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on

SHAKESPEARE AND THE THEATRE

together with Papers on Edward Alleyn and Early Records illustrating the Personal Life of Shakespeare,

BY

MEMBERS OF THE SHAKESPEARE ASSOCIATION

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EDWARD ALLEYN

'EARD ALLEYN was born on i September 1566 in the parish of St. Botolph, Bishopsgate. His father was Edward Alleyn of Willen, Bucks, Innholder and porter to the Queen, who died in 1570 ; his mother, Margaret Townley, for whom he claimed a descent from the Townleys of Lancashire which modern genealogists hesitate to credit, re-married with one John Browne, a haberdasher, between whom and other Brownes who appear in theatrical annals no connexion can be proved/ Thus the dramatic historian of to-day summarises the residuum of fact that can be disentangled from earlier and later embroideries respecting the origin of the man who, a strolling player in his 'teens, lived to found and endow the College of God's Gift at Dulwich, and died, at the age of sixty, on 25 November 1626.

That Ned Alleyn, as he was familiarly known to the public whose idol he became, was, in Fuller's words, bred a stage player from boyhood, seems likely enough in view of his early success in the profession, and the fact that his elder brother John appears to have been his fellow therein, though the two cannot be traced in company from the start. Our earliest glimpse of Edward is at the age of sixteen, when he was one of the Earl of Worcester's players. It is characteristic of the of the casual sort of evidence upon which much of our knowledge of stage-history is built, that it was a dispute between these men and the corporation of Leicester, where they happened to arrive close on the heels of a bogus company, that led to a record of their visit in the Hall Papers of the borough, and the recitation therein of their licence as Worcester's servants. This document was dated 14 January 1583, and their visit to Leicester was on Friday, 6 March 1584.

Their names are given as follows : Robert Browne, James Tunstall, Edward Alleyn, William Harrison, Thomas Cooke, Richard Jones, Edward Browne, Richard Andrewes. It would be rash to attach importance to the order in which the names appear, but it is evident that these eight ' servants ' of the ' Lord ' were the regular members, and presumably the ' sharers,' of the company, for we learn that at Leicester there were others with them, presumably in a subordinate capacity, two of whom are named, one Thomas Powlton, described as Worcester's man, the other William Pateson, as Lord Herbert's *(i.e.* the servant of Edward Somerset, Lord Herbert, the Earl's son). It is clear, therefore, that Alleyn held a recognized, if not a leading, position in the company at this early age. He was already growing out of childhood and though he was probably still capable of acting women's parts there is no reason to suppose that these formed his staple. It may be added that Worcester's men seem to have been a rather turbulent crew who had previously got into trouble at Norwich in June 1583. They were also at Coventry and Stratford in 1583-4, at Maidstone in 1584-5, and at York in March 1585 ; after which they are heard of no more. A company under the patronage of Edward, fourth Earl of Worcester, is traceable from 1590 to 1603, but there is no reason to suppose that it was continuous with its predecessor.

On the whole it seems likely that the earlier Worcester's men passed into the service of Lord Howard of Effingham when he became Lord High Admiral in the summer of 1585. A company patronized by him appeared at Court the following Christmas. The point is of some interest in connection with Alleyn, since if the conjecture (which has the support of the best modern authority) is correct, he was not improbably the impersonator of Tamberlaine in the original produdion of Marlowe's play in 1587, when he was

twenty, and in that case may well have been the 'Roscius' whose deserved reputation redeemed the ailing profession, according to Nashe in 1589. We know that Tamberlaine was among his parts, as were Faustus, Barabas, Orlando, and Cutlack, though the occasions on which he filled them are uncertain. To leave conje6lure, we find the only actual mention of him during the next few years in certain deeds, the first of which records the sale to him for £37 10s. of the share of theatrical apparel, play-books, instruments and so forth, held by Richard Jones jointly with Edward Alleyn, his brother John, and Robert Browne. This was on 3 January 1589, and John and Edward also made other purchases of stage attire between 1589 and 1591, Tunstall being on two occasions a witness to the transaction. These documents seem to indicate a company in which the two Alleyns, Jones and Browne were the sharers and with which Tunstall was also connected. All except John Alleyn had been Worcester's men : but John was certainly a servant of Lord Howard's (though it would seem in a capacity more personal than that of player) before the end of 1589, and very likely earlier.

Although a distinguished company, supported on the literary side by no less a genius than Marlowe's, and on the histrionic, if we are right in our conjectures, by Alleyn, there seems to have been a certain instability about the Admiral's men. When they first appear upon the scene in 1585 they do so in some sort of association with the servants of Lord Hunsdon, the Lord Chamberlain, together with whom they performed both in the provinces and at Court. After that the Chamberlain's men are traceable as a travelling company only till 1589. It is in the winter of 1588-9 that we get what is possibly the first hint of the curious and obscure but most important association between the Admiral's men and the servants of Lord Strange. These two companies

were certainly acting jointly at Court during the winter of 1590-1, while frequent contact between them is traceable in the provinces from 1591 to 1594. Moreover in May 1593 we find an official document in which Alleyn, individually styled servant to the Lord High Admiral, is included among the members of a company belonging to the Lord Strange.

As I have said, the steps and details of this association are obscure, and it is possible to read the evidence in more ways than one. As I reconstruct the history of these years, it seems probable that in 1590 Strange's men were located at the Curtain and there performed *The Seven Deadly Sins,* the ' plot ' of which is preserved and is our authority for the composition of the company which acted it. I may say that the Ned who appears in this ' plot ' is certainly not Alleyn. Meanwhile the Admiral's men were occupying the neighbouring Theatre, where they acted *The Dead Man's Fortune,* a ' plot ' of which, unfortunately affording very little personal information, is also extant. It would seem that not only was there some connection between the companies, but that both houses were in a manner controlled by the Burbadge family. Certainly young Richard Burbadge acted in both the plays I have mentioned. He was also present at the Theatre on the occasion of a violent quarrel between his father and the Admiral's men in the winter of 1590-1. John Alleyn and James Tunstall are the only other actors mentioned in the account that has come down to us. We can hardly suppose that the company's tenancy of the Theatre continued after this, and it has been suggested that they moved to the Rose on the Bankside in the spring of 1591. But it is Strange's, not the Admiral's, men that we find resident there when evidence again replaces conjecture in February 1592. It seems possible that the quarrel with the Burbadges shattered the fortunes of the Admiral's men, and that the company practically

broke up at this time. Richard Jones, we saw, may perhaps have left them in 1589 : he went abroad early in 1592. So did Robert Browne, first in 1590 and again in 1592. John Alleyn disappears from theatrical record in 1591. Since Edward is found in company with Strange's men in 1593, it seems most reasonable to suppose that he and a few other survivors of the Admiral's company allied themselves with the associated organization and together migrated to Henslowe's house in the course of 1591.

If Henslowe and Alleyn now met for the first time, this step was probably the most momentous in Alleyn's career. It is evident that a real affection, as well as a close business connection, sprang up between the famous actor and one who, illiterate as he might be, was certainly one of the shrewdest business men in the theatrical world of the time. The story of their joint adventures is preserved in remarkable detail, but at the same time with tantalizing incompleteness, in the miscellaneous memorandum and account book misknown as ' Henslowe's Diary', and it is significant that the earliest mention of Alleyn in the volume is the record of his marriage on 22 October 1592, a Sunday, to Joan Woodward, Henslowe's step-daughter. I may add that Sir Edmund Chambers has disposed of the suggestion that Alleyn had been previously married by showing that the letter from Richard Jones mentioning Mrs. Alleyn, which had been assigned to February 1592, is almost certainly of much later date.

Alleyn, at the age of twenty-six, had now reached the height of his fame as an actor. His chief panegyrist at at this time is Nashe, who in 1592 ranks him with Tarlton, Knell, and Bentley, heroes of the great days of the Queen's company, as also with Aesopus and Roscius, asserting that his very name ensured the success of a play—an enthusiasm that seems to put the less explicit allusion in 1589 beyond reasonable doubt.

But if Nashe was the first to sing the praises of the rising tragedian—for it is with tragic and heroical parts that Alleyn's name is connected—his generous note is echoed in after days by Weaver, Jonson and Heywood, and still reverberates through the periods of Fuller. And we find evidence of his popularity almost as early as Nashe's on the title of a play which advertises itself in 1594 as acted, not by the servants of such-and-such a Lord, but simply by Edward Alleyn and his company. Perhaps the most curious tribute to his reputation, however, is that offered by the laying of a wager that in acting a chosen play, and in the opinion of chosen judges, Alleyn would equal or surpass the performance of Knell and Bentley—I see not how you can any way hurt your credit by this action ; for if you excell them, you will then be famous ; if equal them, you win both the wager and the credit ; if short of them, we must and w[r]ill say Ned Alleyn still ! The remarkable thing about the letter conveying this challenge is that it is not a forgery.

Nor was Alleyn merely the darling of popular audiences. If we believe the latest historian of the stage, and we risk little in following so cautious a guide, it is to Alleyn's acting that we must ascribe the remarkable success of Strange's company at Court in the winter of 1591-2, where they gave six performances out of a total of nine. Whether or not Strange's men had already been performing at Henslowe's house, the Rose, in 1591, we know that they opened a new season there on Saturday, 19 February 1592. They had a successful run till June, and were able to open again for a few weeks the following winter, when they also appeared once more at Court, giving three performances out of five. During the five months or so that they were playing, or rather during which Henslowe records their performances—for they possibly acted for a while at Newington in the summer—they put on the stage

seven new pieces, and the titles of these are not without interest. They are *Harry the Sixth,* which has been supposed to be the first part of the Shakespearian trilogy; *Titus and Vespasia,* conjectured to have some relation to his *Titus Andronicus ; The jealous Comedy*', in which some have seen an early version of *The Merry Wives,* while others would identify it with *The Comedy of Errors ; A Knack to Know a Knave,* the anonymous play printed two years later as acted by Alleyn's company ; the Second Part of *Tamber Cam,* of the First Part of which we have a ' plot ' belonging to a revival ten years later; *The Tragedy of the Guise,* presumably Marlowe's *Massacre at Parts;* and *The Tanner of Denmark,* of which we know nothing. I have stressed the conjectural character of the Shakespearian attributions because there is no conclusive evidence that Shakespeare was ever connected with Strange's men. Even if he was, it is noteworthy that it is only among the new, and not the old, pieces of i 592 that his hand can be traced, a fact that suggests that if the connexion existed at all it was then recent. That he and Alleyn met at this period of their careers we do not know: that a few years later their paths crossed is true—or at least very likely—but the only occasion on which Alleyn mentions his great colleague in all his voluminous papers is when he notes the purchase of a copy of his Sonnets on their appearance in 1609.

Probably the year 1591-2 marked the climax of the prosperity of Strange's company. The plague, which had already driven them into the provinces in the autumn of 1592, when they are found both at Canterbury and in the west, renewed its violence early the following spring : they gave their last performance at the Rose on i February and were at Chelmsfond by the beginning of May. The wanderings of the companies lasted for over a year and had a profound effect upon their subsequent history and constitution.

Alleyn, who as we have seen was married in October

1592, may not have accompanied his fellows on their autumn tour, but there is no doubt that he did so in the spring, for a most interesting correspondence with his wife and father-in-law is preserved among his papers. It affords us, indeed, less information than we could wish of the activities of the company, but it is full of intimate domestic details, and we get a pleasing pi6ture of affectionate relations with ' father ' Henslowe and his household. Joan appears to have been living there, for though Alleyn evidently had a house of his own, it was in the hands of the workmen. Perhaps the young couple had not yet set up a separate establishment. The joiner, however, reports progress with the portal of the chamber, a bedstead (costing fifteen shillings) and other furniture. Alleyn is concerned about the sowing of his spinach and learns that his beans are well codded. He wants his orange-tawney stockings dyed black for winter wear and sends home his white waistcoat which is a trouble to carry. He chaffs his wife about a report that she and her fellows had been carted ; an affair of which details are perhaps not unnaturally wanting. Rather sententiously he bids his mecho mousin and mouse and her sister Bess Doddypoll to keep their house clean against the infection, throw water before the door and in the backside, and strew herb-of-grace and rew in the windows. Henslowe, not to be outdone, replies that all this they do and more, for they strew the house with prayers, which are more available than all things else. The plague is everywhere around them but they remain in health ; then their two wenches (perhaps the Doll and Sara of another letter) go down with it, but recover ; Robert Browne's wife (he being still in Germany) with all her children and household are dead, and Henslowe's friend the bailie smells monstrouly for fear. Alleyn himself was very sick at Bath and one of his fellows had to a6l understudy. In the spring they had been in the eastern counties, but the autumn

finds them in the west. At Bristol Alleyn played in *Harry of Cornwall* on I August, and they were then to move on to Shrewsbury (where the records confirm their presence) Westchester, and York. In the course of the winter they are known to have visited Coventry and Leicester. Not all the companies fared so well. Alleyn enquires after Pembroke's men, a company which was probably only formed in the autumn of 1592, and learns from Henslowe on 28 September that they had been back in London this five or six weeks, for they could not cover their expenses travelling and were forced to pawn their wardrobe. They must have also parted with their repertory about this time : four of their plays were printed in 1594-5 ; others were very likely bought up by Henslowe.

Though Alleyn was now travelling as a member of Strange's company, he retained his position as servant to the Lord Admiral, and is specially distinguished as such in the licence granted to the company by the Privy Council on 6 May 1593. In this his name stands first, and his fellows are given as William Kemp, John Heminges, Thomas Pope, Augustine Phillips, and George Bryan. Of these the last three appear in the ' plot ' of *The Seven Deadly Sins*, and my personal belief is that the first two filled the two important parts in that piece for which no actor is specified. All are subsequently found associated with the Lord Chamberlain's company. These six then were the leaders of the travelling troop, but they were certainly not alone. From Alleyn's correspondence we learn that Richard Cowley (another Sins-Chamberlain actor) joined them at Bristol, and that Thomas Downton (a later Admiral's man) was also of the company, not to mention Alleyn's ' boy ' or apprentice John Pyk. Lord Strange succeeded his father as Earl of Derby on 25 September 1593, and the company became known as Derby's men : on 16 April 1594, he died. Exactly a month later

the company appeared under the patronage of his widow at Winchester. But Alleyn, together with some of his fellows, possibly representing the remains of the old Admiral's company, had already separated from the main body. The exact date of their departure we do not know, but the later Admiral's men began to act at the Rose on 14 May 1594. For some reason or other, possibly the disrepair of the house, they only gave three performances. Meanwhile most of the former Strange's company had transferred themselves to the service of the Lord Chamberlain (Henry Carey, Baron Hunsdon) and probably received on this occasion the notable accession of Richard Burbadge and William Shakespeare. The new company followed Alleyn to London, and like him, turned to Henslowe for accommodation. The Rose being unavailable, the newly constituted Admiral's and Chamberlain's men arranged to share the house at Newington Butts under Henslowe's management. The details of the tenancy, and whether the performances were joint or alternate, are uncertain. The run, notable for the earliest recorded performance of *Hamlet,* was of ten days only. In the middle of June the two companies separated : the Chamberlain's men settling (though whether immediately or not is uncertain) in the home of the Burbadges at the Theatre ; the Admiral's men returning to the Rose, which was to be for the next six years their regular resort. These ten days at a make-shift house in the suburbs are the only ones on which we can say with any confidence that Alleyn and Shakespeare were brought into assocation.

The new Admiral's company was now launched on its career. Led by Alleyn and in close financial relation with Henslowe, its principal members in 1594 appear to have been John Singer, Richard Jones, Thomas Towne, Martin Slaughter, Edward Juby, Thomas Downton, and James Tunstall (Dunstone). Jones and Tunstall we have traced from Worcester's onward, and

Downton we have already met touring with Alleyn. Singer appears to have been a former Queen's man ; the rest are now heard of for the first time. The company was successful and the tenor of its way tolerably even. There were difficulties in 1597 culminating in an inhibition, the result of the performance by an upstart Pembroke's company of the scandalous *Isle of Dogs,* in which Nashe and Jonson had unleashed their satire ; and a reconstruction of the company followed. Most likely Alleyn took the opportunity of loosening the bonds that tied him to the stage. Henslowe records that before 29 December this year Alleyn had left ' laynge ', by which we may presume that he meant ' playing ', and there is other evidence that he was soon afterwards a man of leisure. But I doubt whether he altogether retired from the boards, for I fancy (on certain intricate grounds which cannot be discussed here) that a revival of Peele's *Battle of Alcazar,* in which he undoubtedly took part, must be placed in the winter of 1598-9. Be this as it may, we know that at the time he was a good deal occupied with other business, and was occasionally away from town without any interruption in the activities of the company. The summer of 1598 he seems to have spent with his wife at the house of a friend, Arthur Langworth, of The Brill (or Broyle), Ringmere, Sussex. There, on 4 June, Henslowe wrote to him on affairs of the Bear Garden, and continuing the correspondence on 26 September, adds the news that one of his company, Gabriel Spenser, a new-comer in the recent reconstruction, is slain in Hogsdon fields by the hands of Benjamin Jonson, bricklayer. This was the affair that brought the redoubtable poet—*tarn Marte quam Mercurio—within* sight of the gallows and left him with the brand of the Tyburn T.

But no doubt Alleyn's chief concern during these years of greater freedom was the provision of a new

playhouse for the company and incidentally a new and lucrative speculation for himself. The erection of the Globe in the course of 1599 may well have intensified competition on the Bankside, and Alleyn determined on the bold move of transferring the activities of the company north of the river, and building a new home for it in the liberty of Finsbury, outside Cripplegate. The demolition of the Theatre and the temporary disuse perhaps of the Curtain seemed to open up a field for dramatic adventure in this neighbourhood. In December 1599 Alleyn obtained a lease of twelve tenements between Golden Lane and Upper Whitecross Street, and in the course of 1600 the Fortune was ereced. The builder was the same Peter Street who the year before had put up the Globe out of the materials of the old Theatre : the contraft, though unluckily not the plans, is extant and is perhaps our most important evidence for the structure of the Elizabethan playhouse. The building, unlike the Globe, was square, and for over twenty years passed as the most sumptuous theatre in London. Although Henslowe is joined with him in the contract the venture seems to have been Alleyn's alone, for he leased a moiety of the house and its profits to his father-in-law in the spring of 1601.

The erection of a new playhouse about London was never in those days an undertaking devoid of risk or likely to be carried through without opposition. In January 1600 Alleyn took the precaution of obtaining a letter of recommendation from his patron the Earl of Nottingham, Lord High Admiral, to the Justices of the Peace for the County of Middlesex and others. This, however, proved ineffective, for on 9 March the Privy 'Council, on the representation of Lord Willoughby and other residents of the Parish of St. Giles without Cripplegate, declared the erection of a new house to be an offence and a scandal greatly displeasing to Her Majesty. Thereupon Alleyn obtained

a certificate from other inhabitants of Finsbury of their willingness to have the building proceed. This is signed by a constable, two overseers of the poor, and twenty-four others, and was clearly obtained by the promise of a liberal weekly contribution to the relief of the poor, this being a burden on the parish which the Justices of the shire had failed in their duty to lighten by contributions from the country districts. Armed with this and, it would seem, with a recommendation from some of the Justices, Alleyn obtained from the Privy Council, on 8 April, a reversal of their previous decision and a warrant in his favour, which, perhaps significantly, bears but the three signatures of the Lord Admiral, the Lord Chamberlain, and secretary Sir Robert Cecil. It is clear that Alleyn was able to bring other arguments to bear. He laid stress on his recent retirement from the stage, and the warrant recites that the Queen herself had been formerly well pleased with his services and had signified her wish that they should be resumed. Evidently too he dwelt on the decay and inconvenience of the Rose with the implication that the new house was to take the place of the old, which it did not. More curious, the warrant definitely states that the Fortune is to replace another theatre which is to be pulled down instead of it, and a further document makes it clear that by this the Curtain is meant. Needless to say, there is no reason to suppose that Alleyn had any control over the Curtain, and that, so far from its being demolished or put to any good use, it continued to serve as a playhouse for another quarter of a century or more.

The Admiral's men had ceased playing at the Rose by the middle of July : the date of their opening at the Fortune is uncertain. There was a composition with Alleyn, presumably on his return to the stage, not later than 11 November, and their first week's profit of £17 98. was shared between then and 14 December.

If we place the ' first night', or rather afternoon, about the middle of November, we shall not be far wrong. I am afraid the suggestion that Dekker wrote a play called *Fortune's Tennis* for the occasion, in spite of reputable support, is a ficton. It is, however, not unlikely that he fitted that old play for topical use.

To what extent Alleyn was himself active on the boards during the remaining years of Elizabeth's reign we are not certainly informed. In view of the aged sovereign's personal desire to witness as of old his tragic prowess, we may confidently assume that he appeared in the performances which the company gave at Court, three in 1600-1, one in 1601-2, three again in 1602-3. And generally we may suppose that he took his normal share of the company's activites. The illness of the Queen interrupted these about the middle of March 1603 : the actors attempted, under Downton's leadership, to travel, being restrained from playing at Canterbury when Elizabeth lay dying. Performances seem to have been resumed in London the following month, but were again suspended, at the King's coming, in the first days of May. This was due to the severe outbreak of plague that postponed the ceremonies and festivities of the new reign. The company travelled once more and are found at Bath, Coventry, Leicester, and York ; but Alleyn was not with them. He had retired to the the house of a friend, Mr. Chaloner, in Sussex. On 21 October his wife, in London, wrote hopefully of the sickness abating, and reported herself, her mother, and their household well : Henslowe is at Court she knows not where—it was as a matter of fact at Wilton with the Earl of Pembroke—his own company is back in town and well, as are all the other companies, except that Browne, of the Boar's Head, is dead and died very poor. If there was any hope of resuming activity at this time it was disappointed. The plague deaths continued at above forty a week till 22 December and the

mortality for the year was over thirty thousand. In the absence of Henslowe's detailed accounts, which now fail us, it is difficult to say when public acting was resumed, but there were great doings at Court this winter, apparently first at Hampton and then at Whitehall, and Alleyn's company, which was taken into the service of the Prince of Wales about Christmas, gave five performances. We may presume that Alleyn was not absent on these occasions, for he was payee for the company on 19 February, though not on 17 April or after. Like his fellows, William Birde, Thomas Towne, Thomas Downton, Sam Rowley, Charles Massey, Edward Juby, and Humphrey and Anthony Jeffes, he received livery as Prince Henry's servant for the coronation procession on 15 March 1604; and his last recorded performance was when that day he delivered, as the Genius of the City, and with excellent action and well-tuned, audible voice, a gratulatory address to James at his entertainment through London. Alleyn still owned a share in the company's property about 1605, but his name is absent from their patent of 3 April 1606. He is described as servant to the Prince of Wales in 1612, but probably in virtue of some personal office. It is practically certain that he withdrew from active participation in the affairs of the company soon after the coronation ceremonies and had ceased to be an a6lor when he acquired the Dulwich property the following year. Puritan legend will have it that his retirement from the profession and his devotion to acts of munificent charity were due to terror at the personal appearance of the devil on the stage where he was profanely playing the part of Doctor Faustus, but this is too widely spread and well authenticated a mythos to be lightly accepted into the biography of any individual actor.

Though no longer of the profession, or retaining, we must suppose, any direct interest in his former company,

Alleyn by no means ceased his financial connexion with the stage. The Fortune remained in his hands, and later formed part of his endowment of the College of God's Gift, which I understand owns the site to this day. It is possible that part of the house was leased to the company in 1608, and after Henslowe's moiety had reverted to Alleyn on the widow's death in 1617, it is certain the whole was so leased in the following year. On Sunday, 9 December 1621, he noted dryly enough in his diary that this night at twelve of the clock the Fortune was burned ; and John Chamberlain, somewhat less laconically records that there was a great fire at the Fortune in Golden Lane, the fairest playhouse in the town, which was quite burned down in two hours, and all the actors' apparel and play-books lost, whereby those poor companions were quite undone. Not so Alleyn, who the following spring formed a new syndicate to which he leased the site ,on their undertaking to erect thereon a new playhouse even finer than the old. It has been supposed that he was also interested in the Red Bull theatre, though this probably rests on a misunderstanding ; but he retained his share in the Bear Garden, after its transformation as the Hope, as late as about 1617.

Personal relations with actors he also maintained. Not only do we find them often dining at his table at Hall Place, Dulwich, but it is clear that in matters of business, whatever his official position in respect of the company, his influence was appreciable or even paramount. One actor of the Prince's company, a hired man I presume, approaches Alleyn with a view to getting his wife a place as gatherer—that is one who collected money at the entrance or for seats—for he knows that Alleyn can strike a greater stroke among the players than that. Others approach him for loans. After Henslowe's death fresh relations naturally arise: there are agreements as to debts due, and disputes and

grievances are referred to him. Actors who had gone abroad write soliciting his care of their interests in London. One of the most illuminating of these letters is an unfortunately undated one from William Birde. He writes to complain of one John Russell, that by your appointment was made a gatherer with us, but my fellows finding him often false, have many times warned him from taking the box. And though with most damnable and execrable oaths he hath vowed never to touch, notwithstanding he hath taken the box and most unconscionably gathered. They have therefore resolved that he shall never more come to the door : nevertheless for Alleyn's sake he shall have his wages and be paid for odd jobs about the theatre. They would know whether this motion will satisfy Alleyn ; for Russell's dishonesty is such that him it never will. One wonders whether this was the John Russell who dined with Alleyn and had a legacy from Mrs. Henslowe.

The theatre was not the only avenue through which Alleyn courted the popular, and not only the vulgarly popular, applause. As early as December 1594, some six months after the Admiral's men had established themselves at the Rose, Alleyn (maybe jointly with Henslowe) appears to have acquired a lease of the bear-baiting house known as Paris Garden, also on the Bankside, together with a licence from the Master of the Royal Game of Bears, Bulls and Mastiff Dogs. But the holding of a licence, with the certainty of unwelcome fees and the possibility of vexatious restrictions, was inconvenient, and Henslowe and Alleyn set about to get the office into their own hands. In 1597 they approached Dr. Julius Caesar, the Master of Requests, on the subject, but without success. In June the next year the Master of the Royal Game, a certain Ralph Bowes, lay dying, and the position became critical.

It formed Alleyn's chief preoccupation during the months that he and his wife were being entertained at the Brill by Mrs. Langworth, while his host and Henslowe busied themselves diplomatically on his behalf in town. Langworth, whom Alleyn seems to have accused of neglecting his interests, writes a rather ill-tempered and very obscure epistle, but one of Henslowe's is so eloquent of the perpetual intriguing for office that went on at the court of Gloriana that it may be worth summarizing here. Mr. Bowes lies very sick and everyone thinks he will not escape, insomuch that Henslowe fears he will lose all, for Dr. Caesar hath done nothing for him. He hath been with the Lord Admiral [the Earl of Nottingham], who promised he would move the Queen about it, and the next day he rides from Court to Windsor, so there is nothing there to be had but good words—which troubles my mind very much, for my loss, you know, is very much to me. Henslowe has also moved Lady Edmonds [a gentlewoman of the Privy Chamber and wife of the Controller of the Household] in the matter, who used him very honourably, for she went presently to the Queen, but Mr. [Edward] Darcy of the Privy Chamber crossed her and made it known to her that the Queen had already given the reversion to one Mr. [John] Dorrington, a [gentleman] pensioner. Henslowe has talked with Dorrington who confesseth it to be true : but as yet Mr. Bowes liveth. Mr. Langworth has been helping so much as in him lies, and they have moved other great personages as well. Thus he commits his correspondent to God, leaving the whole discord to be unfolded by Mr. Langworth, whose verbal explanations we will hope were more lucid than his epistolary style.

Bowes died, and Dorrington was granted the office in August 1598, his patent being renewed in July 1603 by James, who knighted him the same month. There was nothing for it, so far as Henslowe and Alleyn

were concerned, but to continue their commission under licence from the new Master, to whom they paid ten pounds a quarter. A curious and intimate glimpse of the business of the Royal Game is afforded in a letter which Dorrington wrote to Henslowe in May 1600. He has just received word to have Her Majesty's Games to be at the Court of Monday next—so short a warning as I never knew the like, and myself not well, having had a fit of an ague on Friday at night. But if there be no remedy he begs good Mr. Henslowe to pull up his spirit and furnish it as well as he can. He has written to his sister [Mrs. Luce] Hyde [gentlewoman, no doubt, of the Privy Chamber] to let her Majesty understand of the loss they have had that winter of their best bears, and to signify so much to them that execute my Lord Chamberlain's place.

Dorrington died within a year of his knighthood, and Henslowe and Alleyn again failed to secure the reversion. The new Master, Sir William Steward, appointed in July 1604, was presumably one of James's horde of hungry Scots that so excited London opinion at this time and provided so dangerous a topic for the playwrights. He proved his national shrewdness by refusing either to continue the commission under which Henslowe and Alleyn acted or to take the bears and the Garden off their hands on any reasonable terms, and thus forced them to buy the surrender of his office at what they considered an extortionate price. The new patent to Henslowe and Alleyn with survivorship was issued the same month. In spite of more than one petition for better remuneration, in which they lamented the death of that goodly bear George Stone at the baiting before the King of Denmark in 1606, and of bulls and bears to the value of two hundred pounds or more at the visit of the Due de Bouillon in 1612, there can be little doubt that the enterprise was a profitable one. But it was probably a troublesome one as well,

and it is clear from a number of curious documents that the right of the Masters' deputies to ' take up ' dogs in the country for the service of her Majesty's Games, led to no less trouble than the similar right of the Master of the Chapel to ' take up ' boys for her Majesty's choir. In 1610 Alleyn sold his interest in the venture to Henslowe. In 1612 the Earl of Suffolk wrote to Rochester that Alleyn, the Master of the Bears, was dead, and recommended the appointment of one Tom Badger as having the finest breed of bull dogs in the kingdom. His information respecing Alleyn was incorreft and he was evidently ignorant of Henslowe's survivorship. On the latter's death in 1616 Alleyn of course remained sole Master, and trouble arose over the leases and stocks with Jacob Meade, assignee and Keeper of the Royal Game since 1599, which was not finally disposed of till 1619. The Mastership he held till his death.

How much personal attention Alleyn devoted to the Game it is difficult to say, but his continued residence in the Clink after he had acquired the Dulwich estate was probably to look after its affairs, and no doubt when it was brought to Court he was expected to appear in person. This was certainly the case on 13 March 1604, when James sent for Edward Alleyn, Master of the Bear Garden, and caused him to fetch secretly three of the fellest dogs to bate the lions at the Tower. One gathers from Stow's account that this was a novel development, but in 1611 Henslowe and Alleyn received extra allowance for keeping two white bears and a young lion, and shortly afterwards seem to have acquired one male lion, though this was probably the performing animal which was exhibited as early as 1610. The Garden seems also at some time to have received the gift of a wolf, and in 1620 the King sent a young tiger. There are sundry allusions to the Bear Garden in Alleyn's diary from 1617 on, and as late as May 1621

he notes having baited before the King at Greenwich. Much has been made by different writers of the cruel and degraded charafter of this so-called game or sport, and no doubt it was a rude and nasty pleasure, as Pepys found it, but it was probably no more more brutal and less revolting than a modern bull-fight.

It would be interesting to have a more complete account than we possess of Alleyn's financial resources and the foundation of his undoubtedly considerable fortune. Though no doubt it was possible for a respectable actor to make a tolerable livelihood, and when things went well—which was not always—to cut a handsome figure in the London streets, even a sharer in one of the leading companies can have had no very extensive opportunities of saving. There is little evidence that I am aware of for supposing that a popular actor could command any disproportionate share of the common profits. His popularity would be the advantage of the company, and his own return his share in the prosperity of his fellows. No doubt it was different if he were in a position to take a part in the financial exploitation of the troop, advancing money for properties and the like and mortgaging in return for his private benefit a share of the common profits ; or else if he became part owner of the house which the company occupied. But in either case capital would be required. We have no direct evidence that Alleyn pursued the first of these methods, though we cannot help suspecting that he may have had some interest in Henslowe's operations, and may even have been Henslowe's predecessor in these transactions. It is possibly not without significance that Henslowe dates one of his earliest accounts from the time Alleyn left playing, and that several of his earliest advances to the company are witnessed by Alleyn. As to the second method, there is no indication that Alleyn had any share or interest in

the Rose playhouse, but there is good reason to suppose that the Fortune was entirely his own adventure. Before the end of the century he was in a position to put down £240 for a lease of the site, £520 for the construction and decoration of the theatre, and £120 for that of buildings adjoining, which seem to have included a tap-house and several tenements. To this he subsequently added £440 to secure the freehold. The upkeep too was heavy and averaged some £120 a year over a period of seven years. All this implies capital, and the man who found it undoubtedly took toll of the company. Moreover the property was a rapidly improving one, for whereas the site had been rented at *£12* a year in 1584, in 1622 Alleyn was able to lease it for £128 6s. and insist on his tenants erecting thereon a new playhouse at double the cost of the old. There can be no doubt that the venture was a profitable one.

So, plaintive petitions notwithstanding, was the Bear Garden. The accounts are not altogether easy to follow, but Alleyn notes in one place that he paid *£200* to Thomas Burnaby, the previous licencee, in 1594, and £250 (his share evidently of the £450 paid jointly with Henslowe) for the patent of the Mastership in 1604, making a total of £450 for the office ; that in the course of sixteen years he received £960 ; and that in 1610 he sold his interest to Henslowe for £580. This last item is an illuminating comment on the statement of the petition, made in 1607 and apparently repeated in 1612, that whereas formerly the office could have been farmed for a hundred a year none would now accept it as a gift.

But anyone who looks through the muniments and papers preserved at Dulwich and so admirably calendared by Sir George Warner will hardly fail to conclude that a main source at least of Alleyn's fortune was his speculation in land and house property in and about London. There can be no doubt, I think, that values

were rising rapidly at this time, though the exact facts of the case may be somewhat disguised to us, as perhaps they were to Alleyn, by the concurrent fall in the value of money. Thus when we find that between 1584 and 1622 the rent of the Fortune site increased tenfold, we must remember that in the course of these forty years or so the value of money may well have fallen by some forty per cent. We must also note that in the Statutes of 1626 Alleyn complains of the decaying times and the fall of rents.

Alleyn's earliest property no doubt came from his father, who died when he was four. We may suppose that Edward Alleyn the elder, innholder, actually exercised this profession when he settled in the parish of St. Botolph shortly before 1566, since in earlier deeds he is merely described as of London, yeoman. Jointly with his wife he acquired property in Bishopsgate before his son Edward was born. After his death his elder son John is stiled innholder and may, therefore, have followed his father's occupation besides being connected with the stage. In 1585 we find the widow and her second husband transferring to John and Edward jointly four messuages in Bishopsgate Street next to Fisher's Folly, the mansion of the Earl of Oxford, afterwards known as Devonshire House. Ten years later John sold his interest in this property to his brother, in whose hands it remained at least as late as 1615, for in that year he leased two of the messuages, with an alley and garden and eight small tenements adjoining, to a shoemaker of St. Botolph's at an annual rent of thirty pounds and two fat capons.

It would take too long to attempt to unravel, so far as the extant documents permit, all Alleyn's complicated dealings in lease and freehold property, and I can do no more here than add a few remarks concerning some of the more interesting estates, as illustrating the extent and variety of his dealings. The history of his connec-

tion with the parsonage, glebe, tithes, etc. of Firle, near Beddingham, in Sussex, is curiously obscure, but according to a memorandum of Henslowe's he sold it as early as 1596 to his friend Arthur Langworth for the large sum of three thousand pounds to be paid in instalments over twenty years. Two leases of the Manor of Kennington were bought in 1604 for £1,065 and assigned to Sir Francis Calton in 1609 for two thousand. As late as 1623 he held leases of the Manor of Lewisham and of certain houses in Blackfriars, and agreed to assign them as security for his marriage settlement. One cannot help noting, perhaps with a slightly cynical smile, that he was soon afterwards involved in litigation respecting both these leases, and that the properties apparently passed out of his hands. Was this perhaps a not uncommon occurrence in Alleyn's complicated dealings ? There is one curious case at least of which we may hope to learn more. Among the Dulwich muniments is a deed of sale by Philip Henslowe, one of the six Governors of the Free Grammar School of the parish of St. Saviour, Southwark, to the other five Governors, for £120, of a Bankside tenement to the east of Robin Hood Alley. It is dated 28 April 1612. Within the last few weeks there has come to light a document dated a couple of months later whereby Henslowe sells the same property to Edward Alleyn and William Austin. This deed, I am glad to say, is now at Dulwich, but I have not yet seeh it, and until it has been duly examined it would be rash to express any opinion on the transaction it reveals.

I have no doubt that Alleyn had many other subsidiary irons in the fire, either alone or in conjunction with Father Henslowe. We get a glimpse of one in certain entries in the latter's memorandum book, which reveal the two as partners about 1600 in the manufacture of starch. This may have been no unprofitable concern in the days of ruff, cuff, and band, when the lavish use of starc\h—

particularly coloured starch, and Henslowe was by craft a dyer—was a favourite object of sumptuary denunciation. Yellow starch, indeed, is popularly supposed to have been invented by the notorious Mrs. Turner, and it is uncertain whether her display of it on the gallows in 1615 served rather to discredit or to advertise the colour. But as early as 1583 Stubbes mentioned white, red, blue, and purple starches as one and all inventions of the devil, while Jonson attributes a particularly diabolical character to the goose-green variety.

But it is high time to turn our attention to Alleyn's greatest achievement. Negotiations for the purchase of the Manor of Dulwich began in 1605. I cannot hope to improve on Sir George Warner's succinct history of the estate, which I shall reproduce here mostly in his own words. The manor, we are told, was granted by Henry I in 1127 to Bermondsey Abbey, to which it belonged until the suppression of the house in 1537-8- On 11 October 1544 Henry VIII granted it *in capite* at a rent of 335. 9*d.* to Thomas Calton of London, goldsmith, the grant including also the advowson of the vicarage of Camberwell. Besides this Thomas Calton had already acquired from Sir Thomas Pope, on 18 September 1544, some land called Rigate's Green in Dulwich Wood, which had been granted to Sir Humphrey Browne in 1542 and sold by him to Pope the following day. From Thomas Calton the whole estate descended to his son Nicholas and his grandson Sir Francis, the latter succeeding his father at ten years of age in 1575 and receiving livery of his inheritance in 1587. The date of Alleyn's first aquisition of property in the manor was i October 1605. This purchase, however, seems to have been merely a preliminary, in order to clear off a mortgage held by Sir Robert Lee since 1602 ; and it was followed on 3 October by articles of agreement on Calton's part

for the sale of the manor itself and the whole of the estate except the Camberwell advowson. Alleyn first offered £4,500 which was refused, Calton demanding sixteen years purchase at £320. They agreed at £4,900, but Alleyn records in a memorandum-book that he bought the manor on 25 October 1605 for £5,000, and this is the sum mentioned in the actual deed of sale dated 8 May 1606. It included the Camberwell advowson. Alleyn paid in hand £2,000, of which £1,700 went in the redemption of mortgages. The balance he engaged to pay at the end of six years, with £213 6s. 8d. yearly for its ' forbearance,' or a trifle over seven per cent. Calton's final acquittance was not given till 25 October 1613, but he made constant applications for advances on various pretexts, of which the least reputable was his need of five pounds for a bribe. Meanwhile, although Alleyn had become lord of the manor of Dulwich, some part of the soil, freehold and copyhold, still remained in other hands. The successive steps by which he gradually bought up this from Sir Edmond Bowyer, Thomas Calton, and others between the years 1606 and 1614 may be traced in the long series of muniments ; and altogether the estate must have cost him not much less than £10,000. It is not easy to reckon the modern equivalent, but if we put it at £60,000 [1] we should perhaps not be above the mark. The sum Alleyn devoted to building does not appear to be known, but during the years covered by his diary he was spending on his own household and the College some £1,700, or say £10,000, a year. The permanent endowment appears to have been £800. In 1606 he was already styled Edward Alleyn, of Dulwich, esquire, but it is doubtful when he removed his residence thither from Southwark. As he was churchwarden of

[1] Pre-war, that is. **Of** recent years the value of money has fluctuated so much that the conversion is still more difficult, but I suppose it might be put at about £100,000.

the Clink Liberty in 1610—an important office apparently involving many duties we should rather associate with a magistrate—and as letters continued to be addressed to him there as late as 1612, the probability is that he did not settle at Dulwich until 1613, the year in which he began the building of the College.

The history of Dulwich College has been so fully written that it is needless to enter into details here. The contraft for the ereftion of a chapel, schoolhouse, and twelve almshouses was signed on 17 May 1613. The builder was John Benson, of Westminster ; the architect is said, on insufficient grounds, to have been Inigo Jones. By the summer of 1616 the building was nearing completion, and on i September the chapel was consecrated by the Archbishop of Canterbury. On the 12th Thomas Dekker sent a rather belated address, together with a letter still preserved in which he naively hopes that he is the first to consecrate to memory so noble and pious a work. He adds, rather pathetically, that it best becomes him to sing anything in praise of charity, because, albeit he has felt few hands warm through that complexion, yet imprisonment may make him long for them. If anything in his Eulogium be offensive, let it be excused, because he lives amongst the Goths and Vandals where barbarousness is predominant. So wrote the man who penned we may believe the prologue for the first performance at the Fortune and the last speech that Alleyn ever declaimed in public. The letter is dated from the King's Bench prison which seems for some time to have been his habitual residence.

October saw the appointment of the full complement of poor brothers and sisters, so that the almshouses were then presumably finished ; but a year elapsed before the admission of the twelve poor scholars with their master and usher. The scholars were originally free, but paying students were taken some years before the

founder's death. It remained to obtain letters patent to prevent the endowment from lapsing under the statute of mortmain. This took another two years, but Alleyn's diplomacy was this time successful, and by enlisting the support of Buckingham was able to counter the opposition raised by the Lord Chancellor on grounds which will hardly strike the modern reader as uncharacteristic of either the wisest or the meanest of mankind. The Great Seal was affixed on 21 June 1619, and the Deed of Foundation was publicly read and signed on 13 September, after which followed a banquet to the distinguished company assembled, Bacon included.

Besides founding Dulwich, Alleyn built almshouses in Finsbury, near Cripplegate, that is, not far from the Fortune. Not much is known about them, but he laid the foundation stone on 13 July 1620, paid two hundred pounds for the buildings, and stocked them with three men and seven women on 30 April 1621, while a couple of years later John Chamberlain alludes in his correspondence to Alleyn's two hospitals. He further directed the executors of his will to build almshouses in the two other parishes with which he had been most closely connected, St. Botolph's, where he was born, and St. Saviour's, where he lived. But he had miscalculated his resources and his executors were unable to carry out his directions.

