lanch Ho!

BOTE. (whistles). What a god's name is the matter?

WITHIN. Heaue agen.

BOTE. Heaue agen, good fellowes. Cherily, cherily, good Boyes (*a great shout within*). There shee goes, there shee goes a god's name, goinge, goinge, goinge, goinge,

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goinge, well heavd, yfayth, well heaud (*a great shout of all*), there, there shee's awaye, shee's awaye!

GOVERNOR: God preserue the Mary!

ALL: God preserue the Mary, God preserue the Mary, God preserue the Mary, God preserue the Mary! God blesse the Mary.

The launch thus finished the Governor and his guests descend from the gallery (where their place is taken by musicians) to a banquet on the stage, of which the following details are given:

After a little while syttinge Lo[rd] Ad[miral] beginnes a health to the good success of the Mary, which must be contynued with the shootinge of gunnes to the last man: which orderly discharged will be about II or 13 gunnes, which ended (*a loud shout within*) 'God blesse the Mary, &c.' then all sytt agayne and immediately enter Tarre, Trunnell, Tallow, Okum, and Sheathing naye, with some daintie dance eueryone wearinge the embleme of his name vpon his head.

This close to the festivities reminds us of the Bergomask danced by two of the rude mechanicals which ends the revels in *A Midsummer Nighfs Dream*. The dance ended, Captain Fitzjohn enters to pray for a favourable wind for the ship, and to apostrophize the Queen, 'whose glorious name the vessell beares':

Thou honour of our age, our hope, our starre,
Thou Index of the greatest empresses,
Thou peereles abstract of all princely dames.

Finally he leaves himself and his actions to the judgment of the audience:

I will neyther cappe, nor knee, nor fawne,
Too much for favour: you'le doe what you list

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When I haue done my best. A seamans phrase
Is harsh, blunt, wanting seemely epethithes
For illustration, or of arts, or armes,
Or matter of much consequence: kill or cure
Doe what you please, my patience must endure.
Yf you thinke well, I thanke you, but yfyll
You cannot hurt me with your worst of will.

There is not much point in Fitzjohn, of whom the audience have seen little except as a benefactor of Dorotea, making this declaration. But it would be very much in place on the lips of Mountfort himself if he were challenging a verdict on his play. So far as the metrical parts are concerned—and they form much the largest proportion of the work—we may borrow his own words:

A seamans phrase
Is harsh, blunt, wanting seemly epethithes.

He had no ear for the music of verse, and though his vocabulary was fairly copious, he was without the instinct for the arresting epithet or phrase. His imagination never took fire from the glow and colour of Eastern scenes. Marlowe, writing in a London garret, could conjure up a
• radiant vision of the splendours of Persepolis and Samarcand. Mountfort, before whose eyes the gorgeous panorama of the Orient had mgved for months in Ispahan and Gombroon, sees everything in grey monotone.

It is in the prose scenes, where the workmen and Moll Sparke and Tibb Nutt discourse in homely vernacular, that Mountfort shows that he has a measure of the dramatic gift of his time. He has a raciness of dialogue which would have stood him in good stead had he attempted a theatrical sketch of some of the humours of London riverside life. He was outweighed when he essayed a lengthy five-act

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drama, dealing with matters of high commercial policy and having a didactic and propagandist aim.

But the literary and dramatic merits of a play are not the only things that count. The unique character of *The Lanching of the Mary*, the circumstances under which it was written, and its treatment by the Censor should give it special importance to students not only of stage history but of the personal rule of the Stuart kings.

CHAPTER XI

STAGE CENSORSHIP UNDER CHARLES II SIR HENRY HERBERT AND 'THE CHEATS'

DURING the Civil War and the Commonwealth the Office of the Revels was in abeyance. With the Restoration Sir Henry Herbert attempted to re-assert his lapsed powers and privileges as Master. A number of miscellaneous Revels documents for the period 1660-70 are extant, but they relate mainly to Herbert's disputes with Killigrew and Davenant, the patentees of the King's and Duke of York's Companies respectively.¹ They left us in the dark as to whether Herbert after the Restoration 'blue-pencilled' manuscripts of plays submitted to him in the same fashion, and on the same principles, as he had dealt with *The Lan- chinge of the Mary* and Massinger's *Believe as you I.ist*, when Charles I was King.

It is fortunate, therefore, that a manuscript censored by Herbert has recently come to light in an unexpected quarter. Mention has been made above of the Shakespearean quartos in the library of Worcester College, Oxford.² Among its dramatic treasures that library includes a volume of five manuscript plays. One of these is John Wil- son's comedy *The Cheats*, with phrases and passages "marked for omission in performance by Herbert, and with his autograph licence at the end:

This Comedy of the Cheates may be Acted As Allowed for the Stage, the Reformations strictly obserued, to the King's Company of Actors by Henry Herbert Master of the Reuells.

March 6 1662 [i.e. 1662-3]

There were circumstances connected with the production
~~There were circumstances connected with the production~~ These documents sarce

(pp. 81-139), ed. by Mr Joseph Quincy Adams of Cornell University.

² See above, Chapter III, pp. 74-5.

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of the play which make the discovery of this manuscript of special interest.

Wilson was in more than one way a notable figure of the Restoration period. Educated for the Bar at Lincoln's Inn, he attracted the favourite notice of James, Duke of York, and of the Duke of Ormond, through whose influence he was appointed Recorder of Londonderry about the beginning of 1668.¹ In spite of differences with the Corporation of the city, who claimed that 'the election of Recorder was theirs and not his Majesty's,' Wilson appears to have retained his office till towards the end of 1682. He then returned to London as 'a better place for lawyers and poets.' But in 1687 he accompanied the Earl of Tyrconnell, who had been made Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, as his private secretary, and in 1689 he again became Recorder of Londonderry. But the Battle of the Boyne in July 1690 ended his official career, and he again returned to London, where he died in 1696.

Thus law and politics chiefly occupied Wilson's later life, and as a devoted adherent of the Stuarts he published two treatises, *A Discourse of Monarchy* (1684) and *Jus Regium Corona* (1688), in which he argued respectively in favour of the succession of the Duke of York to the throne and of the royal dispensing power.

But in his earlier years he had found time for letters and the stage. The first edition of *The Cheats* in 1664 was followed by the publication of his tragedy *Andronicus Comnenius* later in the same year. Another comedy, *The Prolectors*, appeared in 1665, and a translation of the *Encomium Moriae*, by Erasmus, in 1668.² After a quarter of a

¹ The evidence for this, and for Wilson's disputes with the Londonderry Corporation, is given from the Ormonde Correspondence by Dr W. H. Grattan Flood in *The Times Literary Supplement*, 28 July, 1921.

² A reprint of Wilson's translation was edited by Mrs P. S. Allen for the Clarendon Press in 1913.

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century he returned to drama in 1590, when his *Belphegor, or the Marriage of the Devil*, was acted at Dorset Garden Theatre. Vexed at its failure on the stage, he appealed to the town by publishing it in the following year.

Wilson's success seems to have been throughout rather with readers than theatre-goers. Even *The Cheats*, a capital comedy in the Jonsonian manner, was badly received when it was performed in March, 1662-3. Abraham Hill, writing on the 28th of the month to John Brooke, adds in a postscript: 'The new play called *The Cheats* has been attempted on the stage; but it is so scandalous that it is forbidden.' Documents in the Record Office show that the play had not been completely suppressed (as Hill's letter suggests), but that the performances had been suspended by the Government.¹ There is a minute, dated March 22, 1662-3, by Henry Bennet, afterwards better known as Earl of Arlington, of the dispatch of a letter to Killigrew signifying the King's pleasure that *The Cheats* 'be no more represented' till it had been reviewed by Sir John Denham and Mr Waller.

The letter to Waller follows :

S^r His Ma^{ty} beeing informed that there ware in a new "Comedy latly acted at y^e Theater many things of a scandalous offensive nature hath Commanded mee to Signifie his Pleasure to you y^e you and Sir John Denham immediatly send for y^e saide play and reading it over together give jointly to his Ma^{ty} yo^r Opinion of it, that if there bee cause for it it may be supressed. Y^e pretended approbation it is said to haue had from his Ma^{ty} having I can assure you noe further ground thenn That a matter of twenty or thirtty lines of it being showed him w^{oh} had been excepted

¹ See *State Papers, Domestic*, Charles II, Vol. LXX, 14, and *Entry Book*, 10, ft. 54-5. Though an abstract of the documents is given in the *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic*, 1662-3, under date 22 March, no mention of them is made in the article of John Wilson in *The Dictionary of National Biography*, nor (so far as I know) in histories of the drama.

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against his Ma^{ty} was pleased to say if there had been nothing worse it may bee acted, adding further to the player, that their Company should take heed in this as in all their other Playes, to expose upon y^e Stage any thing y' was either prophane Scandalous or Scurrilous observing which they should be protected & no longer.

There is a similar letter to Denham. In the choice of two such experienced men of letters and affairs to adjudicate upon the play, and in his own independent but cautious expression of opinion, Charles showed his usual sagacity. The report by Waller and Denham is not extant, but from a new prologue written for the revival of the play (which will be quoted later), it is evident that they concurred with the King, and sanctioned further performances if omissions were made in addition to those already ordered by Herbert.

But it was in printed form that *The Cheats* gained widespread popularity. It ran through four editions during its author's lifetime, in 1664, 1671, 1684 and 1693. The fourth edition adds the names of some of the original actors, inserts a new song in the last scene, and makes a small change in Act v, iv. Otherwise the quartos are practically uniform.

The Worcester College manuscript differs materially from the printed version. It has thus a double importance. It gives us the original text of the play, presumably in Wilson's own handwriting, before he revised it for publication.

It also shows the omissions that Herbert thought necessary before he would consent to its performance by the King's Company. And—as a third point of interest—it adds to our knowledge of the cast at the first production. The list given in the 1693 quarto is as follows:

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<i>Whitebroth</i> , an Alderman	<i>Mr Cartwright</i>
<i>Runter</i> , a Civilian	<i>Mr Wintersal</i>
<i>Afterwit</i> , a Gentleman	<i>Mr Bin</i>
<i>Jolly</i> , his Friend	<i>Mr Hart</i>
<i>Tyro</i> , a young Squire	—
<i>Scruple</i> , a Nonconformist	<i>Mr Lacy</i>
<i>Mopus</i> , an Astrological P h y s i c i	<i>M r Mohun</i>
<i>Bilboe</i> } <i>TisereTu</i> }	{ <i>Mr Shatterel</i>
Two Hectors	
<i>Double Diligence</i> , a Puritan Constable	—
<i>Timothy</i> , the Alderman's Servant	—
<i>Mrs Whitebroth</i> , the Alderman's Wife	<i>Mrs Covey</i> ¹
<i>Mrs Mopus</i> , the Astrologer's Wife	—
<i>Mrs Double Diligence</i> , the Constable's	—
' Wife	—
<i>Beatrice</i> , the Alderman's Daughter	—
<i>Cis</i> , the Alderman's Maid	—

The manuscript furnishes the names of some of the actors when they first enter. It gives Burt,² Hart, Clun, and Shatterel in their respective parts, though it reverses the order in which the last two are bracketed in the quarto. It also supplies three new names:

<i>Double Diligence</i>	<i>Mr Loueday</i>
<i>Mrs Double Diligence</i>	<i>Mrs Marshall</i>
<i>Mrs Mopus</i>	<i>Mrs Marg\</i>

Mrs Marshall, who took the part of Mrs Double Diligence, was Anne Marshall, who, according to Genest (*History of the Stage*, I, 379), was 'for many years the principal actress in the King's Company.' Her younger sister Rebecca joined the company somewhat later. The impersonator of Mrs Mopus was doubtless Mrs Margaret

¹ A mistake for 'Mrs Corey,' called by Pepys 'Doll Common,' from the part acted by her in Jonson's *The Alchemist*.