In June 1623 we find Alleyn employed in an unexpected manner, being sent along with Inigo Jones, Surveyor of the King's Works, and six Privy Councillors —whom, adds Chamberlain, they would have done just as well without—to Winchester and Southampton, to oversee the repair of the highway and the preparations for the entertainment of the Infanta of Spain, whose arrival as the bride of Princes Charles was at that time expected. We do not know whether he was back from this wild-goose chase in time to take farewell of his religious and loving wife, who died on 28 June and

was buried in the chapel choir on i July 1623. They had been married just over thirty years and had no children. One hopes that they lived on terms of loving kindness with one another. But most of the evidence as to their relation, which is pleasant enough, comes from the early days of their marriage, and I at least get the impression of a man, however staid and respectable, rather detached from, perhaps a trifle impatient of, domestic ties. Within a year of his marriage Henslowe grows to a little unkindness with him because they do not hear from him as they would, and the absence of any letter from him when the other wives had their's made his mouse not to weep a little. Ten years later he had evidently gone into the country for fear of infection, leaving his wife in London. And she writes with a touch of perhaps rather exaggerated deference to her entire and well-beloved sweetheart—for your coming home I am not to advise you, neither will I ; use your own discretion, yet I long and am very desirous to see you, and my poor and simple opinion is, if it shall please you, you may safely come home ; here is none now sick near us, yet let it not be as I will, but at your own best liking. It is clear from the diary that they were in the habit of going about sight-seeing and dining out together very much as sober married folk might to-day : the latest mention of her is in respect of a deed for an annuity on 7 September 1620, perhaps a settlement in case of his death. Mr. Young remarks that there is among Alleyn's papers no word concerning her illness or death, but the latter took place the year after the diary closes, and I think he must have overlooked the record of 38. spent on 27 February 1620, for pills ordered her by no less distinguished a practitioner than William Harvey. It is possibly from this occasion that we should date her decline.

Howbeit, having buried his first wife on i July,

Alleyn lost no time in supplying her place. He was rising fifty-seven, an age at which it is well not to delay matrimony. A year ago his neighbours Sir Thomas and Lady Grimes had dined at his house and had brought their neice, the Dean of Paul's daughter. Presumably he had been struck by the young lady. At the time her father, unknown to her, was trying to marry her off, to the tune of three hundred a year with a bonus on issue, to the son of an honourable person, who by refusing to enter the church upset the bargain. Now Alleyn entered the field, and a marriage was arranged, probably without further consulting the lady, on 21 October 1623, and celebrated on 3 December. Constance Donne may have been in some ways a more fitting wife for the lord of Dulwich Manor than his illiterate if affectionate mouse ; but there was some disparity of age. The bride was twenty (probably), Alleyn some years older than her father : Chamberlain held it the strangest match in his opinion, and doubted it would diminish Alleyn's devotion to charity. But any financial embarrassment into which he was led was at most temporary, and if Chamberlain looked for an heir he was mistaken. On what terms the couple lived we cannot tell, but there is no hint that Constance incurred any ill-will in consequence of her husband's subsequent quarrel with her father. The jointure of £1,500, in spite of its doubtful security, was duly paid, and by his will Alleyn also left to his loving wife in testimony of his further love unto her the sum of a hundred pounds together with her jewels and ornaments. There is said to be a tradition at Dulwich that the founder was three times married, and the eighteenth century believed that there was preserved a portait of his mistress, who was a most beautiful woman. Sober history finds no corroboration of either.

In 1626 Alleyn purchased an estate at Simonstone in Aysgarth, a mile or two from Hawes, Yorks, and

about the middle of July set out to visit the property : he was expected at Much Hadham, Herts, on the 17th, and was at Ripon on the 22nd. In September he was back at Dulwich, but the fatigues of the journey seem to have proved too much for him : he was seriously ill, and on the 22nd he drew up some final directions to his executors—they will find most of the evidences in the chest at the bed's feet in the yellow chamber, the key whereof is in the till of his desk ; the private debts owing to him, as near as he can call to remembrance five days later, total over two thousand pounds. On the 29th he signed the Statutes and Ordinances of the College. In October he rallied and friends hoped for a recovery ; but on 13 November he executed his last will, on the 2oth added two clauses to the Statutes (the object of which, curiously enough, was to reserve the right to make further alterations during his life) and on Saturday the 25th he died. He was buried in the chapel the following Monday : Aubrey reports his epitaph as dating his death on the 21st, but the inscription was already much worn when he saw it.

As we look back over Alleyn's career we can hardly help thinking of it as a striking and even a remarkable one, and we are tempted to ponder on the social status of actors under Elizabeth and James. Rogues and vagabonds by statute, we are told. There was enough truth in the gibe to make it pass muster even on the stage—I have heard its equivalent in a modern revue—but I doubt whether we should regard it as more than good-humourecl (or perhaps not quite good-humoured) chaff, though there may still have been a sting in it. Vagabonds who wear royal livery may laugh at the stocks and whipping post. No doubt if a player was needy and seedy his profession might be cast up against him, but success was not less successful on the stage than elsewhere. The actors who jetted in smart clothes

through the streets, also consorted in the taverns with the reputations of letters and young sparks of the aristocracy. Though to a sensitive nature in a despondent mood the calling might bring a passing bitterness, it was no bar to worldly advancement ; and Shakespeare retiring to spend his leisure as the leading citizen of his native Stratford is a figure only less notable than Alleyn himself. Several of the Chamberlain's and King's men obtained grants of arms, and Rouge Dragon's disgust was roused not so much by the grants as by the impudent demand to have those of famous families. Alleyn too bore arms and impaled them with what should have been those of his wife, though it is in fact doubtful whether they are Woodward or Henslowe. Joan, it may be mentioned, is described on the funeral certificate in the College of Arms as daughter instead of step-daughter of the worshipful Philip Henslowe, esquire. Henslowe, though not himself an actor, was intimately connected with the profession ; but, while poorly educated, he was Groom of the Chamber to Elizabeth and Sewer of the Chamber to James, a Churchwarden of St. Saviour's and a Governor of the Free Grammar School. George Bryan of the Chamberlain's and John Singer of the Admiral's retired from their respective companies to take up the duties of ordinary Grooms of the Chamber at Court, and appeared in that capacity at Elizabeth's funeral. The fact that he was, or had been, an actor did not prevent Jonson from moving in aristocratic as well as literary circles at Court, nor Field from having an intrigue with a nobleman's daughter. That an actor and a future earl were rivals for the light favours of a dark maid of honour may be a fiction, but it is not an intrinsically impossible one.

The founder of Dulwich College moved in a sphere remote from his old associates of the Bankside and Cripplegate, but he did not cut himself *off* from them. He drank with the workmen at the Fortune, and at his table

at home sat actors no less than statesmen and divines—not to mention a stray poet or two and a seminary priest. It is true that he arrested Thomas Lodge for debt, and did not—*pace* Collier—visit Dekker in prison, but he paid Towne and his wife an annuity (though this was for value received) and subscribed to the works of the Water-Port. We get occasional hints that men had not forgotten his origin. In 1623 a Dr. Meddus calls him sometime player, now squire of the bears ; to Chamberlain he is always Alleyn the old player; and I have no doubt that there was a spice of malice in a remark of Bacon's, who liked well that Alleyn playeth the last act of his life so well. It is supposed or suggested that one of the last acts of his life was to seek knighthood, and if this was so it is just possible that his early profession stood in the way of dignity. But his position was an established one, his reputation secure. He entertained or was entertained by the great ones of the earth : Archbishop Abbot and the Bishops of London and Winchester, the Lord Chancellor and the Master of the Rolls, the Earl of Arundel, patron of art, and the poetical Earl of Stirling, not least the Countess of Kildare, daughter of his old ' Lord ' the Earl of Nottingham. Perhaps the most curious name we note is that of Count Gondomar, the ambassador of Spain, who entertained him at dinner on 26 April 1622. It was an appropriate politeness to the man who was to superintend the reception of the Infanta, and possibly a return for a certain banquet in the garden of the Fortune a few months before. But the Infanta did not come, and a yell of joy broke forth in the land. The man who had been feted by Alleyn's company in 1621 was in 1624 mercilessly lashed by the King's men in a play which made their fortune before Authority,, upon diplomatic representations, intervened.

But all this is by the way. The glory of the old banquets has faded, the raucous applause of the old

playhouses is still : Alleyn the actor, Alleyn of the Bear Garden, Alleyn the lord of the manor, are one dust. We strive to patch up a personality out of the tattered fragments of evidence that have come down to us. Of these there is no lack, though who shall say that he has pieced them together into the true pattern ? But Alleyn's memory is cherished, his fame rests on a firm basis, his monument is an abiding one. His endowment of the College of God's Gift has undergone modification since he signed its Deed of Foundation and its Statutes. But that it endures to-day after three hundred years of charitable use is a sufficient passport through the ages for the name of Edward Alleyn.

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF SHAKESPEARE'S STAGECRAFT

THE study of the Elizabethan stage is the most recently opened avenue to the better understanding of Shakespeare, and, in my view, the most valuable. It is now generally realized by scholars that Shakespeare was, first and foremost, a practical man of the theatre, and, that it is only by understanding the conditions under which he worked that a critic can hope to estimate his method of producing a certain effect, or, in many cases, to discover what effect he intended. The Senate-House Scene of *yulius Ccesar* is a notable example of this. Moreover, we have come to realize that Shakespeare's command of dramatic art, though expressed in a technique foreign to the present-day stage, is fully equal to his other endowments ; and that his technique, though strange, is no cruder than ours, since all drama rests on conventions which appear childish to those who do not subscribe to them.

Now it has long been possible, by studying the plays in chronological order, to trace the developments of Shakespeare's mind and art in several directions—in ideas, in metrical methods, and, since Mr. Richmond Noble's researches, in the use of song. My purpose is to suggest that the time has now come to apply this method to a new field, that of stagecraft. It is not unreasonable to think that Shakespeare's practice in this respect may show changes analogous to those others, and this paper aims at indicating them. Perhaps when this subject has received the attention which I feel it deserves, it will be possible to obtain from it a fresh and independent check on the chronological order of the plays, or even evidence of the genuineness of disputed plays or portions of plays.

The chief difficulty of such an enquiry is the inaccuracy of its basis. The actual constitution and appearance of the Elizabethan stage is at many points still a matter of dispute. It is not my province to discuss this at present, but, since I must have some basis for my main argument, it is necessary to announce my position in regard to these disputed points. This is merely a postulate, and space does not permit me to offer evidence for it ; but I believe that there is no point in it for which adequate evidence could not be supplied.

I suggest that the rear or inner-stage was a corridor, open at either end, and measured, in a theatre the size of the Fortune, about twenty feet by seven and a half. Besides the curtain which hung from the balcony in front of it, it could be shut off from the main stage by some kind of gate. Properties, except the simplest—simple enough to be carried on without incongruity by the actors—were disclosed on the inner stage when the curtains opened. As to the use of properties, I adopt the view that it was very sparing, and that none should be assumed to be present unless they are absolutely required by the action. The majority of scenes, therefore, were played without properties on the bare main stage with the curtains closed : these I call front-stage. When important properties were used, the curtains were open and the action covered both parts of the stage : these are double-stage scenes. The plays, I believe, were acted continuously, without intervals of any kind ; therefore I do not think that two double-stage scenes with different settings succeeded one another, but any number of front-stage scenes could occur successively, whatever their placing. In double-stage scenes the properties would occasionally place the action, but not always ; where it is necessary, the locality is most often supplied by the dialogue. But in many scenes, if no properties are present, no locality is required either ; in fact, very often it is a distinft dramatic advantage that a scene should not

be located anywhere in particular. Even when this did not apply, the Elizabethans were much less concerned with accurate placing than we are ; and I do not think we need assume any artificial aids to it like the display of notices. Absolute freedom of place and time was the basis of Elizabethan technique. The locality could even be altered during action : thus, the dramatist could pass from front-stage to double-stage, or vice versa, by opening or closing the curtains, during the actual progress of the scene ; the effect of this was suddenly to apply a special locality to an action previously indefinite, or suddenly to remove the locality and leave the action, as it were, suspended in space.

It is unnecessary to say much of the other portions of the stage—the balcony, flanked by the windows which surmounted the two doors to the front stage, and backed by the actors' tiring room, occasionally used as an upper-inner-stage ; the second floor windows ; the hut and the Heavens ; and the trap for ghosts. There is general agreement about these features.

I believe this description fits all the public playhouses ever occupied by Shakespeare's company ; though they may have differed in certain details of which I shall make no use.

Space forbids any discussion of textual difficulties, which I therefore ignore altogether. The plays will be dealt with in chronological groups, which may be subdivided for convenience into serious and comic classes.

The Elizabethan stage as Shakespeare found it had already advanced, in the hands of Marlowe and his school, far beyond its origins. Older methods of presentation, such as the multiple stage and the classical technique of the single unchanged scene, both used by Lyly, lingered on, but were giving way to the popularity of the public stage. That stage, when Shakespeare's career began, was dominated by Marlowe and his followers ; the success of his audacious innovations,

which were probably as considerable in stagecraft as in subject and metre, imposed his methods to a large extent on all popular playwrights ; and, in regard to stagecraft, this meant that the action must be striking, elaborate and exciting. It is easy to see how the poetry and passion of *Tamburlaine* are reinforced by the most striking stage effects—the crowding of the stage by contending troops of barbaric warriors, violence, bloodshed and mutilation, and above all the famous entrance of the pampered jades of Asia. It may also be noted that Marlowe is fully alive to the value of the inner stage, using it once with half-opened curtains as an annexe to the main stage, and once, I believe, for the ' discovery ' of a tableau to begin one of his finest scenes, the death of Zenocrate. It is quite evident that stage affect was carefully used to emphasize the tremendous nature of Marlowe's conception. In his other plays, as in Kyd's, we find the same tendency to striking action—for example, the fall into the cauldron of the Jew of Malta, the death of Edward II, the staging of the play-scene in the *Spanish Tragedy.* Marlowe's followers, especially Greene, carried the tendency farther, being forced to outbid Marlowe without sharing his chief asset, poetry. Greene's stagecraft is at its best in *Friar Bacon,* at its most profuse in *A Looking Glass for London.* To the dramatists of this school the stage was like a new toy. At every turn they discovered a new possibility and used it with the utmost daring, and generally with successful and striking affect. How new to them such devices still were is shown by Greene's description of the inner stage in *Alphonsus* as ' the place behind the stage.' But, if he did not yet regard it as properly part of his stage, he was never chary of using it.

Thus in the matter of stage-affect as in other respects the splendid weapon was forged ready for the master-hand of Shakespeare. The earliest plays in which he had a hand follow the stage methods of Marlowe and Kyd. Our first group comprises his first four serious plays,

Titus Andronicus and the three parts of *Henry VI.* Of these the first displays all the characteristics of the Kydian tragedy of blood. There is bloodshed and mutilation in plenty, and the resources of the stage are fully used, especially in the first scene, which requires the propertied inner stage, the trap, the balcony and the two main doors simultaneously, besides crowding the stage with characters and supers. Later on we find the trap used again—for a pit from which people have to be pulled out—and the upper stage, and there are several fairly elaborate inner-stage scenes. Although much of the action is simple, it is evidently the work of a man who knew the possibilities of the stage and used them whenever he had an opportunity.

Henry VI, Part /, is a battle-play, and the trick of using the tiring-house as the walls of a besieged city is worked to death. It is assaulted, or at least summoned, six or seven times, twice in one scene ; in one the defenders escape by leaping down from the upper stage —this must have been about twelve feet, and they had to land in full view, on the bare boards ; the upper stage is used as an observation post, and the observer shot there ; the topmost floor of the tiring-house is pressed into service to show a signal torch. The property gate across the inner stage is in constant use ; it enables the author to show both parties to a siege simultaneously, one inside the gate, one outside. This scene, Act II, Scene i, has been the subject of much discussion, and the use of a gate seems the only means of producing exactly this affect. It had already been used, I think, in the Tower Scene (1.3). A study of the play shows that almost every scene contains a battle, a siege, or at least a coronation. It is more notable that the movement of the armies in Act IV shows a very skilful use of the convention of unlocalized scenes.

Part II is necessarily simpler because it is not a battle-play. It gives us, however, Shakespeare's first use of the

crowd as a theatrical device, in the well-arranged insurrecion scenes. Elsewhere, we find general care to make scenes theatrically effective, for example, that of the necromancers in Act I, Scene 4, where the Spirits use the trap and the spectators the balcony. It is worth noting that Shakespeare does not follow his model in showing us the murder of Gloster : not (as has been suggested) because the stage-arrangement did not allow him to ' discover ' a deathbed, for he actually did so in the next scene, but because this would have spoilt the effect of the second death scene, Beaufort's, which was of far greater dramatic importance. This is a case where apparent poverty of technique is really a sign of superior artistry.

Part Illy like *Part /,* is a battle-play, but it is a war of movement, not of sieges, so the tiring-house and other stage devices are less used. There is bloodshed in profusion ; the crude realism of the period is shown in the actual presentation of York's head impaled on the walls of York, and probably also in that of the three suns in the air. The opening scene, with the soldiers on the balcony, the capture of Edward in Act IV (an interesting use of the inner stage), and the murder of Henry, are all skilfully staged ; and altogether there is no difficulty in classing this play with the other elaborately-staged imitations of Marlowe which form my first group.

The second group comprises the earliest comedies, *Love's Labour's Lost, The Comedy of Errors,* and the *Two Gentlemen ;* with the last I put the *Taming of the Shrew,* which can be dated as early as 1594 without violating chronology unduly. I put these two together because both lack any definite character as examples of stagecraft. Their staging is neither definitely simple nor particularly elaborate ; it does not display notable skill, but there is no noticeable lack of it. Perhaps these two plays most nearly represent the pre-Marlowean technique of the public stage—Marlowe's effect on

comedy was small—but, even so, we can see how Shakespeare improved the stagecraft of his model in *The Shrew,* especially in the Induction.

Love's Labour's Lost is, theatrically, unique in the Folio, because it needs only a single unchanged scene throughout, and employs no stage devices whatever ; practically the only action is in the eavesdropping scene, where two persons hide among property trees and a third climbs one. It is, in fact, an example of the motionless pastoral play without stage-action. This method of staging may have been selected as suitable to the subject ; or, if the play was written for a special private performance, it may have been made necessary by the conditions of the performance. Whichever it was, it shows us that Shakespeare, in his apprenticeship, experimented with and mastered all the various competing theories of stagecraft, out of which he was presently to evolve his own, just as he evolved his whole dramatic method out of those of his predecessors. Probably the method in this play was imposed on him rather than chosen : but so was the Marlowean technique of *Henry VI,* by the taste of his audience. His apprenticeship consisted not in conscious experiment but in being forced to supply all the different kinds of drama which his various audiences wanted.

The *Comedy of Errors* is another example of this, and its stagecraft is also unique. Shakespeare's method of dealing with this very intricate plot was the convention of localizing the different entrances to the stage ; this is shown by the fact that the identity of at least two characters, the Courtesan and Dromio of Ephesus, can only be discovered by the audience seeing whence they enter, and with Dromio, of course, identity is everything. I do not think this convention existed on the public-theatre stage ; but even if it did, its use there seems to be impossible in this play, for the a6lion requires five entrances separately identified, and the public-theatre stage, I believe, had only three. But that convention

was the basis of the technique of the multiple stage, which generally had five sedes or separately-identified locations; and that is the form of stage which we should expect to find at a performance in Gray's Inn, where the play certainly was acted, and for which, I suggest, the version we possess was actually designed. The multiple stage, then, was another side-line of the industrious apprentice of stagecraft.

These two groups bring us down to about 1594. It was a time of transition. Marlowe and Greene were dead, and their innovations in the form and staging of drama had lost their freshness. The companies had been through bad times owing to the plague, and changes of venue, personnel and policy resulted. Shakespeare by now had learnt his craft and gained a certain reputation ; he was about to produce his first great success, *Richard III,* and it was time for him to develop a manner of his own, though based, as it was bound to be, on the various influences under which he had already passed. The next group consists of four plays, *Richard III, Romeo and Juliet, A Midsummer Night's Dream,* and the *Merchant of Venice,* and marks an important step.

Richard III is more of a domestic tragedy and less of a battle-play than the earlier histories, but its staging, like its verse, is nevertheless in Marlowe's manner. The course of the action, to which Shakespeare was more or less committed, did not give him much opportunity for stage affects, but the general impression is that care has been expended on the effective arrangement of each scene, and considering the number of scenes and characters, this could not have been easy. Among several interesting stage effects, by far the most skilful and striking is the Tent scene. The inner stage here represents Richmond's tent, and is closed and reopened several times as required : the scene is made possible only by a skilful use of the convention by which the inner stage, when closed by its curtains, was regarded as out of

action. Richard's was an actual tent, and no doubt could also be closed ; thus both could be on the stage at once, and it was Shakespeare's skilful use of this idea that made the Ghost scene possible. This may be said to be the first of his great scenes.

The next pair of plays are *Romeo and Juliet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream.* To place these here and in that order is bold but not, I think, impossible. Of these, the former is one of the most interesting plays in the Folio, forming, I think, the first turning-point of Shakespeare's treatment of the stage. It is one of the most elaborate of his plays, being comparable with some of the histories and strongly contrasted, in this respect, with the other domestic tragedies like *Hamlet* and *Othello.* The first scene gives us Shakespeare's earliest use of a favourite trick, starting the play with a crowd in commotion. Then in the scene of the masquers we have the locality changed, during action, from the street to the ball-room, by opening the curtains, here assisted by the old custom of characters " marching about the stage " to mark a change of place—a relic of multiple-stage practice. In the marriage, night scene Shakespeare boldly places the whole action on the balcony. In Act IV we have one of his finest uses of the convertible stage ; after Juliet drinks the potion the curtains close, de-localizing the next scene, then they re-open, transferring the locality (and with it the Nurse, who is on the stage at the time) back to Juliet's chamber, and finally they are closed again to de-localize the comic scene of the musicians, which would be impossibly incongruous in the death-chamber—where, nevertheless, most editors have placed it. Perhaps no better example could be found of Shakespeare's use of this device. In the last scene we again meet the tomb or monument already used in *Titus Andronicus,* here wrenched open by Romeo with a mattock. This was certainly an elaborate property, but this use of it can be paralleled from the *Second Maiden's*

Tragedy, while an unopened tomb appears in at least three other plays. But the most striking feature of the play is Juliet's orchard wall, a scene for which it is possible to suggest several methods of staging—such as a wall drawn out lengthways on the main stage, or one built across the inner stage, or some ingenious use of the balcony and curtains—none of which is satisfactory ; but this must nevertheless have been one of the chief ' affects ' of the play.

This unsolved problem is of very great importance. The general impression of the play is of elaborate staging —extraordinarily so considering the nature of the story. It looks like a final effort to maintain the waning popularity of Marlowe's technique with an audience blase to stage-effects ; and this is exactly what we should expect from a popular dramatist at this period. Perhaps the effort failed ; more probably the effort was pushed too far, and Shakespeare found that this elaborate realism broke down when he tried to use it for this scene. At any rate, if the *Dream* followed *Romeo,* as is quite possible, it is noteworthy that we find in it an extremely pointed satire on realistic staging, in which a wall dividing lovers plays an important part. Shakespeare's gibes would be quite understandable if the performance of *Romeo* had shown him, as I think it did, that he had reached the limit in realistic staging, and that further advance in that direction would merely court ridicule. I do not wish to press too far what may only be a coincidence, even though in doing so I am following up a hint dropped by Sir Edmund Chambers ; but if it is more it may be counted corroborative evidence of the thesis which I shall proceed to develop, namely that from about this time Shakespeare's stagecraft is marked by a growing tendency towards simplicity and away from the elaborate technique of Marlowe.

The form of the *Dream* may have been dictated by the special conditions of a private performance ; but I think

that, as we have it, it is a public-theatre play, and, if so, it marks a very important stage in Shakespeare's development. Mr. Richmond Noble has pointed out that the play shows so great an advance in song-treatment that it is difficult to assign to it so early a date as 1595. But it will be more understandable if we agree that Shakespeare, despairing of stage affect, decided in this play to experiment with a new method, based on song and his new-found lyric powers. These two features do, of course, form the basis of the construction of the *Dream ;* it is very simply staged, and requires only one setting, which remains unchanged (though possibly hidden once or twice) throughout the woodland scenes. It would have been very suitable for such an experiment, because it is the only play (except *Love's Labour's Lost,* also an experiment in technique) in which Shakespeare invented a plot and thus had a free hand in the choice of method. This freedom would also explain how it came about that the experiment was so drastic, involving so great a step forward as that noted by Mr. Noble. On the whole, therefore, it seems permissible to suggest that my inquiry offers a solution of Mr. Noble's difficulty in dating the play 1595, as required by most of the other evidence.

The last play of this group, the *Merchant of Venice,* is less interesting. Shakespeare had here to deal with an existing and very complicated plot. Mr. Noble has shewn how he used song to cover up one of the improbabilities of the story—Bassanio's uncharacteristic choice—and it is, of course, clear how musical and lyric effect is used to assist the romantic atmosphere of the last act. Thus the play can safely be classed under the new method. The staging is good but simple, though not more so than that of earlier comedies (for example, the *Two Gentlemen)* ; only two inner-stage sets seem to be needed, those of the Casket scenes and of the Trial Scene ; the convention of unlocalized scenes and unidentified

characters is skilfully used, and the difficult double plot is well managed. Mr. Noble dates the play before the *Dream,* and from its stagecraft it seems possible that it did precede Shakespeare's definite adoption of the new method, even though it forecasted it in the points just mentioned. In fact, the *Merchant* is a transitional play, showing some of the characteristics of each class, and could be placed in either.

Before proceeding with the development of Shakespearean comedy, I shall deal, as my next group, with the remaining historical plays—*Richard II, King John,* and the Prince Hal Trilogy. I regard these five as falling between 1595 and 1599. Now, the contrast in stagecraft between these five and the earlier histories is striking, and forms the chief support of my hypothesis. The earlier technique of the chronicle play had demanded plenty of vigorous action and, therefore, copious use of all possible stage-devices. This technique no longer satisfied Shakespeare, but historical subjects clearly did not often allow the employment of the new method, relying on lyric and song, which he had substituted for it. In the earliest play of the series, *Richard II,* he did indeed find a theme to which this method was applicable, since the character of the poetical and dreamy Richard required, for its dramatic delineation, a lyric poet rather than a skilful stage-craftsman. It may here be argued that I am confusing cause and affect—that the nature of the theme enforced the choice of this particular method ; but it has often been pointed out how the lyric character of the garden scene, in which the Queen hears the news of Richard's fate, distinguishes the technique of this play from those of the earlier and later histories. This scene, simple as it is, is the most elaborate piece of staging in the play ; the only other properties or stage-devices required are a throne and John of Gaunt's bed (for I believe no actual lists were set up in the combat scene, Act I, Scene 3) ; and the upper-stage is only used once, as the walls of a castle, and then only for a parley. In fact the

simplicity of the action is the chief feature of the play, and its contrast with a play of very similar theme, but in the earlier technique—Marlowe's *Edward II*—suggests, I think, that the differences are due more to the author's choice than to the nature of the subject.

But it is clear that lyric and song could not possibly be adapted to the story of Prince Hal, even without Falstaff. Indeed the story of his battles and escapades would have given excellent scope for the old stage-method. But the fact is that in both parts of *Henry IV*, that most characteristic feature the upper stage, with the presentment of action on two different levels, is never used ; in *Henry V* only once, and then only for a parley —though *Henry V* is a battle-play par excellence. This one scene shows that the upper stage could be used, and if so, its disuse elsewhere must surely be due to a definite purpose. Moreover, the first part of *Henry IV* is so simply staged that no properties are required except a throne for the King in Act I, and a table and chairs which do duty in the only other two propertied scenes—those of the tavern and the first meeting of the rebels. This is almost as far as simplicity can go. The Second Part is slightly more elaborate, for the woodland setting was probably used for the successive scenes of Shallow's orchard and the Forest of Gaultree ; with one exception, the only other propertied scenes require, as before, only a table and chairs—these are, again, the tavern scene and the rebels' meeting. The exception, which is also the only exception to the simple staging of the whole trilogy, is the death of the King, an unbroken scene during which the locality is moved from the Jerusalem chamber to the King's bedroom, by the opening of the curtains. This is one of the best examples of Shakespeare's use of the double stage. Finally, *King Henry V* only needs one property, a throne, which remains on the inner stage throughout, though most of the action, of course, passes before closed curtains.

Battle scenes do not require properties, so their absence here is perhaps not noticeable. But the nature of the battle scenes is. Where, in *Henry VI,* the fighting was done by Talbot and Clifford, here it is done by Pistol. It is very noticeable that we never see the King or any of the lords engaged ; the only fighting we see is not melodramatic, but comic. This is a symptom of the new method devised by Shakespeare for history and best exemplified in the two parts of *Henry IV*—a method in which comedy and the delineation of ordinary contemporary life take the place of elaborate staging. And this itself is a symptom of the change in popular taste which took place about this time and which may be indicated by saying that the *Two Angry Women of Abingdon* had replaced *Tamburlatne.* Whether Shakespeare set or followed the fashion is impossible to say, though judging from his general method, the latter is more likely. At any rate the comic sub-plot, drawn from common contemporary life and providing comments on the main plot, provides the framework which fills the void left by the disuse of the stage.

Here again it may be argued that the presence of the comic sub-plot necessitated the disuse of the stage, not, as I suggest, the reverse ; but I think my solution is made more likely by the fact that the five plays of this group all agree in the disuse of the stage, but vary in the method substituted for it. Indeed of *King John* it is hard to say what method does obtain. It lacks equally the melodramatic action of *Henry VI,* the lyric beauty of *Richard Il,* and the comic force of *Henry IV* ; like the *Shrew* and the *Two Gentlemen,* it seems to be a play in which Shakespeare never decided on any particular mould for his material. At any rate it is very simply staged ; as in *Henry V,* the fighting is all done off-stage, and practically no properties are required except a throne. The balcony is used twice, once merely for a parley, once for Arthur's leap—an incident too important to be disregarded ; and

in view of these two scenes, the play should, by my theory, precede the Prince Hal trilogy—as, indeed, all the other evidence demands. Of all these five plays, the chief stage affects—for example, the death of Henry IV and Arthur's leap—are taken from the earlier plays, and their popularity no doubt rendered them obligatory ; even when expanding the *Famous Victories,* and far more when compressing the *Troublesome Raigne,* Shakespeare, I think, effected a definite simplification of the action.

The next group of three brings us back to comedy, and comprises *The Merry Wives, Much Ado,* and *As You Like It.* Remembering the successful experiment of the *Dream,* we shall expect to find in these, as contrasted with the earlier comedies, a greater reliance on music ; and, taking an analogy from the contemporary Histories, a disuse of stage appliances, especially the upper stage, and a freer treatment of plot. These are exactly the characteristics of this group. Mr. Richmond Noble has explained the importance of *Much Ado* in Shakespeare's musical career ; it is the first play in which the songs are sung actually by one of the actors. Supposing Shakespeare to have decided that the basis of his technique in comedy was in future to be song, it would be natural for him to cast about for some expedient less clumsy and costly than the introduction of boys for no purpose but to sing, as hitherto ; the use of a singing actor solved the difficulty, as is shown by the rapid development of the method in *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night.* As regards staging, these three plays fall into place perfectly. In all three the upper stage is never used once. This disuse is particularly noticeable in *Much Ado,* because the action turns upon an incident which requires the upper-stage window. There are other reasons for narrating, instead of staging, this incident ; but such a method is very rare indeed in Shakespeare, and in view of the characteristics of these plays it seems safe to regard this as a peculiarity. In

other respects *Much Ado* is less simple than any of its contemporaries, for both the ' pleached bower ' and the monument of Hero are fairly elaborate and also important scenic devices. The monument, which had been Juliet's, probably acted as a piece of localizing scenery in the Church scene. In the *Merry Wives* only the last scene requires anything in the nature of an elaborate setting ; this was evidently staged with care, but the rest of the action is simpler than in any other play. But *A s You Like It* is the outstanding example in this class. Mr. Noble, while dilating on the importance of its songs, is bound to admit that they are used less effectively, as parts of the dramatic scheme, than anywhere else. In fact, the technique of this play is without exception the poorest in the Folio. Amiens and other singers and Touchstone are used several times merely to fill up pauses while Rosalind rests or changes her dress. In all other plays Shakespeare provides side-winds of the main action, which always advance it, to fill such gaps. Here, he seems not to have taken the trouble to develop the sub-plots, of which there are plenty, sufficiently for this purpose. There is only one setting, that of the forest, used here ; and the very clumsy scene-sequence of the banquet in Act II reinforces the belief that this play represents Shakespeare's nadir as a stage-craftsman.

It seems impossible to discover any external reason for this phase. His stage, at least in its main features, his actors, his audience even, had not changed, as far as we know, since 1594. Is it fanciful to suggest that in the prologue and choruses of *Henry V,* with their deprecatory comments on the stage, we have that very rare thing, Shakespeare's own opinion ?—that, whether as a result of Juliet's wall or not, he did in truth think so little of his possible stage-effects that he abandoned them altogether? If so, we can say that the opinion was temporary only—newly formed, and soon to be abandoned. In the meantime, he was carrying his new technique of song and

gaiety to its perfection in *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night.*

My reason for separating these two plays and placing *Twelfth Night* in the next class, is that it marks the first definite step in Shakespeare's mature use of localization, especially in the use of unplaced scenes. Of course he had devised such scenes before ; an admirable example is the scene in *Henry IV, Part I,* between the Archbishop and his confidant just before the battle of Shrewsbury ; the circumstances of which are so vague that the confidant, ' Sir Michael,' has no surname, and the locality, of course, is indiscoverable. In the other plays of the same period we occasionally find great care and skill in the treatment of both place and time. Thus in *Richard* //, the gradual approach of the chief characters to Flint Castle, where they must meet for the climax, is finely handled ; so is the movement of time before and during the battle of Agincourt. In the later works we shall find similar but finer examples of this method of emphasizing the approach to the climax. On the other hand during the same period he had fallen into a labour-saving habit of artificial localization and timing by means of a chorus, in both *Henry IV , Part* //, and *Henry V.* This may be another symptom of his waning interest in technical difficulties. But the quality that marks the present group of comedies is rather an increasing freedom in the treatment of place. One of the great advantages of unlocalized scenes is that the dramatist is able to bring together two incidents which could not reasonably happen at the same place. Thus, the duel between Viola and Sir Andrew would naturally be fought in the garden, while Antonio's arrest must be in a public place : but if neither has any precise locality there is no incongruity in their juxtaposition. Shakespeare was to use this device again. In *Twelfth Night* he simplified the treatment of place by making two main characters immovable; neither can leave home, and they therefore

act as localizing scenery. This idea is developed in *All's Welly* where the King and Countess perform the same function ; when the King does move, Shakespeare is particularly careful to tell us so before he reaches his destination ; this is a development of his usual treatment of a journey, which is to show the destination before the travellers arrive ; for example, Rosalind's journey to Arden, Brutus' to Philippi.

The third play of this group is *Measure for Measure ;* this should, perhaps, not appear till later, but its technical characteristics are certainly similar to the present group and distinguish it sharply from the next. As in *Twelfth Night,* the treatment of place is generally skilful. Act III is an excellent example of de-localization during action. The two scenes of this Act are really one, for the stage is never empty, but the first portion passes in the prison, the second in some indefinite public place. This method of uniting two incongruous incidents in one scene is a development of that used in *Twelfth Night,* and though it is not new to Shakespeare, it is here used more freely than before and is given greater prominence. The sequence of short unplaced scenes which ends Act IV is a good example of Shakespeare's skilful use of un-localized scenes in a complicated plot, and the treatment of time, during the night fixed for Claudio's execution, is masterly. It is also interesting to note how, with the appearance of Mariana, Shakespeare reverts to his usual comedy technique of song and the orchard setting in a vain attempt to bring the play back to comedy. In all these respects, therefore, the play marks a further development of the process we have been tracing. But in staging itself all three plays of this group are as simple as their predecessors. The upper stage is still entirely ignored, and, as before, the only important properties required are the woodland or orchard 'set' and a throne.

We now reach the second turning point in Shakespeare's theatrical career. Of this neglect of the stage,

which was now about to disappear, the most notable feature is the disuse of the balcony, because this possibility of action on two different levels was one of the outstanding characteristics of the Elizabethan stage, and gave unequalled opportunities for action at once effective and easily contrived ; yet in the last eleven plays dealt with, there have been only four upper stage scenes, all in three plays, while in the first eleven plays there were no fewer than twenty-seven, and no play without one. Why Shakespeare suddenly became reconciled to stage-effect is difficult to say : perhaps the competition of the children and the magnificent Fortune compelled him to use every attraction he had ; perhaps, now that he was returning to tragedy (a change of heart partly, no doubt, induced by another change of popular taste, which was veering back to blood and revenge)—he felt the need of every weapon in his armoury. At any rate, from now onward, we find a generally increasing elaboration of stage-effects ; a technique similar to that of his early days, but superior, because it is now reinforced by what he has learned since,—the appropriate use of song and poetry and a greater freedom in the management of place and time. Each separate field has been explored and mastered, and Shakespeare's stagecraft will now be complete.

The reversion to elaborate staging is very clearly seen in my next two plays, *Julius Ccesar* and *Troilus and Cressida.* My chronological arrangement of the whole group of plays of about this period—say 1599 to 1603—is certainly unorthodox, and may, of course, invalidate my conclusions ; but, whether contemporaneous or not, these two plays should be considered together because of their similarity of technique.

Both plays are extremely interesting, and *Julius Ccesar* may almost be said to be Shakespeare's masterpiece of stagecraft. The upper stage is employed in both ; and the important point is that instead of being

disused where it is almost essential, as in the previous group, it is here used to obtain greater stage effect in scenes which could be played quite well without it. Thus in *Julius Ctesar,* it is the scene of the orations in the Forum, and, later, the hill from which Pindarus watches the battle. This is a very bold use of the upper stage, but there is an even bolder in *Troilus,* where it is used by the spectators of the duel between Ajax and Hector. Logically this is indefensible, because there could be no such eminence in a collection of tents on the seashore ; but no more effective arrangement for the scene could be devised, and it was imitated by Heywood in the *Rape of Lucrece.* This is an example of Shakespeare's mature stagecraft, which depends not on new stage devices but on a freer use of old ones. *Julius Cæsar* also contains two excellent examples of ' split ' scenes, that is scenes where the locality is shifted by a change from front-to double-stage. One of these, the Senate-House Scene, is perhaps his most skilful use of this admirable device, without which the scene is unplayable. The meeting of Caesar and Artemidorus must be in the street, for Artemidorus has no business in the Capitol. But when Caesar is accosted by Popilius, he is already in the Senate House; that is to say, the curtains have opened, and the whole stage has taken on the locality of the inner stage. If the meetings with the Soothsayer and Artemidorus were to occupy a separate scene, previous to the murder, their effect — as the chance of safety lost at the eleventh hour—would be diminished : it is this device alone that, by their rapid succession, made possible the magnificent success of this scene.

Troilus, apart from the scene already quoted, is chiefly remarkable for the localized use of the inner stage with closed or half-closed curtains. This appears several times, in the scenes at Achilles' and Calchas' tents. The advantage is that though the inner stage plays a part and has an importance in the action, the properties for

the next scene can be prepared out of sight. By this means Shakespeare is often able to use the inner stage for successive scenes, and thus get double the usual amount of work out of it ; when he does this, it is notable how carefully and also gradually he re-identifies it for its new locality. Finally, the eve of the Ides of March is, with one exception, Shakespeare's best achievement in the management of time when approaching the climax. The progress of time is here mentioned thirteen times. There is another bold use of time in *Troilus,* where the scene at Calchas' tent bridges the gap from supper time to dawn. Several other technical beauties of these plays must be mentioned—the use of song in Lucius and Pandarus, of an unlocalized scene to bring together Portia and the Soothsayer, of a crowd in commotion to open the play, and of the illusion of darkness during the night of the conspiracy and the night of Cressida's treachery.

The next three plays are relatively disappointing, namely *Hamlet, Lear, Othello.* But this is chiefly because the subjects did not demand any elaborate affects, especially in *Hamlet* and *Othello.* The problems of place in these two plays are simplified by the story, which is confined for the most part to the castles of Elsinore and Cyprus : most of the scenes are prelocalized by implication as ' a room in the Castle,' and it is seldom necessary, even when properties are present, to say which room. In such concentrated action Shakespeare had little opportunity, or need, for his skilful treatment of place ; nevertheless in *Othello* we have two scenes which show perfectly the value of unlocalized and ' split ' scenes for displaying incongruous persons in the same scene, namely Act III, Scene 4, and Act IV, Scene 2. The second of these begins with Othello's very private conversation with Desdemona—probably in her bedroom ; and ends with a conversation between lago and Roderigo—which could not possibly take place

there. Clearly lago, who is on in both portions, was de-localized at Desdemona's exit, like the Duke in *Measure for Measure,* Act III. Elsewhere—for instance, in the scene in the Council Chamber of Venice—lago often suffers delocalization, I believe, in order that his plots should not be made in places incongruous to such action.

Practically all the possibilities of the stage are employed in *Othello,* and nowhere else with such complete mastery in assisting the action. The craftsmanship of the last three acts is perfect ; in theatrical technique the play may be said to be Shakespeare's masterpiece, but it is by no means his most striking piece of stagecraft. *Hamlet* is also, on the whole, simple, but it contains two fairly elaborate effects—the funeral of Ophelia and the play-scene. The latter is, I think, a piece of intentional archaism in stagecraft ; for the ' bank of flowers ' used by the Players seems to have been carried on and off in full view and placed in the centre of the stage. It was not much better than Thisbe's wall, and it is perhaps an indication of the development of theatrical taste that such a device, which would have been taken seriously not so many years before, could here be used by Shakespeare to produce a definitely artificial effect. For the rest, the stagecraft of *Hamlet* is perfectly adapted to the subject, which is one of reflection rather than action ; Shakespeare knew every move in the game, but he had also learnt by now to use only those that suited his purpose.

Lear is a much finer piece of stagecraft, but it shows one or two curious lapses which make it fall short of Shakespeare's best achievements ; for example, the very sketchy treatment of the critical battle and the vagueness of localization in the first half of the play. It is as if there was so much to do that certain details did not receive quite as much attention as they deserved. This impression is not found in any other play, and being isolated

need not invalidate my conclusions about this group ; moreover it is quite different from the definite carelessness of the earlier and also of the later comedies. The resources of the stage are used with great profusion and skill, except the upper stage, which never comes into play ; it was disused also in *Hamlet,* unless the first appearance of the ghost was on the balcony. This reminiscence of the plays preceding *Julius Ccesar* is, I think, only accidental, for the other evidence does not support it. The localized use of the half-opened inner stage is repeated ; it here represents the hovel on the heath, and the first words of ' Poor Tom ' are heard from the dim interior, thus heightening the affect of strangeness and terror. The mock-trial scene in the barn, and the re-union of Lear and Cordelia, are skilful, though not unusually bold, examples of the convertible stage ; and the blinding of Gloster is a complete reversion to the horrors of *Titus Andronicus.* The third aft is perhaps Shakespeare's finest use of alternating scenes in the presentment of a double plot.

If these three plays display Shakespeare's perfected stagecraft in its simple aspect, the next three, *Macbeth, Anthony and Cleopatra,* and *Coriolanus,* show it at its most elaborate, and may be said to be his greatest achievements in this field. Few critics have observed how much of the affect of the first two depends on the treatment of time and place. In *Macbeth,* besides the skill with which the illusion of darkness is maintained, there is throughout an unexampled rapidity of action. This affect is produced, before the murder, by the device already noted, but never so superbly used—by which the progress of time towards the fatal moment is constantly marked in a series of scenes ; the fact that all are short and unpropertied adds to the sense of speed. The impression is maintained even in the rest of the play by the close connexion of scenes : in almost every one we hear that the next will take place on the next day, at

latest. On the other hand, localization, which means chiefly the identification of Macbeth's various castles, is often unnecessary and therefore ignored, until the last act, when, owing to the prediction about Dunsinane, it becomes profuse. *Anthony and Cleopatra*—Shakespeare's stage masterpiece—offers a great contrast. Time is of little importance, for the action never moves very rapidly ; but place is everything, for the play covers the whole known world, which is the prize of the contest. The device of concentrating the characters at the climax, Aftium, is here elaborated ; the first two acts show us practically two localities only, Egypt and Rome, but the opening of the third takes in the whole world before narrowing down to the crucial point. The rapidity and variety of the change of place is really the basis of Shakespeare's method in this play.

But both are remarkable also for frequent and elaborate stage-effects. In *Macbeth,* the two Witches scenes are as melodramatic as anything in *Doctor Faustus* ; it is certain that the Witches vanished in some startling manner, though it is not so easy to say how, and all the action of the cavern scene is elaborate and striking. The appearance of Banquo's ghost, a heavily-staged scene, is also one of the most skilful, in the arrangement of the action, in Shakespeare ; and may be compared, in this respect, with the conference of Csesar and Antony. This play is still more elaborate. It will be noticed with what address Shakespeare counters the Egyptian scenes, which display (perhaps even by the staging) the sensuous luxury of Cleopatra, with those which show us the military pomp of Rome. It seems clear that all the resources of the theatre were lavished on every scene of this play : I will refer to two only, the finest scenes, theatrically, in the Folio—that of the sentinels hearing the unearthly music, and the capture of Cleopatra. The latter, like the death-scene of Antony, was, I feel sure, a very striking and unusual piece of action, even though it is not

easy to say exactly how it was arranged. The former is short and simple enough, but even so I think there is no other passage in all Shakespeare which so vividly displays his supremacy as a practical dramatist.

Coriolanus, an inferior play in every respect, nevertheless falls into this class because it gives us Shakespeare's perfected treatment of two favourite methods, battle-scenes and a crowd in commotion. The mutinous mob is the basis upon which the effect of the play is built up ; even in *Julius Cæsar* Shakespeare had not given the crowd, as apart from its leaders, so large a place in the scheme of the play, and its disappearance in the last two acts may be one reason of the play's failure when compared with its predecessors. The first act contains the finest battle-sequence in Shakespeare ; and nowhere else is the identification of the tiring-house, as the walls and gates of a town, used so skilfully and effectively. The staging of the play appears to be simple because propertied scenes are few and of an ordinary kind, but in fact it must have presented a very striking stage-spectacle.

The last group has taken us to the end of the development which we have been tracing. We see in them Shakespeare's stagecraft complete and perfected. We should not expect to find any radical changes after this. His method remains essentially the same ; there is considerable elaboration of stage-affect in several of the last plays, particularly the *Tempest* and *Henry VIII.* The latter was certainly designed as a spectacle on a lavish scale, even in the first three acts, but it is, of course, doubtful if Shakespeare was responsible for any of it. The *Tempest* may have been intended for a special performance, and, if so, does not represent Shakespeare's use of his true medium, the public stage. *Cymbeline* is thoroughly elaborate ; the descent of Jupiter in the Ghost scene is Shakespeare's only use of the gods' machine, as that of Imogen's bedchamber is the only

scene in the Folio which begins and ends by opening and closing the curtains in the picture-stage manner. Belarius' cave was also an elaborate property, and had already sheltered Timon. The craftsmanship of the play, however, is distinctly inferior to that of the great period ; in particular, we find the habit, repeated in the *Winters Tale* and the *Tempest,* of using undramatic soliloquies and asides to help along the plot. Apart from this the *Winter's Tale* is a beautiful piece of work : the staging, though not profuse, is interesting and excellently adapted to the subject. The scene of Cleomenes and Dion landing in Sicily is a superb instance of Shakespeare's use of incidental action. His stagecraft, at any rate, never suffered decay.

The scope of my subject has forced me to a rapid review of Shakespeare's whole work, and in the circumstances I have not been able to avoid dogmatizing on many disputable points. Needless to say, I am prepared to justify, to myself at least, all I have said ; but I realize that the cumulative affect of a series of dubious assertions will be to cast doubt on my conclusions. I am also aware of superficial inconsistencies in my argument : for example, I have quoted the disuse of the upper stage in the Prince Hal Trilogy as a proof of simplicity, while refusing to accept it as such when it reappears in *Hamlet* and *Lear, Cymbeline* and the *Winter 3 Tale.* My explanation is, that although the absence of any one feature, particularly so important a feature as this, is notable, it is not sufficient in itself to base a judgment on, because other reasons for it may exist. Thus, this disuse in *Cymbeline* is not noticeable because the action never gives any opportunity for the upper stage, while the stage affects that are suitable are lavishly used ; but *Henry IV* is a battle play in which it could well have been used, and in which all the other stage-resources suffer a corresponding neglect. That is, I have attempted to judge by the general impression of the stage method in each group

of plays, rather than by counting the uses in each of a particular stage device. The method is unsatisfactory, because it depends too much on individual taste ; but it seems to be the only possible one, and sufficient for my purpose of calling attention to the possibilities of this line of enquiry.

It is difficult to separate Shakespeare's stagecraft from the rest of his dramatic art. My paper must have seemed to concern itself too much with stage tricks, the business of the prompter and property-man rather than the dramatist. But these are merely the symptoms of Shakespeare's dramatic method, trivial in themselves, but perhaps illuminating. That Shakespeare made them his business there is no doubt ; and we have abundant evidence—for example, the scene of the capture of Cleopatra—that he was his own producer. How much of the theatrical affect he hoped to produce—the only affect he had in mind—depended on the way the scene was played ? We do not know until we work out the action as he designed it. It is these details which enable us to discover his dramatic method ; and to see also, as I suggest, how that method was gradually moulded ; how he turned in disgust from the stage which seemed too primitive for his youthful ambitions, till the time came when his maturer knowledge told him what were the true possibilities of his medium, and how he moulded and used it then to its fullest extent in his greatest works.

C. M. HAINES

SHAKESPEARE'S ACTORS

THERE is not much danger at this date of forgetting what Shakespeare owed to his theatre ; even the school texts now print imaginative reconstructions of the Globe and the Fortune. But the debt to his fellow actors is not so well appreciated because so few really vital details about them have survived. The members of the greater London Companies are indeed known and recorded, each in his place in the card-index ; but it must be admitted that play lists are a thin diet for the imagination and even the seven famous ' platts ' are not much more exciting than an old theatre programme. In this paper, therefore, I propose not so much to add to the details already discovered, but rather to see whether there may not be more latent vitality in the existing fragments of biography and stage history than would at first sight appear. My purpose is to suggest some ways in which Shakespeare's fellow actors have left their impression on his work.

Clearly Shakespeare owed much to his company. The connexion between dramatist and actor in the commercial theatre must always be close, and especially in a repertory company where the individual members of the caste remain the same. For the dramatist must take them as he finds them ; it is quite useless for him to create a tall young hero if the tragedian who will insist on taking the part is stout and middle-aged. This was indeed one of Shakespeare's problems. His tragedian was Burbage and, as time goes on, his tragic heroes mature ; even Hamlet is thirty. But Shakespeare went further ; not only did he avoid creating characters who would not fit his company, he used the peculiarities of his company to fit his plays.

Let us begin then with the plays, and, as the results of our inquiry will be more cogent if we concentrate on a comparatively small area, I propose to confine this paper for the most part to the few years when Shakespeare was most productive, that is approximately between 1597 and 1605.

The three Romantic Comedies—*Much Ado About Nothing, Twelfth Night* and *As You Like It*—were all written within a short period, and all of them rely largely on the female characters. We need not lament unduly that the women's parts were played by boys, for the boy actors (if we may believe Coryat) were better than the professional addresses of Venice. Moreover, boys are quite capable of afcing female parts as can be seen at a performance of Shakespeare at any large Public School. Incidentally, too, the Elizabethans were spared the ordeal of elderly Rosalinds and Violas, for the boy actor's period was limited by the breaking of his voice.

The importance of the women in these three comedies shows that to Shakespeare at least the actors were adequate. Now in each of these plays one of the women is always small. Thus Hero is ' too low for a high praise, too brown for a fair praise and too little for a great praise,' and, ' mark how short his answer is;— With Hero, Leonato's short daughter.' Celia too is 'low and browner than her brother' (i.e., 'Ganymede'). Maria is ' the little villain,' ' the youngest wren of nine,' ' Penthesilea.' It is extremely likely that the same boy-actor took all these parts. Rosalind, on the other hand, is ' more than common tall.' There are not enough indications to conned the other female parts with any certainty, though it is reasonably likely that Rosalind was also Beatrice and Viola.

In the *Midsummer Night's Dream,* Hermia and Helena are similarly contrasted. Hermia having lost her temper with Helena, cries out :

Puppet ? why so ? ay, that way goes the game.
Now I perceive that she hath made compare
Between our statures ; she hath urged her height :
And with her personage, her tall personage,
Her height, forsooth, she hath prevail'd with him.
And are you grown so high in his esteem,
Because I am so dwarfish and so low ?
How low am I, thou painted maypole ? speak ;
How low am I ? I am not yet so low
But that my nails can reach unto thine eyes.

But *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* unless this passage was a later addition, falls out of our period.

In contrast to the little lady is the tall thin man with the hatchet face. He is Prince Hal in I *Henry IV,* ' O for breath to utter what is like thee,' pants Falstaff, ' you tailor's yard, you sheath, you bow-case, you vile standing-tuck.' In the second part of the play, he doubled the part with Shadow and possibly the beadle. ' And this *half-faced* fellow, Shadow ; give me this man ; he presents no mark to the enemy; the foeman may with as great aim level at the edge of a penknife.' Again, at the end of the play, Doll Tearsheet and Mrs. Quickly call one of the beadles ' a thin man in a censer,' ' a starved bloodhound,' ' goodman death,' ' goodman bones.' He reappears in .*Twelfth Night* as Sir Andrew Aguecheek who is ' as tall a man as any's in Illyria,' and, when Sir Toby is more plain spoken, ' a cockscomb and a knave, a *thin-faced* knave.' In *Julius Ceasar* he is Cassius :

Let me have men about me that are fat ;
Sleek-headed men and such as sleep o' nights :
Yond Cassius has a lean and hungry look :
He thinks too much, such men are dangerous.

Did Burbage then take Antony ? It seems probable ; he certainly took Hamlet, and Hamlet, alas, is ' fat and scant of breath.' But of course, fat men are no indication ; bumbast can work miracles; though it is doubtful

whether any producer has ever insisted on Hamlet padding himself to make that line consistent.

Then there is the boy who first appears in // *Henry IV* as the page to whom Falstaff says, 'I do here walk before thee like a sow that hath o'erwhelmed all her litter but one.' The boy seems to have done well; after Falstaff's death he reappears in *Henry V* and transfers his services to Pistol. A knowledgeable lad, he can speak French, and as William in the *Merry Wives,* a little Latin too.

Apart from purely physical clues, there are other parts which can be traced from play to play, notably the ' gull,' In more modern times, his conventional costume includes a monocle, a morning coat and white spats—the Oxford trousers of the Kingsway Osric being only a passing aberration. The gull in the Chamberlain's Company was almost as great a success as the Clown himself. He is Slender in the *Merry Wives,* Monsieur Le Beau in *As You Like It,* Sir Andrew in *Twelfth Night,* Master Matthew in *Every Man in His Humour,* Fastidious Brisk in *Every Man out of His Humour,* Asinius Bubo in Dekker's *Satiromastix,* Osric in *Hamlet,* Roderigo in *Othello,* and perhaps Cinna the poet in *Julis Ccesar.*

Osric seems to have been taken by Christopher Sly in the Chamberlain's Company. In the Induftion added to Maston's *Malcontent* in 1605, the actors are mentioned by name. Sly, as a foolish spectator, strolls on the stage. Noticing that he is carrying his hat, Condell remarks, ' I beseech you, sir, be covered.' ' No, in good faith, for mine ease,' replies Sly. It would be stretching possibility too far to assume that Sly took all the gull parts, or was the thin-faced man.

A few facts may be gleaned from bibliography. In the early quartos and the first Folio there are eleven instances where the name of the player has crept into the stage directions or speech headings instead of the character which he was impersonating. There are

three in /// *Henry VI*— Gabriel, ' Sincklo ' and ' Humphrey ' ; one in *Romeo and Juliet* where in Act IV, Scene V, ' Will Kemp ' stands for Peter the Nurse's servant. Three more are to be found in *The Taming of the Shrew—'* Sincklo,' ' Nicke,' and ' Pel.' ' Sincklo ' again appears in the *Second Part of Henry the Fourth* as one of the Beadles. In the First Folio text of *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* one Tawyer appears with a trumpet before the performance of Bottom's tragedy, and the Folio prints ' Jack Wilson ' for Balthazar the singer in *Much Ado About Nothing.*

The remaining two are the most important, and occur in the Quarto of *Much Ado* where in Act IV scene ii, Kemp and Cowley stand for Dogberry and Verges. Dr. Dover Wilson has shown good reasons for believing that this quarto was set up from Shakespeare's own manuscript, and he lays it down as the golden rule that we should therefore blame Shakespeare for the faults of his text. More recently an American scholar, Mr. Allison Gaw,[1] has subjected the passages where the actors' names occur to a lengthy analysis, and concludes that Shakespeare, not the prompter, is responsible for their appearance in the text. This is quite likely, but without further evidence the suggestion can only remain an interesting possibility.

However, apart from bibliography, the examples which have been quoted from the plays are sufficient to establish the probability—not to put the case more strongly—that when Shakespeare wrote or created a character he had in his mind the actor who would take the part. It follows then that the personality of the actor—if only we can recover that—is of no small importance in a true critical appreciation of the part.

To turn now to more definite knowledge. In 1597 the two star members of the Chamberlain's Company were Richard Burbage and William Kemp.

[1] *Modern Language Association of America.* Sept., 1925.

A good deal is known about the Burbage family. James Burbage, the father, built the first permanent English playhouse—The Theatre—in 1576. In his own way he was almost a genius, but, like most geniuses, hampered by lack of capital. This led to borrowing and inevitably to interminable litigation, for which we may be thankful because in the mass of documents connected with these lawsuits are contained the most lively depositions.

James Burbage borrowed most of his capital from his brother-in-law, John Brayne, a London grocer, who realised that there was money in the scheme. For a few months all went well until Brayne began to demand the return of his capital. Brayne and Burbage, being unable to agree, decided to put the matter in the hands of arbitrators. So they went to the shop of a notary public. There they ' fell a reasoning together,' in the course of which Brayne asserted that he had disbursed in the Theatre three times as much more as the sum then disbursed by the said James Burbage.[1] In the end, Brayne unwisely hinted at ' ill-dealing,' on the part of Burbage, whereupon ' Burbage did there strike him with his fist, so that they went together by the ears in so much/ says the notary, ' that this deponent could hardly part them.' The matter was settled for a time, but unfortunately it was found necessary to borrow money of one Hide on the security of a mortgage on the Theatre in the joint names of Brayne and Burbage. Soon after, Brayne died leaving his share of the credits and debts to his widow. Hide was very patient, but at last in 1590, he began to press for the return of his money. Thereupon Cuthbert Burbage paid the debt in full and received back the title deeds of the property. The widow Brayne, having thus no legal title to show was cheated of her rights, and with the aid of her servant, Robert Myles, she began a lawsuit against the Burbages, The Court of Chancery decided

[1] *Shakespearean Playhouses,* by J. Quincy Adams, p. 50.

in her favour and issued an order that she was to receive a moiety of the takings of the Theatre ; but though Myles and the widow repeatedly called at the Burbages' house, they were always received with the vilest threats and insults. On one occasion, ' when Mistress Brayne spoke of the order of the court, Burbage cryed unto her, " Go, go. A cart, a cart for you ! I will obey no such order, nor care I for any such orders, and therefore it were best for you and your companions to be packing betimes, for if my son [Cuthbert] come he will thump you hence ! " ' Just at that moment Cuthbert did come and the widow and her party thought it best to retire, pursued by the ' great and horrible oaths ' of the Burbage family.

At last the widow and Myles, with his son and his partner, Nicholas Bishop, decided to assert their rights more forcibly. They went to the Theatre and stood at the door leading to the galleries to colle6l the pennies as the audience assembled. ' In the Theatre they were met by Richard Burbage, then about nineteen years old, and his mother, who fell upon the said Robert Myles and beat him with a broomstaff, calling him murdering knave. When Myles' partner, Bishop, ventured to protest at this contemptuous treatment of the order of the Court, " the said Richard Burbage," so Bishop deposed, " scornfully and disdainfully playing with this deponent's nose, said that if he dealt in the matter he would beat him also, and did challenge the field of him at that time.' " '

This is the first appearance of the great tragedian Richard Burbage on the stage of history. He makes an effective entrance.

When James Burbage died in i 597, the Theatre passed to his son Cuthbert. More troubles followed. The twenty-one years lease of the Theatre fell in a few weeks later and Giles Alleyn the landlord was unwilling to

[1] Ibid, pp. 56, 57.

renew it, in spite of a clause in the original contract. After eighteen months of negotiation, during which the Theatre stood empty, it became clear to Cuthbert and Richard Burbage that they would be unable to force Alleyn to come to terms. Moreover, they saw that there was considerable danger that, unless they moved in the matter, the valuable timber and fittings of the theatre buildings would be forfeited to their landlord. This was at Christmastide 1598. While Alleyn was away in the country, the Burbages with several friends, armed with swords and other weapons, proceeded to the Theatre and tore it down, in spite of the protests of Alleyn's people. Then they took up the timber and carted it across the river to the site on the Bankside which they had already leased, and there they built the Globe Theatre. Alleyn, needless to say, went to law.

I have mentioned these incidents at some length because of the light they throw on the characters of the three Burbages, and especially Richard ; for Richard was original Hamlet. It is scarcely likely that his interpretation of the characler would agree with a recent psychological formula that Hamlet was the victim of the law of ' reversed action,' and that the more he tried to force himself into action, the more his unconscious mind invented pretexts why he should delay to act.[1] At any rate, neither Myles nor Bishop noticed much of the law of reversed action in their dealings with Richard Burbage.

Burbage's great reputation as a tragic actor began when the Chamberlain's Company was re-formed after the great plague of 1593-4, and started to play in The Theatre. The parts which he is known to have taken are Lear, Othello, Hamlet, Brachiano in Webster's *White Devi/,* Malevole in *The Malcontent,* and, most famous of all, Richard the Third. Richard one suspects to have been an early success in a rather more violent

[1] A. Glutton Brock, *Shakespeare's Hamlet.*

style than Burbage generally used ; at least the lines ' A horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse,' passed into a phrase, and were the most quoted, not to say parodied, of all Shakespeare's verses. Bishop Corbet in his poem *Iter Boreale,* relates how his host, who conduced him over the battlefield of Bosworth, was such an enthusiastic admirer of the tragedian that he showed the spot where Burbage cried, ' A horse, a horse.'

It is impossible to estimate what the friendship and partnership of Burbage and Shakespeare has meant to literature ; for, apart from their professional relationship, these two were friends. When Shakespeare died, he left a gold ring to ' my fellow Richard Burbage,' seven months later, Burbage named his child William.

Burbage survived Shakespeare nearly three years ; he died on I3th March, 1619, eleven days after Queen Anne, the wife of James 1st. It was a fact much noted that the public were more concerned for the loss of the player than the queen.

As Middleton wrote :

Hung be the Heaven's with black, yield day to night.
Comets importing change shoot through our sky.
Scourge the foul fates that thus afflict our sight,
Burbadge the player has vouchsafed to die ;
Therefore in London is not one eye dry :
The deaths of men who aft our Queens and Kings
Are now more mourned than are the real things . . .
When he expires, lo ! all lament the man,
But where's the grief should follow good Queen Anne ?

But then Middleton was writing for a rival Company, and was moreover place-hunting at the time.

Several epitaphs have survived. The shortest is ' Exit Burbage ' ; the longest, of which no less than five copies are known, is of more importance than merit, as it gives some idea of the impression that Burbage made

on his contemporaries. It is printed in full in Mrs. Stope's book *Eurbage and Shakespeare's Stage.* Some of the lines are worth quoting :

> Hee's gon, and with him what a world is dead,
> (Which he revived to be renewed so.
> No more young Hamlett, ould Hieronymoe,
> Kind Lear, the grieved Moore, and more besyde
> That lived in him, have now for ever dy'de.)
> Oft have I seen him leap into a grave
> Suiting ye person (which he seemed to have)
> Of a sad lover, with so true an eye
> That then I would have sworn he meant to die ;
> Oft have I seen him playe his part in jest,
> So lively t'ye spectators and the rest
> Of his sad crewe, while hee but seemed to bleed
> Amazed thought that he had died indeed.

There is a good deal more in the same strain.

But the most touching tribute of all is to be found in a letter written by William, Earl of Pembroke, one of ' the incomparable paire of brethren ' to whom the First Folio is dedicated, to Viscount Doncaster in Germany—' My Lord Lenox made a great supper to the French Ambassador this night here and even now all the company are at the play, which I, so tender-hearted, could not endure to see so soone after the loss of my old acquaintance Burbadge.'

One other of Burbage's gifts must be mentioned ; he was a painter of considerable ability.

Next in importance to Burbage in the Chamberlain's Company ranked Will Kemp the Clown. He was already famous when he joined the company in 1594, having made a great reputation in England and on the Continent as a comedian (of the low order), but especially as a dancer of jigs, mostly indecent. As we have seen, he is known to have taken the parts of Peter, the Nurse's servant, in *Romeo and Juliet,* and Dogberry in *Much Ado About Nothing.*

Kemp remained with the company for some years. His name appears in the list of actors prefixed to *Every Man in His Humour,* first staged in September 1598 ; wherein presumably he took the part of Cob the water-carrier. He does not appear in the actor-list of *Every Man Out of His Humour* ; but as only five actors are mentioned, it does not follow that he had left the company. Indeed, as I shall show, there is good reason to suppose that he took the part of Sogliardo.

When the Chamberlain's Men left the Shoreditch neighbourhood and built the Globe, Kemp was one of the original sharers in the new ventures. But soon after he broke with his fellows.

On 11th February, 1600, he began his famous morris dance to Norwich. He actually danced the whole distance in nine stages, though he made several halts by the way, the journey being finished on 11th March. The progress is related in his amusing little book *The Nine Daies Wonder.* It was a triumphant success, and everywhere Kemp was received royally. The morris ended thus :

' Passing the gate, Wifflers (such Officers as were appointed by the Mayor) to make me way through the throng of the people, which prest so mightily upon me : with great labour I got thorow that narrow preaze into the open market place. Where on the crosse, ready prepared, stood the Citty waytes, which not a little refreshed my wearines with toyling thorow so narrow a lane, as the people left me : such Waytes (under Benedicite be it spoken) fewe Citties in our Realme haue the like, none better . . .

' On I went towards the Maiors, and decieued the people, by leaping over the Church-yard wall at S. lohns, getting so into M. Mayors gates a neerer way : but at last I found it the further way about : being forced on Tewsday following to renew my former daunce, because George Sprat, my ouer-seer hauing lost me in

the throng, would not be deposed that I had daunst it, since he saw me not : and I must confesse I did not wel, for the Cittizens had caused all the turne-pikes to be taken vp on Satterday, that I might not be hindred. But now I returned again to my Jump, the measure of which is to be scene in the Guildhall at Norwich, where my buskins, that I then wore, and daunst in from London thither, stand equally deuided, nailde on the wall. The plenty of good cheere at the Mayors, his bounty, and kinde vsage, together with the general welcomes of his worshipful brethren, and many other knights, Ladies, Gentlemen and Genlewomen, so much exceeded my expectation, as I adiudg'd myselfe most bound to them all.' [1]

He goes on to relate that the Mayor gave him a present of five pounds, and an annual pension of 408. Will Kemp, in short, was as highly valued in his own day as Mr. Charles Chaplin in ours. There is indeed much in common between Kemp's progress in 1600 and Mr. Chaplin's in 1921.

Emboldened by the success of his Norwich venture, Kemp became ambitious and undertook to dance over the Alps to Rome. He fulfilled his promise, but the adventure was a failure, and on 2nd September, 1601, he was back again in London, as Richard Smith of Abingdon in his interesting little Latin diary of gossip records. The entry runs :

1601, September 2

> Kemp, mimus quidam, qui peregrinationen quandam in Germaniamet Italiam instituerat, post multos errores, et infortunia sua, reversus ; multa refert de Anthonio Sherly equite aurato quern Romas (Legatum Persicum agentem) convenerat.

He did not apparently rejoin the Chamberlain's. On the loth March, 1602, he borrowed 2os. from Henslowe, and in August and September of the same year he appears

[1] *Nine Dates Wonder.* The Bodley Head Quarto, Vol. IV., pp. 24-26.

with Worcester's Men at the Rose. No more is heard of him ; probably he died soon afterwards.

Kemp appears as a character in the Second Part of *The Return from Parnassus,*[1] a Cambridge play acted at St. John's College at Christmas 1601.

Philomusus and Studioso, the two hopeful undergraduates, have fallen so low that they are ready to turn their hands to anything. Burbage and Kemp come on, and the following dialogue ensues.

> *Bur:* Now *Will Kempe,* if we can intertaine these schollers at a low rate, it wil be well, they have oftentimes a good conceite in a part.
>
> *Kempe:* Its true, indeede, honest *Dick,* but the slaues are somewhat proud, and besides, it is a good sport in a part to see them neuer speake in their walke, but at the end of the stage, just as though in walking with a fellow we should neuer speake but at a stile, a gate, or a ditch, where a man can go no further. I was once at a Comedie in Cambridge, and there I saw a parasite make faces and mouths of all sorts on this fashion. *[He makes a few]..*

Soon after the two students arrive and exchange greetings. ' God saue you, M. *Kempe ,'* says Studioso, ' welcome M. *Kempe* from dauncing the morrice ouer the Alpes.' To this Kempe replies, 'Well you merry knaves you may come to the honor of it one day, is it not better to make a foole of the worlde as I haue done, then to be fooled of the world, as you schollers are ? But be merry my lads, you haue happened vpon the most excellent vocation in the world for money : they come North and South to bring it to our playhouse, and for honours, who of more report, then *Dick Burbage & Will: Kempe,* he is not counted Gentleman, that knowes not *Dick Burbage & Wil Kempe,* there's not a country wench that can dance Sellengers Round but can talke of *Dick Burbage* and *Will Kempe.'*

[1] Edited by W. D. Macray, Oxford, 1886, pp. 138-140.

Studioso first has his lesson and is made to recite ' Who calls Hieronimo from his naked bed.' Then Kemp turning to Philomusus, remarks, ' Now for you, me thinkes you should belong to my tuition, and your face me thinkes would be good for a foolish Mayre or a foolish justice of peace ; marke me.' This suggests that Kemp took Justice Shallow.

Kemp is again introduced as a character in the play of *The Travailes of The Three English Brothers; Sir Thomas, Sir Anthony and Mr. Robert Shirley*—a composite work of Day, Rowley and Wilkins. The scene is Venice where Sir Anthony was staying. Kemp is announced and enters. While Sir Anthony and he are in conversation, an Italian Harlequin and his wife arrive. Sir Anthony asks Kemp to play a part with them ; he replies, ' I am somewhat hard of study, and like your honour, but if they will inuent any extemporall merriment, ile put out the small sacke of my witte I ha' left in venture with them.'

From these passages, it would appear that Kemp was an ignorant man who relied for his clowning on his facial expressions and his extemporal wit—neither gifts being at all appreciated by a serious dramatist. Small wonder that Hamlet in his advice to the players should remark, ' let your clowns speak no more than is set down for them ; for there be of them that will make themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too ; though in the meantime, some necessary question of the play, be then to be considered ; that's villainous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it.'

Seeing that Kemp had now left the Chamberlain's and was playing with Worcester's men at the Rose in 1602 there can be little doubt that this is a direct reference to his misdeeds, especially when the passage in the first, pirated, quarto (which does not reappear in the authorised version) is added :

And then you some agen, that keepes one sute
Of leasts, as a man is knowne by one sute of
Apparrell, and Gentlemen quotes his ieasts downe
In the tables, before they come to the play, as thus :
Cannot you stay till I eate my porrige ? and, you owe me
A quarters wages : and, my coate wants a cullison :
And, your beere is sowre : and, blabbering with his lips,
And thus keeping in his cinkapase of ieasts.
When, God knows, the warme Clowne cannot make a iest
Vnlesse by chance, as the blinde man catcheth a hare :
Maisters tell him of it.[1]

These lines raise quite an interesting little problem. It is usually supposed that Kemp did not take a part in *Every Man Out of his Humour,* which the Chamberlain's produced in 1599 or 1600. But the phrase ' my coat wants a cullison ' comes from Sogliardo's part in that play. Sogliardo is described by Jonson as ' An essential clown, brother to Sordido, yet so enamoured of the name of gentleman that he will have it, though he buys it. He comes up every term to learn to take tobacco, and see new motions. He is in his kingdom when he can get himself into company where he may be well laughed at.' The rustic fool is the type of part which most suited Kemp.

But Shakespeare was not only indebted to the actors of his own company ; he found excellent dramatic material in some of his rivals. Competition between the Chamberlain's and the Admiral's was very keen in the late 1590's, and not without bitter feeling. It led for instance to the fatal duel between Ben Jonson and Gabriel Spencer, one of the Admiral's men, in September, 1598. It is reflected in several of Shakespeare's plays, but especially in the two parts of *Henry the Fourth.*

There are many parodies in these two plays, as Mr. R. P. Cowl has shown in a most useful article which he contributed to the *Times Literary Supplement* of 26th

[1] Bodley Head Quartos, Vol. VII, p. 41.

March, 1925, entitled, ' Some Literary Allusions in Henry the Fourth.' But these parodies are not ' literary allusions,' nor are they directly taken from literature at all. Shakespeare, in fact, was not engaged in setting the trail for the scholarly game of ' Hunt the original source,' but was making fun of the rival house—the Rose—and of the Admiral's men who were then playing there under the leadership of Edward Alleyn. Ancient Pistol is no booklover, but a patron of the theatre, and when he misquotes *Tamburlaine,* he is thinking not of Marlowe but of his idol Alleyn ; and so he stalks about the stage, giving a very fair imitation of Alleyn's best tragic style.

> These be good humours indeed ! Shall pack-horses
> And hollow pamper'd jades of Asia,
> Which cannot go but thirty mile a-day,
> Compare with Caesars, and with Cannibals,
> And Trojan Greekes ? nay, rather damn them with
> King Cerberus ; and let the welkin roar.

Mr. Cowl notes quotations from Chapman's *Blind Beggar of Alexandria,* Peele's *Battle of Alcazar,* Greene's *Alphonsus of Arragon,* in addition to the well known allusions to the *Spanish Tragedy* and *Tamburlaine.* All these plays were in the repertory of the Rose at the time when the two parts of *Henry the Fourth* were written.

Chapman's *Blind Beggar of Alexandria* is one of the most extravagant plays that even the Admiral's ever produced. The blind beggar is a protean person who assumes several disguises and under each woos a different lady. One of his personalities is that of Count Hermes, a veritable huff-snuff, who makes great play with his pistol. ' Now by this pistol, which is God's angel,' he swears. Bardolph's nose puts Falstaff in mind of the fiery Count. ' If thou wert in any way given to virtue, I would swear by thy face ; my oath should be, " By this fire, that's God's angel." ' The phrase tickled the

audience ; Dekker parodied it again in *Sattromastix* at the Globe, ' By this Candle (which is none o' Gods angels).'

A better known parody is Pistol's ' Then feed and be fat, my fair Calipolis.' Pistol addresses these ' terrible words ' to Mrs. Quickly and Doll Tearsheet ; originally they belonged to *The Battle of Alcazar,* where the heroic, not to say ranting, Moor, Muly Mohamet, brings the flesh of a lioness to his wife and son who are starving in the desert.

> Hold thee, Calipolis, feed and faint no more ;
> This flesh I forced from a lioness,
> Meat of a princess, for a princess meet . . .
> Feede and be fat that we may meet the foe
> With strength and terror to revenge with wrong.

The most elaborate parody occurs in the *First Part of Henry the Fourth,* where Falstaff and the Prince act their play and practise an answer for the unpleasant interview with the King which is to come.

' Weep not, sweet queen, for trickling tears are vain,' begins Falstaff, addressing the giggling hostess.

' O the father,' she comments, ' how he holds his countenance.'

' For God's sake, lords, convey my tristful queen ;
For tears do stop the floodgates of her eyes '—

' O Jesu, he doth it as like one of these harlotry players as ever I see.' The repetition of the word ' tears ' is suggestive ; did Alleyn make a habit of saying, ' O eyes, no eyes, but fountains filled with tee-ers " ?

Mr. Cowl further suggests that ' when Falstaff exclaims, " this chair shall be my state, this dagger my sceptre, and this cushion my crown," an Elizabethan audience would no doubt have seen and enjoyed an allusion to the *Spanish Tragedy,* where Hieronimo [just before his play is to begin] calls to Balthasar, " Bring a chair and a cushion for the king," and a stage direction

follows : ' Enter Balthazar with a chaire V I venture to disagree with Mr. Cowl's suggestion. It is more likely that the audience would have been reminded of Sacrepant's speech in *Orlando Furioso :*

> For when I come and set me downe to rest,
> My chaire presents a throne of Maiestie ;
> And when I set my bonnet on my head,
> Me thinkes I fit my forhead for a Crowne ;
> And when I take my trunchion in my fist,
> A Scepter then comes tumbling in my thoughts ;
> My Dreams are princely, all of Diademes.

Orlando Furioso was another of the Admiral's plays. However, the chair and the cushion of the *Spanish Tragedy* are certainly honoured with mention in *Much Ado About Nothing* in the scene where Dogberry and the Sexton are about to examine the prisoners. ' Is our whole dissembly appeared,' asks Dogberry. Verges, fully alive to the importance of the occasion, interrupts with, ' O, a stool and a cushion for the sexton.'

One editor, in commenting on this line, says ' a stool and a cushion, i.e., for the writing. Shakespeare is represented writing on a cushion in his bust at Stratford.' This is ingenious ; but on the whole I feel that the evidence points to the fact that the cushion was used to sit on. A cushion is not a convenient writing pad—except on a funeral monument.

In the play scene in *I Henry the Fourth*, Shakespeare not only parodies the Jeronimo of his rivals, he parodies, by anticipation, his own very moving scene where the King rebukes his erring son. Small wonder if poor Henslowe, whom we do not suspect to have had a vast sense of humour, should have been puzzled and angry, not knowing how to retaliate.

But this is not the end of the story. When *Henry the Fourth* was first written, the Chamberlain's were playing at the Curtain in Shoreditch, the Admiral's at the Rose

on the Bankside in Southwark. In the summer of 1599, the Chamberlain's moved to the new Globe, not a stone's throw away from the Rose. It was bad enough for Henslowe's players to be ridiculed by the rival company when there was the river and the city between them ; but now they could literally hear the shouts of applause from the new house. There was much anxious deliberation in the tiring house of the Rose, and in the end the Admiral's had a device to make all even.

In Shakespeare's *Henry the Fourth* the fat knight had originally been Sir John Oldcastle, and there had been trouble with Lord Cobham which resulted in a change of name to Falstaff. The company now summoned their band of hacks—Munday, Drayton, Wilson and Hathaway—and set them to work on writing a play on the real Oldcastle. The first part was finished on 16 October, 1599, and rehearsals were hurried on. Then came the first performance on 1st November, wherein the prologue very unctuously sneers at Shakespeare's wicked misrepresentation of the real Oldcastle.

> The doubtful Title (Gentlemen) prefixt
> Vpon the Argument we haue in hand,
> May breecle suspencc, and wrongfully disturbe
> The peaceful quiet of your setled thoughts :
> To stop which scruple, let this brief suffise.
> It is no pamper'd glutton we present,
> Nor aged Councellor to youthful sinne,
> But one, whose vertue shone aboue the rest,
> A valiant Martyr, and a vertuous peere,
> In whose true faith and loyaltie exprest
> Vnto his soueraigne, and his countries weale :
> We striue to pay that tribute of our Loue,
> Your fauours merite, let faire Truth be grac'te,
> Since forg'de inuention former time defac'te.

And, in order that there might be no doubt about the intention of the play, it was entitled *The true and honourable historie, of the life of Sir John Old-castle, the good Lord Cobham.*

The first performance on 1st November was a success and the Admiral's were delighted, as the entry in Henslowe's Diary shows :

> Receved of Mr. Hincheloe for Mr. Munday & the Reste of the poets at the playnge of Sr. John oldcastell the ferste tyme . . . xs.[1]

which is noted in the margin ' as a gefte.' It was obviously a momentous occasion, for ' geftes ' are rare in Henslowe's accounts.

As an answer to Falstaff, *Sir John Oldcastle* is not very devastating ; but it is quite a revealing commentary on the mentality of the Admiral's Men.

In the play scene in *Hamlet*, Shakespeare made his most important pronouncement on the art of playing. The lines are so well known that I quote them with apology, because there is perhaps more in the passage than has usually been recognised.

HAMLET. Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue : but if you mouth it, as many of your players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus, but use all gently ; for in the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, the whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness. Oh, it offends me to the soul to hear a robustious periwigpated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags to split the ear of the groundlings, who for the most part are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb-shows and noise ! I would have such a fellow whipped for o'erdoing Termagant ; it out-herods Herod : pray you, avoid it.

FIRST PLAYER. I warrant your honour.

HAMLET. Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor : suit the action to the word, the word to the action ; with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature : for any thing so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and

[1] *Henslowe's Diary,* edited by **W. W. Greg, i, 113.**

now, was and is to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature ; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure. Now this overdone or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve ; the censure of the which one must in your allowance o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. Oh, there be players that I have seen play, and heart others praise, and that highly, not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent of Christians nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted and bellowed that I have thought some of Nature's journey-men had made men and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably !

Now it is clear that these theories could not have been so boldly announced had they not also been the practise of Burbage and his company. The points should be noticed. Firstly, he lays great emphasis on restraint—' use all gently,' ' o'erstep not the modesty of nature,' ' you must beget a temperance that may give it a smoothness,' ' The purpose of playing is to hold the mirror up to nature ' ; this does not mean ' realism ' as we understand it—Shakespeare of all people could never have pleaded for that—but restraint in all things, avoiding rant on the one side and excess of humours on the other.

Secondly, the actor is to appeal to the judicious, and not to lay himself out to catch the applause of the unskilful groundling or those whose lungs are tickle o' the sere.

Thirdly, the actors are to avoid the faults of certain tragedians and certain clowns. Now, as we have seen, when Shakespeare says, ' let those who play your clowns,' he means—as everyone present knew—' don't imitate that fellow Will Kemp and his pitiful ambition,' So too when he says, ' there be players that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly,' he is again referring to a definite person, a tragedian, who has made his name by strutting and bellowing. Neither Shakespeare, nor for that matter any other Elizabethan

dramatist, made such pertinent remarks as these without a definite purpose, and it is no very wild guess that Edward Alleyn is here intended.

Alleyn had retired from the Admiral's in 1597, but in 1600 he returned to the stage, and his presence with the rival company was a dangerous counter-attraction. Moreover, *Hamlet* was first acted when the theatre war was raging and theatrical competition between the three leading companies—the Chamberlain's, the Admiral's and the Children at Blackfriars—was at its highest.

Alleyn's chief humour was for a tyrant, or a part to tear a cat in. He was Orlando in Greene's *Orlando Furtoso,* he was Faustus, Barabas in *The Jew of Malta ;* above all he was Tamburlane, and Jeronimo in *The Spanish Tragedy.* All these parts were made for ' strutting and bellowing,' and it is a tribute rather to Alleyn's skill than to the dramatist that some of the lines from these plays were so often quoted—' Go by, go by, Jeronimo,' ' holla ye pampered jades of Asia,' and so forth.

Moreover the whole of Hamlet's advice to the players is the presentation of the case of the Chamberlain's men in a controversy on acting and stagecraft which was acute during the Stage War. Alleyn and the Admiral's, appealing chiefly to a citizen audience, represented the old tradition, plenty of good incident and noise, blood and thunder melodrama, and all the marvels of the stage carpenter. Jonson and the Children, patronised by a select and aristocratic audience, stood for the newest theories in psychology and dramatic technique. Burbage, Shakespeare and the Chamberlain's occupied the middle course and appealed to the judicious spectator. It is not difficult to find similar types of actor and of playgoer in London to-day.

But there is more in the play scene than this. Shakespeare has the difficult dramatic problem of making the play within the play very distinct from the rest of the

action. He could never avoid a joke, and the play scene in *Hamlet* is one of his best. In order to show how different the journeyman player is from the real actor, he inserts a play of the Alleyn type performed in the Alleyn way. *The Murder of Gonzago* is introduced by a dumb show. Dumb show was an ancient device to explain the action that is to follow which Shakespeare himself had never used ; but Alleyn and the Admiral's loved the ' inexplicable dumb show and noise ' so roundly condemned by Hamlet. Of the surviving plays in their repertory during these years, there are dumb shows in such old favourites as *The Battle of Alcazar, Alphonsus of Arragon, The Spanish Tragedy* and *Old Fortunatus.*

And the dumb show in *The Murder of Gonzago* is inexplicable. Claudius and Gertrude sit blandly through the pantomime without comment or movement. Ophelia in her innocence, turns to Hamlet and asks :

OPHELIA. What means this, my lord ?

HAMLET. Marry, this is miching mallecho ; it means mischief.

OPHELIA. Belike this show imports the argument of the play.

[The Prologue enters.

HAMLET. We shall know by this fellow : the players cannot keep counsel ; they'll tell all.

OPHELIA. Will *he* tell us what this show meant ?

The play itself opens with a delightful parody of antiquated rant :

> Full thirty times hath Phoebus' cart gone round
> Neptune's salt wash and Tellus' orbed ground,
> And thirty dozen moons with borrowed sheen,
> About the world have times twelve thirties been——

bakers' dozens presumably.

The whole play was acted with deliberate over-emphasis, and exaggerated action. ' Begin murderer,'

cries Hamlet to Lucianus who has been gesticulating during nine lines of dialogue, ' leave thy damnable faces and begin.'

Nor need it cause anyone surprise that Shakespeare should use this scene for a good topical joke at the expense of his professional rivals. It is part of his art ; he introduces the porter in *Macbeth* with his talk of equivocators, and the grave diggers before the funeral of Ophelia to distract the attention of his audience from the plot for a few moments so that the crisis which is to follow may fall with the greater emphasis.

Of Shakespeare's own skill as an actor unfortunately but little is known. Aubrey says, ' This William being inclined naturally to poetry and acting, came to London, I guesse, about 18 ; and was an actor at one of the play-houses, and did act exceedingly well,' But then Aubrey is quite unreliable, especially when he is guessing. Rowe could discover little more ; ' tho' I have inquir'd,' he says, I could never meet with any further account of him this way, than that the top of his performance was the ghost in his own *Hamlet"* Oldys records a tradition that ' One of Shakespeare's younger brothers,[1] who lived to a good old age, even some years, as I compute, after the restoration of King Charles II, would, in his younger days, come to London, to visit his brother Will, as he called him, and be a spectator of him as an actor in some of his own plays. This custom, as his brother's fame enlarged, and his dramatic entertainments grew the greatest support of our principal, if not of all our theatres, he continued it seems long after his brother's death, even to the latter end of his own life. The curiosity at this time of the most noted actors to learn something from him of his brother, &c., they justly held in the highest veneration. And it may be well believed, as there was besides a kinsman a descendant

[1] Mrs. Slopes denies the existence of this brother ; but the story seems genuine enough.

of the family, who was then a celebrated actor. The opportunity made them greedily inquisitive into every little circumstance, more especially in his dramatick character, which his brother could relate of him. But he, it seems, was so stricken in years and, possibly, his memory so weakened with infirmities (which might make him the easier pass for a man of weak intellects) that he could give them but little light into their inquiries : and all that they could be recolle6ted from him of his brother Will in that station, was the faint, general, and almost lost ideas he had of having once seen him act a part in one of his own comedies, wherein being to impersonate a decrepid old man, he wore a long beard and appeared so weak and drooping, and unable to walk, that he was forced to be supported and carried by another person to a table, at which he was seated, among some company who were eating, and one of them sung a song.' This character was presumably that of Adam in *As You Like It.*

Nor need we assume that Shakespeare's final opinions of the actor's lot are summed up in Sonnets CX and CXI,

> Alas, 'tis true I have gone here and there,
> And made myself a motley to the view,
> Gor'd mine own thoughts, sold cheap what is most dear,
> Made old offences of affeftions new ;

And

> O, for my sake do you with Fortune chide,
> The guilty goddess of my harmed deeds,
> That did not better for my life provide
> Than public means which public manners breeds.