² The MS. has this more usual spelling of the name.

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Hughes, Prince Rupert's mistress. As it was Killigrew who first regularly employed actresses, instead of boys, for female parts, it is of some importance to know (as we do now) how three of these parts were filled in *The Cheats*,

A brief outline of the action is now necessary.

Afterwit, aided by Jolly, is a suitor to Beatrice, daughter of the dyspeptic and miserly Alderman Whitebroth. His wife, together with Mrs Double Diligence and Mrs Mopus, is among the adoring flock of Scruple, a canting Nonconformist pastor. Mrs Double Diligence is carrying on intrigues with Whitebroth and with Bilboe, and Mrs Mopus with the latter's brother-in-arms, Titere Tu. There is a rival to Afterwit in the foolish squire Tyro, whom Whitebroth favours. But Afterwit bribes the cheating astrologer and medico Mopus to help him in his suit. Mopus in a mock incantation scene shows Beatrice her predestined husband in a glass, the face being that of Afterwit, who is secretly looking over the back of her chair. The girl is thus induced to marry Afterwit, who gets a hedge-priest to tie the knot. Afterwit and Jolly also learn from Mopus the secret of Whitebroth's intrigue with the Constable's wife, and they suborn Bilboe and Titere Tu to catch *himflagrante delicto* and to extort from him £1,000 to avoid exposure. Furthermore, through a trick in which the lawyer Runter and Scruple are bribed to take part, the Alderman, thinking that he is signing his will, makes a settlement upon Afterwit. Thereupon he has no choice but to give him his blessing as a son-in-law.

Herbert found in the manuscript much to 'reform.' To begin with, he was as absurdly meticulous about 'oaths' in 1663 as he had been nearly thirty years before, when Charles I had remonstrated with him on January 9, 1633-4, for crossing *outfaith*, *death*, and *slight* in Davenant's 'playe

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booke of *The Witts*, 'and had ordered them to be allowed as 'assentations and no oaths'.¹ Charles II was the last man to be more censorious than his father in such a matter, but Herbert stuck obstinately to his original view. In the manuscript of *The Cheats* the following words and phrases are all marked for omission: 'Faith, troth, by all that's good, by this good light, by the good Morglay, fore George, as I am an Alderman, by the faith of a Souldier and a man of Armes.' When such mild expletives were taboo, Herbert, of course, set his face against 'pox on, and be hang'd,' and 'if this won't take 'um, the Devil take 'um,' and the Constable's exclamation 'Odds Niggs,' as well as •JBilboe's reproof, 'I hate those Puritan Oaths. If thou must swear, swear like a man of Office.'

Herbert had better reason for heavily underlining a passage in Act n, iii, where Scruple, relying on the distinctions made by the Casuists, assures Mrs Whitebroth that a married woman may commit adultery, 'Provided alwayes she have no intention of sin, but only to satisfie her longing,' and that 'it may be lawful to procure Abortion, provided alwayes, it be not done, with an intention of Murder, but only to save Life or Reputation.'²

In Act in, iii Herbert found matter that evidently offended his Welsh susceptibilities. Scruple is induced by Mrs Whitebroth to visit' Mopus, with whom he discusses the exact time of the Flood and the language of that time. Mopus declares that the time was 'the 5th day of *June*, in the 1656 Year of the World, one Month, and 17 dayes, not more nor less . . . fifteen minutes precisely after Sun-setting,' and continues:

Then for the language, notwithstanding any thing that

¹ *Sec Dramatic Records of Sir Henry Herbert*, ed J. Q. Adams, p. 22.

² This and the following passages are quoted in the spelling of the 1671 quarto.

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has been said, to prove it *High-dutch*, I am clearly of opinion, it was *Hebrew* or some other *Jargon*.

SCRUPLE. Nay then, you must bate me an Ace, for though I look upon it as obscure, as the head of *Nile*, yet as far as it may be lawful to pry into unreveal'd mysteries, I dare boldly pronounce it to have been *Welch*.

MOPUS. Welch!

Scruple tells the astonished astrologer that he has studied Welsh, because it was the language of his nurse, and also 'because it makes an excellent sound in a country church,' and then proceeds to justify his claim for it as the tongue of Noah:

I say 'twas Welch, and thus I prove it: 'Tis confest of all hands, that before the confusion of Tongues, there was but one language; which being so, 'tis more than probable that *Corner*, the first Gran-child of *Noah*, the first Ancestor of the Welchmen, spake the same language, that his Grandfather did, and that from him, by continu'd succession, it has been deriv'd to them?—For Example;—Ask a Welchman at this day, what Countreyman he is, he will answer, *Cymro gldn*, A true Welchman; that is to say, *Gomera glan*. ... I might yet further, and (I think) without much difficulty, make it out, That the mountains of *Ararat*, were *Penmenmaure* in *Wales*; And the most ancient *Egyptians*, originally Welch, as may be more than suspected, from their Deification of Leeks. . . . But what do I go about to prove that, which no body dares deny?—I'll give you but one smart parting blow—The red streakt Apple, which makes such excellent Sider, what was it originally but the Welch Crab?

The whole of this dialogue is marked with lines in the margin which doubtless indicate Herbert's disapproval. In this connexion it may also be noted that another jest against the Welsh is absent from the manuscript. In Act

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i, i Mopus interprets to Beatrice the meaning of various dreams. It is only in the quartos that we find the words 'Of Leeks and Cheese; that she shall marry a Welchman.'

It was, as has been seen, in the speeches of Scruple that Herbert found most need of 'reformation.' In Act in, 5, this worthy delivers himself, to the edification of the womenfolk, of an unctuous harangue in which the Master of the Revels evidently scented danger. Several passages are heavily underlined, and they have also crosses in the margin. In one of them Scruple expatiates on the service done to the 'Cause' by subscription to the Covenant:

Did I for this preach up the Holy Covenant? Told you, you must deny Learning, and Reason, and give the good Cause, a lift? Was it for this, that, That zealous son of Thunder, *Mas'*, *Andrew*, told you, that he came to you with a Commission, to bid you subscribe, That it was a spiritual contract in letters of flesh: and that he came a wooing to you, for him that had commissioned him, and therefore called upon you to come, and be handfasted, by subscribing the Contract? Did I, for this, convince you of the lawfulness of the thing, and, as it were compel you to the Wedding? And will you call that Holy Violence a Spanish Inquisition?