The *Sonnets* were written before Shakespeare reached maturity as a dramatist, and the discontent which he expresses at the beginning of his career is the price that everyone pays who submits his work to public censure, as he sees critics blindly misunderstanding his best,

perversely praising his worst. The critics who did not misunderstand were the other members of the Chamberlain's Company.

In this paper I have perhaps laid too much emphasis on the personal aspect, but I feel that in the past scholars have been prone to regard Shakespeare as a bookish man who drew much of his inspiration from literature. Personally I should doubt whether he read half the books which are claimed as sources of his plots or his ideas. In Aubrey's words, ' he did gather humours of men dayly wherever they came ' ; in the street, round the fire, in the tavern, in the country inns as he travelled to and from Stratford to London ; but above all from the men with whom he was most intimate, his fellowship of players.

G. B. HARRISON

SHAKESPEARE AS MAN OF THE THEATRE

IT is a modern fashion, and the dictates of fashion must be obeyed, to speak of the art of the theatre, and of men of the theatre. A new attitude has made us pay homage to Mr. Granville Barker and Mr. Gordon Craig in England, to Professor Max Reinhardt in Germany, to Jacques Copeau, Firmin Gemier and Pitoeff in France, to Stanislavsky, Tairov and Meierhold in Russia. All these men have a sense of the theatre, all have been actors, all are producers. It is the object of this paper to examine Shakespeare's sense of the stage, and of the theatre, his understanding of the nature and evolution of theatrecraft, to expose the problems he faced and solved, to see how far the modern conception of a ' producer ' may be found valid in helping to understand Shakespeare as ' a man of the theatre.'

We are helped in our enquiry if we can prove the existence of an art of the theatre and an international interest in theatrecraft in and before Shakespeare's lifetime. The best of all citations is from Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy.*

Hieronymo says :

> The Italian Tragedians were so sharpe of wit,
> That in one houres meditation
> They would perform anything in action.

Lorenzo replies :

> And well it may, for I have seene the like
> In Paris, amongst the French Tragedians.

There was an art, purely of the theatre, not concerned with any formal stage, made up largely of that ' eloquence of the body ' admitted even by its enemies.

Illustration to MS. scenario of the *Commedia dell' Arte,* early seventeenth century.
K. M. Miklashevsky. La Commedia dell' Arte. Moscow. 1914-17

Italy, with its *Commedia dell' Arte,* its comedy of types and vivid gesture and improvisation, taught France where the stiff reconstructed theatre of the Renaissance impinged on the elaborate staging of the mystery and passion plays. In France in 1571, Lord Buckhurst, part author of *Gorboduc,* saw ' a comedie of Italians that for the good mirth and handling thereof deserved singular comendacion.' This same troupe of the Gelosi laid the foundations of French theatrical art, and a little later even Moliere was not ashamed to learn his art from Scaramouche.

In England the ' producer ' has never been a prominent figure. The very name does not go back more than thirty years, the years in which his function, over and above that of stage-manager, has become naturalised. As sole director of the conscious artistic unity of a performance he is, as a result of the theatrical degradation of the late 17th, the 18th and early 19th centuries, often regarded as a modern invention. Yet we have actually a portrait of a continental producer in a miniature painted by Jean Fouquet in 1461. He wears a long clerical robe and cape, a tiara-like hat on his head, holds a prompt-book in his left-hand, and with a baton in his right directs a beautifully organised medley of late mediaeval religious performers. We have the greater faith in the accuracy of this representation since Fouquet is known to have assisted in preparing a theatrical welcome for the entry of Louis XI into Tours in 1461. A little later we hear of Jean Bouchet, whose success as producer of a Passion play at Poitiers in 1508 caused his services to be demanded all over France and Belgium. When even vast sums did not tempt him to go in person, he sent his prompt books and advice, chiefly about costume, and sweetness and softness of voice, and clarity of articulation. In England, until later, costume that ' was good enough for an English bishop was good enough for Ananias and Caiaphas ' ; but in France it was decreed that

' Pharisees must not be dressed like Pilate,' In France competent producers were haled in from distant cities, in England the producer was often the Mayor and Corporation. Later, in i 547, we have the famous contract for the Passion Play at Valenciennes, the document that gives us the classical picture of the multiple staging system. Therein we hear of stage discipline, of the supreme authority of the producer, to whom no complaints are to be made, particularly at rehearsals, and of a ban against the haunting of taverns during the days of performance.

Our knowledge of mediaeval staging has, until recently, been built up by laborious reconstruction of tiny facts and vast conjectures. To Professor Gustave Cohen of the Sorbonne, we owe the discovery of the most valuable document in the history of the early European theatre. It was published only last year, and is no less than the producer's complete prompt book for the great Passion Play at Mons in 1501. We have, in its modern form nearly a thousand columns of close print describing the actual presentation of a religious cycle at the summit of its magnificance. We have the full constitution of the play, the names of the players, their professions, their parts, their entrances and exits, their positions, their a6tions, their first and last lines, a description of the scenery, of the musical accompaniment, of the machinery and stage affects even to the provision of a Deluge for Noah and a moving star for the Nativity. The producers, whose official title was ' Superintendents of the Performance ' or ' Conductors of the Secrets,' were two brothers, Guillaume and Jehan de la Chière.

In this mediaeval theatrical system the manner of playing appears to have been as rigidly laid down as that of a player in an orchestra and the resemblance of this huge prompt book to an orchestral score is perhaps the best proof of the autocratic power of the producer. The Renaissance with its ambivalence of submission to classical

authority and indulgence in wild and passionate individuality gave a new world of activity to the actor. In the dialogues of Leone da Sommi of the mid 16th century, in the scenarios of the *Commedia dell' arte* we see the actor compelled to that team work that is inseparable from true theatrical activity, yet permitted liberty so far as his body will adapt itself to the mood of the play. When this liberty swells into license, we have Shakespeare warning his clowns not to speak more than is set down for them.

We shall never know the full details of this gestatory period, but we may hope to recover something of the Elizabethan practice by probing a little further into the European situation of the drama. The theatre of Germany was definitely and admittedly born of the English theatre, and in the documents of its early progress we have material that has not been fully utilised for theatrical history. In the last fifteen years of the 16th century English companies wandered to Germany and Holland and played condensed versions of popular English plays. Their success was prodigious, they were soon forced to act in German, and from the *Englische Komodianteri)* as they were called, grew the German theatre. The best contemporary account is by Fynes Moryson who was at Frankfort in September, 1592 :

> Germany hath some few wandering comedians, more deserving pitty than prayse, for the serious parts are dully penned, and worse acted, and the mirth they make is ridiculous, and nothing lesse than witty (as I formerly have showed). So as I remember that when some of our cast despised stage players came out of England into Germany and played at Franckford in the tyme of the Mart, having neither a complete number of actors, nor any good apparel, nor any ornament of the Stage, yet the Germans, not understanding a worde they sayde, both men and women, flocked wonderfully to see theire gesture and action, rather than heare them, speaking English which they understood not ; and pronouncing pieces and patches

> of English playes which my selfe and som English men there present could not heare without great wearysomenes. Yea myselfe coming from Franckford in the Company of some cheefe merchants Dutch and Flemish, heard them often bragge of the good market they had made, only condoling that they had not the leisure to heare the English players.

Again, in the Netherlands, he says :

> For Commedians, they little praftise that arte, and are the poorest Aftours that can be imagined, as myselfe did see when the Citty of Gertrudenberg being taken by them from the Spanyards, they made bonsfyers and publikly at Leyden represented that action in a play, so rudely as the poore artizans of England would have both penned and acted it much better. So as at the same tyme when some cast players of England came into those partes, the people not understanding what they sayd, only for theere action followed them with wonderfull concourse, yea many young virgins fell in love with some of the players, and followed them from citty to citty, till the magistrates were forced to forbid them to play any more.

This gives a valuable contrast between England which already had a developed art of the theatre, and the northern continent. It is not merely patriotic pride because the statements are supported with naive emphasis from German sources. Balthasar Paumgartner writes to his wife from the same Frankfort Fair visited by Moryson.

> Here are some English actors whose plays I have seen. They have such splendid good music, and are perfect in their dancing and jumping, whose equal I have never yet seen. There are ten or twelve of them, all richly and magnificently clothed.

Our most valuable evidence for the nature of these players' art comes from the work of Jakob Ayrer who wrote 140 plays in 15 years, half of them fortunately lost, but important because he was not original enough to

depart widely from the models he used: Sackville's troupe of players performed in Nuremburg from 26 April to 23 May, 1596, and immediately after their departure Ayrer began his second Roman Drama, containing the figure of John Posset the English clown based on Sackville's favourite role of Johan Bouset. The preface to his *Opus Theatrlcum* speaks of ' everything arranged according to life and so drawn up that everything can be acted and performed in person after the new English manner and style.' The Germans were impressed by the English naturalistic style of a6ting and the complete absorption of each actor in his part. Their imitations afford valuable evidence for the reconstruction of Shakespeare's practice.

In this European situation, Shakespeare grew up and lived. It is not too much to say that there is hardly a detail in the evolution of the theatre of his time with which he is not familiar. He came in time to be a pioneer, to feel that the theatre was still in its crudity, and therefore mocks while learning from the older systems of staging and theatrical presentation. Most of his comment on the older forms of drama is condemnatory, but it is difficult to mock without acquaintance. He laughs, in *Henry V* , iv, 4 : at

> This roaring devil i' the old play, that every one may pare his nails with a wooden dagger.

In *Lear, I,* 2,he gibes at earlier mechanical construction:

> And pat he comes like the catastrophe of the old comedy.

In *Love's Labour s Lost's* the conventional ending is blown upon :

> **Our** wooing doth not end like an old play,
> Jack hath not Jill.

Justice Shallow, who was no Roscius, is permitted to remember his mummings,

I remember at Mile-end-Greene, when I lay at *Clements* Inn, I was then Sir *Dagonet* in *Arthurs* Show.

He knew of, and may have seen the miracles, and calls upon them when he talks of the theatre and out-Heroding of Herod. The creaking solemnity of Cambises vein is used to mark the pompousness of Polonius or the mock seriousness of Feste. Seneca to him is heavy, dumb show and amateur pageantry are suspect, and the pious moralities give him occasion for parody. It is difficult to prove parody, but much of Launce's speech about his shoes in *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, some of Falstaff's comment on his honour, and all of Launcelot Gobbo's speech in *Merchant of Venice, II*, ,ii, can be aced back to the debating systems of this old form.

Certainely, my conscience will serve me to run from this Jew my Maister : the fiend is at mine elbow, and tempts me, saying to me, Gobbo, Launcelot Gobbo, good Launcelot, or good Gobbo, or good Launcelot Gobbo, use your legs, take the start, run awaie : my conscience saies no ; take heede honest Launcelot, take heed honest Gobbo, or as afore-said honest Launcelot Gobbo, does not runne, scorne running with thy heeles ; well, the most coragious fiend bids me pack, *via* saies the fiend, away saics the fiend, for the heavens rouse up a brave minde saies the fiend, and run ; well, my conscience hanging about the necke of my heart, saies verie wisely to me ; my honest friend Launcelot, being an honest mans sonne, or rather an honest womans sonne, for indeede my Father did something smack, something grow too ; he had a kinde of taste ; wel, my conscience saies Launcelot bouge not, bouge saies the fiend, bouge not saies my conscience, conscience say I you counsaile well, fiend say I you you counsaile well, to be rul'd by my conscience I should stay with the Jew my Maister, (who God blesse the marke) is a kinde of divell; and to run away from the Jew I should be ruled by the fiend, who saving you reverence is the divell himselfe : certainely the Jew is the verie divell incarnation, and in my conscience, my conscience is a kinde of hard conscience, to offer to counsaile

me to stay with the Jew ; the fiend gives the more friendly counsaile : I will runne fiend, my heeles are at your commandement, I will runne.

It seems, moreover, no accident that in the plays used or alleged to have been touched up by Shakespeare, we have a museum of the evolution of theatrecraft, a museum that should be utilized to peer into Shakespeare's workshop.

What are the problems of a man of the theatre ? First it may be suggested that the actual staging and stage carpentry are somewhat from our purpose. His real business is the disposition of characters, the spacing, the grouping, the business of ensemble, the maintenance of continuity and variety, the achievement of various systems of illusion ; whether boys as women, day as night, two men as the armies of France, two human throats as a vast tempest, the maintenance of melody and harmony, the establishment of unity and poetry and even philosophy amid the trivialities of artificial thunder and glued-on beards. Shakespeare took the shape of his theatre for granted and frankly accepted and utilised its limitations. In Pericles Act II, the prologue says :

> In your imagination hold
> This stage the ship, upon whose deck
> The sea-tost Pericles appears to speak.

In Henry V the chorus say :

> And so our Scene must to the Battaile flye,
> Where, O for pitty, we shall much disgrace,
> With foure or five most vile and ragged foyles,
> (Right ill disposed, in brawle ridiculous)
> The Name of Agincourt.

Where then does he clearly show his sense of the theatre, of the movement of human bodies sculpturally on a stage viewed almost from all angles ? In *Hamlet*, Act I, Scene v, where the ghost in the cellarage drags

Hamlet and his friends about the stage. In *Macbeth*, Act V, Scene iii, where he never forgets for a moment that Macbeth is putting on his armour.

Macbeth : *Give me mine armour.*
How docs your patient, doctor ?
. . . . . .
Throw physic to the dogs ; I'll none of it.
Come, put mine armour on ; give me my staff.
Seyton, send out. Doctor, the thanes fly from me.
Come, sir, dispatch, If thou couldst, doctor, cast
The water of my land, find her disease,
And purge it to a sound and pristine health,
I would applaud thee to the very echo,
That should applaud again—*Pull't off, I say,*—
What rhubarb, cyme, or what purgative drug,
Would scour these English hence ? Hear'st thou of them ?

Doctor : Ay, my good lord ; your royal preparation
Makes us hear something.

Macbeth : *Bring it after me.*
I will not be afraid of death and bane
Till Birnam forest come to Dunsinane.

where the gestures help the psychological conduct of the drama. Clearest of all is it seen in *Antony and Cleopatra,* Act IV, Scenes iii and iv, where the soldiers come on guard—' good night—good night,'—strange music of hoboyes under the stage—the night becomes conscious and its passing is marked, and then in the reluctant dawn Cleopatra helps Antony on with his armour, for Antony will stay no longer abed, and later the captain comes to say the morn is ready—and so time moves in the enchantment of Shakespeare's illusion.

He has restrictions all the time—he works with well marked conventions : two colours symbolise two armies ; space is gained when kings and armies march about the stage in procession—one of the chief of Elizabethan stage conventions. In *Henry V,* before Agincourt, the

shabby coats of England contrast with the bright armour of the French—the Romans and Egyptians are differentiated with subtle art in *Antony and Cleopatra*, the British and the Romans in *Cymbeline.* Trumpets make a battle. Time passes in divers ways. The stage must be emptied and therefore bold formal processions end the tragedies, *Lear* with a dead march, *Hamlet* with Fortinbras bearing off the bodies and then a peal of ordnance shot off. This practical necessity of clearing the stage was so present that when, in the German imitations it is necessary to leave a dragon to be found by one of the players—the stage direction says specifically

> This worm must not be removed.

Such general indications almost convince us that the Elizabethans would have understood our notion of a ' producer.' Fortunately we have definite evidence on the matter. John Aubrey in writing of Shakespeare, points a contrast. ' Now B. Johnson was never a good actor but an excellent instructor,' and the Induction to *Cynthia's Revels,* 1600, has :

> I would speak with your author, where is he ?
>
> Not this way, I assure you. Sir, we are not so officiously befriended by him, as to have his presence in the tiring-house, to prompt us aloud, stamp at the book-holder, swear for our properties, curse the poor tireman, rail the music out of tune, and sweat for every venial trespass we commit.

and in *Bartholomew Fair* a little later [1614] :

> I am looking, lest the Poet heare me . . . hee has kick'd me three, or foure times about the Tyring-house for but offering to putt in, with my experience.

but most important is evidence from a German writer Johannes Rhenanus in prefacing a play adapted from the English ' *Lingua* 'in 1613 :

> So far as actors are concerned they, as I noticed in England, are daily instructed, as it were in a school so that even the most eminent actors have to allow themselves to be instructed by the Dramatists, which arrangement gives life and ornament to a well-written play, so that it is no wonder that the English players (I speak of the skilled ones) surpass and have the advantage of others.

This seems to be a direct allusion to rehearsals, to which Rhenanus was perhaps admitted. In any case, in Quince we have Shakespeare's satirical portrait of a producer at work.

We may now endeavour to reconstruct what took place on the stage, how Shakespearean players acted. We can be certain that Elizabethan acting was bolder than now, that speech was much quicker, that gesture was wilder, that bodily movements were more actorish. It is still possible to see the equivalent of Shakespeare's audience at the few remaining melodrama theatres of London, at Collins' Music Hall or the Elephant, where *Sweeney Todd—the Demon Barber of Fleet Street* and *Maria Marten or the Murder in the Red Barn* are still played. There can be found, perhaps not the Elizabethan stench of garlic—but one might easily

> be pasted
> To the barmy jacket of a bere-brewer.

There, too, will be found those ' Squirrels that want nuts,' who are warned by Shirley, ' Pray do not crack the benches.' There will be found an audience alive to every jest, quick to accept the fun of exaggeration, to distinguish between good and evil, to hiss at vice and applaud virtue. There the acting is perhaps our nearest to Shakespeare's acting. There illusion is complete. There the good wife of *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* makes her comment on the gladness and the sadness of the scenical happenings.

Jonson, in his *Staple of News* used the term ' over-act.'

The actor ' does over-act, and having' got the habit of it, will be monstrous still in spite of counsel.' The stamping, robustious player existed

> whose conceit
> Lies in his hamstring, and doth think it rich
> To hear the wooden dialogue and sound
> 'Twixt his stretched footings.

And we learn something of Alleyn's manner of playing Tamburlaine from T.M.'s *The Blacke Booke* (1604) : ' the spindle-shanke Spyders . . . went stalking over his head, as if they had bene conning of *Tamburlaine.'* Women when distraught rushed in with ' their haire about their eares.' Brutus ' suddenly arose and walked about, musing and sighing, with his arms across.' Othello shouts O, O, O, and falls on the bed. Boyet says he is ' stabbed with laughter,' and acts accordingly. Regan, in the old play of *King Lear,*

> Knits her brow, and bytes her lips
> And Stamps and makes a dumb show of disdayne

the affected Boyet darts his hand, and the very stairs kiss his feet, i.e., even his walk is indicated. In *Titus,* the mutilated Lavinia tosses a book about and turns over pages with her stumps, and Titus himself asks,

> How can I grace my talk,
> Wanting a hand to give it action.

If this is the general condition of gesture, how then could the German writer speak of the charm and appropriateness of gesture and Shirley of ' graceful and unaffected action ' ? Delicacy in acting can be amply and wonderfully proved from Shakespeare. Restrained emotion is shown in *Coriolanus,* v. 3, where the folio stage direction reads, after Volumnia's speech of pleading

> Holds her by the hand silent.

and in *Macbeth,* Act IV, Scene iii, the scene of exquisite management and restraint when Macduff is told of his wife's death, he pulls his hat over his face and is silent.

Malcolm : Mercifull Heaven :
What man, ne're pull your hat upon your browes :
Give sorrow words; the griefe that do's not speake,
Whispers the o're-fraught heart, and bids it breake.

Perhaps it was the stage quality in these lines that Ford expanded to majestic proportions in his *Broken Heart.* In *Richard* //, we have a gesture exquisitely poised and used magnificently as a structural symbol, in the march of the play's action. In Aft III, Scene ii, comes Richard's sad speech on hearing of his defeat,

Let's talk of graves, of worms and epitaphs.

He speaks of death,

Within the hollow crown
That rounds the mortal temples of a king
Keeps Death his court and there the antic sits,
Scoffing his state and grinning at his pomp,
. . . . .
Comes at the last and with a little pin
Bores through his castle wall, and farewell King !
Cover your heads and mock not flesh and blood
With solemn reverence :

Clearly he has wrenched off his crown at ' farewell king,' an omen of the abdication later, all present sweep off their headgear to avoid being covered in the presence of an uncovered king.

Those who begrudge the actor or the singer his concentrated fame, forget that his, even more than the tumbler's or dancer's, is a short-lived fame, vanishing with the echoes of his voice. The 19th century, with its

slow deliberate intellectual distortions of famous speeches, almost ruined our understanding of the Shakespearean world of sound. It is clear that the Elizabetheans spoke quickly and distinctly to achieve the two or three hours traffic of the stage. It must be remembered that much of it was open-air speaking. Overbury said of ' an excellent actor,' perhaps of Burbage,

> for his voice, 'tis not lower than the prompter nor louder than the foil or target.

In the *Spanish Tragedy*, we have a hint in praise of the ' Oxford accent ' :

Hier. : It was determined to have beene acted,
By gentlemen and schollers too ;
Such as could tell what to speake.
Bal. : And now it shall be said, by Princes and Courtiers
Such as can tell how to speak.

We may recover at least a fragment of Shakespearean difcion from Shakespeare's own joke about the producer who could not understand punctuation. In *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* V, i, Quince enters as Prologue, and the punctuation kept faithfully, through Quarto and Folio, points the joke.

Pro. : If we offend, it is with our good will.
That you should thinke, we come not to offend,
But with good will. To shew our simple skill,
That is the true beginning of our end.
Consider then, we come but in despight.
We do not come, as minding to content you,
Our true intent is. All for your delight,
We are not heere. That you should here repent you,
The actors are at hand ; and by their show,
You shall know all, that you are like to know.

The comments that follow, exquisitely and almost foppishly punuated may serve as a contribution to the

present-day quarrels about the dramatic use of stops in Shakespeare's works.

Theseus : This fellow doth not stand upon points.

Lysander : He hath rid his Prologue, like a rough Colt : he knowes not the stop. A good morall my Lord. It is not enough to speake, but to speake true.

Hippolyta : Indeed hee hath plaid on his Prologue, like a childe on a Recorder, a sound, but not in government.

Theseus : His speech was like a tangled chaine : nothing impaired, but all disordered. Who is next ?

Although it is probable that the Elizabethan actor, especially in bold thunderous plays, spoke almost in an avalanche, there can be little doubt that the prologues and epilogues were regarded as special displays of elocution, and being written and punctuated to that end, still retain their magic, that reaches a summit in the epilogue to *As You Like It.* How far the soliloquy was an exercise in diction will never be known. It has a peculiar emphasis where it is an element in exposition or character-building, and derived vast theatrical relief owing to the special contact established when the actor advanced to ' the skirt of the stage,' and spoke his lines into the individual ears of his audience.

Before we examine the more delicate function of the clown in the Shakespearean system, it would be well to glance at him in the raw state from which Shakespeare refined him. His chief fault lay in straying from the text, though Thomas Hughes, many years before, complained of similar behaviour in the Gentlemen of Gray's Inn, in their treatment of his *Misfortunes of Arthur*, 'here set downe as it past from under his handes and as it was presented excepting certaine wordes and lines, where some of the Actors either helped their memories by brief omission ; or fitted their acting by some alteration.' Hamlet's complaint was clear enough, and I am tempted

to see an allusion to an early form of his advice to the players in Robert Arnim's statement in his *Quips upon Questions or A clownes conceite on occasion offered.* By Clunnyco de Curtanio Snuffe. 1600

> True it is, he playes the Foole indeed ;
> But in the Play he playes it as he must.

In any case this is the only confession I have been able to find in which a clown, in his own person, admits any restraint laid on him. The clown's tricks are many, from eating bread and butter through a curtain to playing with huge slippers or big boots. Kemp's slippers were as famous then as Little Tich's or Mr. Charles Chaplin's to-day, and Sackville, who used the same trick, was described by a German poet in 1597 as wearing shoes ' neither pincheth him a whit.' The German fools took over the English clown's drum and fife, they came on with armour back to front, and a German stage direction shows one of the rare concrete allusions to the necessity of getting a laugh.

> John Pansser comes in wondrously clad, not clownishly but venerably and honourably, yet so that there is something to laugh at. He takes his hat off, bows to all four corners of the stage, clears his throat, wanders around a long time, and when that raises a laugh, he laughs too and waves his hands.

From the German imitations we have some valuable hints concerning details of stage behaviour and stage affects. In the *Spanish Tragedy* the direction for Hieronymo is, ' He bites out his tongue.' In Ayrer's adaptation, ' he produces a knife, cuts his tongue off, throws it away, and holds a blood stained cloth to his mouth.' In the death scene, when Petrian shoots Niclaus, ' he has inwardly a small squirt full of red liquid. This he presses as if he were clutching his wound, squirts the liquid through a little hole on to his

belly, like blood, and rolls round till he dies.' These details take us back to the English *Cambises*, where, ' Enter Crueltie and Murder with bloody hands,' and when Smirdis is killed, Crueltie cries

> Even now I strike his body to wound :
> Beholde now his blood springs out on the ground,

and the stage direction reads, ' A little bladder of Vineger prickt.' In another play the storming of Jerusalem is minutely described for stage purposes and would repay careful examination, while rain is produced in this wise :

> The waterworks are so arranged that the water is poured into a hanging dish hidden above and the dish has a string behind it, so that when John conveniently pulls the string the water falls into a sieve, that is also covered over with leaves and falls on John and makes him somewhat wet.

It would be easy to carry this discussion of the material side of the Elizabethan stage much further, to speak of costume and make-up, of ghosts and storms, thunder, atmospheric affects and extemporising, of properties and loose heads, of ' noises off.' All these things, though important in helping us to get the ' feel ' of the theatrical practice of Shakespeare's time can be regarded as little more than the canvas and pigments with which the painter works, and in their highest form as the mere subject-matter that a Signorelli or a Cezanne forces to his own ends, whether of design or significance.

Let us be bold and take Shakespeare's greatest play. *King Lear*, that by igth century distorting criticism has been bracketed with *Love's Labour's Lost*, as unplayable. It contains more problems of the theatre than almost any other existing play. In Germany, at any rate, to play a good *King Lear* is the summit of an actor's career. The problems of production are of the highest complexity, arising out of Shakespeare's manipulation of his theatrical material. There is not, from beginning to end

of the play, one single stage direction giving the scene, it has no ' local habitation and a name,' Such localisation as there is comes from within the text. We are thrown back immediately to the actors whose groupings and movements and linked speeches must provide the theatrical unity over and above the dramatic unity of the plot and its intellectual problem. Modern dramatists apart from sentimental entertainers fear this homelessness and timelessness. Only a rare piece like Benavente's *Los Intereses Creados* dares to build a serious fantasy, ' Once upon a time, in a certain place.' And of all fantasies *King Lear* contains the most impossible when Edgar builds up a cliff with his voice, gives it shape and dimensions from above and below to cure Gloucester's despair. It is a fantasy that can exist only within the conditions of the actor's art, and is so written, with mathematical perspective that even the Italian decorated stage of the time could not better, and as for the voices, it would be well to study the changed rhythms. There is a bold difference between Edgar's speech before and after the fancied leap, there has already been a change from his ' Poor Tom ' voice, and this is marked by Gloucester for theatrical, practical purposes, since the poetical description of the cliff would have had comical rather than magical value in a contorted accent, and there are quieter, more composed tones in Gloucester's second voice. I emphasise these important trivialities because it is not in pious philosophical generalities that Shakespeare's art of the theatre can be displayed.

Edgar is the most complex of all Shakespearean parts. No conscious conceited actor dare attempt it. We do not know who played it originally, but it is no unjustifiable assumption that it formed part of Shakespeare's researches into the dramatic funftion, and theatrical capability of the clown or fool, and was performed by an actor, who, if not a genius, possessed enough of that quality to harmonise the part's discordancies and make it

credible on the stage. It is not too much to say that *King Lear* is an arabesque of fools, or that in the evolution of the Shakespearean fool we have the most valuable field of enquiry for the examination of Shakespeare's structural development. It would be difficult to go beyond *King Lear* in complexity of fools. In Lear himself, who is mad, in his pendent professional fool who becomes more foolish in his terror, Gloucester, who is on the verge of suicidal mania, and in Edgar the artificial fool, we have all four grades of genuine, professional, partial and factitious fool. It must not be forgotten that one of the chief of Shakespeare's favourite words is ' fool.' To trace Shakespeare's use in detail is difficult in our uncertainty of his chronology, but we may indicate some landmarks. In *Love's Labour's Lost,* a verbal play, Costard the clown is used for dictionary humour, and uses his body but little more than the others in the *Masque of the Nine Worthies.* In the *Comedy of Errors,* an exercise in dramatic archaeology, the sets of twins, over and above the verbal factor, which is almost a dramatic constant in all Shakespeare's fools, are used for humour from the hall of mirrors. In *Two Gentlemen of Verona,* Speed, after the Spanish manner, is a distorted echo and a crude chorus, but in Launce we have the beginning of the true Shakespearean clown, who, as he must have been in his original form, is closely allied to the music-hall comedian who, with his unaided personality, entertains the audience with his moods and gestures. Of this kind, and in close brotherhood with Launce and his shoes and dog, is Mr. Charles Chaplin, by many regarded as the greatest living actor of to-day. It is not unamusing to note an earlier experiment in the music-hall manner in the cross-talk between Moth and Armado in *Love's Labour's Lost.* In a recent performance of this play in modern costume it was found that the only plausible manner of presenting this scene was to bring the players close to the footlights and give them

the position of display and contact possessed in Elizabethan times by the soliloquy or the explanatory openers of the play. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is a fable with the motto, ' What fools these mortals be.' The dramatic problem is to link the never-ending succession of condescensions with the dramatic irony provided by the theatrical necessity of creating foolishness suited to the three spheres of existence. It is the comic arabesque of which *Lear* is the tragic counterpart. Falstaff is one half of a problem in dramatic psychology, of which the concluding portion is Hamlet, and does not affect the progress of the fool. In *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night* we have the maturity of the Shakespearean clown. He is, in both plays, an independent figure yet linked inextricably with the essential substance of the play. In *As You Like It* Touchstone and Jacques are the two significant figures. Touchstone, a man of the court who has fled to the fields for happiness ; Jacques, who is half-way to revolt against the world and wants to be a fool. Touchstone marries Audrey to close the door against all return to the follies of court life. That this interpretation has theatrical plausibility was proved in a Berlin performance in which Elizabeth Bergner and Fritz Kortner demonstrated the intellectual flexibility of a play that is usually smothered in leaves like the *Babes in the Wood.* In Act III, Scene iii, Jacques and Touchstone play not as lord and clown, but well-nigh as equals, and when Touchstone announces that he is to marry Audrey, a smile appears on Jacques face, growing to a laugh and finally to uncontrolled merriment in which Touchstone joins, the two men of the court have their secret, and a flash of illumination fills the play with more than pastoral quality. Shakespeare is beginning to be serious. *Twelfth Night* is in many ways the most serious of all under a mask of lightness. Its problem is the eternal antagonism of Puritan and light-heart, the protagonists are Feste and Malvolio. In the end Feste wins,

and Malvolio wins, but in his victory Feste is sad. Feste is no boy as so often played, he must be of years to make the conflict with Malvolio more real, more respectful. The clown is here entangled in the main plot which is the Malvolio plot. We may even go so far as to say that the masquerade plot of the Duke and Viola is a kind of extended scenery in which the tragi-comedy can take place. Music may be the food of love to begin with, but music is the substance of tragedy when Feste sings the dirge of his youth at the end. After this, so far as the fool is concerned there is decadence, if we can take decadence to be the excessive preoccupation of the artist with his technique.

Beyond Feste the fool cannot go with impunity, but in two plays Shakespeare makes an attempt to stretch him beyond his function. In *King Lear* as we have seen, the distribution of this function over the chief figures of the play has produced a technical disaster that cannot be redeemed without the return of the original conditions of the stage and perhaps without another genius such as played the original Edgar. The other play, strange as it may seem to bring it within this particular discussion, is *Antony and Cleopatra.* There two of the clown's chief funftions are divided, that of the buffoon is given to Antony on Pompey's galley, that of the chorus to Enobarbus. In this connection it is of some historical interest to note a modern use of Shakespearean technique that has won the highest honours on the modern stage. The substance of Act III, Scene vi, in which Pompey at one side and Caesar, Antony and Lepidus at the other, their armies symbolised by leaders and standards, engage in negotiations while Enobarbus the plain-spoken adds his thread, is, save for Enobarbus' interference, one of the commonest of Elizabethan conventions for the close conflict of powers, whether in war or diplomacy. Mr. Bernard Shaw, in the discussion scene in the tent in *St. Joan,* has gone back, wittingly or

unwittingly, to this device. The power of England in the person of the Earl of Warwick, deals with the power of the Church in the person of the Bishop of Beauvais, and Enobarbus is still present as plain-spoken Stogumber. Perhaps this is Shakespeare's revenge for some of Mr. Shaw's strictures on his theatrical capacity. This discussion has, I hope, hinted at the way in which the practical necessity of having bodily humour in his theatre, was utilized by Shakespeare to produce the subtlest of dramatic essences.

Lest I be accused of neglecting Shakespeare's boards, let us see how Shakespeare himself treats them with sublime insolence. For him the stage has a magic adaptability ; locality, except by accident, has no existence ; space to him has no more logic than in a hashish dream. Thomas Platter on a visit to England in 1599 saw *Julius Ccesar* acted with about fifteen actors, and yet the dramatis personas amount to thirty-three, excluding citizens, senators, soldiers and attendants. If a change of place is to be achieved by a journey, the players move about the stage in full view of the audience ; sometimes a change of scene is made by a character going out by one door and coming in immediately by another ; a general and his standard bearer are sufficient to fill a stage with the symbol of an army ; Romeo bids farewell to Juliet in a room overlooking the garden which on the entrance of her mother becomes,without logical question, another part of the house. With a few trumpet noises and two pairs of men in single combat the ends of a vast battlefield are telescoped within the dimensions of the stage. More wonderful still, and accepted without a blink, is the convention by which the stage may represent two places at once. We scoff at the cinema, yet the convention by which the blank screen may be any place without unity or succession of time, is paralleled in one of the most magical pieces of Shakespearean illusion. In *Richard III,* Act V, Scene ii, to build up the

contrasting moods of Richard and Richmond the night is made to pass. Richmond says :

> The weary sunne, hath made a golden set.

Catesby, a little later, says :

> It's supper time my Lord, it's nine a clocke.

The dead of night passes with the procession of ghosts, then Ratcliffe rouses the King with news of cockcrow, then one of his lords tells Richmond it is four o'clock, the King announces it is an hour past sunrise. For the passing of time there is a more emotional parallel in *Anthony and Cleopatra,* but for the mystery of place it has no parallel. The two armies pitch their tents on either side of the stage, logically the camps are a safe distance apart, and the procession of ghosts in alternate sentences dishearten Richard and comfort Richmond, the simultaneity by goodwill of the audience, is more powerful even than in those affects of the cinema, where the fire engine and the advancing flames are shown in swiftly alternating scenes, or where the reprieve rushes along to the rhythm of the condemned man's progress to the scaffold. Expressionistic and post-expressionistic drama in Europe, in turning to the cinema for its systems of flickering alternation is merely exploring a simple and sometimes crude Elizabethan device.

It is not uninstruftive to take advantage of the bifurcation of the drama in its extremest modern forms, for a technical analysis of the Shakespearean theatre. We have, whether it result in art is a matter for discussion, the completely visual element separated out in the cinema, the completely auditory in the wireless play. Both aspects may teach us something. The purely visual cinema play is one without explanatory sub-titles. Perhaps the greatest film of this kind, *Warning Shadows,* with Fritz Kortner, the great Shakespearean actor, as its chief player, achieved some of its success by taking the

Shakespearean Othello theme as its motive, the bodies of the actors and their groupings were the sole material of the play, and our actors visited it to get a rare opportunity of learning their craft. At the other end of the scale, it has been found that of all plays tested on the wireless, Shakespeare's have been most successful, since there is not only verbal scene painting, but verbal time-indications and lighting affects. The progress of these two attempts at art show remarkable parallels with the development of Elizabethan drama. We have seen the development from crude ' slapstick ' to the miming subtleties of Mr. Charles Chaplin, we have seen the progress from crude action to sensitive psychology, we have even seen, as the Elizabethans saw, the change from a robust joyous mood to something bordering on the morbid. If the cinema is to be an art, we are in the unique position of being able to watch it from its birth, a privilege the modern world has been accorded by no other artistic manifestation. In the wireless play, we have already seen Mr. Richard Hughes, a University wit, placing his drama in a coal mine where the visual element is completely eliminated. From such crude beginnings as these, whether in *Cambises* or *Gammer Gurton's Needle,* grew *Hamlet, The Broken Heart* and *Twelfth Night.*

It is seldom that we are permitted to see a Shakespearean play as one that must win its way by its pure theatrical quality. How then did Shakespeare succeed in subduing the unruly audience of the open-air theatre and make it listen to his play ? In *The Tempest '* A tempestuous noise of thunder and lightning ' is heard, foul and technical words draw the audience's attention and the play is on its way. If that be unavailing, ' Enter Mariners wet,' and ever - powerful realism completes the conquest. I have seen an audience at a melodrama hushed by the explosion of a submarine at the bottom of the sea, and the immediate appearance of

the crew in dripping oilskins. Such violent means are not Shakespeare's sole prerogative, or his complete bag of tricks. Remember that *The Tempest* was his ripest play, his greenest, *Love's Labour's Lost,* begins with a boyish rigmarole,

> Let *Fame,* that all hunt after in their lives.
> Live registred upon our brazen tombes.

Such lines cannot quell or attract the groundlings. Small point as it is, perhaps in such an approach we have assistance in separating court plays from public shows. The same lack of initial attack characterises a *Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Cymbeltne. The Taming of the Shrew* makes a bold enough beginning, and *Twelfth Night* opening with song is safe enough. Of the tragedies, *Coriolanus, Titus Andronicus, Romeo and Juliet, Julius Ctesar, Macbeth* and *Hamlet* all begin with noise and excitement, nuts, apples and pamphlets are forgotten, and the play-world begins. In *Antony and Cleopatra* and *King Lear* the first few lines seem to give an opportunity for the hubbub to subside before the action begins. In *Troilus and Cressida* we have a bold experiment. *Julius Ccesar* is clearly a play in two parts whose *theatrical* interest lies in the first half, including the murder, whose *dramatic* interest is after the manner of a Greek tragedy on the theme of the consequences of Csesar's death. In *Troilus and Cressida* it would seem as if Shakespeare wished to begin the play without pandering. He therefore brings out a prologue to warn the audience

> that our Play
> Leapes ore the vaunt and firstlings of those broyles,
> Beginning in the middle : starting thence away,
> To what may be digested in a Play.

Attention is therefore needed from the very first line, and with this first line :

> Call here my Varlet, He unarme againe,

this fierce play fiercely begins.

We must not forget the contribution made by the actors. The German audiences were impressed by the unprecedented naturalism of the acting and the actor's intensity within his part. Richard Flecknoe, at some distance, it is true, gives this description of Richard Burbage who played Lear, Hamlet and Falstaff among other chief parts :

> He was a delightful Proteus, so wholly transforming himself into his Part, and putting off himself with his cloathes, as he never (not so much as in the Tyring-house) assum'd himself again until the Play was done . . .
>
> He had all the parts of an excellent orator (animating his words with speaking, and speech with action) his Auditors being never more delighted than when he spoke, nor were sorry than when he held his peace ; yet even then, he was an excellent actor still, never falling in his Part when he had done speaking ; but with his looks and gesture, maintaining it still unto the heighth.

Such a description explains much, and more might have been understood if Nash had kept his promise to write, so that

> Tarlton, Ned Alleyn, Knell, Bentley shall be made known to Fraunce, Spayne and Italic ; and not a part that they surmounted in more than other but I will here note and set down, with the manner of their habites and attyre.

We cannot know the detail of their movements, but of their costumes we know something. Even as early as *Fulgens and Lucres* at the beginning of the 16th century, actors' costume was noted for its richness.

> I thought verely by your apparell
> That ye had bene a player.
> . . . . .
> Ther is so myche nyce aray
> Amonges thes galandis now aday
> That a man shall not lightly
> Know a player from another man.

The magnificence of English actors' costumes dazzled German eyes, in spite of Fynes Moryson's disparagement

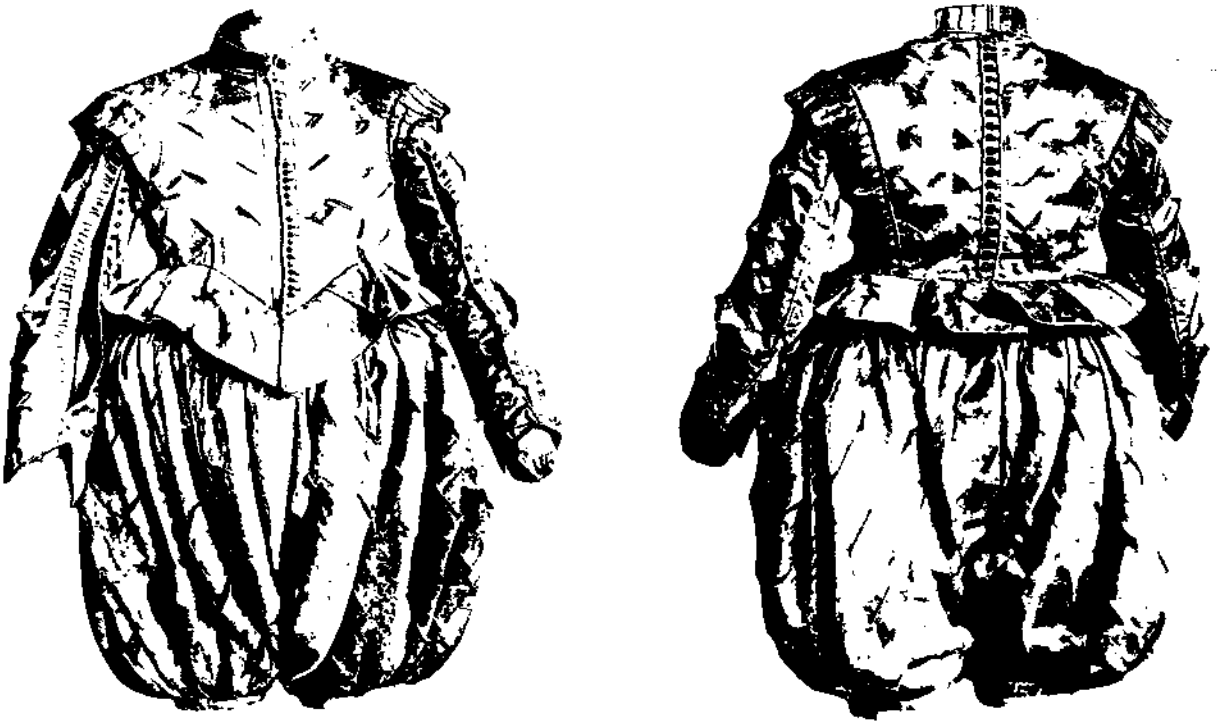
of it. Specimens of costumes actually worn by these English actors in Germany still exist, as well as a sword used by them on the stage. From Henslowe's Diary and from the Revels accounts we know that special costumes were assigned to specific parts, an important aid in clarifying the action on the stage. We have also a description of a special clown's get up worn by Tarlton,

> Who came like a rogue in a foule shirt without a band, and in a blew coat with one sleeve, his stockings out at the heeles, and his head full of straw and feathers.

I am convinced that one element in the successful illusion of the Elizabethan lay in the costume, which even when it was intended to be contemporary was of such magnificence as to constitute a stage livery that carried with it a heightened atmosphere. Archaeological accuracy of costume was not understood in its modern strictness, but some attempt at verisimilitude was made. In the Court Revels this was certainly done, and we have an interesting record by Leone de Sommi, an Italian producer at Mantua in the mid 16th century :

> Since every novelty is pleasing, it is a delightful sight to see on the stage foreign costumes, varying from our usage ; hence it is that the most successful comedies are those costumed in the Greek fashion, for this reason more than any other I have arranged that the scene of the piece which, God willing, we shall present Tuesday, is laid in Constantinople, so that we can introduce for men and for women a style of dress unfamiliar to us here . . . And if this succeeds well in Comedy, as by experience we are sure that it will, all the more will it succeed in Tragedy, in costuming which the greatest care must be taken, never dressing the actors in the modern manner, but in the way that is shown in antique sculptures or pictures, with those mantles and that attire in which the persons of former centuries appear so charmingly.

The Shakespearean stage did not go anything like so far. The drama of which De Sommi speaks is rightly named



Costume in white satin worn by an English actor in Germany during Shakespeare's lifetime.
Karl Masner. Die Kostum. Ausstellung im K.K. Oesterreichischen Museum [1891].
Wein. 1894

Montebanks in the Piazza San Marco, Venice. By Giacomo Franco. Habiti d'huomini et donne Venetiane. Venice [1609]. An Englishman is depicted among the spectators. The scene is that described by Coryate, who was in Venice in 1608.

the *Commedia Erudita,* the learned or written drama opposed to the popular and improvised *Commedia dell' Arte.* I hope shortly to give a thorough account of the contacts of this improvised comedy with Elizabethan England, but for the purpose of this immediate enquiry it is sufficient to say that more interest was taken in it by actors than by authors. Shakespeare's advice to the players is not merely an attack on improvisation, but on this particular school of improvising. The players are described by Hamlet before he sees them and form a stock *commedia dell' arte* company. ' He that plays the king,' ' the adventurous knight,' the sighing lover, the humorous man, i.e., the elderly pantaloon, the clown, and the lady. They can play both learned and improvised drama, ' law of writ and the liberty,' they have a stock of speeches out of which they make their patchwork improvisations, they use miming or dumb-show, and spoken words. At the time Hamlet was being written, if we take 1600 as a possible date, the travelling actors were returning from the Continent and bringing their theatrical bad manners with them, their habit of improvising and ' inexplicable dumb shows and noise.' It may be, as Mr. Harrison suggests, that Shakespeare is mocking a rival company, but if this is so, they are merely scapegoats for a broader technical principle. Shakespeare's interest in the *commedia dell'Arte* is shown again in one of the best remembered of his speeches, Jacques' ' All the world's a stage.' This speech contains description of four of the stock characters of this comedy of types, the lover, the soldier or capitano, who is used by Shakespeare himself as Armado in *Love's Labour's Lost,* the justice, and finally mentioned by his Italian name, the Pantaloon as he appears in the old engravings, lean and slippered with spectacles on nose and pouch on side.

It is because he cannot neglect any manifestation of theatrical art that he includes this Italian kind in his allusions ; it is because he seeks finer effects than mere

bodies can give that he condemns it. Shakespeare's subtlest effects are musical, musical and vocal tones, and magical, compelling, hypnotic atmospheres. Otto Ludwig many years ago spoke of symphonic and concerted scenes. It is possible to find melodies and harmonies, arias, duets, trios, quartets and further in such a play as *Midsummer Night's Dream.* In a mild form we have, at the beginning of his career in *Love's Labour s Lost,* an interesting attempt at comic mass music in the two successive vocal waves, first when Holofernes, in the masque at the end (Act V, Scene ii) is being ' ragged,' and again in the wilder hullabaloo during the fight between Costard and Holofernes. This second tumult is a crude though successful device to render theatrically affective the announcement of the King's death. In this reputedly unplayable play we find laid bare for our inspection some of the mechanics of playwriting, and like good machinery, though simple, it is effective. In *Merchant of Venice,* Act V, Scene i, we have an interesting use of the vocal duet, between Lorenzo and Jessica, to point the scenery and atmosphere of ' such a night as this.'

It is a commonplace to speak of *King Lear* as a symphony, but I hope to show how the musical elements have their practical bearing in the theatre. I take the dramatical problem of *King Lear* to be the discord raised when Lear and Cordelia who are one harmonious being, are, by dramatic fiction torn roughly apart. The musical movement of the play emphasises this discord and demands a reconciliation. I find this dramatic and musical reconciliation occurs during the exquisite duet in Act IV, Scene vii, when Lear comes to his senses, his mental discord is resolved and his Cordelia is at last restored to him. All this part is Shakespeare's own invention. There is nothing in the old legends, nothing in the old play. The crescendo of the discord is rightly regarded as one of Shakespeare's summits of dramatic

achievement, but it must not be neglected as a theatrical achievement. The theme is boldly stated at the beginning of the play

> Give me the map there. Know that we have divided into three our Kingdom.

The height of his disruption, his mental kingdom divided into the three of himself, Edgar and the Fool, occurs amid an eruption of the elements. It is a mistake to suppose that there was no physical storm on the stage. ' Storme and Tempest ' are clearly called for in the stage directions :

> Drummers make Thunder in the Tyring-house, and the twelve-penny Hirelings make artificial! Lightning in their Heavens.

The storm is stilled to allow the actors to speak, and there is no need of thunder and lightning when Lear has such words as these to speak :

> Blow windes, & crack your cheeks ; Rage, blow
> You Cataracts, and Hyrricano's spout,
> Till you have drench'd our Steeples, drown the Cockes.
> You Sulph'rous and Thought-executing Fires,
> Vaunt-curriors of Oake-cleaving Thunder-bolts,
> Sindge my white head. And thou all-shaking Thunder,
> Strike flat the thicke Rotundity o' th? world,
> Cracke Natures moulds, all germaines spill at once
> That makes ingratefull Man.

That such crashing storm-music comes to so exquisite an end in the reconciliation duet is proof enough of Shakespeare's theatrical capacity.

It seems, however, that he was not satisfied ; the duet was too soon over, and in a play not far from *King Lear* in time, in *Pericles,* he gives us one of the greatest of all his musical scenes, Act V, Scene i, in which the reconciliation of Marina and Pericles is so full of happiness for him that hallucinations of music come to close

the scene with a dying fall and a vision. Further than this scene his accomplishment did not go.

It has often been denied that the Elizabethans used descriptive or atmospheric music. In its crudest form martial music for battle purposes has been shown by Mr. W. J. Lawrence to have subtle differences. In atmospheric quality the song ' Come away, come away, death,' in *Twelfth Night* is not lacking. As a clue to character, ' When that I was and a little tiny boy,' brings a note of tragedy to end a very serious play. But outside Shakespeare there is more definite evidence. In Marston, *Wonder of Women,* Act IV, ' Infernal musick plays softly whilst Erictho enters, and, when she speaks, ceaseth.' In *Fedele and Fortunio, Two Italian Gentlemen,* between the acts there is ' a pleasant Galliard.' and ' a sollemne Dump.' In the *Duchess of Malfi,* madmen sing ' to a dismal kind of music,' and in *The Chaste Maid in Cheapside,'* While all the Company seeme all to weepe and mourne, there is a sad Song in the musicke Roome.' These should be sufficient to indicate the possibilities of supporting the atmospheric value of the spoken words, in the way in which some modern producers of Greek plays support the choruses. Two instances are clear enough. In *Antony and Cleopatra* the masterly scene, Act IV, Scene iii, of the passing of the night with the watchmen on guard is intensified, ' Musicke of the Hoboyes is under the Stage.' Music is a flux to smooth the conjuring up of a vision, it happens so in *Pericles,* and again in *Julius Ccesar,* Act IV, Scene iii, where Lucius falls asleep over his song. It is a structural scene, and, therefore, receives special emphasis as the final pivot of the play. Music is used as a solvent, as an atmospheric veneer, used to swing over moods, to prepare for tragedies and catastrophes, to harmonise discordances. Such is the music that labels itself, but the subtlest of all Shakespearean music eludes the statistician. The purely vocal music that gives colour to a character's speeches,

that differentiates one man from another, one mood from another is the most difficult of all to pin down and to analyse. Of the separate vocal melodies are built up scenic harmonies and concerted music. If ever we were able to record the tonal qualities of verse, its quivering overtones and vocal mysteries, we should be on the threshold of Shakespeare's real workshop. Until we have this certainty it is not allowable to cut or to prune a speech, however trivial it may seem. Certainly to cut out a whole scene or character without understanding its tonal function is criminal, to cut out the opening lines of a speech is foolish, for we do not know as yet the relation between speech and character in poetic drama. If there must be cutting, let it be in the middle of a speech, so that its impact and its final notes are unimpaired. Shakespeare the producer in the days of his maturity was conceivably unable to supervise his plays in person, to that end many of his later scenes are actor-proof but it would need a bold person to consider them producer-proof.

These suggestions I have put forward are in many cases personal, and cannot have their justification except in the test of practise. It seems brutal to speak of a dramatic laboratory, but if we are to be more than amateurs in the study of Shakespeare, as I fear have been many eminent and erudite scholars, it would be well to devote at least a part of our attention to that side of his work which shows Shakespeare as a practical man of the theatre. If a national theatre is permitted by the temper of this country it does not seem too much to ask that some part of its activity may concern itself with the basic elements of dramatic and theatrical affect as exemplified in the work of the greatest wielder of the English language. It is this language, spoken, under the conditions of the theatre, that is the chief clue to the effects that Shakespeare's poetical mind demanded from the theatre.

J. ISAACS

SHAKESPEARE'S SONGS AND STAGE

IF the question were asked, ' Which feature in Shakespeare's Plays had received the least attention ? ' there is no doubt that the reply would be *The Songs.* True enough the songs have been quoted more frequently possibly than any other portions of the text ; a selection from them appears in practically every anthology of English lyrics ; the words of several of them are familiar to many members of the public, who perhaps would be puzzled to which plays to assign characters such as Ariel or Feste or Autolycus. Nevertheless, it must be stated as a fact that little attempt has been made by students or by producers to understand the function and place of the songs and the familiarity enjoyed by them has in no way stimulated the spirit of inquiry, but on the contrary has deterred it.

Naturally there are many obstacles in the way of a complete understanding of the point of view of Shakespeare and of Elizabethan dramatists. For one thing many artistic movements have had vogue since their day, and the great Romantic movement has exercised a very strong influence on our taste to the extent that we may be led to admire features in Elizabethan lyric poetry which may have provided Shakespeare and his fellows with material for parody. It is possible that in the serenade to Sylvia, for example, we may have a parody of the style of sonnet which extolled a mistress in so high a vein that no man could come over it. Again it may be that in the aubade in *Cymbeline* the tendency to deal in ' admirable rich words,' calculated to impress unsophisticated groundlings is pointed at, however gently it may be done. Mr. Dover Wilson has told me that in lines which are indisputably Shakespeare's there may be much that is weak, but they are

not thin. Certainly I am of opinion that effects which Shakespeare took pains to achieve, are neither flat nor without purpose ; I am satisfied that he did not aim at some merely pretty or pleasing effect ; he had some definite stage object to attain and if we fail to perceive it we may rest assured that there is something that has escaped our notice. Shakespeare was essentially a comic dramatist endowed with the keen critical faculty essential in a good comic dramatist. Herein he must suffer in common with his kind for the comic artist has a tendency to destroy his material and to deprive posterity of models wherewith to point the comedy.

Undoubtedly, however, the most potent difficulty we encounter in an intelligent comprehension of Shakespeare's plays is that their stagecraft is no longer familiar to us. The problems in presentation he had to solve, the limitations under which he had to labour, the difficulties he had to surmount, as well as the advantages he enjoyed, are unknown to us.

Shakespeare's theatre was more akin to a circus in kind than to the playhouse with which we are familiar. His plays were not intended to be acted, as on the modern stage, remote from the audience but more or less in its midst. The modern dramatist's conception of a stage is a scene whose fourth wall takes the form of a movable curtain. The idea is to present a picture across whose surface the characters move and the dramatist has to take care that the occupants of his stage shall preserve a certain degree of line so that the visual effect shall be good and free from obstruction. He is not Concerned to make his puppets emphasise objects of scenery ; that function is discharged by the scene painter. He need not dwell on the fact that " The air bites shrewdly ; it is very cold," nor does he require to direct questions as to the hour nor to point out the passage of the night and the approach of dawn ; he has various auxiliaries at hand ready to discharge these offices.

Where the modern dramatist is severely taxed is in his choice of the exact psychological moment for veiling his picture. He must choose some striking remark or situation whereon to close his episode. Some otherwise successful dramatists display weakness in the dropping of their curtain and in consequence exhibit a tendency to end completely and calmly as did the dramatists before the invention of the proscenium curtain. Sir J. M. Barrie's *The Admirable Crichton* is an instance of this. On the other hand, often when we condemn certain Shakespearian producers it is because these men possess a highly developed " curtain instinct " ; they are conscious that Shakespeare has not provided them with an ending appropriate to what they would call a dramatic finish and so they cut or introduce some seeming absurdity which will invest the dropping of the curtain with interest. It was this curtain instinct which caused Macready to close on Lear's curse on Goneril although thereby he omitted subsequent business between Albany and Goneril. Shakespeare could not have ended as did Macready, for he had not the means ; he had to get Goneril and Albany off and their exit had to be interesting. If this very important difference be thoroughly comprehended it will help to an understanding of the function some of Shakespeare's songs were called upon to fulfil, notably as epilogues in *Love's Labours Lost* and *Twelfth Night* or in the Clown's song at the end of his teasing of Malvolio.

At the beginning of an episode a modern dramatist's task is easy as compared with that set his Elizabethan predecessor. He merely unveils his stage and characters are revealed in occupation and the action can commence. Shakespeare had no such device whereby to summon his audience from its chatter and gain its attention. Instead he had to introduce his characters to begin the episode and the entrance had to be arresting. In the *Winter's Tale,* after the departure of Polixenes and Camillo, the

first entrance of Autolycus arrests the spectators' interest by song, and it is possible also that the song's object was to distinguish him clearly from Antigonus with which character the actor may have been doubling, as I deduce from the emphasis attaching to the announcement of Antigonus's death. None of the plays indisputably Shakespeare's commences with song although *Twelfth Night* opens with music. Fletcher's and Massinger's, *The Two Noble Kinsmen* is a good example of a play opening with song.

The modern proscenium curtain enables the play to proceed from event to event, for by merely lowering it any lapse of time desired may be indicated. As a substitute the alternative episode was an imperative necessity to the Elizabethan dramatist. Malvolio could not overtake Viola immediately after his despatch by Olivia ; another episode had to intervene, whereas on the modern picture frame stage it is possible to disclose the episodes in their more natural sequence. An interesting example of a singing party being introduced as an alternative episode occurs in *As You Like It* when to indicate the lapse of two hours a party of hunters on their way home are introduced singing, ' What shall he have that killed the deer ?'

One more difference I must dwell upon before I come to the main subject. In the modern theatre with its stage remote, words are apt not to reach the audience. As a consequence words in the modern theatre are not so important as they were formerly when spoken more or less in the midst of the audience and to a large extent reliance on the action is necessary to maintain the clarity of the relation.

With special reference to the songs another factor has operated. Since the Reign of Queen Anne a style of singing has come into being both on the stage and the concert platform which makes it difficult to distinguish the words. The old style of singing has been preserved,

although in uncultivated form, on the music hall stage ; there the singer aims at making his words penetrate. Sir Harry Lauder would constitute a good example of this aim of the music hall singer ; he makes his words penetrate and moreover, he can sing. The singers on the modern Shakespearian stage fail in making their words intelligible to their hearers ; hence the import of the words is lost and the significance of the song passes by unnoticed. This is frequently to the detriment of the narration for many times as in " Tell me where is fancy bred," the words are in the nature of dialogue and have a very direct bearing on the development of events.

Shakespeare was not original in using occasional songs in his plays; the British people had long been accustomed to be regaled by songs scattered through plays and in Lyly's comedies there were frequent directions for song. Where Shakespeare improved upon his predecessors was in the greater advantage to which he turned his songs ; from the very earliest he made his song essential without which the play would have had to be in part rewritten and other means would have had to be employed of attaining the end desired.

Probably Shakespeare's earliest venture in song[1] is the serenade to Sylvia in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona.* Not only has the serenade been prepared for by Proteus's suggestion to Thurio with the treacherous intention of prosecuting his suit, but it is otherwise employed. Julia has come to Milan disguised as a boy in the hope of seeing Proteus and is informed by the Host that Proteus is to be a party in the serenade and by reason of the performance she obtains evidence of her lover's perfidy. Cut out the serenade and it is obvious

[1] For the sake of brevity, a certain chronological order in the songs is here assumed without agreement. The subject of The Sequence of the Songs has been discussed by me at moderate length in *Shakespeare's Use of Song* (Oxford University Press) to which reference should be made.

that considerable revision of the play would be necessary to achieve the dramatic end in view. It is in this essential character of the song that Shakespeare was from the very commencement of his career original in its use.

We may assume that " Tell me where is fancy bred " in *The Merchant of Venice* is the next song. There is a marked advance in the relevance of the song to its context and it plays its part in forwarding the action of the comedy. The song, which was rendered to impart distinction to Bassanio's contemplation of the caskets, deals with the transient character of that fancy or love which is born of the view and is fed by gazing. It dies in its cradle ; out of sight out of mind, and all join in the ringing of its knell. Mr. Fox Strangeways points out that the hint to Bussanio is stronger by the emphasis laid upon " ed " and the suggestion of " I " in bell and knell. Professor Dover Wilson in the New Cambridge Text, adds " the sound of the tolling bell and the reference to Fancy dying in the cradle where it lies, both hint at the lead which ribbed the ' cerecloth ' in obscure graves."

Anyway, Bassanio, with the quickness of a gambler on the lookout for any clue, impatiently follows on the ending of the refrain :

> So may the outward shows be least themselves
> The world is still deceived with ornament,

and he carries on his soliloquy in that vein to conclude :

> But thou, thou meagre lead.
> Which rather threat'nest than dost promise aught,
> Thy paleness moves me more than eloquence
> And here choose I.

Thus Bassanio's choice is relieved of being fortuitous and is natural, the result of a strong hint.

Both these songs deserve careful attention on account of the normality of their occurrence. Each time the

song is what might be called a concert platform song, yet care has evidently been taken to ensure the absence of abruptness ; the song is prepared for and it falls into position with natural effect. Shakespeare would have appeared to have aimed at making his singing occur as it might in life or as in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *The Tempest* we imagine in such enchanted conditions it might happen. Evidently even in his dream of music drama he sought to avoid the absurdity which we cannot but be conscious attends operas and other musical plays. When this fact is clearly appreciated much will be accomplished towards an intelligent presentation of Shakespeare's Plays, an ideal from which we are still far removed and there is no greater tribute to Shakespeare's genius than the fact that his work has survived the unintelligent efforts to present him.

I do not propose here to deal with all the songs in the plays, only with the songs which illustrate the progress of Shakespeare in his use of them. Shakespeare learnt as he went on the greater and greater service song could afford him in forwarding his dramatic scheme. In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, he has his first experience of song as scenery in colouring his atmosphere. No more delightful means of depicting Titania's retirement can be imagined than the song and dance of the fairies round her couch. No matter how drab the surroundings and how simple the accessories, the song and dance alone light up the central feature in the episode and all else fades from the sight. Let us suppose the episode as in the arena of a circus and then we can realize, if our imaginations permit us, this wonderful scene painting of Shakespeare's beside which the gaudy effects of modern producers seem poverty-stricken vulgarities.

The same marvellous pictorial affect is gained in the ending of the play where the fairies under the leadership

of Oberon again dance and sing. The whole episode beginning with Oberon's

Though the house with glimmering light,

is of the most magnificent a poet has even been able to imagine ; to think of it makes the heart throb and leads one to sympathise with those who fear to see the play on the stage lest they be disillusioned. Given eight or ten intelligent children capable of singing and dancing and given removal from the vulgarities and garishness of the modern stage, the thing can be produced in all the magnificence of Shakespeare's conception. I have seen village children bent on raising funds for their local hospital produce, with only very simple means at their disposal and with no other stage than that afforded by the street, effects which would have gladdened our dramatist's heart and their success suggests that *A Midsummer Night's Dream* can yet be made a glorious reality.

Of the same kind as the song in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is the dance song at the end of *The Merry Wives of Windsor.* Comparison has been made between this and the song which appears in the 1632 edition of Lyly's *Endimion.* It is not here accepted that that song is of Lyly's authorship. Otherwise in the advantage to which Shakespeare turned his song is his superiority in economical stagecraft over his predecessor clearly manifested. If the song in *The Merry Wives* is omitted, then the scene would have to be re-written as some other means would have to be devised whereby the farce relative to the deception of Doctor Caius and Simple could be brought off and the love affair between Fenton and Anne Page made smooth. The commotion attendant on the song and dance affords a natural opportunity.

Hitherto Shakespeare had been compelled to rely upon musicians specially brought upon the stage for the

purpose of singing or upon boys a supply of whom was not always apparently easily available. In *Much Ado About Nothing,* he tried an experiment in set song by an ordinary adult actor and this actor in the conspiracy with Don Pedro, Claudio and Leonato is employed to sing " Sigh no more ladies " at Benedick. That it was an experiment we may infer from the word play preceding the song, one of whose purposes was evidently to disarm criticism of the quality of the effort.

In *As You Like* ,',', the adult actor singer is employed more boldly and the songs in that comedy are definitely used as auxiliaries to describe scene. " Under the greenwood tree " and " Blow, blow thou winter wind " are otherwise notable. Amiens, who sings them, is an amateur of cultivation, misanthropic as a result of the vicissitudes of misfortune. This misanthropy is reflected in his verse, in his bitter references to society and his extolling the joys of unsheltered exile in comparison. These songs are the first in our drama wherein the character of their singer is reflected.

The emotional quality of Amiens' songs was distinct however slight. Shakespeare was soon to realise the powerful emotional effect that song could develop. In *Hamlet,* Ophelia sings popular ribald songs and the tragedy of her madness is thereby much deepened. Nor can the emotional affect of the grave-diggers' rendering of corrupted stanzas from Lord Vaux's poem be neglefted. By contrast in their suggestion of the indifference of life to an individuals' sorrow, they heighten the misery of the scene.

Shakespeare having discovered the dramatic advantage of song in stirring up the emotions of the audience developed its use still further. The affect upon the emotions of Desdemona singing in a clear piping voice an adaptation of the old Willow Song is indescribable, especially as all fear the impending catastrophe which is to overtake her. The song evokes the utmost compassion.

A similar dramatic purpose is served by the lyric " Take, oh take those lips away " rendered by a boy in *Measure for Measure*, to give colour to the desolate situation of the jilted Mariana. The breaking off of the song is excellent dramatically and better than a continuance of the song had it been Shakespeare's purpose merely to produce a pretty and pleasing affect. It illustrates how Shakespeare subordinated his song to his aim and how he did not, as did his successor Fletcher, allow himself to be captivated by what he had produced. The manner in which the song is embedded in the conversation between the Duke and Mariana is also of interest.

That *Twelfth Night* was revised is a commonplace of criticism ; how far it was revised is a problem towards whose solution we must look to Professor Dover Wilson. Some at least of the songs were included in this revision. When Manningham heard the comedy, Shakespeare had a boy capable of taking a leading part and of singing. It is apparent that in Act II, Scene 4, Viola was intended to sing a ballad in somewhat the same way as had Ophelia and Desdemona. One of the main motives of the comedy was Orsino's conservative attitude to music and his dislike of

> The light airs and recollected terms
> **Of** these most brisk and giddy paced times,

and his preference for simple unadorned sentimental melodies. Suitably, Viola was to have been presented to him as an eunuch who could sing and play music to him. But in the play as we now have it, she does neither of these things and it is therefore very plausible to infer that when the comedy was revived Shakespeare's company no longer possessed a leading boy who could sing and play the lute. Instead it is the domestic Minstrel Feste who sings. In the song which he sings before Orsino much of the point in the context is lost. The

song Orsino calls' for is plainsong, a product of unconscious art known as the folk-song, whereas the one rendered is a highly finished art song, one of the songs of the lutenists to whose productions Orsino was so much averse, and it does not accord with Orsino's description of it.

Otherwise, like " Take, oh take those lips away," its theme is directed to the situation of the person to whom it is sung even although its pity is half-mocking. It has the requisite emotional quality of which Shakespeare was by this time thoroughly master.

Songs are very adroitly used in *Twelfth Night. "* O mistress mine " is employed capitally to open a scene of revelry. " I am gone, sir, and anon sir," succeeds in getting Feste off the scene most effectively. " When that I was and a little tiny boy " affords a most fitting commentary on the events in this comedy of cloudland ; it maintains in the end the altogether comic quality of the play ; and it covers the retreat of the characters off the stage.

The aubade in *Cymbeline* " Hark, hark the lark at Heaven's gate sings,"—deserves attention. The translation of the midnight of the Trunk Scene into day would be easily accomplished on the modern stage by dissipating the darkness by means of artificial light. Shakespeare had no accessories of such a nature. Instead, he makes Imogen inquire the hour—" Almost midnight, madam." Before he retires to his trunk again, lachimo counts three hours of the clock. Then the topic is discussed on the main stage as between Cloten and a Lord. " It's almost morning, is't not ? " inquires Cloten. "Day, my lord," is the reply. Finally to impress the fact of dawn upon the audience characteristically morning music is introduced.

It is in *The Winter' s Tale* that we have the first glimpse of Shakespeare's final mastery of occasional song; there is a certainty in its application which bespeaks

the result of its constant practice. It is not until the latter part of the play that Autolycus appears and he is introduced singing. His song is soliloquy as is Ariel's "Where the bee sucks," only his is in introduction, whereas Ariel's is farewell. Both are autobiographical. The song depicts objects and announces the season of the year. Further it mitigates the meanness of the theft Autolycus is about to commit. To rob the good Samaritan is highly repulsive to our instincts; song transforms the villainy into comedy and our sympathies are henceforward with this worthless rogue when in the character of a pedlar he trades upon the rustic's credulity. It is song which makes Autolycus a tolerable and lovable stage character.

Song pervades *The Tempest* and never has occasional song been liberally used in a play with equal natural affect. The dialogue and action run naturally into song, no matter who is singing. It seems natural that Ariel should invite Ferdinand to the shore with song and that again it should be by song that his ears, hardly free from the sound of water, should be mocked into the belief that his father was dead. Ariel's singing into the ear of Gonzalo seems in character and singing of himself, and as if to himself appears perfectly natural while attiring Prospero.

In like manner Stephano's entrance drunkenly singing as well as Caliban's fierce breaking into song as the result of drink have all the appearance of ordinary life. This perfect propriety of every song must strike the most casual student of *The Tempest.* And each song is in character and relevant to the action. Stephano, the drunken butler, an object contemptuous to the sailor, sings a good forecastle song in which Kate's depraved preference for a tailor, no sort of a man, is the theme. Caliban expresses all the aboriginal's hatred of drudgery and contains to boot the characteristic of the aboriginal chorus which dwells upon and repeats parts of a name.

Shakespeare's handling of song in this play, his weaving it into the dialogue and action, his investing it with absolute propriety has never been surpassed and as his final effort forms a glorious conclusion to his song career

There is no good purpose to be served in overlooking the fact that our attempts to reproduce the songs on the stage are sadly disappointing. Apart from the matter of staging, the music to which the songs are usually set conceal their fine vocal quality.

On reading the songs, one feels that the words of the songs sing themselves and when one finds this extra vocal quality, one feels that the songs, as in those of Sir Philip Sidney and Robbie Burns, have been written under the influence of existing tunes. There are several considerations which would tend to establish this conclusion.

First, with the exception of Morley's setting to " It was a lover and his lass," none of the great Elizabethans seems to have had any connection with the original songs in the plays. True it is Johnson, lutenist to King James an inferior musician, set songs in *The Tempest,* but his settings, judging from the departure from the text in " Full fathom five," would not appear to have been made for the original production of *The Tempest,* but rather for the revival in 1613 when the play was revived for the Princess Elizabeth's wedding and probably in part revised.

The marked economy with which Shakespeare's theatre was conducted and the fact that runs of plays were not anticipated would warrant the belief that the expense of hiring musicians specially to compose would be avoided. With the exception of the serenade in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona* and the aubade in *Cymbeline* the songs did not call for any elaboration in accompaniment ; sometimes as in *The Tempest* the singer accompanied himself on a portable lute.

In the song in *Measure for Measure* there is strong

evidence that a tune already in existence was in view. The repeats " bring again " and " sealed in vain " are absent in the stanzas in Fletcher's *Bloody Brother* in the 1640 edition of the Poems and in Dr. John Wilson's later setting of the lyric. This difference would argue almost conclusively that the song in Shakespeare's comedy was made to fit a tune.

All these considerations unite in favour of the assumption that Shakespeare's songs were meant to be sung to airs already known to the audiences. This would probably make them more popular.

If we accept this theory, and it is at the least very plausible it is evident that we must recast our notions of setting Shakespeare's songs for stage purposes. We must give up the art song, which is composed harmonically, and revert to the folk song the essential point of which is that the vocal melody is independent and its rhythm is free from the tyranny of an instrumental accompaniment, thus enabling the singer dramatically to interpret the words.

It is on these lines that Mr. John Vise and I have approached the setting of Shakespeare's songs, examples of which Miss Janet Christopher and Miss Beatrice Beaufort are rendering. There is one setting, however, to which I wish to draw your attention. In *Julius Coesar* Act IV, Scene 3, there is a direction for music and a song rendered by the young attendant on Brutus,but no text is supplied. I suggest as appropriate John Dowland's " Weep you no more sad fountains " *(vide* Dr. Fellowe's edition of Dowland's 3rd Book of Airs, published by Winthrop Rogers). None of Shakespeare's songs exactly suits the occasion and context, but this one of Dowland's appears to me to fit exactly.

RICHMOND NOBLE

THE PLAY WITHIN THE PLAY

I HAVE chosen as my subject in this series of papers on ' Shakespeare and the Theatre' the Play within the Play. We have now good reason to believe that this feature, at any rate in a rudimentary form, had its origin as far back as the close of the fifteenth century, and we know that it lasted into the earlier decades of the seventeenth. If the material with which I have to deal is all more or less familiar, and if I have neither new facts nor theories to put before you, I hope that there may be some interest in considering in their mutual relation some different aspects and developments of a very distinctive feature of Elizabethan dramatic history.

Like so many factors in the evolution of the stage the play within the play is a product partly of intellectual forces, partly of material conditions. In the theatre of Greece there was no place for it. It would have been alien to the Hellenic conception of unity of action, and the somewhat rigidly articulated scheme of Attic tragedy. And it would not have fitted in with the Greek out-door stage or with its scenic arrangements. The plays of the Greek dramatists, as Mr. Harold Nicolson has recently reminded us in speaking of *Atalanta in Calydon*, ' were produced in the honey-coloured theatre of Dionysus . . . they were conducted to a prescribed ritual, to flute and rhythmic dancing, with the unearthly immobility of masks and the rigid ungainliness of the Cothurnus.' It is no wonder that Aristotle, as at the close of the great dramatic period he summed up in *The Poetics* the characteristics of Greek tragedy, had nothing to say of a play within the play.

Nor in that far later, but far more primitive form of out-door drama, the Miracle Cycles acted on moving

' scaffolds,' was such a device conceivable. But we see in the scriptural plays themselves that zest for elaboration, for spectacle, movement and incident breaking the hallowed and traditional mould of their subject matter, which, when the necessary material conditions were supplied, produced *inter alia* the play within the play. Among these conditions was the rise of travelling professional companies which made it a familiar occurrence for a ' cry of players ' to arrive at a great house ready to perform any item in their repertory. It was easy to transfer such an incident from real life to the traffic of the stage. Again the growing popularity of the masque from the early Tudor period as a court entertainment led to the inclusion in plays performed on ceremonial occasions of a masque episode. And when the permanent Elizabethan theatres were built their structural arrangements, with inner and outer stage and gallery, lent themselves to the play within the play.

One naturally thinks of such a play being performed on the inner stage with the actor-spectators grouped on the outer part of the platform. But it is curious how scanty are the indications on this point in the original texts. In the case of the play within *The Spanish Tragedy* we are expressly told that the actor-spectators watch it from the gallery, but as will be seen later, there is a special reason for this, and no general conclusion can be drawn from it. But apparently in *The Taming of a Shrew*, Sly, after the first scene of the Induction, watches from the gallery, for later the lord bids his servants :

> Lay him in the place where we did find him,
> Just underneath the alehouse side below.

But we now know that long before the building of the Elizabethan theatres, with the very beginning of English secular drama, we have something in the nature of a play within the play. There is little doubt that Henry

Medwall's *Fulgens and Lucres* was acted in the hall of Cardinal Morton's house, and through the researches of Dr. A. W. Reed we can date its performance approximately at Christmas, 1497. There seems to have been no stage, but simply a clear space in the hall. And here we see a feasting throng, including two youths A & B, who are looking forward to a performance of a play. And soon we have the entrance of the actors, with difficulty making their way through the crowd :

B. **Pees,** no moo wordes, for now they come,
The plears bene euyn here at hand.
A. So thei be, so help me god and halydome,
I pray you tell me where I shall stand.
B. Mary stand euyn here by me I warand.
Geue rome there syrs, for god avowe
Thei wold cum in if thei myght for you.
A. Ye, but I pray the, what calt tell me this,
Who is he that now comyth yn ?
B. Mary it is fulgence the senatour.
A. Ye is ? what, the father of the forseide virgyn ?
B. Ye forseth he shall this matere begyn
A. And wher is feyr doughter Lucrece
B. She comyth anon, I say hold thy pece.

And then the main action, which is thus in a sense a play within a play, begins with the speech of Fulgens. Moreover, within the main action itself there is a mumming or disguising, which the rich suitor of Lucres provides for her entertainment. The show introduces ' strangers freshly disgysed ' together with dancing and music, directed probably to the address, not so much of Lucres as of foreign diplomatists in the Cardinal's hall:

Cor. Wyll ye se a bace dance after the gyse
Of spayne, whyle ye have nothynge to do ? ...
Go sone and bidde them come thens anone.
And cause the mynystrelles to come in beffore.
(Intrant Mummers.)

B. Mary, as for one of them his lippe is sore,
I trow he may not pype, he is'so syke.

After the dance has been performed Lucres cries in admiration :

Forsothe this was a godely recreacyon.
But I pray you of what maner nation
Be these godely creatours ?
Were they of Englonde or of Wales ?
B. Nay they be wylde Irish portyngales
That dyde all these pleasures.

Thus in this, its earliest, appearance, the inset mumming is not merely an extra decoration. It illustrates the prodigality of the patrician suitor of the heroine, and it was also probably an act of ceremonial compliment to distinguished visitors.

Medwall, from personal knowledge gained while he was a member of Morton's household, gives us a contemporary picture of a performance, with a ' mumming ' inset, in the hall of the Cardinal's house. About a century later another dramatist was to give an imaginative reconstruction in ' a play with a play ' of a performance in the house of one who like Medwall had been in the service of Morton for a time—Sir Thomas More. With the controversial questions that have clustered round the British Museum MS play called by More's name we are here happily not concerned. When exactly it was written, whether the additions were made before or after it was submitted to the Master of the Revels, whether it was or was not performed, whether Shakespeare did or did not write the lines in hand D, all these may be ' a relation for a breakfast,' but they do not come within our purview this afternoon. What concerns us is that in Scene IX of Dr. Greg's Malone Society's edition of the play Sir Thomas and his wife give an entertainment to the Lord and Lady Mayoress which includes a performance of a play. This scene,

containing lines 877-1157 is part of the original text and is written in the hand which Dr. Greg in the Malone edition called " S ", but which he has since identified as that of Anthony Munday. The episode therefore is of unique interest as showing how a contemporary of Shakespeare conceived of a dramatic representation in the time of Henry VIII. Sir Thomas and his wife have apparently already entertained their guests in another room to dinner, and the host is now giving orders about stools and lights for a banquet in the evening. A player is announced as waiting outside to speak with More, and is bidden enter. To the question, ' Whom doo ye serue,' he answers'My Lord Cardinalles grace' and More exclaims :

> My lord Cardinalls players ? now trust me, welcome,
> you happen hether in a luckie time,
> to pleasure me, and benefit your selues.
> The Maior of London, and some Aldermen,
> his Lady, and their wiues, are my kinde guests
> this night at supper. Now, to haue a play
> before the banquet, will be excellent.

It is evident from what follows a little later that Munday thought of Wolsey as having a company of professional actors in his service. But so far as I can tell this was not the case, though on Jan. 3, 1527, his ' gentlemen,' i.e., the singing men of his chapel, recited a Latin comedy by Plautus entitled the *Menoechmi*, and a year later the boys of St. Paul's school at a banquet given by him recited with ' much spirit and good acting' the *Phormio* of Terence.

The Lord Cardinal's players of Munday's imagining offer a less high-brow entertainment, but they can provide a choice from a repertory of seven plays :

> the Cradle of Securitie,
> hit nayle o' th' head, impacient pouertie,
> the play of four Pees, diues and Lazarus,
> Lustie luuentus and the mariage of witt and wisedom.

It is a notable list. *The Cradle of Securitie* is apparently the lost morality *The Castle of Security,* which R. Willis saw at Gloucester, when he was a boy, standing between his father's legs. *Hit nayle o' th head* has also disappeared. We can only hope that either or both of these may turn up as an unrecorded edition of the third play, *Impatient Poverty, did* in the Mostyn sale in 1919. *The Four P's* is, of course, Heywood's play. There is a *Lazarus & Dives* among the lost comedies of Ralph Radcliff mentioned by Bale, but this appears to have been in Latin. *Lusty Juventus* is Wever's morality. There is a MS morality *A Marriage between Wit & Wisdom* (B.M. Add. MSS, 26782) with 1579 on the title-page, and which may have been printed about that date, as a play with that title is included in Roger & Ley's list of 1656. While some of these at any rate are early Tudor plays, Munday does not seem to have troubled much about chronological verisimilitude in the list of plays available for the entertainment of Sir Thomas and his guests. This does not surprise us in an Elizabethan, but stranger things follow. More chooses the *Marriage of Wit and Wisdom,* and then asks the player, ' how manie are ye ?'

PL ffoure men and a boy Sir.
Mo. But one boy ? then I see,
ther's but fewe women in the play.
PL Three my Lord ; dame Science, Lady vanitie,
and wisedome she her selfe.
Mo. And one boy play them all ? bir Lady, hees loden.

Munday, in representing the company as so small that duplicating of parts is necessary, is speaking by the book. On the title-page of *Lusty Juventus* there is the direction : ' Foure may playe it easely, takyng such partes as they thinke best : so that any one take of those partes that be not in place at once.' Similarly on the title-page of *Impatient Poverty:* ' Foure men may well

and easelye playe thys Interlude' and there follows an arrangement of parts. On the title-page of *The Marriage between Wit and Wisdom* there is an arrangement for six parts. But the cast of this play does not contain a Lady Vanitie, and this is not the only surprise. When the company have assembled and are seated a player, dressed or 'readie' as Inclination, the Vice, craves to speak with More :

Mo. How now, what's the matter ?
In. we would desire your honor but to stay a little, one of my fellowes is but run to Oagles, for a long beard for young witt, and heele be heere presently.
Mo. A long beard for young witt ? Why man, he may be without a beard till he come to mariage, for witt goes not all by the hayre : when comes witt in ?
In. In the second Scene, next to the Prologue my lord.
Mo. why play on till that Sceane come, and by that time witts beard will be growne, or else the fellow returned with it. And what part plaist thou ?
In. *Inclination* the vice my lord.
Mo. Gramercies, now I may take the vice if I list : and wherfore hast thou that bridle in thy hand ?
In I must be bridled annon my lord.

It is not Inclination but Idleness who is the Vice in *The Marriage between Wit and Wisdom.* Inclination is the Vice in another Morality, *The Triall of Treasure,* printed in 1567, and there has a bridle put upon him by Sapience and Juste. And when Sir Thomas bids the play proceed without Wit's beard, the Prologue enters and speaks the opening lines of one of the prodigal son plays, Ingelend's *Disobedient Child,* printed in 1560, as a preface to ' the mariage of witt and wisedome,'

A matter right pithie and pleasing to heare,
Whereof in breefe we will shewe the whole summe.

But then comes the greatest surprise of all. Wit

indeed enters, but accompanied by Inclination, the Vice, as has been seen, of *The Triall of Treasure,* and singing :

> In an arbour greene, a sleepe where as I lay.
> The birdes sang sweetely in the midst of the day,
> I dreamed fast of mirthe and play,
> In youthe is pleasure, in youthe is pleasure.

This and the two stanzas that follow with the same refrain are the opening lines (after the Prologue) of *Lusty Juventus,* one of the plays which Sir Thomas had rejected. And the next 53 lines of dialogue between Wit, Inclination and the Lady Vanitie, are with a few omissions and interpolations, the dialogue in a later part of *Lusty Juventus* between Juventus, Fellowship and Abominable Living.

Then the play threatens to come to a standstill, for Luggins, the actor who plays ' Good Councell,' has not yet come back with Wit's beard. But More himself steps into the breach and takes the part. His words to Wit are really an improvisation after the manner of the *Commedia dell' arte,* for the speeches of Good Counsel in *Lusty Juventus* are strongly Lutheran in tone and would have blistered the lips of the martyr for the ancient faith. But here again Munday throws dust in our eyes. After Luggins has at last returned with the beard, and the excuse ' why Oagle was not in and his wife would not let me have the beard,' and Sir Thomas has stopped the play for the time because the banquet is ready. Inclination exclaims :

> doo ye heare fellows ? would not my Lord make a rare player ? Oh, he would vpholde a companie beyond all hoe, better than Mason among the King 's players : did ye marke how extemprically he fell to the matter, and spake Lugginses parte, almoste as it is in the very booke set downe.

To this we must answer to-day that the ten lines spoken by More in ' Lugginses parte,' bear no relation

either to the speeches of Good Counsel in *Lusty Juventus* or of Good Nurture in *The Marriage between Wit and Wisdom,* whichever of the two may be supposed to be the book that Munday has in mind. But this does not trouble the company. What does perturb them, and what Wit (or is it really Munday himself?) thinks it politic at once to disclaim is the identification of a Lord Chancellor with an actor :

> Peace, doo ye knowe what ye say ? My lord a player ? let us not meddle with any such matters.

In an age which had still a caste-system such a confusion of estates was no laughing matter.