He assures his hearers that the righteousness of the elect will save the nation from judgment:

Comfort yourselves, that though these Land-destroying sins of Superstition, Innovation, and Idolatry, were sins in the Kingdom, they were not sins of the Kingdom; And a Nation was never destroyed, without National sins:—Mark that Beloved, pray mark that.

Even in this time, when the wicked triumph, the godly are not to be faint of heart, nor too proud to make the best terms they can with the enemy:

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The Nation cannot be destroyed as long as you are in't. —Ah.—Then, do not dispond in this day of Tryal, this day of treading down, and not building up—Aa—Give not up this *Good Old Cause*, which you have so long contended for, with so much precious blood, and so much precious Treasure—Aa—forsake it not lest the Malignants rejoyce, lest the Malignant, and disaffected say, *Tou've fought to much purpose*:—Aa—Bear it yet but a little and you will see *Dagon* totter, and when he is once running down hill, he will not stop, till he come to th' bottom. [*Here he sinks his voice.*] In the meantime, —Ah—What remains? But that (forasmuch as the Sword is yet out of our hands)—Ah—But that we as it were descend from ourselves, in petitioning for Toleration, and preservation of our mortal bodies, against the rude Enemy; And that we promise to be their Servants in everything, that we shall judge to be righteous.

By 1663 the reign of Scruple and his friends was over for ever; but Herbert, trained in the school of James I and Charles I and a victim of the Civil War, could scarcely have been expected to 'pass' such utterances, though Wilson meant them to have a purely dramatic significance, appropriate to the character of this time-serving and slippery cleric. Herbert's methods of censorship had always been mechanical, and the manuscript of *The Cheats* proves that during the Civil War and the Commonwealth he had learnt nothing and forgotten nothing. Yet, in spite of all, he did not prevent an outcry over the performance of the play, and he doubtless felt very sore when the King went over his head and called in Waller and Denham as advisers upon stage proprieties.

There is another point on which the Worcester College manuscript of *The Cheats* is valuable evidence. The grant of Charles II to Killigrew and Davenant, made on August

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21, 1660, not only gave them power to raise two companies and to purchase, build, or hire theatres for them, but also to exercise a censorship over any plays, new or old, which these companies might perform. By this last clause in especial Herbert was deprived of a very profitable right. He sought redress both by petition to the King and by actions at law. At last, on June 14, 1662, he came to terms with Killigrew. The patentee of the King's Company agreed to pay him 'for the new Plaies at fortie shillings a Play, and the Old Reissued Plaies at twentie shillings a Play' acted by the company since August 11, 1660. Herbert on his part undertook not to do anything 'to the prejudice of the Grante made unto' Killigrew, or to interfere with his profits.¹ The fact that nine months afterwards, on March 6, 1662-3, the King's Company submitted the manuscript of *The Cheats* to Herbert to be censored and licensed before performance shows that Killigrew was loyally carrying out his part of the agreement. Herbert doubtless received his fee of two pounds for his pains.

In an attempt to revive a more disputable prerogative of his office he was less successful. A document dated July 25, 1663, sets forth 'Arguments to prove that the Master of his Majesties Office of the Revells hath not only the power of Lycencing all playes, Poems, and ballads, but of appointing them to the Press.' It is here claimed *inter alia* that the right of licensing plays for performance carries with it the further right of licensing them for publication, 'least after such examination and allowance, alterations should bee made, and the abuse prove a scandall and reflection upon the Master.' All 'Poets and Printers' were therefore warned of the necessity of obtaining a licence

¹ 'Forthefull 'Articles of Agreement' see *Dramatic Record* of Sir Henry Herbert, pp. II 13-5.

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from the Revels Office.¹ Nevertheless, when some three months later, on November 5, 1663, authority was given for *The Cheats* to be published, the *imprimatur* was not in the hand of Herbert, but of Roger L'Estrange, who on the previous August 15 had been appointed 'surveyor of the imprimery,' with control of printing offices and vendors of books and papers.

L'Estrange's standard concerning 'prophaneness, oaths, ribaldry and matters reflecting upon piety, and the present government' differed widely from that of Herbert, and the Master of the Revels must have been scandalized to see printed in the quarto almost all the phrases and passages that he had noted for 'reformation' in Wilson's manuscript. But the manuscript submitted to L'Estrange, and used by the printers, was evidently a different one from that which had been licensed by Herbert, and which had apparently served as a prompt copy when the piece was first produced. In this manuscript, in Act iv, iii, after Beatrice has declared that if she is in love, it is not with Tyro, the dialogue continues:

SCRUPLE. O have a Care. You must Love the Professor. Not Love him, if she loveth him not, she must love another, and consequently send him into Abram's bosome, that • is to say make him a Cuckold.

WHITEBROTH. How's this a Cuckold. Would they were all in the Thames.

This passage had been underlined by Herbert, and marked with crosses in the margin, probably because of the reference to 'Abram's bosome.' In the quartos there is a substituted dialogue, beginning with Mrs Whitebroth's exclamation, 'How, child! Not be rul'd by your father?' and continuing to the end of the scene. There are further

¹ *Dramatic Recordss*, pp. 125-6.

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differences in Act iv between the Worcester College manuscript and the printed text in the latter part of scene iv and the beginning of scene v. In the mock incantation scene, in v, i, the manuscript, strangely enough, leaves a blank where the quartos insert the dog-Latin jargon headed *Mazol Tob*. But the chief variation between the manuscript and the printed text is found almost at the close of the final scene (v, v). Afterwit and Beatrice have received Whitebroth's blessing, and he has sent for musicians to strike up a dance. Tyro, the defeated suitor, enters, whereupon in the manuscript version, Jolly, Afterwit's friend, exclaims, 'He shall even marry Cis,' the Alderman's maid. He then whispers in an aside to Beatrice, 'Good Madame, owne her for your sister, and let me alone for the rest.' After a few words with Bilboe, he turns to Runter, and the dialogue thus proceeds in the manuscript:¹

JOLLY. Faith, now our hand is in, we had as good Clapp two weddings in one.

RUNTER. With all my heart. Whose is't?

JOLLY. Tyro shall marry Cis—and for your assistance in't, Ile give you a Coach and horses.

RUNTER. He's fitt for nothing else. It shall be done, but • whose daughter shall I call her?

JOLLY. The Alderman's—and he shall own it.

TYRO. How's this—my mispress married? I did not thinke I should have been scorn'd soe.

JOLLY *whispers the* ALDERMAN *and* Cis.

AFTERWIT. It cannot be helpt—but He deale fairely with you; weel devide—I have got one sister and you shall have tother.

BEATRICE. Come Sister Cis—perhaps we may be both married of a day—you must fine up yourselfe—tis such a slat-tering wench—when doe you thinke to get a husband?

¹ I have expanded some contractions, and have made some changes in punctuation.

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Cis. Nay, pish, you nothing but make me blush, for shame.
WHITEBROTH. Well, Sir, for once He do't.

At Jolly's command Cis kneels, and Whitebroth gives her a paternal blessing, which convinces Tyro of their relationship.

TYRO. She is his daughter, that's certaine—but I should hardly have believed it by her dress.

JOLLY. Why then you don't know the Custome of the City, they never prinke up the younger daughter till they have put off the older.

TYRO. There was my mistake—had I best hand her?

RUNTER. Hand her, d'you call't? Will she have you?

TYRO. Pray, speake a good word for me.

RUNTER. Mr Alderman, they say one Gossopping begetts another. Let it for once be said the same of weddings. I have a request to make to you in behalfof this gentleman. [WHITEBROTH]. Let him speake for himselfe.

TYRO. Shall I have better lucke with this daughter than I had with tother?

WHITEBROTH, You had best aske her.

TYRO. What say you, Madam? Can you love me?

Cis. I must be rul'd by my friends, Sir.

WHITEBROTH. Come, come. I know there meaning. Gi' me your hands. Mr Scruple, your assistance. [*Scruple joynes there hands.*] Soe, soe. This is enough at present; if there be anything wanting, weel make it up anone.

TYRO. Pray, ffather, pray to God to bless me.

TYRO and Cis kneele.

WHITEBROTH. Bless, my good boy. See you prove a good husband, if not—

Here the fiddlers enter, and the dance begins.

It is remarkable that this episode of Tyro being tricked into a marriage with Cis, in the belief that she is the younger sister of Beatrice, disappears from the quartos. It must have been quite to the taste of a Restoration audi-

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ence, and it carries on the idea of successful cheating to the very close of the play. But in the printed text some vague hope of future compensation is held out to the disappointed wooer:

JOLLY. Here's Tyro too. Yue ev'n come time enough to dance at your Mistresses Wedding.

TYRO. How, My Mistresses Wedding?

TiTERE'Tu. Even so.

TYRO. Alas that I had but known of this before.

RUNTER. Women will have their wills. Let her go. I have another guess thing, in chase for you.

TYRO. And shall I have her?

RUNTER. Thou shalt. And hark you.

•[RUNTER *having whispered him, he shrugs, and scratches his elbow.*

Thereupon follows a long speech by Scruple while the company is waiting for the fiddlers, of which there is not a word in the manuscript. This addition is curious; for not only had Herbert (as has been seen) found most need for 'reformation' in the pastor's utterances, but it was chiefly on account of the character of Scruple that the comedy had caused a scandal on its first production. It was his part that Waller and Denham evidently 'cut' severely. This is evident from the Second Prologue, 'intended, upon the revival of the play, but not spoken':¹

Sad News my Masters'; and too true, I fear,
For us—Scruple's a silenc'd Minister;
Would ye the Cause? The Brethren snivle and say.
'Tis scandalous that any Cheat, but they:
Well—to be short; H' as been before the Tryers,
And (by good fortune) is got out o'th' Bryers;
Where, if he lost a Limb to save the rest.
No hurt—Here's yet enough to know the Beast.

¹ In the edition of 1693 this is altered to, 'Upon the revival of the Play, after it had been suppressed by a faction.'

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Considering that Scruple had only escaped from the hand; of the 'Tryers,' as Wilson dubs Waller and Denham in this maimed condition, it is surprising that the quartos should give him additional prominence just before the play ends with a highly characteristic discourse in answer to a question of Mrs Whitebroth, whether music, dancing, and the bridal posset are lawful:

Hum—I am full; and shall discourse 'em gradualie: And first, of the first—Musick; yes. Certainlie, it is lawfull—but what Musick? That's the question. We'll examine it a little. Gimbals, they are Jewish. The Harp, malignant and Irish; Organs, Anti-christian; the Fluit, a meer Hornpipe ;the Fiddle, out upon't! Most abominable; it ushers in Revels and Maypoles. What then? Why trulie I agree with the Assembly. Bag-pipes; a harmless, innocent Musick, and most agreeable, to the discipline and practice of our Brethren of the Kirk: Besides, it has (as the Learned observe) a specifick qualitie to molifie, and soften the most brutal natures—witness, the Bears—*Emollit mores nee sintt esseferos*.

In similar vein he harangues upon dancing and the posset till the fiddlers enter, and Jolly adjures them, 'Strike up! Strike up! One noise best drowns another.'

King Charles, at any rate, if he read the quarto, was not likely to be displeased by this elaboration of Scruple's part. The twenty or thirty lines which had been shown to him by a player, after the first production of the piece, and which he had allowed to pass, were doubtless taken from the pastor's speeches. Perhaps the player was Lacy, the creator of the part. In any case Langbaine records that the King approved so highly of Lacy as an actor 'that he caus'd his Picture to be drawn in three several Figures in the same Table, that of Teague in Sir Robert Howard's

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The Committee, Galliard in the Duke of Newcastle's *Variety*, and *Scruple* in *The Cheats*.