Whether Oagle the wigmaker is the John Ogle who appears in this capacity in the Revels' accounts for 1572-3 and 1584-5 ; whether Luggins and ' Mason among the King's players' were the names of real actors are interesting questions. But to me at any rate it is a more intriguing problem why in this play within a play the Elizabethan dramatist who shows, so far as I know, closer textual knowledge of early Tudor drama than any of his contemporaries, makes use of it apparently to perpetrate an elaborate hoax, which, but for the fortunate preservation of *The Marriage between Wit and Wisdom, Lusty Juventus, The Triall of Treasure* and *The Disobedient Child,* would have mislead historians of the drama to the end of time. And if Shakespeare wrote the lines in hand D, and so was concerned in the play, I am afraid he must have picked up some very erroneous information about early Tudor plays.

From the hall of Sir Thomas More let us pass to that of his predecessor in the Chancellorship, Cardinal Wolsey. A ct I, Scene iv of *King Henry Fill* shows us the Cardinal in state at York-Place, a magnificent Renaissance Prince of the Church dispensing hospitality in the grand style. A noise of drums and trumpets within and of chambers discharged announces the arrival

of a noble troop of strangers. They enter as masquers, habited like Shepherds, ushered by the Lord Chamberlain, who announces :

> Because they speak no English, thus they pray'd
> To tell your Grace ; that having heard by fame
> Of this so noble and so fair assembly
> This night to meet here, they could do no less,
> Out of the great respect they bear to beauty,
> But leave their flocks; and under your fair conduct
> Crave view to leave these ladies and entreat
> An hour of revels with them.

The masquers are, of course, the King and courtiers, and when they choose ladies for the dance, Henry picks out Anne Bullen, with the words :

> The fairest hand I ever touch'd ! O beauty,
> Till now, I never knew thee.

The playwright evidently intends this to be taken as the first meeting between Henry and Anne, for the King, after he has unmasked, whispers to the Chamberlain, ' What fair lady's that ? ' and is told:

> An't please your Grace, Sir Thomas Bullen's daughter.
> The Viscount Rochford, one of her highness' women.

But ' her highness' is far from the King's thoughts as, he bursts out :

> By heavens she is a dainty one. Sweetheart,
> I were unmannerly to take you out
> And not to kiss you.

Such a salutation was in the fashion of the time ; but when the company at the Cardinal's bidding passes into the next chamber for the banquet, Henry gives a further sign of his sudden infatuation :

> Lead in your ladies, every one. Sweet partner
> I must not yet forsake you.

I doubt, howeyer, if at the Globe, as at the recent revival at the Empire Theatre, the King carried out Anne kicking in his arms. Such a semi-farcical touch seems to me out of keeping not only with the dignity of a Tudor King, even in his lighter hour, but with the spirit of the episode in Wolsey's presence chamber. The masque, the wordless play within the play, intended by Henry to be merely a piece of frolic, becomes by one of life's supreme ironies big with destiny. That dance of the Shepherd-King with Anne, and that first kiss are the beginnings of an infatuation that will bring disaster to Queen Katherine, to Wolsey, and in the end to Anne herself. The scene is London, not Verona, and when Henry gives the signal ' let's be merry,' there is none to suspect

> Some consequence *yet* hanging in the stars
> Shall bitterly begin his fearful date
> With this night's revels.

Whatever are the faults of construction in *Henry VIII* as a whole, the masque episode is pregnant with dramatic significance.

In another historical play, *Thomas of Woodstock,* one of the fifteen dramas contained in B.M. MS. Egerton 1994, a masque, in which a predecessor of Henry VIII figures, is not an accidental but a designed instrument of tragic destiny. Richard II, swayed by his unworthy favourites, plots against his uncle, Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester, who had been Lord Proteftor, and whose influence with the people even when deprived of his office he still fears. In Act IV, Scene ii of the play, the King and his retinue ride down to the Duke's country seat at Plasshy, and disguised as masquers crave admission. We get another vivid picture of the excitement caused by the arrival of a company of actors, amateur or professional, at a great house. The Duke orders a banquet to be prepared, calls for light and music,

bids his servants, ' sturr, sturr ' and get the hall ready for the performance. After ' a great shout and winding a homes,' Cinthia appears to speak the prologue. Then the King and three of his favourites enter ' like Diana's Knights,' and go through a country dance before the Duke who at the close invites them to the banquet. But at a signal from Richard the doors are guarded, and Thomas of Woodstock is seized, arrayed in a visard and masquing suit and borne away to Calais and to death.

A King and courtiers again appear as masquers, in *Love's Labour's Lost* V, ii, where the King of Navarre, Berowne, Longueville and Dumaine, preceded by blackamoors with music, come disguised as Muscovites to see the Princess of France and her ladies. But we need not linger over this for the King does not trust to the powers in a disguising of himself and his lords alone. As Don Adriano de Armado tells Holofernes, the schoolmaster, ' the King would have me present the princess, sweet chuck, with some delightful ostentation, or show, or pageant, or antick or fire-work. Now understanding that the curate and your sweet self are good at such eruptions and sudden breaking out of mirth, as it were, I have acquainted you withal, to the end to crave your assistance.'

Holofernes at once proposes to present ' The Nine Worthies,' but Sir Nathaniel, the curate, raises a difficulty which, if pressed to its logical extreme, would make the actor's profession impossible, and which is not without its echoes in our own day, ' Where will you find men worthy enough to present them ? '

But Holofernes has no qualms :

> Joshua, yourself; myself or this gallant gentleman [Armado] Judas Maccabaeus ; this swain, because of his great limb, or joint, shall pass Pompey the Great ; the page, Hercules.

But the show is a failure. The burlesque rhymed speeches of the performers meet with unmannerly

interruptions from the audience, though at any rate the ' apology ' of Holofernes, as Judas, for Moth, as Hercules, might have been better received :

> Great Hercules is presented by this imp
> Whose club kill'd Cerberus, that three-headed canis;
> And when he was a babe, a child, a shrimp
> Thus did he strangle serpents in his manus.
> Quoniam he seemeth in minority.
> Ergo I come with this apology.

This six-lined stanza, with its jingling double rhymes, its queer mixture of ink-horn terms and colloquialisms, might have come out of the *Seven Days of the Weeks*, an amusing tour-de-force in the 1607-8 revels at St. John's College, Oxford, known to us as *The Christmas Prince.* But Holofernes has to beat a retreat before a fusilade of mockery, and Armado as Hector is being tarred on to an encounter with Costard as Pompey, when the news suddenly comes of the death of the Princess's father. Thus the inset pageant, as usual, has an organic part in the complete play. The instantaneous change from uproarious merriment to a ' new-sad soul ' prepares the way for the final denouement.

The authentic Nine Worthies were Joshua, Hector, David, Alexander, Judas Maccabasus, Julius Cassar, King Arthur, Charlemagne, and Guy of Warwick. Shakespeare's inclusion of Hercules and Pompey is part of the same youthful classical ardour that led him to find in Golding's translation of Ovid the subject for the interlude of the rude mechanicals in *A Midsummer Night's Dream.*

It is not necessary here to deal at any length with such a familiar theme as ' the tedious brief scene of young Pyramus and his love Thisbe : very tragical mirth,' There are, however, two general considerations which I would wish to emphasize. More than in *Love's Labour's Lost,* more even, it might be maintained, than in *Hamlet,* the play within the play in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is woven into the very texture of the whole piece.

Throughout the comedy Shakespeare is presenting variations upon the theme of shadow and reality. The workmen's play is one of these. Perhaps, as I cannot put it more shortly, I may be allowed to repeat some words of my own :

> In the rehearsal and setting-forth of their comedy, Bottom and his friends enter a debateable domain which like that of the fairies, hovers round the solid work-a-day world and yet is not of it. There is a point of view for which life may be regarded as the reality of which art, and in especial dramatic art, is the shadow, the very word used by Theseus of the work-mens' play. Thus in their grotesque devices and make-shifts these rude mechanicals are really facing the relation of shadow to substance, the immemorial question of realism in art and on the stage. The classical maxim that' Medea shall not kill her children in sight of the audience ' lest the feelings of the spectators should be harrowed beyond endurance, finds a burlesque echo in Bottom's solicitude lest the ladies should be terrified by the drawing of Pyramus' sword, or the entrance of so fearful a wild-fowl as your lion. Hence the necessity for a prologue to say that Pyramus is not killed indeed, and for the apparition of half of Snug the joiner's face through the lion's neck, and his announcement that he is not come hither as a lion, but 'is a man as other men are.' Scenery presents further difficulties but here, as there is no risk of wounding delicate susceptibilities, realism is given full rein. The moon herself is pressed into the service, but owing to her capricious nature she is given an understudy in the person of Starveling carrying a bush of thorn and a lanthorn. It is only the hypercriticism of the Philistine Theseus that finds fault with this arrangement on the score that the man should be put into the lanthorn. How is it else the man in the moon?

The crudely bombastic plays burlesqued in *Pyramus and Thisbe* apparently had short shrift, for I confess that among existing pre-Shakespearean plays, I find it difficult to specify any which give a colourable pretext for just this kind of parody. Perhaps, as has been recently suggested, Shakespeare had in mind not any play but ' The Lamentacion of Piramus ' in *A Gorgeous Gallery of Gallant Inventions* (1578) :

> And with these wordes, his naked blade hee fiersly from his side
> Outdrew, and through his brest it forst with mortal wound to glide.
> The streames of gory blood out glush, but hee with manly hart,
> Careles, of death and every payne, that death could them imparte
> His *Thisbies* kercheefe hard hee straines, and kist with stedfast chere
> And harder strainde, and ofter kist, as death him drew more nere.

But, however this may be, the problems with which Quince as producer had to wrestle are still exercising in various ways the brains of Mr. Gordon Craig, the Guitrys, Signor Pirandello, M. Balieff of the Chauve-Souris, and the Expressionists.

But supreme genius has its awful responsibilities and Shakespeare has really over-reached himself. The *Pyramus and Thisbe* episode, is like the Trial Scene in the *Merchant of Venice* and the Forum Scene in *Julius Ctesar,* one of the stock diploma pieces in all the school-rooms and on all the amateur stages of the world. And thus taken from its context it has been turned by the irony of Time to an unhallowed use. We are only now realising afresh that for several centuries before the growth of the professional theatre England was the home of a wide-spread and flourishing community drama. The guild-craftsmen, carefully chosen and trained, who performed in the York and Chester plays and the great

Moralities, must have been of a very different kidney from Quince and Bottom. But the Puritanism of the seventeenth century, the rationalism of the eighteenth, and the materialism of the nineteenth combined with the almost complete concentration of theatrical interest in London to kill community drama. Meanwhile for 300 years it stood guyed, for the derision of the wayfaring man, in episodes of matchless mockery.

I can see in my mind's eye the Adult Education Committee who have recently published their important Report on The Drama in Education, in which they survey and encourage the recent widespread revival of community acting—I can see them solemnly committing *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Love's Labour's Lost* to sacrificial flames.

In *A Midsummer Night's Dream* the yokels provide a play for lords and ladies ; in *The Taming of the Shrew* and its forerunner *The Taming of A Shrew,* the position is reversed, and it is a lord who bids his players entertain the drunken Tinker, Sly. But here the play within the play swells till its bursts the mould, and Shakespeare in *The Shrew* forgets that Sly is on the stage as a spectator of the action and does not trouble further about him, though from the closing words of the Induction it is evident that he and the page, Bartholomew, dressed as a girl, remain seated on the stage throughout the pleasant comedy—a highbrow phrase which does not satisfy the tinker :

Sly : Is not a commonty a Christmas gambol or a tumbling trick ?
Page : No my good lord : it is more pleasing stuff.
Sly : What! household stuff ?
Page : It is a kind of history.
Sly : Well, we'll see't. Come, madam wife, sit by my side and let the world slip, we shall ne'er be younger.

Sly's difficulty with ' comedy ' was probably suggested by the twist given to the word, with less plausibility, by

Sander, one of the lord's players in *A Shrew*, when he and his fellow have entered with packs at their backs. To the lord's inquiry, ' Now, sirs, what store of plays have you ?' Sanders answers, ' Marry, my lord, you may have a tragical, or a comodity, or what you will,' whereupon the other player cries, ' A comedy, thou should'st say, souns thou'lt shame us all.'

But we may be thankful for Sanders' blunder as it leads his fellow to that ejaculation, ' souns,' which, repeated frequently in *A Shrew*, and found also in *The Famous Victories of Henry V*, and in the 1616 quarto of *Doctor Faustus*, was the first clue that led Mr. Dugdale Sykes in a brilliant paper, read before this Association in 1918, to find the hand of Samuel Rowley in all these pieces. To Rowley, Mr. Sykes assigns in *A Shrew*, besides the prose ' taming ' scenes the Induction, interludes, and Epilogue in which Sly appears. For Rowley, unlike Shakespeare, remembers that *The Taming of a Shrew* is technically a play within a play, and does not leave Sly derelict on the stage. He puts illuminating comments into his mouth, as when at the end of Act I, his only query is, ' When will the fool come again ? ', or when in the middle of Act IV, on hearing the Duke's order that Phylotus and Valeria are to be sent to prison, he, doubtless a gaol-bird in his time, bursts out :

> I say we'll have no sending to prison.

The lord tries to calm him:

> My lord, this is but the play ; they're but in jest.

But Sly is not to be put off by these subtleties :

> I tell thee. Sir, we'll have no sending to prison, that's flat...
> I say, they shall not go to prison.

He is only pacified when he is told ' that they be run away,' and then asks for more drink and goes to sleep. In this condition he is carried out and so misses

the last Act, with Kate's first proofs of submission, but he has seen her surrender when, at her husband's bidding, she calls the sun, the moon, and addresses the Duke as ' fair lovely lady.' So when he wakes, just ' underneath the alehouse side below,' from the best dream that ever he had in his life, he prepares to put it to practical application :

> I'll to *my* wife presently
> And tame her too, and if she anger me.

Thus a *liaison* is maintained to the end between the outer and the inner plays, but the latter has waxed so disproportionately that Shakespeare is scarcely to be blamed for lifting it, after the Induction, clear out of its setting.

There are some, though I am not among them, nor (I believe) is Mr. Sykes, who have ascribed to Thomas Kyd the verse scenes in *A Shrew.* But the play has this feature in common with *The Spanish Tragedy,* that the Ghost of Andrea and Revenge sit on the stage as spectators of the tragedy as Sly and the lord watch the comedy, and Revenge like Sly goes to sleep before the last Act The multiplication of stage-devices appealed to Kyd. He introduces into *The Spanish Tragedy* a masque and a dumb show, and in a play within the play his dramatic genius finds its highest expression. For here this device is not only, as I have sought to show is usually the case, in some relation to the main action, but it becomes its nerve-centre. You will remember the situation. Hieronimo, the Knight-Marshal of Spain, is seeking revenge for his son Horatio, who has been murdered by Lorenzo, son of the Duke of Castile and nephew of the King, because he has gained the love of Bellimperia, sister of Lorenzo, who wants her to marry Balthasar, the captive Prince of Portugal. Hesitating and distracted, he suddenly finds his opportunity in an entertainment to be given in honour of the visit of the Viceroy of Portugal, father of Balthasar. He arranges

for the performance of a play of his own penning on the subject of Soliman and Perseda by members of the court. Bellimperia takes the part of Perseda; Lorenzo of her husband, Erastus, a Knight of Rhodes ; Balthasar of Soliman, the Turkish Sultan, who seeks her love, and whom she kills before stabbing herself ; and Hieronimo of one of the Bashaws who kills Erastus, and then takes his own life. The Knight-Marshal has arranged with Bellimperia that their murders shall be real not feigned. But we are not told this beforehand explicitly. We get hints of it from words dropped by Hieronimo which mean one thing to him and another to his hearers, whether in the play or in the actual audience. Thus when he is asked who is to play the Bashaw's part he replies :

> O, that will I, my lords : make no doubt of it :
> I'll play the murderer, I warrant you,
> For I already have conceited that.

Here we have irony in the Greek sense, and it is one of the glories of the play within the play that here for the first time the English stage borrows, probably unconsciously, one of the most effective features of its Attic forerunners. And more poignant even than the irony of speech is the irony of situation. Under the shadow of the doom to come Hieronimo chats with the amateur actors about details of costume and hands them the abstracts of their individual parts. Later he is found ' knocking up the curtain,' and providing, according to the custom with royal spectators, a copy of the play for the King, as well as a chair and a cushion which Balthasar brings in. As in the case of Wit in the Sir Thomas More play, Balthasar's beard causes delay :

> *Hier.* What is your beard on ?
> *Bal.* Half on : the other is in my hand.
> *Hier.* Despatch for shame ; are you so long ?

These bantering words are the last,that pass between them before Hieronimo's tragedy is played in all its grim reality. Everything goes according to plan except that Bellimperia-Perseda, after she has stabbed Balthasar-Soliman, turns the weapon against herself, though Hieronimo had altered the catastrophe in the hope of saving her life. And when the King, thinking that all is fabulously counterfeit, innocently asks, ' But now what follows for Hieronimo ? ' the Marshal draws back the curtain that he has knocked up, and showing the body of his murdered son, reveals the truth. It is a superb *coup-de-théatre,* unfortunately followed by some crude melodrama with which we are here not concerned.

Here the play within the play has become the instrument of tragic Nemesis, and such too is the part designed for it in *Hamlet.* But if, as is almost certain, it was Kyd who first put Hamlet's revenge upon the stage, it was natural that he and Shakespeare after him should seek variety by a novel treatment of the device that had proved so successful in *The Spanish Tragedy.* Thus where Hieronimo employs high-born amateurs, Hamlet employs professionals. So we get the immortal episodes of the arrival of the tragedians of the city at Elsinore and the Prince's welcome to his old friend whose face is valanced since he saw him last, and to the young lady and mistress who is nearer to heaven by the altitude of a chopine. We hear the echoes of the war of the theatres in the reference to the ' aery of children, little eyases that cry out on the top of question,' and of tiring-room controversies in Hamlet's speech to the players. And we are face to face again with the teasing problem of reality and shadow when, the first player, 'in a fiction, in a dream of passion,' is more distraught for Hecuba than Hamlet for a dear father murdered.

All this is so familiar that it has probably never occurred to us that Hamlet, a born actor if ever there was one, might himself have played the murderer

Lucianus. Polonius, who was accounted a good actor at the University, and did enact Julius Cæsar and was killed in the Capitol, might have been killed again in the part of Duke Gonzago, and Ophelia could have made a first appearance in that of Baptista his wife. The play thus acted would have been as much of a ' mouse-trap ' to catch the conscience of the King as when performed by the players. But in neither case with Hamlet's character would retribution have followed on the criminal. Paradoxical as it sounds it is Claudius rather than Hamlet who carries out the part of Hieronimo. He arranges with Laertes another entertainment for the court, a fencing-match in which he and Hamlet are to play.' [1] But as in *The Spanish Tragedy*, what the actor spectators take for sport is grim earnest, and the stratagem claims victims beyond its design. The working out of the catastrophe in *Hamlet* shows, I suggest, the influence of Kyd's treatment of the play within the play.

And now turn from the court of Elsinore to another court with a Danish queen, Anne, the consort of James I. It is the Christmas season of 1612-3 and high revel is being held in honour of the betrothal and nuptials of the lovely Princess Elizabeth to the Count Palatine. The brilliant series of entertainments includes a revival of *The Tempest* with a Masque inserted in honour of the royal lovers. I fully agree with Professor Dover Wilson that Ceres' words to Ferdinand and Miranda :

> Spring come to you, at the farthest,
> In the very end of harvest

are a veiled reference to the hoped-for issue of the royal bridal bed. Like the mumming in *Fulgens and Lucres*, more than a century before, the masque in *The Tempest* is more than a piece of inset decoration ; it has its bearing on affairs of state. But it has a yet loftier function. To Shakespeare the play within the play had already in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and in *Hamlet* been part

of the eternal problem of shadow and substance, appearance and reality. And now as the masque vanishes before the eyes of the lovers on the stage and the lovers in the audience, the dramatist, in a transcendental rhapsody, unparalleled in his work, finds in it a symbol of the annihilation of what seems the ultimate reality, the cosmos itself :

> Like the baseless fabric of the vision
> The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
> The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
> Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve
> And like this insubstantial pageant faded
> Leave not a rack behind ; we are such stuff
> As dreams are made on, and our little life
> Is rounded with a sleep.

With the fading of Prosperous pageant, in which Ariel has doubled the part of Ceres, the play within the play, in its relation to Shakespeare's theatre, also disappears.

It takes indeed some sporadic later forms as the puppet-play in Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair,* but its work was virtually done. It was the product of special conditions, and it had an ephemeral life. But the marvel is what it achieved in its short span. It is linked, as I hope this imperfect survey has helped to remind us, with the names in dramatic history, of Medwall, Munday, Rowley, Kyd and Shakespeare, and in the wider sphere of affairs with those of Morton, Wolsey and More, Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, the Princess Elizabeth and the Count Palatine. It has preserved confused echoes of the period of the Moralities, *Lusty Juventus* and the *Triall of Treasure,* and of the prodigal son plays, such as *The Disobedient Child.* It has left its mark on our first secular play. It has perpetuated, in immortal burlesque, the Elizabethan community drama. It has preserved in pictures of unfading freshness the life of the professional travelling companies in the golden age of the English theatre. In it Thomas Kyd found the

vehicle for his highest dramatic gifts in the most popular of Elizabethan tragedies with his contemporaries, which gave the impulse to Shakespeare's use of it in the most popular of Elizabethan tragedies with the modern world. For the master-dramatist, as he employed it for his professional purposes, it raised in the concrete Renaissance way the eternal problems of reality and appearance with which the metaphysician and the scientist are still in a subtler and more penetrating fashion wrestling to-day. And never is he so near to them as in the apocalyptic vision at the ending of the revels in *The Tempest* where he foresees the dissolution of *flammantia maenia mundi.*

The play within the play could serve no higher purposes than this, and so like a well-graced actor let it make its exit to these majestic strains.

F. S. BOAS

SHAKESPEARE AND THE ELIZABETHAN STAGE

THE subject of this paper is the Elizabethan stage, and its influence on the conduct and structure of Shakespeare's plays. It is a subject which has been greatly discussed during the last thirty years, and I have little, if aught, to add to what has been already discovered concerning this most interesting branch of Shakespeare study. I make no preliminary apology for contributing nothing new. No apology is needed. It is at least as necessary, if not as laudable or as difficult, to maintain the good old highways of the city of English Literature as to make in the suburbs new roads, some of which do not seem to lead to houses of any importance.

Therefore, you will forgive me if I begin by reminding you that before 1599 Shakespeare's early plays were probably acted at the Rose, the Theatre, the Curtain, that from 1599 to1613 his plays were acted at the first Globe theatre, and after 1614 at the second Globe, which was ' new builded in far fairer manner than before.' These were public theatres open to the sky. From the autumn of 1609 Shakespeare's plays were also acted at the second Blackfriars theatre, a private theatre roofed and artificially lighted and used during the winter months by the King's company. And you will pardon me too I hope if I recall to your memory the chief sources of our knowledge of the structure of the Jacobean stage, which are : (i) for the theatre in general, —the specifications for the building of the Fortune and Hope theatres ;[1] (2) for the stage in particular,—the pictures which have survived of the early stage, namely, Arend van Buchell's copy of a drawing of the Swan

[1] Published from the documents at Dulwich by W. W. Greg in *Henslowe Papers, being Documents supplementary to Henslowe's Diary* , 1907. Also in E. K. Chambers, The *Elizabethan Stage,* Vol. **II,** pp. 436-9, 466-8.

theatre made soon after its erefcion, probably in 1596, by Johannes de Witt'; a small engraving of a stage in one compartment of the engraved title-page of William Alabaster's academic play, *Roxana,* acted at Trinity College, Cambridge, c. 1592, published in 1632 by William Jones ; a small engraving representing a similar stage in the engraved title-page of N. Richards's *Messallina,* published in 1640 by Daniel Frere ; and the engraved frontispiece to the editions in 1672 and 1673 of *The Witts, or Sport upon Sport*', published by Francis Kirkman ;[2] and (3) the even more indefinite evidence of the original stage-directions in early plays.

In Shakespeare's age dramatic producers were unaccustomed to scenery as an aid to dramatic illusion. They relied upon dresses and properties, and upon the fire or the force of their actors. The first public theatres were temporary structures of wood,—and a wooden stage can be freely modified and altered. We know nothing of the nature of the scene in the earliest theatres, the improvised stages at the ' Five Innes, or common Osteryes turned to Play-houses,' or the regular stages at the Theatre, the Curtain, Newington Butts, and the Rose, or at the earliest private theatres, St. Paul's Singing School and the first Blackfriars. But no doubt mother-wit in stage-design was guided by several possible models. There was the original home of the players of interludes,—the interior of a hall with its screen pierced by two doors and its minstrels' gallery above, in front of which the noblemen's companies had acted. There was the courtyard of the inn in which the strolling players had acted, with its gallery and upper windows, which

[1] The original is in the library of the University of Utrecht, in the commonplace book of Arend van Buchell. It was first published in 1888 by K. T. Gaedertz in *Zur Kenntnis der altenglischen Buhne,* and again more accurately in the *Transactions of the New Shakespeare Society* for 1888, together with an article by H. B. Wheatley entitled, ' On a contemporary Drawing of the Interior of the Swan Theatre.'

[2] These four pictures are reproduced in A. H. Thorndike's *Shakespeare's Theatre,* 1916; and in Alkrdyce Nicoll's *British Drama,* 1925.

contributed no doubt to the design of the auditorium. And there were the academic temporary stages of the universities and the inns of court, which from time to time must have been influenced by Vitruvius's description in *De Archttectura,* Book V, ch. 6 of the tragic, comic, and satiric scenes of the classical theatre. It is probable that the stages of the various early theatres differed as much as the stages of concert-halls differ to-day.

But there must have been features common both to the public and the private theatres. The stage directions of old plays unite in speaking of doors, and of voices 'above' and 'within.' The well-known drawing of the Swan, a public theatre, portrays a square platform open on three sides and backed by a screen which bears a gallery above. On the level of the stage the ' mimorum aedes ' or tiring-house is entered through the screen by two double doors. The rear portion of the stage is roofed over the gallery by a cover which rests on two pillars rising from the platform. The pictures of a stage found on the title-pages of *Roxana* and *Messallina* agree in representing a platform shaped like three sides of a hexagon, screened in the rear on a line corresponding to the diameter by a curtain. Above the curtain there is an upper story which is fronted by either one or two windows. In the *Messallina* picture, at the sides of the upper storey, there appears to be a hint of flats projecting at an obtuse angle from the back scene to the sides of the stage, making the rear of the stage in fact a kind of box-scene. It is most unfortunate that the picture fails to show the wings. It is just possible that, in this particular theatre, the side doors leading to the stage were not in the back scene, as in the Swan, and here concealed by a broad curtain ; but in the sides of the scene, in the wings, in front of the curtain. If so, this type of stage would be the ancestor of those eighteenth century stages with a proscenium

and side doors, which formed an apron-stage in front of the curtain or drop-scene that concealed the scenic background. In any case it is probable that the *Roxana* and *Messallina* pictures typify the stage of a private theatre. The later picture of a stage which forms the frontispiece to Kirkman's edition of *The Wits* depicts a square platform, in the rear of which is a wall surmounted by a gallery. Beneath the gallery in the middle of the rear wall is an opening screened by a square arras ; but no doors, either in the rear wall as in the *Swan* picture, or at the side of the stage are indicated. There is, however, in the middle of the gallery, an upper window, which is screened by a double curtain. There is no canopy or ' heavens,' and although spectators crowd around three sides of the platform, it is probable that the picture represents an improvised private theatre, as the chandeliers and the footlights suggest.

These pictures of the early stage are most interesting, but they are inconsistent, and they do not tell us all we want to know. They all agree in depicting a type of stage which juts out into the auditorium, and can therefore be viewed from three of its sides. They all agree in depicting a rear wall which bears either a gallery or upper windows at a height of some ten feet above the platform. But they differ in representing the shape of the stage, and they differ in their arrangement of the rear of the stage. The *Swan* picture and that of Kirkman's *Wits* portray a square platform ; and we might note that the contract for the building of the Fortune theatre provided for a rectangular platform which was to project half way across the pit. The pictures in *Roxana* and *Messallina* portray an apron stage shaped like half a hexagon. As far as concerns the rear stage beneath the gallery, the *Swan* picture indicates two doors in the rear wall, but no curtain of any kind ; the *Roxana* and *Messallina* pictures show a rear curtain which extends the whole breadth of the

stage, and therefore conceals any possible recesses behind it ; and the picture in *The Wits* suggests a comparatively small arras screening the middle of the rear wall, in which evidently there was an opening, for a figure is emerging from it through the divided arras ; but it shows no doors, neither in the rear nor at the sides. If we rely on illustrations alone, the Swan, a public theatre, had no space concealed by a curtain ; and the private theatres, represented by the pictures in *Roxana, Messallina,* and *The Wits,* had no means of access to the platform save through the curtain.

But besides these early pictures there is the evidence of the original stage-directions of early plays ; and, though much is still obscure, it seems clear that in all Jacobean theatres the rear wall of the stage carried a gallery or balcony above, or at least upper windows. It seems probable that at first there were doors in the rear wall on each side of the platform ; later the doors may have been arranged in wings on each side of the stage. And in the public theatres there was an arras,—presumably in the centre of the rear wall, as in the picture in Kirkman's *Wits,*—which concealed a middle door, and, possibly later, a recess, ' the place behind the stage.' In addition to the doors and the arras, the private theatres had a great curtain which concealed the whole of the rear wall beneath the gallery or balcony.

Imagine then the interior of a public theatre. It is an amphitheatre of three galleries surrounding a pit. Half the pit is occupied by a great platform, in the rear of which rises the tiring-house, a building which rises above the level of the topmost gallery of the auditorium, and whose front wall forms the scene. On the stage the effect of a proscenium arch is made by the ' heavens ' and the pillars which support them, and in front of these pillars the platform projects like an apron. The permanent scene is the front of the tiring-house, of which the upper portion is a gallery or balcony extending the

breadth of the stage, and the lower portion contains three openings leading to the platform, namely, a door at each side and a recess in the middle screened by an arras. The 'heavens' acts as a roof for the stage, but the pit is open to the sky and the only means of illumination is daylight.

That, I imagine, is the type of theatre in which Shakespeare's plays were acted, and for which they were written. But not all the public theatres were alike, and how far this imaginary picture may have been modified in detail, it is impossible to say. If the Swan picture be accurate, the scenes of the earliest public theatres were derived from the screen of a hall with its customary two doors below and its minstrels' gallery above. But very soon in the history of the theatre, perhaps from the very beginning in some theatres, a central door—or possibly a lobby—was cut in the centre of the back scene, and this opening was ordinarily curtained by an arras. The origin of this opening behind the arras is obscure, but it probably represents the *media value* of the classical stage as described by Vitruvius in *De Architectura,* v. 6.[1] Other problems still await solution. Was the upper stage, for example, a gallery or a balcony? Did it project, or did it recede from the rear wall? Were the doors in the rear wall of the stage, or were there wings with doors arranged at an obtuse angle to the rear wall? Were the doors in the scene, or were they proscenium doors? We know from the stage-directions that properties such as beds, tables, and benches were used, but was scenery as well as properties employed in the central opening behind the stage? I am probably rash to offer an answer to these questions, but my own opinion is that in the public theatres the upper stage was a gallery; that the doors were in the scene at each side of the stage, making together with the central opening three possible

[1] 'Ipsae autem scenae suas habent rationes explicitas ita, uti mediae valvae ornatus habeant aulae regiae, dextra ac sinistra hospitalia,'

entrances and means of exit ; and that scenery was not used.

How far the private theatres differed from this plan we do not know. It is improbable that the stages of the Children of Paul's, the two Blackfriars, and Whitefriars were exactly alike. All would have some form of lighting by means of footlights and chandeliers ; and no canopy over the platform would be needed, though it is always possible that one was used as a sounding board. The pictures in *Roxana* and *Messallina* indicate a curtained rear-stage. If the stage of the second Blackfriars theatre became the model for the Salisbury Court (1629-1649) and for the Cockpit or Phoenix in Drury Lane (1616-1649) and their successors of the Restoration, the theatres in Lincoln's Inn Fields and Drury Lane; it is possible that in the Blackfriars theatre, occupied by the King's men in 1608 towards the end of Shakespeare's career, scenery may have been displayed on the rear stage, and also that the actors entered and left the outer stage by means of side doors in front of the curtain. The music at Blackfriars was more elaborate than that at the Globe, and it is quite possible that the stage-direftions in the first folio edition of some of the plays, *The Tempest* and *Henry VIII* for instance, are the directions for the stage of Blackfriars and not of the Globe. Nevertheless, Shakespeare's connexion with the Blackfriars stage came too late in his career to alter his craftsmanship, and in thinking of the influence of the structure of the stage upon the conduct of Shakespeare's plays we can justly confine ourselves to the stage of the Globe.

II

We may think of Shakespeare's stage then as a platform without curtain or scenery. Behind this platform stands the tiring-house of the company, the front of which forms the scene. On the level of the platform,

centrally, there is an arras concealing an opening of uncertain size, flanked by two doors. At a height of some ten or twelve feet the upper story of the stage is either a long gallery divided to look like windows, or a balcony fronting two or more windows. If to this we add a trap-door or two in the platform, we have surveyed Shakespeare's resources. Such a stage seems very crude, yet, with an audience willing to eke out its imperfections with imagination, it must have been a satisfactory, if not an admirable setting, and obviously it was a much more elaborate scene than a simple curtain behind an improvised stage. Let us consider each part in turn, beginning with the platform.

Little imagination would be needed to see in the screen fronting the tiring-house the poop of a ship seen from the waist, as in *The Tempest,* I, i, or the interior of a hall, as in *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* I, i, or the exterior of a house, as in countless scenes where the action takes place before a door leading to a street or a garden. But it is doubtful whether this symbolism was required or conceded by an Elizabethan audience. Our generation is so accustomed to the provision of a convincing background, that we are apt to forget that a realistic setting is a modern sophistication. Even after the introduction of scenery, theatres carried few scenes, and the same back scene or box-set did duty on many occasions. The acquisition of a set of new scenery was an event to be advertised on play-bills. I imagine that the Elizabethans were in respect of setting rather like children. When children make plays, they do not trouble about scenery. They imagine that it is there, and there it is for them. The way that the scenes of Shakespeare's plays flit from a street before a house to the interior of a house, or to an open park or forest, seems to indicate that the stage was never visualised as the scenic background of the play. It remained the stage. Audiences familiarized themselves with the story

of the play, and then the scenes carried on the story. Exact location did not matter, and setting was inessential. Properties such as thrones and tables, beds and benches seem to have been used, where they were necessary, for interior scenes ; but they seem to have been used only where the action could not be carried on without them. They were properties, not scenery. The dresses of the actors seem to have been rich, and in keeping with the part according to Elizabethan notions ; but there can have been little time for the leading actors to make elaborate changes of dress in successive scenes, and it is probable that, unless disguise or a distinct change of dress was called for, one dress as a rule served each actor throughout the play. The locality of scenes is rarely indicated by the stage directions of the first folio. There are occasional notes, such as ' The Scene, an vn-inhabited Ifland ' *(Tempest),* 'The Scene Vienna' *(M. for M.*), ' Scaling Ladders at Harflew' *(Henry V)* ; but no scene-headings which indicate the location of the scenes. The localities which now appear at the head of each scene, and add so much to our understanding and enjoyment of the plays when we read them, were the work firstly of Nicholas Rowe in 1709. If we examine the localities of Shakespeare's scenes as deduced by Rowe, we shall find that excepting a few striking scenes in which the stage became the waist of a galleon, the Senate House, or the ground before the walls of a castle or a city, the majority of Shakespeare's scenes have as their setting one of the three commonest types of locality :—a street before one or more houses, the interior of a hall or a room, or an open place, such as a garden, a forest, or a field. There could be no doubt about locality in the first scene of *The Tempest,* or in Act III, Sc. i, of *Julius Ccesar* ; but in many of the scenes, indeed I think in most of the scenes, the locality is vague and not insisted upon. Sometimes locality seems to have been ignored. In other scenes it would be suggested by properties such

as benches and a table to indicate an interior scene, or possibly by young trees in tubs to represent a forest or park. Staging by means of properties would be easy in *The Tempest,* where, after the first scene, the stage could be set as a pastoral scene with trees and rocks, and with Prospero's cell in the background represented by the inner stage ; or again in *Love's Labours Lost,* where the scene could represent a park with, on one side, the pavilion of the Princess of France, and, on the other, the house of the King of Navarre. There is a close connexion between symbolised locality and unity of scene. If the Elizabethans had insisted upon a realistic setting for every scene, the rule of ' scene individable ' would have prevailed. The fact that in most of the plays the scenes are short, and their localities, a street, a room, a garden, an open place, follow haphazard without any apparent regularity, indicates that the setting mattered little.

The platform was the most important part of the stage. The gallery and the place behind the stage were very rarely used alone.[1] Usually they were employed as annexes to the platform. When the platform represented a garden, the arras which concealed the inner stage could be used as a hiding-place. It was so employed by Benedick and by Beatrice in the orchard scenes in *Much Ado,* II, iii, and III, i ; and by Maria and Sir Toby Belch in the scene of the gulling of Malvolio, *Twelfth Night,* II, v ; probably also it was used in the garden scene in *Richard II,* III, iv ; where the Queen hides from the gardeners. In the historical plays the platform frequently represented a space before the walls of a castle or a city, and it was not uncommon for a stage-army to enter by one of the side doors and lead the audience to imagine that the middle recess was

[1] Two scenes in which the platform was empty are the Induction to *The Taming of the Shrew,* Scene ii, which took place on the upper stage ; and *Cymbeline,* II, ii, which must have been acted in the inner stage.

the gate of a city or castle, and the gallery its walls. There is an interesting scene of this kind in *King John*, II, i, where the French and English meet before the city of Angiers. The scene at Flint Castle in *Richard II*, III, iii, is another. The opening scene of II *Henry IV* represents the arrival of Lord Bardolph, Travers and Morton, in succession, at the gate of Northumberland's castle. Similarly in ,' *Henry VI*, I, iii, Gloucester and Winchester meet before the gates of the Tower of London. In this scene probably the recess represented the gates, and the opposing parties entered severally through the side doors. A variant of this device is to be found in *Henry V*, III, i and ii, where the breach at Harfleur was probably the recess. Henry V and the English army enter the platform through one of the side doors carrying scaling ladders. They find already on the scene a portion of the English army besieging Harfleur, consisting of drummers, gunners, and a small battery of cannon, which had already been in action ; for when the chorus had reached the lines :

> and the nimble Gunner
> With Lynstock now the diuellish Cannon touches,
> And downe goes all before them.—

the drummers drummed an alarum, and bang ! went the cannon, as the direction ' Alarum, and Chambers goe off ' indicates. And probably at the words ' down goes all before them ' the planks covering the breach were thrown down, leaving the scene ready for the entrance of the king and his forces. After the king's address :

> Once more vnto the Breach,
> Deare friends, once more ;
> Or close the Wall vp with our English dead :—

at the words :

> Cry, God for Harry, England, and S. George—

the ' Alarum, and Chambers goe off' again, and the whole force stormed the tiring house. Some, including the king and the cannon, would rush through the central opening ; others would scale the gallery with their ladders, and no doubt all would be opposed in mimic conflict by another skeleton army composed of the actors representing the French, and some supernumeraries. That was a good scene. In the next scene the serious warriors are followed by the comedians led by Corporal Bardolph, and they in turn are driven ' up to the breach ' by Fluellen. Yet in the next scene, scene iii, the central recess becomes the gates of Harfleur. Henry V and the English army enter by one door and halt before the gates. The king summons the city to surrender, whereupon the governor enters, probably above on the gallery, and the city is surrendered to the king, who marches off the stage with his army in procession through the recess representing the gates. The attack on Corioli in *Coriolanus*, I, iv, was probably staged by this convention. Lartius enters with his army of Romans ' as before the City Corialus.' The gallery represented the walls, and it was in the gallery that the ' two Senators with others ' appeared for the parley. The recess probably represented the gates. From it the Volscian army issued to beat back the Romans to their trenches, and through it in the counter attack Marcius followed the Volscians and was shut in. Of course, the door which was not used by Lartius may have represented the gates, but I think that the opening usually screened by the arras must have been used, because of its central position. You will remember that Marcius re-enters from the gates bleeding and assaulted by the enemy, whereupon Lartius and his army rush to help him, and, as the stage-direftion indicates, ' They fight and all enter the City.' The cannon excepted, the scene must have been very like the storming of Harfleur. But this scenic make-believe

lasts only for one scene. Rowe was right in localizing Scene v within Corioli, for we cannot b'elieve that Lartius would come outside the gates until the city was secured. Scene vi flits to the battle-field where Cominius is fighting. Scene vii brings us back to the gates of Corioli, and scenes viii, ix and x take us back to the battle-field. There can have been no scenic illusion, no identification of the stage with the setting, or such rapid and complete transition would have been impossible. The stage remained always the stage ; but the childlike and illusive imagination of the audience allowed it temporarily to become any place, anywhere.

In *Richard III,* V, iii, the platform represented the rival camps of Richard III and of Richmond before the battle of Bosworth Field. The king with his forces entered by one door and his tent was pitched on that side of the stage, and similarly Richmond and his army entered by the other door and pitched a rival tent. Short scenes inside each tent ensue, which indicate that the pavilions were open in front, and finally the rival leaders, Richard and Richmond, are left sleeping in their respective tents, to be visited in dreamland by the ghosts of Richard's victims, who entered and left the stage probably by the central way through the arras in the rear of the stage. In *Coriolanus,* II, ii, and in *Julius Ccesar,* III, i, the platform by the introduction of benches and cushions became the Roman Senate. The latter scene is of interest because it shows how little the scenic background mattered either to dramatist or to audience. The scene opens in a street leading to the Capitol, as Cassius's lines :

> What, vrge you your Petitions in the ftreet ?
> Come to the Capitoll.—

clearly indicate. But a moment later the members of the procession are assembled inside the Capitol, and Caesar is asking :

> Are we all ready ? What is now amiffe,
> That Caesar and his Senate muft redreffe ?

There is no break in the scene which would give an opportunity of carrying in the benches. The benches which converted the platform into the Senate-House must have been put on the stage in the interval between Acts II and III. I imagine them placed in two rows at right angles to the tiring-house within the posts supporting the heavens. But they were ignored until they were needed. The stage was a street as the procession advanced from one of the doors down the side of the platform, where the business with Artimedorus and the Soothsayer would take place ; but it became the interior of the Senate-House as soon as the procession had wended round the post into the centre of the stage. I need hardly say that there is no authority in the folios for the modern stage-direftions ' the Senate sitting above ' and [1] Caesar goes up to the Senate-House, the rest following,' which seem to imply that the murder of Caesar was affected on the balcony, an impossible situation. These directions first appear in Malone's edition, and are a relic of the eighteenth-century stage with its scene and its proscenium. They imply that the curtain rose on the Senate sitting in the inner stage, set as a hall in the Capitol, and that Caesar entered by one of the proscenium doors. The preliminaries in the street were acted on the outer stage, and then Caesar and the conspirators passed up the stage, under the proscenium arch, into the scene.