After 1693 *The Cheats* was not reprinted until 1873, when it was included in the volume, *The Dramatic Works of John Wilson*, edited by James Maidment and W. H. Logan. The play is there reproduced in modernized spelling, from the fourth quarto. Now that the Worcester College manuscript has come to light, a new edition is desirable, based upon a collation of this and of the printed texts. Both as a comedy of humours and a footnote to history, *The Cheats* deserves to be more widely known.

APPENDIX I.

THE DATE OF 'HAMLET' & GABRIEL

HARVEY'S ' MARGINALIA'

IN Chapter II, p. 27, reference has been made to Gabriel Harvey's autograph *Marginalia* in his copy of Speght's edition of Chaucer, published in 1598, containing an allusion to Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*, *Lucrece*, and his tragedie of Hamlet, Prince of Denmarke/ If this note was written in 1598, *Hamlet* must have been performed, and possibly printed, before or during that year. The more closely the note is examined, the weightier, as has been said, is the cumulative evidence that it was set down in or about 1598. The question, however, is somewhat complex, and needs to be sifted in detail.

There is no doubt that Harvey bought a copy of the Chaucer in 1598, for he wrote his name and the date on the title-page and after the *Finis* on the last page. The notes, however, that, after his custom, he inscribed in the volume, need not have been written in 1598, and the one with which we are here concerned raises some difficulty. It is found on p. 394 (*verso*), and deals with contemporary writers and their repute. It must be quoted almost in full:

And now translated Petrarch, Ariosto, Tasso, & Bartas himself deserue curious comparison with Chaucer, Lidgate, & owre best Inglish, auncient & moderne. Amongst which, the Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia, & the Faerie Queene are now freshest in request: & Astrophil, & Amyn-tas are none of the idlest pastimes of sum fine humanists. The Earle of Essex much commendes Albions England: . . . and the Lord Mountiory makes the like account of Daniels peece of the Chronicle, touching the Vsurpation of Henrie of Bullingbrooke... The younger sort takes much delight in Shakespeares *Venus*, & *Adonis*: but his

<HAMLET' Gf HARVEY'S 'MARGINALIA'

Lucrece, & his tragedie of Hamlet, Prince of Denmarke, haue it in them, to please the wiser sort. Or such poets: or better: or none.

Vilia miretur vulgus: mihi flavus Apollo
 Pocula Castaliae plena ministret aquae:

quoth Sir Edward Dier, betwene iest & earnest. Whose written deuises farr excell most of the sonets, and cantos in print. His Amaryllis, & Sir Walter Raleighs Cynthia, how fine & sweet inuentions? Excellent matter of emulation for Spencer, Constable, France, Watson, Daniel, Warner, Chapman, Siluester, Shakespeare, & the rest of owr flourishing metricians. I looke for much, aswell in verse, as in prose, from mie two Oxford frends, Doctor Gager, & M. Hackluit: both rarely furnished for the purpose: & I haue a phansie to Owens new Epigrams, as pithie as elegant, as plesant as sharp, & sumtime as weightie as breife: & amongst so manie gentle, noble, & royall spirits mee-thinkes I see sum heroical thing in the clowdes: mie soueraine hope. Axiophilus shall forgett himself, or will remember to leaue sum memorials behinde him: & to make an vse of so many rhapsodies, cantos, hymnes, odes, epigrams, sonets, & discourses, as at idle howers, or at flowing fitts he hath compiled. God knowes what is good for the world, & fitting for this age.

There is one reference in this note in favour of a considerably later date for it than 1598. John Owen's 'new Epigrams' were first published in 1606. But compositions of this kind often circulated from hand to hand before publication, and Harvey himself, besides mentioning Raleigh's manuscript poem *Cynthia*, refers to the 'written deuises' of Sir Edward Dyer as far excelling 'most of the sonets and cantos in print.' One of Owen's Epigrams, addressed to Lord Burleigh, is dated 1596, and it and others may well have passed from hand to hand.

'HAMLET' &? HARVEY'S 'MARGINALIA'

Apart from this difficulty the cumulative evidence points strongly to the note having been written in 1598 or soon afterwards.¹ The books described as 'now freshest in request' are *The Arcadia* of which the complete edition (the third) was issued in 1598, and *The Faerie Queene*, books iv-vi of which appeared in 1596. It is not necessary (nor, in my opinion, possible) to interpret 'our flourishing metricians' as poets still alive. Harvey, when he included Thomas Watson, the author of *Hecatompithia*, in his list, cannot have forgotten that Watson, with whom he had been on terms of personal intimacy, had died in 1592. None the less the names given are those of the popular 'metricians' of the last decade of the sixteenth century. In the third of his *Four Letters*, September, 1592, he had mentioned Spenser, Stanihurst, Fraunce, Watson, Daniel, and Nash as 'professed sonnes of the Muses.'² In *Pierce's Supererogation*, 1593? he had again listed Stanihurst, Fraunce and Watson together among 'vulgar' writers.³ In the MS. note Spenser, Fraunce, Watson and Daniel reappear. The note thus looks back to Harvey's earlier lists of poets, and is much more relevant to 'metricians' in 1598 than after 1606.

There is still stronger ground for assigning Harvey's observations on noble patrons of poetry to a similar date. He states that 'The Earle of Essex much commendes Albions England.' The note evidently refers to some spoken or written encomium by Essex on Warner's poem, dating probably before he started on his ill-fated Irish expedition

¹ As Dr Moore Smith points out (*Gabriel Harvey's Marginalia*, pp. xi and 308), when Harvey speaks of 'translated Tasso', he need not have been referring (as Malone thought) to Fairfax's translation of the *Gerusalemme Liberata* in 1600. A version of the first five cantos by Richard Carew appeared in 1594.. A translation of Tasso's pastoral play, *Aminta*, had also appeared from the pen of Abraham Fraunce in 1591.

² *The Works of Gabriel Harvey*, ed. A. B. Grosart 1, 21 8.

³ *Op. at.* ii, 290.

'HAMLET' & HARVEY'S 'MARGINALIA'

in April, 1599, and certainly before his execution in February, 1601.' Essex was succeeded as Lord Deputy of Ireland by Lord Mountjoy early in 1600. Mountjoy remained in Ireland for three years till he had put down the rebellion of Tyrone, and on his return he was created Earl of Devonshire. Had Harvey therefore written his note after July, 1603, he would have spoken of him by that title, and not as 'the Lord Mountjoy.' The inference is that Harvey is recording a commendation of Daniel's *Civil Wars* (1595) by Mountjoy before he left England early in 1600. Mountjoy had doubtless hastened to peruse the poem, which included compliments to Essex and himself. Here again 1598 is a much more appropriate date than 1606 or later.

Moreover, as Prof. Grierson has pointed out,² the tone of the note under discussion connects it so closely with Harvey's previous note (on p. 393^V)³ that they must have been written about the same time. In this previous note Harvey asks 'when shall we tast the preserved dainties?' (i.e., the unpublished poems) of various illustrious men? They include, besides Dyer and Raleigh, the Earl of Essex—obviously still living; 'the King of Scotland, the soueraine of the divine art'—who was not yet King also of England; and 'M. secretarie Cecill, the new patron of Chawcer.' This description of Sir Robert Cecil deserves more attention than it has yet received as an evidence of date. It refers to the dedication to him of Speght's Chaucer and would only have been appropriate very soon after the publication of the edition in 1598.

¹ Sir Sidney Lee in his *Life of William Shakespeare* (revised edition, 1915) p. 360, note, contends that 'much of the context makes it plain that Harvey uses the present tense in the historic fashion'. I agree with Prof. Grierson (*Mod. Lang. Rev.*, xi [ii], 221) that there is no parallel to such a use of it concerning a man dead within a few years and that in so dramatic a manner.

- *Mod. Lang. Rev.*, xii, ii, 221. ³ Punted in *Gabriel Harvey's Marginalia*, p. 231.

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Finally there are the panegyrics on 'Axiophilus.' One of these closes the note on p. 3947, quoted above; the other occurs in that on p. 393^V. 'No maruell, though Axiophilus be so slowe in publishing his exercises, that is so hastie in dispatching them; being one that rigorously censures himself; vnpartially examines others; & deemes nothing honorable or commendable in a poet, that is not diuine or illuminate, singular or rare; excellent, or sum way notable.' Prof. Moore Smith is certainly right in identifying 'Axiophilus' with Harvey himself.¹ In both notes he is alluding with characteristic complacency to his unpublished compositions, and to his projects for enriching the world with them. Prof. Grierson has acutely drawn attention² to the close correspondence between the phrases here used by Harvey, and those in his letter to Sir Robert Cecil of May 8, 1598, wherein he proclaims his intention of publishing 'sundry royal cantos,' long since written, 'with other tracts and discourses.' The similarity of phrasing and tone suggests strongly that the notes were written about the same time as the letter.

Thus the more closely Harvey's references are examined the weightier is the cumulative evidence that it was in or about 1598 that he spoke of *Hamlet* and *Lucrece* as having it in them 'to please the wiser sort.'

¹ *Op. cit.* p. 308. *Mod. Lang. Rev.*, xii, ii, 221.

APPENDIX II

BEN JONSON'S 'VOLPONE' AT OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE.

IN *The Fortnightly Review* for August, 1919, Mr W. J. Lawrence challenged the conclusion that *Hamlet* was performed by Shakespeare's company at Oxford and Cambridge under civic and not academic auspices. He relied mainly on two pieces of evidence, the patent of James I to the Lord Chamberlain's company, henceforth known as 'His Majesty's Servants,' on 19 May, 1603; and the dedication by Ben Jonson of *Folpone: or the Fox* to the two Universities.

• I replied to his arguments in the *Fortnightly* for May 1920. I showed that, even on the improbable assumption that the performances of *Hamlet* took place after the Queen's death, James I's patent did not affect the attitude of the Universities towards travelling companies, and that the conclusive proof of this is found in the record of the payments mentioned above (Chapter II, p. 31) that were made by Jacobean, as by Elizabethan, Vice-Chancellors of Oxford to the companies to take themselves off. For the fuller discussion of this matter I may be allowed to refer to my *Fortnightly* article.

But it seems desirable to reproduce with some minor changes that part of the article which deals with the performances at Oxford and Cambridge of Ben Jonson's comedy. For reasons stated below no parallel can be safely drawn between these performances and those of *Hamlet*. But the question is in itself interesting and important.

The quarto edition of *Folpone* is dedicated 'to the most noble and most equall sisters, the two Vniversities. For their love and acceptance shew'n to this Poeme in the presentation.' The most significant words for our present

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consideration are those in which Jonson speaks of 'this my latest Work, which you, *most learned* Arbitresses, have scene, judg'd, and to my crowne approv'd.'

This Epistle is dated from Jonson's house in Blackfriars 'this 11 day of February, 1607,' i.e., in all probability 1607-8. The play must therefore have been acted at Oxford and Cambridge some time between this date and its first production at the Globe in 1605. Jonson claims that it 'had received whole-hearted academic approval, but as to how or where it was performed he is tantalizingly vague. He personifies the Universities as 'sisters' and 'arbitresses,' but he does not tell us through whom or in what fashion they gave a favourable judgment on his work. He cannot have been referring to the Vice-Chancellors. It was not their function to provide entertainments by professional players for the scholars. And there was no building belonging to the University as such in which performances of the kind could take place. The rare occasions on which the Vice-Chancellors' accounts record contributions to theatrical entertainments are the visits of royal or other exalted personages. Even then the payments were for general expenses, such as staging or hire of costumes, and did not include fees to the actors, who were graduates or undergraduate members of the University. These state performances took place, as a rule, in the hall of Christ Church at Oxford, and of Trinity College at Cambridge. On less formal occasions other colleges mounted and acted their own plays.