On the Elizabethan stage, as we have said, locality was indefinite, and the platform became what the scene required. If benches or a table were carried out, the audience expected an interior. If a bed were thrust out from behind the arras, they knew that it symbolized a bed-chamber. If no properties were used, the platform represented a street or an open space, and the tiring-house behind it became a private house or a castle, or

even a city, as the occasion demanded. How gardens, parks and forests were indicated is not clear. Properties, such as trees or bushes in tubs, may have been used ; or more probably, the sense of make-believe produced all the illusion that was needed. There was no curtain before the platform ; consequently the players entered by one or other of the doors, and advanced down the platform before beginning to speak their lines, we may suppose ; and eventually, they would retire in the same way through one of the doors, or possibly, if the scene required it, through the arras. The scenes of Shakespeare's plays are separated one from another by an empty stage at the beginning and at the end. Usually it will be found that some pretext for leaving the stage is advanced by the actors in order to bring the scene to a conclusion, such as :

We'll wait upon your grace till after supper.

or,

I'll after.

or,

Sir John! . . .
I come, Master Shallow : I come, Master Shallow.

Either they leave to meet some friend, or to set about some task, or they are sent for. Ordinarily this matters little ; but in the grand scenes, and inevitably in final scenes, the climax was necessarily passed, and the conclusion suffers in consequence. The disposal of his dead was a problem which the dramatist had to face. Usually the dead were carried off, either ignominiously, as Polonius was dragged off by Hamlet, or ceremonially, like Coriolanus, Hamlet, or Lear. The end of *Othello*, where the hero falls upon Desdemona's bed and the curtains close upon him, was exceptional. But in no play could the sequence to which we are accustomed—climax, tableau, curtain,—be provided. No grouping

of the characters could be satisfactorily viewed from three sides, and the curtain was non-existent.

Probably the side doors were strictly regulated in the prompt copy of the play for entrances and exits ; but much is obscure. Was one door regularly used for interior scenes, and another for exteriors, for instance ? Were the doors regularly employed to emphasize a contrast to the audience, as in the Bosworth Field scene in *Richard III* ? They appear so to have been used in *Antony and Cleopatra,* III, viii, where ' Camidius Marcheth with his Land Army one way ouer the stage, and Towrus the Lieutenant of Caesar the other way ' ; and in the opening of *King John,* where the French army appears to have entered by one door, and the English army by the other. But in *Love's Labour's Lost,* did the Princess and her companions always enter by one door, and Navarre and his friends by another ? In *The Comedy of Errors,* did Antipholus and Dromio of Syracuse use one door, and the twins of Ephesus the other? And in *Twelfth Night,* did Cesario always enter on the right, and Sebastian on the left, or vice versa? These are doubtful questions, but I am inclined to think that they did.

The heavens appear to have served no dramatic function. They were simply a sounding-board. But the pillars which supported them might serve as pillars in a hall or as posts in a street scene. Possibly they were camouflaged by branches in forest scenes, and probably they could be climbed by means of pegs. It was probably up a post that Berowne climbed in the scene which is the denouement of *Love's Labour's Lost,* Act IV, iii, whilst the King and Longaville seem to have hidden behind property-bushes. The stage-directions merely direct them to stand or step aside, so that possibly the King and Longaville pretended to hide in the doorways ; but the presence of Berowne on the stage during the scene, his constant interjections, and especially his lines :

Like a demie God, here fit I in the skie,
And wretched fooles fecrets heedfully ore-eye :

indicate that he presided over the action from above. And lastly, as far as concerns the platform, there was a trap-door which could be used on occasion. The trap, I imagine, would become the grave of Ophelia in *Hamlet,*V, i ; and the pit into which Bassianus, Quintus, and Martius were manoeuvred in *Titus Andronicus,* II, iii. One naturally wonders how the actors who took these parts made their exits. In *Hamlet,* it was not the boy who took the part of Ophelia who was lowered into the trap, but simply, as the stage-direction of the first folio indicates, an empty coffin. In *Titus Andronicus,* Bassianus, who was supposed to be dead, was hoisted up and carried off the stage, and Quintus and Martius were arrested and marched off, as the command of the Emperor indicates :

Some bring the murthered body, fome the murtherers,
Let them not fpeake a word, the guilt is plaine.

But there must have been a way through from beneath the stage into the tiring house, by which Ophelia's coffin would be removed. From this place under the stage the ghost of Hamlet's father uttered his sepulchral ' Swear ' in *Hamlet,* I, v ; and thither the waits were sent in *Antony and Cleopatra,* IV, iii, to play the supernatural music which was to alarm Antony's soldiers, as the stage-direction : ' Musicke of the Hoboyes is under the Stage ' —makes clear.

The inner stage next calls for our consideration. If Van Buchell's drawing of the Swan is a faithful representation of what De Witt saw, the scene of that theatre had in 1596 neither arras nor middle door. The scene drawn by Van Buchell was not novel. It was common in the screens of halls. It was also found fronting the poops of sailing ships. When Captain Reeling's crew of the Dragon acted *Hamlet* on their voyage to the East

Indies in September, 1607, they would find in the waist of the ship in front of the poop a stage which, with its two doors leading to the state-rooms, and the railing of the quarter-deck as a gallery, was not unlike a public stage. But the evidence of the stage-directions of plays acted at the public theatres, and the numerous allusions to the ' arras ' either by this or some other name, prove that in most of the public theatres there was a middle door, or opening of some kind, concealed by an ' arras ' or tapestry curtain. Three doors must have been used in the apparition scene in *Richard III,* and the witches in the first scene of *Macbeth* may well have entered and disappeared through three separate doors. It may be that the Theatre and the Rose resembled Van Buchell's sketch of the Swan, and that the early theatres had neither middle door nor arras. The tombs in *Titus Andronicus* and in *Romeo and Juliet,* and the place behind the curtains where the caskets were displayed in *The Merchant of Venice* may originally have been one of the doors; but if this were so,—and personally I think it unlikely,—the advantage of a central position for such scenes would soon become apparent, and it would not be long before a central opening was made, so that such scenes could be presented in the middle of the rear stage. It is hard to prove that there were these three openings in the rear wall of the Globe ; nevertheless, the action of certain scenes and the evidence of stage-directions make it almost certain. This central opening may originally have been a double door. It seems to have been larger than the side doors, and there is sufficient evidence that it was screened by a curtain or arras. This middle door, leading to a recess in the middle of the stage under the gallery, appears to have had no special name. The inner stage, behind it, is alluded to in the stage-directions as ' within,' ' within the curtains,' ' behind the arras,' and once, in *Alphonsus, King of Arragon,* (1599) as ' the place behind the stage.'

The inner stage seems to offer such a tempting opportunity for scenery and tableaux that naturally one is tempted to conjecture that it was so used : but of that, as far as Shakespeare's plays are concerned, there is no evidence. The place behind the stage must have been either the whole or a part of the ground floor of the tiring house. It was so far back from the auditorium and muted by three walls and two floors, that voices uttered within must have lost much of their resonance, and were probably almost inaudible to those sitting facing the stage. If, as seems probable, it was only illuminated by daylight, any scenery displayed therein cannot have been seen to best advantage, and indeed, on dull days, must have been almost invisible. Really the place within can have been little more than a wide middle door screened by an arras ; and it will be found as a rule that it was the doorway, or the arras itself, that the dramatist makes use of, and not the room behind. The inner stage, when it is used, usually appears as an annex to the outer stage. It is rarely the setting for an independent scene : *Cymbeline* II, ii, the scene of Iachimo's emergence from the trunk in Imogen's bedchamber, is, I think, the only scene in Shakespeare in which the inner stage is alone in use, and in which the scene is concluded solely by the drawing of the curtains.

We have seen the middle door figuring as a gate in the historical plays. It was quite commonly used as an entrance to the stage. It was probably the door by which old Queen Margaret entered in *Richard III,* I, iii, gliding through the arras like an apparition. Ghosts appeared and vanished through the arras,—Banquo's ghost in *Macbeth,* the apparitions in *Cymbeline,* and the ghost in *Hamlet.* It would be through the arras that Hamlet pursued the ghost in *Hamlet,* I, iv, followed hard after by Horatio and Marcellus ; and through the arras again that they reappeared in scene v. The apparitions in *Richard III* and in *Macbeth* probably

entered and disappeared through the arras. Behind the arras was the hiding place for the torturers in *King John,* IV, i, for Falstaff in ,' *Henry IV,* II, iv, and for Polonius in *Hamlet,* III iv. Used as an annex to the platform, the place behind the arras frequently represented a bed-chamber or a tomb. It figured as Juliet's bedchamber in *Romeo and Juliet,* IV, iii-v, as Duncan's in *Macbeth,* II, i-ii, and probably as Desdemona's in *Othello,* V, ii. It was the tomb of the Andronici in *Titus Andronicus,* I, i, and probably the tomb of the Capulets in *Romeo and Juliet,* V, iii. It represented a cave in *Timon of Athens,* and in *Cymbeline,* it became a hovel in *King Lear,* III, iv. In the historical plays it could represent a royal tent, as in ,',',' *Henry VI,* IV, iii, where Warwick and his men surprise Edward IV in his tent, capture him, and lead him out on the platform.

So far we have alluded to scenes in which the inner stage was regarded as little more than a central door to the platform. But it was soon realized that there was dramatic possibility in suddenly drawing aside the curtains and discovering a surprise behind it. In the 'nineties, Peele had designed discoveries in *The Old Wives" Tale,* scene xiii (before 1594),—where the Ghost of Jack ' draweth a curtain and there Delia sitteth asleep,' and in *David and Bethsabe,* I, i (before 1594),—where the prologue in retiring from the stage ' drawes a curtaine and discovers Bethsabe with her maid bathing over a spring : she sings, and David sits above viewing her.' How David, presumably in the gallery, managed to see Bethsabe inside the arras is a problem which has vexed great minds, and I will not pretend to solve it ; but I think the viewing must have been pretence ; he pretended to see her, and to the audience he seemed to see her, and the illusion was enough. What I wish to emphasize is the fact that here was a new and fruitful discovery. Surprises and tableaux were impossible on the platform where the actors had to walk on and off ;

but the arras made them possible on the inner stage, or, as I prefer to think of it, in the place behind the arras. Shakespeare seems to have made little, if any, use of this dramatic possibility until 1609 and after. Possibly the stage of the Globe was unsuited to this device, and his plays in which it occurs were written for Blackfriars. One of them, *The Tempest,* is said by Dryden to have been a Blackfriars play. The first scene of this kind which I note, was acted on the inner stage. I allude to the bedchamber scene in *Cymbeline,* II ii. The stage-direction is ' Enter Imogen, in her Bed, and a Lady.' But it is clear from the context that the scene opened with a discovery. The arras was drawn aside and discovered Imogen in bed, her maid near her, and a trunk at the foot of the bed. After a short dialogue with the maid, the maid retires, and Imogen sleeps. The next direction is ' lachimo from the Trunke.' lachimo emerges, observes the room, takes Imogen's bracelet ; and then, as his lines imply :

> I haue enuogh,
> To th'Truncke againe, and fhut the fpring of it.
> Swift, fwift, you Dragons of the night, that dawning
> May beare the Rauens eye : I lodge in feare,—

he goes back into his trunk. Imogen is still asleep in her bed. lachimo is in the trunk. The only way to end the scene was to draw the curtain, and that I imagine was how it was done ; though the first folio gives the usual stage-direction ' Exit.' There is a discovery in *The Winter's Tale,* V, iii, where Paulina draws aside the arras and unveils to Leontes the statue of Hermione. At least I assume that Hermione was hidden behind the arras until the moment when Paulina shows her to the King. The first folio contains no special stage-direction for a discovery ; indeed the initial direction :

> *Enter Leontes, Polixenes, Florizell, Perdita, Camillo, Paulina : Hermione (like a Statue* :) *Lords, &c.*

suggests that Hermione, draped as a statue, was brought on the platform with the rest, absurd though this would have been. But Paulina's lines :

> I keepe it
> Louely, apart. But here it is : prepare
> To fee the Life as liuely mock'd, as euer
> Still Sleepe mock'd Death : behold, and fay 'tis well.—

suggest almost to conviction that Hermione was ' apart ' behind the arras, and Leontes's plea (1. 59) :

> Doe not draw the Curtaine.—

coupled with Paulina's playful threat (1. 68) :

> He draw the Curtaine :
> My Lord's almoft fo farre tranfported, that
> Hee'le thinke anon it Hues.—

are clear proof that Hermione was discovered. *The Tempest,* V, i, offers another example, where ' Prospero discouers Ferdinand and Miranda, playing at Chesse.' And there is a similar scene in *Henry VIII,* where the king is discovered ' within ' by Norfolk and Suffolk. The stage-direction in the first folio indicates that the curtain was actually drawn aside from within by the actor who represented the king.

If there is some doubt about the uses of the inner stage, there is little or none about the gallery or balcony. It is shown in all the old pictures of the stage, and is frequently alluded to in stage-directions as ' above,' ' aloft,' or ' on the walls.' It figured in the balcony scene in *Romeo and Juliet.* In *The Merchant of Venice,* II, vi, Jessica appeared ' above,' and threw down the casket containing Shylock's jewels to Lorenzo. Here probably Sylvia appeared in the serenade scene in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona,* IV, ii, and perhaps also in Act IV, scene iii. On the balcony appeared Brabantio at lago's call in *Othello,* I, i. In the latter part of the Induction to *The Taming of the Shrew,* Christopher Sly, the drunkard, was

brought on ' aloft,' and remained - presumably as a ' presenter ' of the play. The gallery was the Senate House at the beginning of the first scene of *Titus Andronicus,* and the monument in *Antony and Cleopatra,* IV, xiii. How the dying Antony was heaved aloft to Cleopatra some ten or twelve feet above is an interesting problem : possibly one of the scaling ladders was used. In the historical plays the gallery commonly and frequently represented the walls of a castle or a city. From such a wall Arthur jumped to destruction in *King John,* IV, iii ; and Richard III ' betweene two Bishops ' addressed the citizens of London *(Richard III,* IV, iii). The gallery represented the hill near the battle of Philippi in *Julius Ccesar,* V, iii, which Pindarus ascended to view the fight. On the balcony representing a tower in the suburbs of Orleans, Salisbury and Talbot in ,' *Henry VI,* I, iv, were fired at by a master-gunner from his gun on the platform, which represented the walls of Orleans. Such cannon shots were not unusual. A ' shot goes off,' for instance, in *Hamlet,* V, ii, when the King drinks to Hamlet in the duel scene ; and, as is well-known, it was a mischance in firing a gun during a performance of *Henry VIII* that caused the destruction by fire of the first Globe theatre on June 29, 1613. The scenes in which the gallery was employed are far too numerous to discuss in detail, but it will generally be found that the upper stage represented fortified walls, or, either a balcony or an upper window. The much discussed ' orchard wall ' which Romeo is said to leap in *Romeo and Juliet,* II, i, was, I think, no wall at all, and we need not assume that a special property wall was thrust out for this incident. The first folio has no stage-direction indicating that Romeo actually jumped a wall, which, according to Juliet, was ' high and hard to climbe," Romeo enters alone, saying :

> Can I goe forward when my heart is here ?
> Turne backe dull earth, and find thy Center out.

Whereupon, although there is no direction for his exit, he probably turned back, climbed up to the gallery, and disappeared through one of the upper windows. As soon as the stage is empty, Benvolio and Mercutio enter below by the same door as Romeo. Benvolio calls him, and then adds :

He ran this way and leapt this Orchard wall.

They fail to find Romeo, and conclude that he is hidden in Capulet's orchard. After their exit by the door, Romeo, I imagine, entered through the arras representing the orchard, Juliet appeared on the balcony, and Shakespeare's most lyrical scene commences. It may be, however, that, instead of climbing, Romeo turned and disappeared through the arras,—the arras representing both the wall and the trees of Capulet's orchard.

An upper window figures in *Henry VIII,* V, ii, where the King and Butts ' at a Windowe aboue ' observe Cranmer waiting at a door below. The scene concluded with the King's command to ' draw the Curtaine clofe,' so that evidently in this scene there was a curtained upper window such as is pictured in the frontispiece to Kirkman's *Wits.* Finally, in two of the plays supernatural beings descend by means of some sort of crane from the upper storey to the platform. In *Cymbeline,* V, iv, the platform represents the interior of the prison in which Posthumus is confined, and the scene represents his dream. Apparitions enter to the sound of solemn music, probably through the arras, and ' circle Posthumus round as he lies sleeping ' ; and then ' lupiter descends in Thunder and Lightning, sitting uppon an Eagle : hee throwes a Thunder-bolt. The Ghostes fall on their knees.' After promising a happy ending to the troubles of Posthumus, Jupiter ascends in his machine, and the ghosts vanish through the arras. There is a similar event in *Macbeth,* III, v, where,—if the stage-directions in Middleton's *Witch* are to be trusted,—during the

singing of the ' Song within. Come away, come away, &c.,' ' A Spirit like a cat descends,' or, in other words, a swing with a seat shaped like a cat was lowered from the balcony. Hecate ascended in the machine ; and the witches disappeared through the arras.

III

It now remains to discuss the influence of the stage upon Shakespeare's drama. I must be brief ; but I believe it can be shown that the stage influenced structure, acting, and style. In structure, it made for many and varied scenes and the loose-knit episodic action. In acting, it led to rhetorical delivery and gesture. In style, it led to romantic fiction and to a figurative, florid kind of verse which could lend itself to declamation.

Really all these consequences arose from the absence of scenery, and the subsequent necessity to strive for dramatic illusion. Let us consider first the affect on structure. The absence of a front curtain and scenery made an initial surprise impossible. It would be some moments, I imagine, before the first audience of *The Tempest* realized that the opening scene represented a ship at sea ; or, in *Macbeth,* that the opening scene represented some supernatural region. The location of opening scenes therefore, was usually either the interior of a hall, or a street, with possibly the exterior of a house in the background. And owing to the absence of the curtain, the end of the play, as we have said, almost inevitably outran the climax. The indeterminate character of the scenic background, namely the front of the tiring-house, led to frequent changes of locality. There was no scenery, and no time was lost in shifting it. It was easier to convey the action of a play by means of numerous comparatively short scenes, than by a few long acts. Indeed, if the latter contrivance had become the rule, it must have led, as in classical drama, almost inevitably to observance of unity of place ; for who could tolerate

at length the same background representing, let us say, a hall throughout act I, a battlefield in act II, and a courtyard in act III. But because the scenes were short, dramatic illusion never attracted the background into the play, and made it persist from scene to scene. The scene could be anything, anywhere. What little illusion there was, the properties of the scene provided, and even these may have been left on the stage and ignored by the audience during an intervening scene.

There can be no doubt, it seems to me, that the old dramatists were not led to the unity of place, because their audiences never regarded the stage as a scene. Locality was vague, and is not indicated as a rule, even in the stage-directions. The play was the thing, and a setting was neither demanded nor conceded. There was no attempt to set aside a certain part of the stage as a definite and fixed locality. In the same play the arras could be in one scene the portal of Juliet's chamber, and in another the Capulets' tomb ; or the gallery could be either a gallery in the hall of the translated Kit Sly, or the upper story of the pedant's house. We may claim therefore that the screen-like rear wall,—it was neither the exterior of an ordinary house, nor the interior of an ordinary hall, but a mixture of both,—by causing the indeterminate nature of the many and varied short scenes, prevented the growth of an illusion that the permanent background represented anything realistic, and consequently prevented the development of the practice of unity of place. There were frequent changes of scene in Elizabethan plays because there was no scenery to change.

But the most important influence on drama of a stage of this kind was that, since it provided no realistic setting and created no dramatic illusion, actor and dramatist had to work in their several ways to remedy the defect. The scene was simply the tiring-house after all, and the actors were forced to exert themselves in voice and gesture

to force the illusion upon the audience. In a modern play with scenery it is enough if an actor has personality and can speak clearly. Except in low-comedy parts, acting is not called for. Natural behaviour is enough. That perhaps explains why low-comedy parts, which require *acting*, are so very satisfactory. But on the Elizabethan stage every actor from king down to clown, had to deliver his lines in an exaggerated style. If he dropped to the familiar conversational style, he became simply Humphrey or Sincklo on the stage of the Globe theatre. It was only by voice, and gesture and style that he could convince an audience that he was of such stuff as dreams are made of. No doubt the absence of scenery led to a certain amount of rant. You remember Hamlet's advice to the player : ' Speak the speech . . . trippingly on the tongue ; . . . Do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus, but use all gently. . . . It offends me to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters ; . . , Suit the action to the word, the word to the action ; . . . O'erstep not the modesty of nature.' That was how Shakespeare spoke to the boys. They had to create dramatic illusion by gesture, and to speak with modulation and clear enunciation of the voice; but it was necessary in the midst of this cultivated artificiality not to o'erstep the modesty of nature.

Lastly, in the case of Shakespeare, the stage led to an avoidance of realistic subjects. He declined the challenge of common life, and localised his scenes anywhere but in a place that needed carpentry to make it credible. True in *The Merry Wives* Shakespeare staged an English play, but as a rule he preferred foreign lands or the distant past. To him the setting was idealized. He felt no need of scenery. He imagined it, and it was there. But its very absence led to a heightened poetic style. An appeal to the ear had to compensate for the lack of appeal to the eye. Declamation in the actor was paralleled by figurative language in the poet. It may

reasonably be argued that we owe much of Shakespeare's richness ofdirectionand splendour of imagery to his stage. His vivid and daringly expressive style is his unconscious attempt to illustrate the play and to create illusion.

We might indeed claim that Shakespeare had little interest in the stage and its contrivances. If he required a scene aloft or within, he made free use of gallery or arras ; but he never appears to have constructed a play with the intent to develop the possibilities of these resources, unless *Titus Andronicus* be wholly his. Indeed in many plays,—in *The Merry Wives, Measure for Measure, The Comedy of Errors, Love's Labour's Lost, A Midsummer Night's Dream, As You Like It, All's Well that Ends Well,* and in II *Henry IV*,—he seems to have used only the main platform. When Shakespeare used the annexes to the platform, the departure arose inevitably out of the play. Places ' above,' ' beneath,' or ' within,' were needed, and so they were used.

Shakespeare sought his settings in the never-never-land of make-believe,—in Illyria, Ephesus, Sicily, Venice, Denmark, Scotland, or the coasts of Bohemia, where the bears came from. He peopled his plays with Elizabethan nobles, gallants, and rustics, it is true, but to him they were the inhabitants of far countries or the dim past. Distance eliminated the common and the trivial, lent its dim enchantment of illusion, and set his imagination free to make them talk like wits and poets. As he once remarked, ' the truest poetry is the most feigning,' He found the most satisfactory atmosphere in actions remote from common life. I know no better name for this than the word ' romantic,' Shakespeare was not a visionary, or a mystic. He was sane, and balanced, and comprehensive. He did not see things differently. He saw them more vividly. For this reason it has been denied that the poet who influenced the romantic movement so profoundly possessed the romantic eye, and saw

The light that never was on sea or land.

One by one, like the ten little nigger hoys, the romantic poets are disappearing under the subtle and penetrating gaze of the critics into the limbo of classicality. Byron has gone. Wordsworth is going. And Shakespeare has begun to slip. But if romanticism stands for escape from the common way of life, from material values, from concern with the practical aspects and sensuous flavours of life ; if it stands for a more intense, almost a transfigured view of life,—for life seen, not in terms of fact and intellect, but of intelligence and feeling,—for life in the crowded hour of its glory,—then surely, Shakespeare was a romantic, and if not the most visionary or the most fantastic, he is the most persuasive and the most rousing of them all.

G. H. COWLING

SHAKESPEARE'S AUDIENCE

WHEN faced with a subject of this kind one's instinct is to take refuge behind Chaucer's famous apologia, and to appeal at once to the modern audience for its toleration.

> For wel I wot that folk han herebeforn
> Of makyne ropyn and lad awey the corn.

Since A. C. Bradley's pioneer essay of 1902 gleaning has proceeded apace in this particular field of Shakesperian research. It was never very fertile, and now there is little left for even the most industrious. The good grain has all been gathered in to *Shakespeare's England* and Chambers' *Elizabethan Stage*, for any of us to rifle at will.

It is necessary at the outset to emphasize the fact that there is not a very great deal of information available. The impression is often given nowadays that we know an enormous amount about the subject : but the truth is that Elizabethan literature is not as lavish as might have been expected with its pen-pictures of Shakespeare's theatre and audience. When Chambers has been ransacked we are still left asking innumerable questions. What, for instance, were the proportions of men to women, young to old, gentle to simple, in a Shakespearean audience ? Was a ' first night ' audience any different from that of an ordinary day ? Did Shakespeare cater for the same audience as Henslowe's hacks, or were there cliques amongst the playgoers then as now ? What did the groundlings in the yard do if it began to rain during a performance ? How regularly would a keen drama-lover go to the theatre ? There would be no exhausting the possibilities of a list of this kind, but they are questions which bid fair to remain unresolved, and it is along other lines that I propose to explore to-night.

We have two main sources of information at our disposal. There is the one already mentioned—contemporary literature with its sketches of individual members of the audience : and there is also the evidence of Elizabethan drama itself—the inferences concerning the general tastes and psychological ' make up ' of that audience which we may gather from a study of the material that Shakespeare and his fellow-writers put before it. The one tests and reinforces the other. The theatre stands empty, but there is a play toward. Let us begin by watching an audience assemble, summoned from the bye-ways of play and pamphlet, to satisfy our curiosity. Unsubstantial figures some of them will be, but there is at least one famous full-length portrait known to us all. Centuries pass, but Dekker's Gull remains a familiar of the theatre. That as often as not he is clad in female attire in the present age makes no difference to his essential characteristics. He is always to be found in any audience : let us therefore allow him pride of place in this gathering.

Your Gull comes to the theatre to pass an idle afternoon and to show *off* his fine clothes and his folly. The pit is more patient with him to-day than ' the yard ' was in Shakespeare's time : if we may trust Dekker, the groundlings hooted, hissed, spat and threw dirt at such pests, feathered ' estridges ' who sat on the stage and impeded other folks' view of the action. Like the modern flapper who giggles violently in a crisis the Elizabethan gull would ' laugh aloud in the midst of the most serious and saddest scene of the terriblest tragedy,' If he had a grudge against the author he would get up in the middle of the play and walk out, passing the time of day with his acquaintances as he went : if the rain began, however, and he did not wish to spoil his fine clothes he would sit it out and ' turn plain ape.' ' Take up a rush and tickle the ears of your fellow-gallants,' recommends Dekker, ' mew

at passionate speeches ; blare at merry ; find fault with the music ; whew at the children's action ; whistle at the songs.' One other favourite trick he had, in common with his modern descendant : he waited to take his place, especially if the piece was a new one, until the play was just beginning. Then, as he came forward, stool in hand, mewed and hissed at by the ' opposed rascality,' he felt that he had indeed secured from the whole audience the attention he deemed due to his elegant clothes and his egregious personality. Fortunately, however, such fellows formed but one very small section in any representative audience, and they may have met with their deserts at times. We have no reason to suppose that the Elizabethan play-goers suffered fools gladly.

Not so well known as Dekker's Gull are the satirical sketches to be found in Henry Fitzgeffrey's *Third Booke of Humours: Intituled Notes from Black-Fryers.* In this dialogue the speaker picks out and describes certain individuals while the crowd gathers before the play begins. He notices first the military element in the audience, reminding us of Dekker's assertion that ' your gallant, your courtier, and your captain ' are the players' ' soundest paymasters.' Captain Martio at the Blackfriars can be warranted to regale the time of waiting with warlike yarns of doubtful veracity. Then Fitzgeffrey notices the traveller Sir Hand Hunt, a favourite butt of all Elizabethan satirists, and a notorious liar. The calibre of this particular specimen of his numerous tribe can be well gauged from one of his curios. On his last trip he brought home with him from Jerusalem ' a remnant of Jacob's Ladder.' After he has passed, the speaker and his friend spy a ' Cheap-side Dame.' They would like to inveigle her into their company, but she takes no notice of them : she already has a companion waiting for her in one of the boxes. Following her comes a fashion-monger, a

youth who, like Portia's English suitor, has gathered his garments from the four quarters of the globe :

> His Boote speakes *Spanish* to his *Scottish* Spurres,
> His Sute cut *Frenchly,* round bestucke with Burres
> Pure *Holland is* his Shirt, which, proudly faire,
> Seemes to out-face his *Doublet* everywhere.

Next comes one who is sufficiently described as a ' plumed dandebrat.' Last, there is a ' spruce cox-comb ' who would find himself at home in a certain feminine section of the modern audience. He carries a mirror in the lid of his tobacco-box or the back of his watch, and he is always looking at himself in it to see:

> How his *Band* jumpeth with his *Peccadilly,*
> Whether his Band strings balance equally:
> Which way his *Feather* waggs.

Ben Jonson can add several personages to this rapidly assembling audience. His acid strokes have etched for us a goodly company of those critics and gulls whom he disliked so intensely. He pays the audience a more or less generous tribute in *The Case is Altered :* ' the people generally are very acceptive, and apt to applaud any meritable work' ; but his tone is hostile and unsparing when he anatomizes those who misliked his plays and who carried the audience with them by the open expression of their opinion. The ' rude barbarous crew,' the people that have ' no brains and yet grounded judgements,' who ' will hiss anything that mounts above their grounded capacities,' he dismisses with contempt :

' The sport is at a new play, to observe the sway and variety of opinion that passeth it. A man shall have such a confused mixture of judgment, poured out in the throng there, as ridiculous as laughter itself. One says he likes not the writing, another likes not the plot, another not the playing : and sometimes a fellow,

that comes not there past once in five years, at a parliament time, or so, will be as deep mired in censuring as the best, and swear by God's foot he would never stir his foot to see a hundred such as that is ... the rankest stinkard of them all will take upon him as peremptory as if he had writ himself *in artibus magister"*

But he has lunged harder and more effectively at the more objectionable type ; there are a few ' capricious gallants ' who haunt the theatres, and whose behaviour, he complains, ' is more infectious than the pestilence.' ' They have taken such a habit of dislike in all things, that they will approve nothing, be it never so conceited or elaborate ; but sit dispersed, making faces, and spitting, wagging their upright ears, and cry, *filthy ! filthy !* simply uttering their own condition, and using their wryed countenances instead of a vice, to turn the good aspects of all that shall sit near them from what they behold.' It is much the same as his portrait of the gallant who sits like an Aristarchus or stark ass :

> Taking men's lines with a tobacco face.

To be thought ' one of the judicious ' he

> Sits with his arms thus wreath'd, his hat pull'd here,
> Cries, mew, and nods, then shakes his empty head
> . . . . . .
> And now and then breaks a dry biscuit jest,
> Which, that it may more easily be chew'd
> He steeps in his own laughter.

Best of all, perhaps, is the figure of the Ignorant Critic in *Cynthia's Revels,* ' taken off' to the life by one of the child actors. He enters, hands his cloak to one of the boys, seats himself on his stool, takes out his tobacco box and lights up, puncuating his remarks with tremendous puffs of smoke :

' By this light, I wonder that any man is so mad to come to see these rascally tits play here—They do ad like so many wrens on pismires—not the fifth part of

a good face amongst them all—And,then their music is abominable—able to stretch a man's ears worse than ten—pillories and their ditties—most lamentable things—like the pitiful fellows that make them—poets. By this vapour, an 'twere not for tobacco—I think—the very stench of 'em would poison me, I should not dare to come in at their gates—A man were better visit fifteen jails—or a dozen or two of hospitals—than once adventure to come neer them.'

Thus they gradually assemble, the gallants and gulls upon the stage itself, and a diversity of folk in the yard, the galleries and the rooms. Once inside, as Dekker puts it, the place allows ' a stool as well to the farmer's son as to your templar : your stinkard has the self-same liberty to be there in his tobacco fumes which your sweet courtier hath : your carman and tinker claim as strong a voice in their suffrage, and sit to give judgment on the play's life and death as well as the proudest Momus among the tribe of critic.' Whether you frequented the theatre in Shakespeare's time depended not upon the social class to which you belonged, but upon the opinions which you held. Those who agreed with the view of the stricter Puritans that the theatres were haunts of iniquity and the devil the father of all players would not go to the play-houses, and this section of the community tended to be found amongst the moderately comfortable and well-to-do citizen class, especially in London. Nevertheless this class too was well represented in any typical audience. As Dekker points out, your gull—and your ordinary theatregoer as well therefore—may be a justice of the peace, a Lord Mayor's son, or an under-sheriff just as easily as a lord or a knight or an inns-of-court man.

When we begin to look around for sketches of the citizen at the play we find many scattered allusions mostly contemptuous or satirical in tone. But the

full-length portrait which matches Dekker's Gull is, of course, Beaumont's Grocer and his wife in *The Knight of the Burning Pestle.* As the satire is gentler so the drawing is subtler, the characterization finer and more complete in the case of the grocer : and we shall see presently that much more can be learnt about the tastes and the prejudices of the average playgoer from Beaumont than it was possible to learn from Dekker, cleverly as his gull is outlined.

A grocer and a freeman of the City of London Beaumont's citizen will sit upon the stage with the gentlemen and he will tolerate no girds at his class. He will have a play ' notably in honour of the commons of the city ' *:* he will have a grocer ' do rare things.' He will pay for his pleasures, and will give the players two shillings to hire the waits of Southwark : Ralph is to play a stately part ' and he must needs have shawms. I'll be at the charge of them myself rather than we'll be without them' He comforts his wife when she is frightened by a stage-combat, goes out at the end of a scene to fetch her a drink, and is most anxious that Ralph should do the proper thing when it comes to tipping the domestic staff in the King of Cracovia's house. He represents more nearly than any other contemporary sketch that elusive person referred to as ' the ordinary playgoer.' It is noticeable that his tastes and those of ' the gentlemen ' are the only ones referred to by Beaumont. On the evidence of the play it is tempting to deduce that this plebeian element was the main force with which a dramatist had to reckon by the end of Elizabeth's reign. In the present instance the grocer is well-to-do, and can afford to thrust himself amongst the gentlemen : his poorer brethren, scanter of cash, but alike in their tastes, paying a penny to stand in the yard, or two pence for a place in one of the galleries, filled the greater part of the theatre. Referred to by the saucy playwrights as the stinkards,

pressed together as close as they could be penned, kindly, talkative and opinionated they probably represent the ' body of the house ' that the dramatist had to carry with him if his play was to escape their hisses and arouse their plaudits.

The citizen being accompanied by his wife we are brought to a consideration of this remaining section of the audience, the women who attended plays. Various rash statements have been made upon this subject, many as unwarranted as Schelling's assertion that ' the queen herself occasionally condescended to witness a popular performance at the Blackfriars or the Globe, duly disguised and masked.' James I's queen, Anne, attended the Blackfriars, but there is no evidence to show that Elizabeth ever did so.[1] Again, there is none to show whether or not such an one as ' Sidney's sister Pembroke's mother,' would have been likely to grace a public theatre with her presence. That decrier of theatres who wrote the *Second and Third Blast of Retrait from Plays and Players,* and who may have been Anthony Munday, repeats the usual criticism : ' The Theater I found to be an appointed place of Bauderie, mine owne eares have heard honest women allured with abominable speeches.' There was and is nothing new in his statement about bawdry : it is worth while, however, to realise that the whole statement also conveys evidence of the fact that honest women went to the theatre. Ben Jonson, affirming that his *Silent Woman* catered for all tastes, asserts that some parts of the play will be

> . . . f*it for ladies ;* some for lords, knights, squires ;
> Some for your waiting-wench and city wires,
> Some for your men and daughters of Whitefriars.

The famous drawing of the Swan Theatre shows some women amongst the eight auditors represented, and

[1]Cf. Chambers: *Eliz. Stage:* II. p. 555.

for the presence of waiting-women who, in company with gentlemen-ushers, frequented the lord's room, Dekker vouches in the *Gull's Hornbook.* According to every contemporary moralist light women found the theatre one of their most profitable haunts. Chambers considers that the galleries were full of them, but that in spite of this it was possible for ladies of position to attend a public performance, probably masked and sitting nowhere but in one of the private rooms. Chambers also produces evidence from a law-suit to show that the French Ambassador's wife attended with her husband a public performance of *Pericles* at the Globe,[1] between the years 1605 and 1608.

On all these points, however, detailed information is lacking : the only important sketch of a woman playgoer is that of the citizen's wife in *The Knight of the Burning Pestle.* Apparently such good dames were not the regular frequenters of the theatre that their husbands were. The grocer's wife informs the gallants whom she joins on the stage that this is her first visit to a playhouse : ' I was ne'er at one of these plays, as they say, before ; but I should have seen *Jane Shore* once : and my husband hath promised me any time this twelve-month to carry me to *The Bold Beauchamps,* but in truth he did not.' Like the careful huswife she is she brings her own sweetmeats with her, sticks of liquorice, sugar-candy and green-ginger ; and when they grow thirsty she sends her husband out for ale, in which she drinks to the health of the gentlemen sitting by her.

To conclude our gathering of men and women there should be some children. The only mentions I have come across refer to the London apprentices, who apparently made so much noise that the audience could scant endure their presence at a play. In *Henry VIII* they are described as ' The youths that thunder at a

[1] *Eliz. Stage :* II : p. 549.

playhouse and fight for bitten apples ' ; and in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Wit without Money* Valentine, the hero, abuses Bellamore by comparing him to the ' prentices who ' break in at plays for three a groat,' crack nuts with scholars in the penny rooms and fight for apples. They must have been busy most afternoons in the shops, but evidently when occasion offered they followed the taste of their elders and thronged to the play.

Once assembled the various members of the audience find themselves places according to their purses and their several pleasures. The gallant desirous to be seen as well as to see has paid an extra sixpence or even a shilling for a stool on the stage. Your groundling, content with his pennyworth of standing room, remains in the yard : your stinkard has paid an extra penny and squeezed himself into the crowded two-penny rooms in the top gallery and elsewhere : gentlemen pay yet a third penny. Such, at any rate, is the account of prices given by the Swiss traveller Thomas Platter in 1599 : ' Anyone who remains on the level standing pays only one English penny ; but if he wants to sit he is let in at a further door, and there he gives another penny. If he desires to sit on a cushion in the most comfortable place of all, where he not only sees everything well, but can also be seen, then he pays yet another English penny at another door,'[1] Prices varied, of course, in different years and at different theatres : by 1604, for example, the *Gull's Hornbook* is speaking of sixpenny and twelvepenny rooms, and by 1614 Ben Jonson gives the audience of *Bartholomew Fair* leave to judge each ' his sixpen' worth, his twelvepen' worth, so to his eighteen-pence, two shillings, half a crown, to the value of his place.' Fashions varied too, for originally the lord's room appears to have been at the back of the stage, but towards the end of the century this was given up, and the lords and gallants

[1] Quoted by Chambers : *Eliz. Stage* II, 364.

sat either on the .stage or else in what the contract of the Fortune Theatre calls ' ffower convenient divisions for gentlemen's roomes,'[1] that is, in the originals of the present-day private boxes to the right and left of the stage in the lower gallery.

It does not appear that reserved seats were usual : most people came early, and beguiled the time with talk, cardplaying, eating or reading. Pamphlets were hawked in the auditorium, and nuts, apples and drinks sold. Platter says that ' in the pauses of the comedy food and drink are carried round amongst the people and one can thus refresh himself at his own cost.' It was not wise to keep the audience waiting too long for the play to begin, however : Jonson's Cordatus[2] remarks that ' this protraction is able to sour the best settled patience in the theatre.' It would probably start the apprentices ' thundering,' and might also prematurely arouse the attentions of a hostile *claque.* That such gangs were sometimes employed we have the assurance of Dekker in *Satiromastix,* where he makes his Horace assert ' I can bring (and that they quake at) a prepared troupe of gallants who for my sake shall distaste every unsalted line in their fly-blown comedies.' Apart, too, from any such prepared manifestations we have ample evidence in contemporary literature that the audience was accustomed to being both noisy and tiresome in its behaviour. Ben Jonson complains that the gallants cluttered up the stage and left the players no room to move[3] : and many plays besides *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* suggest that the players might at any moment be subjected to interruption and criticism. The audience vented both its rational dislikes and its own folly in mews, cat-calls and hisses. When really strong feeling was aroused it did not scruple to add to its abuse flights of nuts, apples, eggs

[1] Greg: *Henslowe Papers:* p. 5. *'Everyman out of His Humour'*
[3] *Devil is an Ass :* Prologue, 1616.

or any other convenient missile ; and it is probable that practice with the victims of the pillory had made of the majority excellent marksmen. Indeed we have only to imagine ourselves at a performance of the *Playboy of the Western World* in the Scotland Road district of Liverpool to be able to recreate for ourselves exactly the circumstances of the reception of a misliked Elizabethan play. It has been asserted that the audience ' had the drama in their blood,' but I think it would be more accurate to say that as a nation the Elizabethans had decided that dramatic performances were the most popular form of entertainment. We are then in no way prematurely committed to an opinion of the aesthetic quality of that audience which might contradict those impressions which some of us form more or less unconsciously while thus inspecting and re-arranging these well-known facts.

Research has thus given us the material for a fairly vivid idea of the appearance, behaviour, and playgoing habits of what Ben Jonson refers to as :

> The wise and many-headed *Bench,* that sits
> Upon the Life, and Death of Playes, and Wits,
> (Compos'd of *Gamester, Captain, Knight, Knight's man*
> Lady, or Pusil, that weares maske, or fan,
> Velvet, or Taffata cap, rank'd, in the dark,
> With the shop's *Foreman,* or some such *brave sparke,*
> That may judge for his sixpence.)[1]

It is more exciting, as well as more hazardous, to turn now to the material of the Elizabethan drama itself, and see whether we may draw therefrom any inferences which will help us to realise something of the mentality and the tastes with which this audience was endowed. It is not too absurd a task as a modern analogy may suggest. Given as our facts, the opening years of this century, with the Granville Barker productions at the Court, some of the best of the Pinero plays, Tree's

[1] Commendatory verses to Fletcher's *Faithful Shepherdess:* ed. of 1629.

Shakespeare productions, the success of Stephen Phillips and of musical comedy, and the foundation of the Stage Society ; and it is not too difficult to infer something about the nature of the Edwardian audience which will stand up to examination.

It will be obvious that I am bearing down, although from the opposite direction, upon the old assumption that ' the drama's laws the drama's patrons give,' It is an assumption which I think we can accept more unreservedly if we express it in the form chosen by a modern playwright and critic, St. John Ervine, who in his *Organized Theatre* asserts that ' drama is, of all the means of artistic expression, the one which most closely corresponds with the mental and spiritual state of the race.' The frequency and the thoroughness with which Shakespeare's contemporary popularity was vouched for gives us legitimate assurance that an examination of his plays will reveal to us certain aspects of this mental and spiritual state.

A play that is popular may, on examination, show two things : it may indicate something of the tastes of the audience, and it may also reveal the fact that the audience exercised a certain influence over the playwright. It is always difficult to be at all sure about this latter case, because things in Shakespeare which we dislike to-day may not be due to any ' writing down ' to the contemporary audience, but simply to tastes shared in common with his fellows from which we nowadays differ. There is also the further difficulty, that influence need not involve this writing-down : it may simply mean that the dramatist sets before us that which he realizes from his observation of contemporary life to be the normal behaviour or opinion of ordinary people. I should be inclined to look for this influence, therefore, only in something which, as it were, cuts across the integrity of a Shakespeare play—which in any way interferes with or partially nullifies the artist's

creation. For example, I am not prepared to hold the groundling responsible for the music and canonry and displays of physical skill in the plays. He liked them, admittedly : on the evidence I see no reason to doubt that Shakespeare liked them too, and used them deliberately as part of his legitimate theatrical material—as deliberately as he used the mechanical devices which would reproduce the storm in *Lear.* They are in no way out of keeping with the matter or the method of the plays, and they were as much part and parcel of Elizabethan life as telephones, gramophones and ball-room dancing are of modern life.