Is it possible that *Folpone* was acted by the scholars themselves at Christ Church or at Trinity College, Cambridge? Many members of both these societies came from Westminster, and would doubtless have been glad to perform a work by their distinguished schoolfellow which was

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cast in the mould of classic drama. It is worth mentioning that the Christ Church account-books record the performance of an 'English comedie' during the session 1605-6. But no case seems to be known of the University amateurs producing a play which was the property of one of the professional companies, and which was still in manuscript. Moreover, had the piece been staged at Christ Church or Trinity, Jonson would probably have made direct mention of the fact.

If, therefore, an amateur college performance has in all probability to be ruled out, the only other alternative is that the King's Company acted *Votyone* in the usual way at one of the city inns. We know from the municipal account-books that they visited Oxford on October 9, 1605, about the end of July, 1606, and September 7, 1607. It was on one of these occasions that the play doubtless was presented.¹ Of any formal recognition by the University of the performance, or of any payment to the King's men by the academic authorities, there can, in my opinion, for the reasons already given, be no question. But if ever there was an occasion on which the Vice-Chancellor and Proctors might be expected to turn a 'blind eye' upon the attendance of scholars at prohibited professional entertainments, it would be at the production of *Folpone*. Nearly sixty years later (as has been mentioned above, p. 33) Anthony Wood records that on New Year's Day, and again on Twelfth Night, 1663, he spent sixpence to see '*Folponey*' acted at the Oxford Town Hall by 'prentices and tradesmen. We may be sure that when the King's Company presented the play fresh from its triumph at the Globe Theatre, gownsmen were among the audience, and

¹Sec pp. 29-30. 'E.S.' (probably Esme Stuart, Lord Aubigny) in his lines prefixed to the quaito fo*Volpone*, which are quoted by Mr Lawrence, speaks of the play as best known 'in both Minerva's Cities.' But the place and manner of performance are left vague.

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showed their appreciation of a work so completely after their own heart. It was Jonson's cue in his dedication to make the most of this. His attitude throughout the epistle is one of appeal from the judgement of the vulgar to that of *the intelligentsia*. He calls them to witness that he 'stands off from' the ordinary writer for the stage, morally and artistically, as light from darkness. He admits the indictment against the contemporary theatre—except in his own case:

It will here be hastily answer'd ... that now especially in *Dramatick*, or (as they terme it) Stage-Poetry nothing but Ribaldry, Profanation, Blasphemy and Licence of offence to God, and Man, is practised. I dare not deny a great part of this . . . But that all are embarqu'd in this bold adventure for Hell, is a most vncharitable thought, and vtterd, a more malicious slander. For my particular, I can (and from a most cleare conscience) affirme that I have trembled to thinke toward the least Prophanenesse, have loathed the vse of such foule Bawdry as is now made the foode of the *Scene*...

The present trade of the Stage in all their misc'line *Enterludes*, what learned or liberall soule doth not already abhor? where nothing but the garbage of the time is vtter'd?

Could any academic Puritan or precisian, even John Rainolds himself, the opponent alike of the collegiate and the professional stage, have said more?

It is noticeable that in his dedications Jonson speaks of his comedies and tragedies not as 'plays,' but 'poems,' to be judged by the classical rules. So, too, his friends in some of the commendatory verses prefixed to the quarto of *Folpone* salute him as the harbinger in England of an art that will revive the glories of Greece and Rome. Thus Edmund Bolton, in Latin hexameters addressed 'Ad Vtramque Academiam/ begins:

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Hie ille est primus, qui doctum drama Britannis,
Graiorum antiqua, et Latii monimenta Theatri,
Tanquam explorator versans, felicibus ausis,
Prebebit: Magnis ceptis *Gemina astra* favete.

Another admirer, 'F. B.,' speaks of

The Art, which thou alone
Has taught our tongue, the rules of Time, of Place,
And other Rites deliuer'd with the grace
Of comick stile, which onely, is farre more
Then any *English* stage hath knowne before.

What worlds away are we here from *Hamlet*! Can anyone imagine Shakespeare dedicating it as a 'poem' to the Universities, or his friends writing Latin panegyrics upon it, or hailing him as a poetic saviour of English drama?

And if we want to have a typical verdict of early seventeenth century Oxford on the two playwrights, we have only to open, as has been said above (p. 55), the poems of William Cartwright, of Christ Church, himself a distinguished academic dramatist. In 1638 Cartwright contributed to the collection of memorial verse, *Jonsonus Virbius*, a poem of nearly 200 lines of unrestrained panegyric. Here are some characteristic couplets:

Where shall we find a Muse like thine, that can
So well present and shew man unto man,
That each one finds his twin, and thinkes thy Art
Extends not to the gestures, but the heart?
Where one so shewing life to life, that we
Think thou taughtst Custome, and not Custome thee?

Whence 'mong the choycer Judges rose a strife
To make thee read a Classick in thy life
Those that doe hence applause, and suffrage begge,
'Cause they can Poems forme upon one legge,

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Write not to time, but to the Poets day:

There's difference between fame, and sudden pay.

Contrast with this the notorious 'appreciation' of Shakespeare in Cartwright's commendatory verses on Fletcher prefixed to the 1647 edition of Beaumont and Fletcher's plays. Part of it may be quoted again :¹

Shakespeare to thee was dull, whose best jest lyes
1' th' Ladies questions, and the Fooles replies.
Old fashion'd wit, which walk'd from town to town
In turn'd hose, which our Fathers call'd the Clown ;
Whose wit our nice times would obsceanesse call,
And which made Bawdry pass for Comickall.

In the light of these two passages from the pen of 'that ~~that~~ typical Oxonicule, the Rev. William Cartwright' (to borrow Swinburne's vituperative coinage), can any analogy be drawn between the academic attitude to *Folpone* and to *Hamlet*, and is it conceivable that either the University or the college authorities would have given official countenance to a performance of Shakespeare's tragedy?

¹ See above, p. 55.

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