In an examination of this kind it is advisable first to make some attempt to gauge the sensibility, the emotionally-reaftive capacity of the audience. Rightly or wrongly we are accustomed to judge the imaginative development of any particular section of the modern audience by the quantity and the quality of the sensationalism which it likes in its plays ; and we are accustomed to think that the whole-hearted and enthusiastic patrons of what has been suggestively christened the ' thick-ear ' drama are, imaginatively, somewhat undeveloped and hard of hearing. For a point of attack therefore it will probably be simplest to regard first that aspect of Shakespeare's plays and those of his contemporaries with which the modern reader is least in sympathy. I mean, of course, those horrors and sensationalism designed to curdle the blood, which when represented on the stage to-day, disgust in Shakespeare, and are usually absurd in others. What is the legitimate deduction to be drawn about the mentality of the audience that had provided for it the plucking out of Gloster's eyes in *Lear,* the revolting butcheries of *Titus Andronicus,* and the atrocities of which Marlowe, Webster, Chapman, Marston, Ford and Tourneur are all severally guilty ? Not, I think, that the audience had a morbid craving for horror or

sensation, or that Shakespeare and his fellows were pandering to a depraved taste in their audience. The thrill of horror, is, after all, one of the tragic dramatist's most legitimate and natural resources. What these horrors enable us to do is accurately to measure the sensibility of the audience and to gauge their imaginative reaction. On that evidence, we have no choice but to rate both low. This deduction is, of course, amply borne out by our knowledge of the time. A strong vein of brutality and an insensitiveness to physical suffering were part and parcel of the mentality of the Elizabethan audience. Accustomed to a very considerable degree of cruelty in real life they needed something as violent as the blinding of Gloster if their sensibilities were to be penetrated at all, and an emotional reaction aroused. The men and women who watched *Lear* had perhaps watched Jesuit executions with the usual appurtenances of hanging, drawing and quartering. Spectators of Lavinia with her bleeding stumps had watched in 1579 when John Stubbes' right hand was struck off on a block with a butcher's cleaver. Those who could tolerate either the one or the other were, from the modern point of view, very deficient in imagination. They had the same interest in blood and slaughter that a robust-minded undeveloped child has, and what is more they were familiar with both.

To assert that Shakespeare's audience was in any way deficient in imagination is to challenge the most venerable and acceptable of myths. From A. C. Bradley onwards stress has been laid upon this quality : ' It possessed, first, a vivid imagination. Shakespeare could address to it not in vain the injunction " Work, work your thoughts." Probably in three scenes out of five the place and surroundings of the action were absolutely invisible to its eyes. In the fourth it took the barest symbol for reality. A couple of wretched trees made the Forest of Arden for it. . . It heard Romeo say

" Look love, what envious streaks Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east," and to its mind's eye they were there. . . . The simplest convention sufficed to set its imagination at work. If Prospero entered wearing a particular robe it knew that no-one on the stage could see his solid shape.'[1]

This, I believe, is the orthodox view, but I cannot see that it really squares with the facts. Brutality is admittedly the concomitant of a crude and undeveloped imagination. We have reason to suppose, from the plays as a whole, that Shakespeare did not share the brutality of his audience, but whether this is true or not we are bound to infer that his use of crude horror gives us some index to the mental and spiritual state of those for whom he wrote.

The points made by Bradley in the passage quoted must be taken up in a moment, but it will be better first to consider another passage in the same essay in which he comments on the audience's love of poetry as the natural concomitant of this vivid imagination. If it could be proved, it would be a serious argument in favour of the rehabilitation of the Elizabethan imagination, but personally I do not find the evidence strong enough. Bradley considers two main kinds of poetry in the plays—one, explicitly, the reflecive, the other implicitly, the descriptive. This latter he refers to in the passage already quoted, but it will be obvious to anybody who takes the trouble to ransack the plays for such passages as Bradley cites that they are extremely rare—so rare that only an already-bored audience would ever have resented them. That, however, is no positive evidence that it liked such passages.

The reflective poetry of the long speeches and soliloquies is, however, another matter. Bradley asserts, with reason, that if the audiences had not liked this element they ' would have silenced it, and the Eliza-

[1] *Oxford Lectures on Poetry : Shakespeare's Theatre and Audience :* p. 391.

bethan drama would never have been the thing it was,' What Bradley omits to mention, however, is the fact patently revealed by Elizabethan drama as a whole, that the audience would stand any amount of moralizing or sententious argument or declamation, however dull and badly written—it was the pith it enjoyed, as far as evidence goes, rather than the lovely trappings of Shakesperian verse. Further, if we may take the playwrights in evidence against themselves, what the audience really enjoyed was colourful, sonorous rhetoric. Ralph has by heart the 'huffing part ' from *Henry IV*' : he holds up his head and declaims :

> By heaven methinks it were an easy leap
> To pluck bright honor from the pale-faced moon.

His romantic jargon moves the grocer to applause : ' Well said Ralph ; some more of those words Ralph,' Finally, we may as well remember that a delight in the sheer sound of poetry, the first and most primitive stage of poetic appreciation, is no evidence at all of a developed or imaginative apprehension. The presence of poetry in the work of a poet is no evidence of appreciation upon the part of his audience : so far as the evidence goes it may have tolerated the poetry for the sake of his other undeniable merits.

In view of this and other qualities to be found in their plays it would be wiser, I think, to credit the Elizabethan audience not with an imaginative capacity distinctly superior to that possessed by the modern audience, but with an immense capacity for make-believe. By make-believe I mean the childish faculty of over-looking without effort any discrepancies which shatter the illusion of reality. To an Elizabethan audience time and place meant almost as little as they do to a child : one place was as good as another, and Verona conveyed, like the sea-coast of Bohemia, at

[1] Hotspur in Act I, Sc. iii.

most a vague atmosphere of strangeness but certainly nothing pictorial in the way of background. Pretence and make-believe are not the same thing as imagination. For a child who possesses the former capacity a simple statement suffices. The scene is Rome because I say it is, not because the child can imagine the appearance of Rome or does imagine an appearance for Rome. The nursery cupboard is a bear's den because architecturally it is a suitable structure, and because the child says it is a den, not because he has either seen a bear's den or imagines what it would look like. The bear is the thing, the den is so secondary as to be almost negligible. In just the same way I think the Elizabethans accept willingly the constant changes of scene upon their stage simply because there is no scene at all either in their imagination or before their eyes. As in the Greek theatre the permanent architectural background represents nothing at all except architecture. It is innocent of any local suggestion : it merely provides, when necessary, doors, windows, a room and a balcony. There is no evidence to show that they visualised the swallows flitting around the sunlit battlements of Dunsinane as Bradley suggests. Shakespeare's injunction ' Work, work your thoughts ' implies that they could work them but it does not imply that they did. If human nature is any guide to the nature of the Elizabethan audience we may be fairly sure that it did not exercise its imagination unless it was forced to. Nor was there really much need for any such exercise. ' The play is—and was—the thing ' : what Hamlet does and says when he meets the ghost is infinitely more important than the suggested background of the bleak and wind-swept battlements of Elsinore. What happens to most people is that Shakespeare gives them a feeling, an atmosphere, and that suffices them : they do not need to make their imaginations create from that atmosphere any visual image at all.

Here, then, in the multiplicity of scenes in which Shakespeare and his contemporaries indulge I would be inclined to discover another indication of the imaginative quality of the audience. Local poetry, or the poetry of place, is a sprig of modern grafting, and its emotional affect depends upon its associative value in the main. The modern dramatist must deal carefully with place, on account of its possibly associative value. If there are no associations more liberties may be taken.

Similarly with their treatment of time. In practice time was expansive or contractile as they pleased on the Elizabethan stage. Again, like children, the audience did not imagine such a thing as a time lapse : having embarked upon pretence it was prepared to pretend right through : time simply did not exist. That Shakespeare was fully aware of the dramatic value of time there is no manner of doubt : that he was even more aware of the dramatic value of speed is perhaps even more certain. Hence, I believe that, knowing the nature of his audience, he was prepared to sacrifice the first to the second. Given a really imaginative audience, that realized as he did himself, the suggestive value of place and time, I do not think Shakespeare would have allowed himself to treat time in the cavalier fashion that he does, for example, in *Othello* and *Richard II.* But given the Elizabethan audience he was perfectly well aware that by concentrating on what was both dramatically and theatrically the more affective—i.e., speed—his treatment of time would pass unnoticed. On the time-scheme given to the audience Othello has no alternative but to know that lago is lying. If we accept at their face value the time indications given between Act II, Sc. i and Act III, Sc. iii, ,'. 384 they should sadly interfere with our conception of Othello's character, let alone the credibility of the action, which consists here in his temptation by lago. But who stops to examine

indications of time when he can see a crisis approaching, is hurried to it by swift dramatic writing, and sees a great and noble character suddenly caught up in the most awful coil of circumstance? Theatrically the emotion aroused was and generally is strong enough to carry us over any such discrepancy. If it can carry over the modern audience, with its heightened regard for verisimilitude, naturally it could carry the Elizabethan theatre with it. But artistically this treatment of time cuts across the integrity of the play, by interfering with our conception of Othello's character. It is, therefore, one of the few cases in which I am prepared to allow that Shakespeare may quite deliberately have traded upon the childish imaginations of his audiences, and have allowed himself to be influenced thereby.[1] The case of *Richard II* is more blatant if less vital. Act I, Sc. iv, opens with conversation between the king and those who have just sped Bolingbroke on his departure into exile. After fifty lines Bushy enters with the news that John of Gaunt is sick to death and wishes to see the king. The scene ends to indicate not any lapse of time but simply a change of place, and in Act II, Sc. i, the king arrives to visit his dying uncle. At the end of this death scene—which chronologically is one with the preceding—the king has no sooner made his exit than the nobles discuss the news, which is that Bolingbroke is on his way back from exile with a goodly following of gentlemen, eight tall ships and three thousand men of war. As an example of speed, it is perhaps excessive, even from the theatrical point of view. Dramatically, i.e., as determining our opinion of the motives of Bolingbroke's return, it should make it useless for this latter—or his creator—to assure us that he has returned simply because, on hearing of

[1] It is only necessary to adopt Christopher North's ingenious theory of Double Time in *Othello* if you start from the assumption that Shakespeare is infallible.

the death of his father and Richard's consequent seizure of his lands, he has come to claim his rights. Yet, on the whole, most of us believe this to be the case : as his character is presented to us it leads us to conceive of him as a careful man who would assuredly have waited for a *casus belli* of some kind before making a move. I do not for a moment believe either that Shakespeare was not aware of these discrepancies or that if he had had a mind to it he could not easily have adjusted them. But speed is essential in a good story, and speed is one of the demands that a popular audience makes, and speed is effective dramatically : hence it is possible to understand, I think, how, given the Elizabethan audience, it would be possible for Shakespeare the artist to decide deliberately to exploit that audience's lack of appreciation of a lesser merit in favour of a greater. It is not a question of a lack of dramatic skill, but of acquiescence in the attitude of make-believe. The audience, as yet, had no desire to make dramatic conditions approximate to those of real life, because its eyes were not yet opened to the imaginative value of either place or time.

Having drawn a few inferences concerning the character and tastes of the Elizabethan audience we may proceed to ask for what did the Elizabethan play-goer visit the theatre ? To judge from the whole mass of the dramatic fare submitted to it, the exciting stories, the medley of incidents, the abundance of displays of physical skill, the general atmosphere of alarums and excursions, that audience went to the theatre primarily to please and amuse itself. If a modern parallel is illuminating the audience was, psychologically speaking, an amalgam of the *Bulldog Drummond* and the musical comedy or the variety audiences of to-day. It received its pleasure from a good story ; from having its emotions thoroughly aroused ; from having its senses appealed to by music, dancing, noise and spectacle; from being

deliciously thrilled by exciting events and crises ; and finally from observing—as the *Bulldog Drummond* audience does to-day—the spectacle of behaviour on the part of the characters which would arouse in it not any ' obstinate questionings ' but a continuous and sympathetic moral assent. Shakespeare's audience, on the evidence of its plays, was profoundly interested in the spectacle of human beings caught up in a situation. They wanted to see what these people did, to see how they acted, given a crisis. They were apparently not in the least interested in thinking things out with the aid of a play, as one section of the modern audience is. Neither audience nor playwrights were in the least social, reformative or propagandist : they could no more have endured to listen to *Getting Married* than Bernard Shaw could bring himself to write a *Spanish Tragedy.* The age was not destitute of speculation, but social ethics had simply not occurred to them as a subject thereof, still less as a subject for stage-plays. The play of *Hamlet* is not Shakespeare's speculation as to whether the accepted social convention of murdering your uncle when he has murdered your father is ethically defensible for a thinking man. It is Shakespeare's presentation of a fine spirit caught up in a coil of circumstances. To say that the situation was already socially out of date when Shakespeare used it would be quite unsound : family feuds are never out of date. Even now, as then, it is the situation and its attendant emotions that rivet our attention : the play does not set many of its auditors debating upon the ethics of a revenge for a father. It is almost impossible, however, for even the most purely academic mind to-day to contemplate *Strife* or *Loyalties* or *The Rumour,* or even *The Admirable Crichton* or *St. Joan* without being driven to fierce speculation upon the social fabric, until an ethical interest comes almost to outweigh our appreciation of their dramatic values.

Having, as I believe legitimately, deduced a popular mixed audience that went to the theatre for entertainment and not for education or tragic kathartic experience or indeed anything save pleasure in the simplest meaning of the word, we may profitably enquire what are the demands that such an audience would and did make of its playwrights ? Here the comparative popularity of Shakespeare and Ben Jonson will help us not a little. According to his own evidence in *The Sad Shepherd* it took Jonson nearly forty years to accustom the audience to his methods, and to win its appreciation : but Shakespeare apparently hit its taste at once, and kept its ear. On Leonard Digges' evidence it was ' ravished ' by the quarrel scene in *Julius Ctesar* when it ' would not brooke a line of tedious (though well laboured) Catiline.' *Volpone* or *The Alchemist* were played to miserably small houses :

> when let but Falstaffe come,
> Hal, Poins, the rest, *you* scarce shall have a roome
> All is so pester'd : let but *Beatrice*
> And *Benedicke* be seene, loe in a trice
> The Cockpit Galleries, Boxes, all are full
> To heare Malvoglio that crosse garter'd Gull.[1]

Primarily I believe this was due to the fact that the first demand made by a popular mixed audience is the demand for a story ; it need be only moderately good : it can be old, borrowed, patched, with its end foreknown —nevertheless, it is a story. By a story I mean simply a connected narrative in which the people shall be ' real,' shall be like ourselves or identifiable with ourselves (either as we are, or as we fancy we are, or as we would like to be) : whereas their circumstances and situations shall be remarkable, shall be unlike our daily round—what might be but generally is not.

A story casts over an audience the glamour of ' once upon a time ' : it allows it to leave its social conscience

[1] Prefatory verses to 1640 edition of Shakespeare's *Poems.*

at home. It constitutes an insulating agent : it removes us from reality just sufficiently for bur participation in the emotions aroused to *be* pleasurable and not painful. It is, as it were, a guarantee of the author's good faith : we are reassured that it is not ourselves but perhaps our neighbours, with their frailties, that we are about to overlook. It makes us anticipate pleasurably an issue to a chain of events. We want to know how *Hamlet* and *Much Ado* and *Macbeth* and *Twelfth Night* are going to end. I doubt whether we care how or when *Every Man in his Humour* ends. Ben Jonson could weave an intrigue, but he had no gift for telling a good story that anyone could remember: the exhibition of character for its own sake is apt to be the aim of all his events. As a result his audience was disturbed by what was, to use his own phrase, ' thus near and familiarly allied to the time.' The ordinary mixed modern audience did not take Bernard Shaw to its heart until he gave it *St. Joan :* it wants—and gets—a story, old, borrowed, patched : and it is very apt to leave the theatre when the epilogue begins. The ordinary mixed audience does not want to be brought to a ' conviction of sin ' either in Shakespeare's time or our own. Set your scene in medieval France, or Illyria, or ancient Rome, or Verona, or the Forest of Arden : call your characters Joan, the Dauphin, Duke Orsino, Julius Caesar, Romeo, the Banished Duke, and the story-element, the insulating agent, allows you full scope to criticise our common human nature and behaviour. Set your scene in seventeenth century London, and call your characters Master Stephen and Master Matthew : set it in twentieth century London, calling your characters, Mrs. Warren and Sartorius, and your mixed audience relegates your work to the category of Plays Unpleasant. They are too ' near and familiarly allied to the time ' : it is almost impossible for the mixed audience to escape their implications.

To state that the first demand made by a popular audience is the demand for a story is practically to summarize under one heading all its demands. It is this demand which is responsible for the traits we have just been considering ; and it is, at bottom, this demand which is responsible for the apparently haphazard way in which the Elizabethan drama delights to mix the realistic and the romantic. It is just this story-demand for real people and remarkable events that gives rise to this inevitable mixture. Beaumont's citizen will have a grocer for his hero, but the grocer must ' kill a lion with a pestle.' Once the make-believe attitude of mind has been accepted there is nothing to prevent the audience moving at will from one of these planes to the other. The grocer's wife is ready with a recipe for chilblains when one of the characters in the play protests that his feet are sore : next moment she will ' have Ralph, come and fight with the giant ' or else ' kill all that comes near him ' : then her demand is ' let Ralph travel over great hills, and let him be very weary, and come to the King of Cracovia's house, covered with black velvet : and there let the king's daughter stand in her window all in beaten gold, combing her' golden locks with a comb of ivory ; and let her spy Ralph, and fall in love with him and come down to him, and carry him into her father's house.' Here, when all allowance has been made for the satirical tone of the playwright, is sufficient indication that this admixture of fantasy and the fairy tale element was due to the demand of the audience, rather than the taste of the playwrights.

The *Bulldog Drummond* audience which demands of its writers what it terms ' a rattling good yarn,' demands, as we may see for ourselves, the excision of such social problems as stir the genius of a Galsworthy. I have hazarded the deduction that the story-loving Elizabethan audience made the same demand : and

those critics who have little affection for *Measure for Measure* and *Troilus* and *Timon* may even go so far as to say that this demand of the Shakespearian audience was perhaps salutary, even necessary, because the posing of problems interferes with the specifically dramatic effect of a play. The modern author who caters for this public makes the behaviour of his hero such that it enlists by its propriety and normality the sympathetic moral assent of the audience. He worsts his enemies, the German spy, the Russian communist, the Central European anarchist : and we are not left debating in our minds whether patriotism is not enough. The situation may be remarkable, fantastic, unreal : but that is immaterial, provided the hero's behaviour runs along lines with which the audience is morally and socially sympathetic and familiar. This applies in a large measure to the Elizabethan audience as well. Some of the situations encountered may be as far-fetched as the lioness of the Forest of Arden : in such cases any equally far-fetched solution will be accepted by any audience which submits to the story-glamour, and accepts the make-believe. But when it comes to behaviour which calls either for a moral or social assent on the part of the audience then be the situation romantic or realistic the reaction of the audience will be realistic. Ralph may be wooed by the King of Moldavia-Cracovia's daughter, but the grocer and his wife approve when he avows his constancy to Susan of Milk Street. If Ralph meets a lion he may kill it with a pestle : but when he leaves he must remember to tip the Cracovian royal household staff. Equally marked is the grocer's and his wife's disapproval of that romantic young fellow Jasper who wishes to elope with his master's daughter. A father and an employer of apprentices himself he naturally gives his sympathy to the foolish but respectable Humphrey who is the suitor chosen by her father for Luce. Here we see

an audience moving happily as a child does upon two planes at once, seeing no incongruity in this juxtaposition of the fantastic and the practical.

The citizen's attitude to a romantic love affair leads us back again to Shakespeare, and to a consideration of that marriage lottery or lucky bag in which a Portia draws a Bassanio, a Viola an Orsino, a Rosalind an Orlando. Some of us take this state of affairs philosophically. We grow up accustomed to the idea that Portia must marry Bassanio. But whenever it is our privilege to teach a keen and fresh intelligence we are reminded of the essential falsity of these arrangements : we realise that here again is something which cuts across the artistic integrity of the play. How, then, are we to regard these patched-up weddings ? Are we to use yet once again in its loosest and frailest meaning that much-abused word ' romantic ' ? Corruption of the text cannot be blamed : in spite of the mix-up at the end of the *Two Gentlemen* Shakespeare means Valentine to have Silvia and Proteus to have Julia. Carelessness, some critics allege : but the instances can be multiplied somewhat alarmingly for the world's greatest dramatist. It was, assuredly, not from a lack of vision of what the ' marriage of true minds ' might be : the hand that drew the passion of Romeo and Juliet and the mating of Beatrice and Benedick had cunning to match his Portia and his Viola had he so desired. Why not look, for a change, at the average Elizabethan attitude towards marriage ? We need not, therefore, credit Shakespeare with an entire acquiescence in the popular view, but we can at least be certain that he will have perceived it, have understood and appreciated it.

The Elizabethan mind, like the grocer's, was essentially praftical. Society accepted the idea, which it inherited from the middle ages, that it was a woman's only business in life to get married as soon as possible.

Until she was safely disposed of to a husband a woman was an anxiety and a nuisance to her friends and relations. We turn not to any crusted old conservative, but to one of the most progressive, enlightened and liberally minded men that the age produced : Mulcaster himself, advocate of education for women, will tell us that ' the bringing up of young maidens in any kind of learning is but an accessory by the way,' The first end of learning that he mentions is that a woman should be trained ' in respect of marriage ' : it may be chance, but it is significant that training for a trade by which she may live, and training for the exercise of government figure only second and third. Bassanio's is to-day a somewhat thankless part, but to the Elizabethan audience it would be perfectly ' sympathetic.' It is true that he mingles fortune-hunting with love : he would have made a good son to Tennyson's Northern Farmer who advised his offspring, ' Doän't thou marry for munny, but goä where munny is.' This idea, however, would be no more indecorous to the Elizabethan audience than it was to the hard-headed folk that Tennyson knew. From the point of view of the Elizabethan woman and her relatives it was better that the suitor should bring money, but good enough if he brought simply himself, there being no higher bidders. The important thing was to purchase the husband. Portia was worth half a dozen of Bassanio, as her creator well knew : but he also knew that only as Bassanio's wife could she enjoy in society that scope which her personality demanded. The only lady of his time who achieved a career without this asset was the one who gave her name to the epoch : and she has generally been allowed to pass as an exception to most rules. It was not, therefore, I believe, due either to carelessness or to a false romanticism that these spirited women were married off so unequally or on such absurd and insecure bases. Shakespeare saw how his audience

regarded matrimony : he saw what happened on all sides of him.

Throughout the play the grocer and his wife move on two planes : when they submit to the story-glamour lions are slain with pestles, Antigonus is pursued and eaten by the bear, Imogen mistakes the decapitated Cloten for her husband Posthumus, and any absurdity is allowed without protest. But when it comes to a good knock-about fight, or giving in marriage, the audience is upon its own ground, and behaviour must approximate exactly to the real. It is not romance, it is common-sense and a sense of reality to provide Rosalind and Viola and Portia with presentable if not remarkable husbands. To leave them unwed would be to waste their charm, their energy, their wit, their capacity, and all their creator endowed them with. To those—and they would be the majority of the audience—who regarded them as living beings, as real as themselves, it would be a negation of the action to leave them unwed, there would be no rounding off of the story, character would have been manifested simply for its own sake, as it is in Ben Jonson. It would be as if a modern writer of the *Bulldog Drummond* school should end his play with the triumph of the villain, after the display of all the proper qualities on the part of the detective hero. Why all this fuss, unless something comes of it ? So Portia marries her fortune-hunting spendthrift Bassanio, Viola wins her sentimentalist of a Duke, Olivia finds herself married to a stranger, through a misunderstanding, Maria is paired with Sir Toby who cannot even invent his own practical joke on Malvolio, Celia is rushed into love at first sight for the villain of the piece about whose reformed character we have every reason to be doubtful, but to the Elizabethan audience all is well, for now these excellent witty women are what every sympathetic man and woman in the audience must desire to see

them—in the French phrase, *rangées.* When it comes to matrimony, reality must be vindicated, even in the Forest of Arden or Illyria. Hence, once again, in these mixed marriages, I would look for that modified influence of the audience on Shakespeare which results in the expression by him of what he observed as a norm, in the behaviour of that audience.

To exhaust the possibilities of exploration of this kind would be beyond the power of one Iecturer. What I have tried to suggest to you this evening is that, given the wealth which has been gathered into Chambers' four volumes, and given the material of the plays, it is possible for each of us to pursue investigation along these lines. It is a mistake, and an ungrateful one at that, to leave the facts severely alone, to moulder in that store house : everyone should take them out and arrange them for his own amusement. Similarly, so long as the plays remain there will be fresh deductions about the audience for which they were written to be drawn by every fresh mind that bends itself to the task. But it is essential that these two operations should be pursued side by side : the latter results must square with the former if they are to be worth anything. The psychological picture I have tried to present' to-night has been that of an audience primitive and undeveloped imaginatively ; simple, conventional and practical in its reactions to ordinary situations, childish in its immense capacity for make-believe, delighting in a story, thrills, and excitement. To confirm the impression we turn back to that contemporary gathering—the military man and the military hanger-on ; the young man about town, foolish or less foolish ; the *fille de joie* ; the good grocer and his wife ; the noisy apprentices who applaud all the mechanical devices ;' the animated clothes-props and tobacco-drinkers ; a sprinkling of gallants, scholars, wits, country bumpkins, and the

[1] *Everyman out of His Humour.*

average steady going hard-working citizens. Add thereto any other portrait that can be found—the gentlewoman who barely stifles a little scream when a squib goes *off* on the stage : and the die-hard who swears that the *Spanish Tragedy* of 1586, ' the old Hieronymo as it was first acted, was the only best and judiciously penn'd play of Europe.'[1] Does not the character fit the gathering, and the gathering the character ?

M. ST. CLARE BYRNE

[1] *Cynthia's Revels.*

EARLY RECORDS ILLUSTRATING THE PERSONAL LIFE OF SHAKESPEARE

SHAKESPEARE THROUGH THE ARDENS

THE value of fragmentary records is nowhere more clearly proved than in those which affect the personal life of Shakespeare. We know that he was the son of John Shakespeare and Mary Arden, the youngest of the eight daughters of Robert Arden of Wilmecote, the only son of Thomas Arden. Circumstances make it simpler to trace his pedigree through the mother's side at first, as the sixteenth century opens at a critical point in their family history. A messuage with all its appurtenances was handed over' by John Mayowe through his attorneys Thomas Clopton, and John Porter to six people, ' Robert Throckmorton, Armiger (Knighted that same year), Thomas Trussel of Billesley, Roger Reynolds of Henley in Arden, William Woode of Wodehouse, Thomas Arden of Wilmecote and Robert Arden his son.' Robert Arden was under age and these others were trustees for his possession in 1501.

To read into this deed the full meaning of its words would tell something of the relation of the other feoffees to Thomas Arden. It would imply that Robert Throckmorton was either a brother-in-law to Thomas Arden through his unknown first wife, or one of his especially trusted friends, and that Thomas Trussell stood in a similar relation to Robert Arden. The other trustees were gentlemen. Yet Mr. Halliwell Phillipps did not realise the import, and classed the Ardens as ' obscure country farmers.'

Mr. G. K. French knew *most* of what could be learned from the deed, but not all. We find that the same Sir Robert Throckmorton was made trustee for his children

[1] *Misc. Documents,* Stratford LI, 83.

by Walter Arden of Parkhall in the same year when he made his will. He left his second son Thomas, ten marks a year for life. There is no other Thomas to be found who fulfils the necessary conditions to prove him to have been the second son of the "gentleman of worship," an Arden of Parkhall. This has been much contested.

But the living representatives of the family have assured me personally that they claim Thomas Arden of Wilmecote as the second son of Walter, and find him in the pedigree. After the death of Walter, his son John, making his will in 1526 continued—

' To his brothers their fees left them by their father.' Ten marks seems a very small allowance, but his brothers had only been allowed 5 marks. Younger sons had precarious incomes then. Their fathers generally settled some property on them for life, or married them to some rich heiress. I believe that the little estate of Asbies had either come to Thomas through his mother, or through the Arden connection with the Beauchamps, Lords of Aston Cauthorne. We hear of no other child of Thomas than this Robert who had been enfeoffed in Smitherfield. Of his wife we know nothing, except her admission to the Guild of the Holy Cross at Stratford on Avon in 1517-8—' Robert Arden of Snitterfield and his wife, 13 shillings and four pence.'

After bearing him eight daughters, she must have died, before 1548. We know the name of Robert's second wife.

'From the Court Rolls of Katherine the Queen, at Balsalle, we learn that Agnes Hill, Widow, came before the Court and prayed license to marry herself to one Robert Arden, which was granted in the name of the Queen, on her paying a fee of five shillings, 21st April, 2548. It is probable the marriage took place shortly afterwards.

Other settlements may have previously been made,

[1] The view of Frank Pledge Balsale, Portfolio 207 (9), 2ist April, 1548.

but the final one was executed on 17th July[1], 1550, when Robert Arden enfeoffed Adam Palmer, and Hugh Porter in the tenement, &c., which is now in the occupation of Richard Shakespeare in trust for himself and his wife for life, with a remainder of a third part to three of his daughters. [2] On the same day with the same form the other tenement and land now in the occupation of Richard Henley was divided into three parts, for other three daughters. He settled the family jewel, Asbies, on his youngest and favourite daughter Mary. Robert Arden died before Mary was married, but it is probable that he helped her to choose her mate.

WHERE DID THE SHAKESPEARES COME FROM?

Mr. Arthur Heintz, through his researches at the Record Office came to believe that the ' Levelances'[3] who had early taken root in Warwickshire bore the original form of Shakespeare to which, in the fourteenth century the name in many cases was translated. The last trace of the connection we find in the ' Shakespeares of Llyance.'[4]

The Rev. Mr. Norris found the earliest local Shakespeares in Adam de Woldich, who held land by military tenure of the Lord of the moated Manor of Baddesley Clinton, and he thought that it was this Adam who had been rewarded by the King for some special act of Bravery.

We come out of the realm of conjecture at the date of the founding of the Guild of Knowle.[5] That honoured and honourable Guild held many Shakespeares, and

[1] *Misc. Doc.* II, 21, and II, 70.
[2] Misc. *Doc.* II, 77, and II, 79.
[3] *Times Literary Supplement,* 23rd April, 1916.
[4] Ryland's *Records of Rowington.*
[5] Bickley's *Record of the Guild of Knowle.*

what Dugdale did not know we do know, because Mr. Bickley has published their records. Among their members they had at least one Shakespeare *Prioress.* The brothers and sisters of the Guild were in 1504 ' called to Pray for the soul of Isabella Shakespeare, formerly Prioress of Wroxale.' [1] Whether unmarried or a widow, the existence of this lady was a proof that the family was of great local importance.

A fragment of one of her Court Rolls[2] has been preserved at the Record Office, taken out of its place and sewed by a thong to another Roll of a later date to prove that a certain property had been granted by the Prioress Isabella Shakespeare in 1507. This had been done by a lawyer who supported the Shakespeare's successor in claiming it as an inheritance in Agnes Little's time. One difficulty is the date. The members of the Guild were asked to pray for Isabella's soul in 1504, and this Court was held in 1507. That, however, might have been held after her death, before a successor had been appointed, and it would have been called by her name, though held by a sub-prioress or seneschal. Dugdale also omits in the troublous times of the Dissolution another Shakespearean ' Lady,' Johanna, the sub-prioress. The previous Prioress had either died or resigned, and Johanna governed the Priory for three months, till she received from the central authority a ' Congé d'élire,' and she elected Agnes Little. This lady had a pension when the Priory was dissolved, but there is no trace of any pension being granted the Lady Johanna or the other nuns.

Four Shakespeare brothers had joined the Guild of Knowle when Johanna did so, and it may be inferred they were related to her, as members of the same family so often joined at the same time. These were Richard

[1] See *Guild Register.*

[2] *P.R.O. Court Book, Gen. Ser.,* Portfolio 207, No. 99 (endorsed Shakespeare).

with a wife Alice ; William with a wife Agnes ; John with a wife Johanna and Richard Woodham, who had married the Shakespeares' sister Agnes. Richard, the brother of the Guild of Knowle, was the Bailiff of the Priory Lands, at the Dissolution, and he was at once dismissed from his office and replaced by John Hall who was of a more conforming mood, and then all was taken over by Leonard Chamberlain and Richard Andrews and sold. Richard had foreseen the storm coming, had secured what lands he could temporarily, and leased land from Robert Arden of Smitherfield. From that time there are notices of him continued irregularly in the Court Rolls. Sometimes Robert Arden was fined, sometimes Richard Shakespeare, for neglect of fences and ditches, sometimes both for default of suit of court. Mr. Yeatmen discovered in the will of Mr. Francis Griffin of Braybrooke[1] in 1551 that he left *£20* to be divided between his two sisters, Annys Crosmore, and Alys Shakespeare, so these ladies must have married a Crosmore and a Shakespeare. The only suitable Shakespeare who had a wife ' Alys ' at the suitable time was the former Bailiff of Wroxall. The marriage of an Alice Griffin to a Shakespeare would entitle her Shakespeare children to claim the noble Griffin Pedigree, and one of them would be a good enough alliance for an Arden of Wilmecote. This Alice must have died before her husband, as there was no allusion[2] to a wife, when John Shakespeare went to Worcester to sign, with Thomas Nicols, the bond for the just administration of his father's property on Feb. loth, 1560-1.

THE TOWN JOHN SHAKESPEARE WENT TO[3]

Much has been written about the uncleanliness of Stratford because John Shakespeare in 1552 was fined

[1] Northampton Probate Registry, Will proved, 26th March, 1557.
[2] ' Shakespeare's Marriage,' by J. W. Gray, page 259.
[3] View of Frank Pledge, Stratford, P.R.O. Portfolio 207, April 29th, 1552

for keeping a dustheap before his door in Henley Street. To me it seems to have the opposite meaning, suggesting that the people of Stratford were so desirous of being cleanly, that they hesitated not to fine their most important men, Humphrey Reynolds, Adrian Quiney and John Shakespeare xiid. each for disobeying the regulations of the town, in order to give the ordinary inhabitants a lesson. It would seem they were up to the relative standard of the time. John Shakespeare was not married then.

Francis Griffin's legacy to his mother might have helped forward that marriage.

A POSSIBLE DATE OF JOHN'S MARRIAGE

Nobody *knows* just when John Shakespeare married Mary Arden, but I have selected a likely date, which may serve for a working hypothesis. He had been very industrious during his early years as freeman of Stratford. The only day on which he had been fined for being absent from his duties was the 3rd of June, 1557, when he was recorded ' absent from ' the Court of Records,[1] 8d. Mary Arden had a farm of her own then, and it would be a slack time with her between the hay harvest and the wheat harvest, and if she expressed a wish to fix that date, John Shakespeare might feel justified in defying the summons of the Corporation to the Court of Records.

If Mary had chosen it as her wedding day he would go up to Aston Cantlow on the morning of 3rd June, and bring away his bride over the little stream that runs by the back of the Church, to the wedding breakfast at Asbies, then with a troop of friends, mount horse to Henley Street for the rere-supper and the Bride Ale. Jane, their eldest daughter, arrived on I5th September, 1558. There is no further mention of her in the Stratford Register, and Shakespeareans have believed

[1] See Register of the Court of Records.

she died unrecorded. I do not think so. It was a common custom of the time to christen two children by the same name.

DAME JOHANNA SHAKESPEARE

One event which might have impressed the poet's youthful imagination was the death of the former sub-prioress Johanna (after whom his sister might have been named). It is more than probable that she had been held in high honour by both the Shakespeare and the Arden families, and that the young Shakespeare might have been occasionally taken to see her. She had lived in Hasely, as near as possible to her beloved Priory, and in the Register of that village it is recorded :

Mortua et Sepulta est Domina Jane (Shakespeare) aliquando una monicaria Wroxall, 21st October 1571.

THE COMMON FIELDS OF SMITHERFIELD EXCHANGED BY BARTHOLOMEW HALES[1]

Many accounts of the Sports of the people have been written, and Shakespeare's allusion to them noted. I may refer to a special occasion from the Records.

In January, 1575, Bartholomew Hales, Lord of the Manor of Snitterfield, was exchanging very liberally some of his own lands for the *Common lands* of the Manor. Aunt Margaret, formerly Mrs. Webbe, now Mrs. Cornwall and her son Robert Webbe, also Thomas Stringer, husband of Shakespeare's Aunt Agnes, were among the freeholders concerned, and we are almost sure that when the transfer was completed at the end of the harvest, the customary tenants with their children and relatives would take the joyful advantage of a holiday, young Shakespeare among them. It had been definitely settled that they were to do what they liked with the multitude of

[1] *Misc. Documents,* Stratford, VII, 4.

conies, which had become such a pest to the farmers in the neighbourhood.

The year of 1580 may be considered specially. It was important in the history of the family. Among the State papers of that year there are two little books noting the ' Gentlemen and Freeholders of Warwickshire.' In both of these [1] John Shakespeare's name appears. We know it is for the purpose of subsidy, and it was based on his possession by the courtesy of England, of his wife's farm of Asbies, which he was just about to lose.

John Shakespeare's special troubles seem to have begun in Michaelmas, 1578, when he mortgaged Asbies to Edward Lambert, his brother-in-law, for £40. The deed was drawn up formally as for a normal *Sale,* and a fine was levied on the purchase. But there seems to have been a definite understanding, that if the £40 were repaid at Michaelmas, 1580, the proceedings would be void. Roger Sadler, Baker, made his will in November, 1578, in which he said that ' £5 was due him which was [2]in the hands of Edmund Lambert and———Cornish, as the debt of Mr. John Shakespeare ' (I think that Sadler means here ' Edward Cornwall.') Many others owed Sadler moneys but none others seemed to have debts secondhand. I began to make a careful search into the happenings of that time to John Shakespeare, and some of them surprised me.

JOHN SHAKESPEARE'S LAWSUITS [3]

Among the Plea Rolls 20 Eliz we can find :

Henricus Higford, gent, of Solihill in Co. Warr, appearing against John Musshem, nuper dc Walton, Co. Warr . . . praying that he should pay £40 .... and against John Shakespeare nuper de Stratford upon *Avon,Whitamer,* on the plea that he should pay £30, which he owes and unjustly detains.

[1] D.S.S.P., Com. Plea. Roll 1313, Membrane 394, Easter 15 Entry.
[2] Principal Probate Registry, Somerset House, No. I, Bakon.
[3] Plea Roll, 20 Entry. Easter, 1355. Membrane 7, Entry 4.

But they do not appear, and cannot b? found. Wherefore he gets a new Writ that they should appear at Westminster.

This mysterious lawsuit seems to be for *rent.*

JOHN SHAKESPEARE'S NEW DEBTS[1]

A similar summons had come to John in Easter 15 Eliz., but nothing followed, so he must have paid then. I have not found what followed the ' new writ,' but another charge, much more serious, was laid against him in Trinity Term I580.[2] He was summoned for Contempt of Court, in not having appeared at Westminster to be bound over to keep the peace on a day now past, for which contempt he was fined £20. The next charge is against his surety, John Audley of the Town of Nottingham, Hatmaker, to pay *£20,* for not appearing himself, and for not producing John Shakespeare at the time fixed. The other security was Thomas Colby of Stoke in the County of Stafford, Yeoman, who had also to pay £20. And Shakespeare had to pay half of each fine, because he *had not produced them.* I looked through several terms before and after this,[3] but could not find the original case, on which the *contempt* was built, I also looked up the Exchequer Accounts, where I found the acknowledgment that *these fines had been paid.* Now John and Mary Shakespeare, had, on I5th October, 1579, sold their interest in a share of Snitterfield to Robert Webbe. Halliwell-Phillipps thinks her father had left her this, but it is much more reasonable to believe that it had been left her by either her sister Joyce or Alice.[4] It should have been safely ready to repay

[1] Court of Common Pleas, Plea Roll 1313, Membrane 399, Easter 15 Eliz.

[2] Coram Rege Roll Trinity, 22 Eliz. ?

[3] Exchequer Accounts K.R. Anglia, Walls Villa Notts and Stafford 109,'13.

[4] See Shakespeare's Environments (Stopes, 423).

Edmund Lambert, but John had to spend it on some neglect of his own in regard to this summons, and it apparently was with difficulty he offered payment to Lambert at the time agreed.[1] But Lambert had been roused to anxiety, and refused to take it until the *other debts* were paid (like that of Roger Sadler).

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S MEMORIES

I also looked through ' Ancient Indictments,' as papers which had not yet been searched. In the Index I saw the name of 'John Shakespeare, murderer.' Of course, that could not be our John Shakespeare. I found that it was John Shakespeare of Balsale, who was charged with feloniously buying a rope which he tied to the rafters, and hung himself by the neck, till he was dead. He had evidently been also suffering from lack of money, for there was little left to realise in the house, so little, that the Coroner, in the name of the Queen, whose right it was, forgave it to the mournful widow. Through reading the Index, I found that a Coroner also in 1580, in Stratford-on-Avon, had been occupied in trying a girl who had been ' found drowned ' in the Avon at Tiddington, one mile from the Town Hall. The queries and answers in this document, remind one forcibly of the same queries in regard to Ophelia by the grave-diggers, in *Hamlet.* The Coroner then was merciful, he argued that as the girl had taken a pail with her to the river, she had meant to draw water there and had accidentally fallen in, and might be allowed Christian Burial. Though the Poet was only sixteen years old then, I felt as if he must have heard that Coroner. The next time I was at Stratford I went to Tiddington. Just before the village a lane turns down to the river. It is used to water horses now, and a slight elevation near the water leads to a rapid descent in the slipperiest mud.

[1] P.R.O. Fret of Fines, 1578-9.

It was at a place where a branch of the Avon curves in shore, and by the help of an island makes a second stream. I felt that I should risk an immersion if I made a thorough inspection, but I was struck with wonder. There, opposite, wreathed with beautiful riverside flowers I saw

> There is a willow grows aslant a brook,
> That shews his hoar leaves in the glassy stream.

\and I could add the following words of the Queen :

> There with fantastic garlands did she come . . .
> There, on the pendent bought her coronet weeds
> Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke ;
> When down her weedy trophies and herself
> Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide ;
> And, mermaid-like, awhile they bore her up ...
> Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
> Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay
> To muddy death.

I felt that Shakespeare had gone to the Coroner's inquest, and had then sought the scene as I did, had seen an ancestral Willow, as I did a descendant, and that he had, in this case, drawn, from the remembrance of his youth, and painted for us, the drowned Ophelia.

The name of the girl found drowned at Tiddington was ' Katharine Hamlet.' I looked up the registry (Tiddington is taken in Alveston).[1] I saw no record of her, but among the ' Burials 1576 December 9th Hamlet Hassan of Tiddington.' Mr. Savage said he thought he had been a donkey driver.

Some may not have noticed that the early rendering of the prototype of Ophelia did not drown herself. She threw herself from a cliff. And in *Fratricide Punished,* lately produced by Mr. William Poel, we read it so. It seems to me, therefore, that the story of Katharine

' *Notes and Queries,* nth Series, vol. vii, p. 306 (19th April, 1913). *The Drowning of Katharine Hamlet.*

Hamlet is the answer to the query :' ' Why did Shakespeare drown Ophelia ? '

MRS. ARDEN'S EVIDENCE 1580

Thomas, a descendant of the Mayowes who sold the first Snitterfield estate to the Ardens, claimed it in I 580. Mrs. Agnes Arden was bed-ridden, so Bartholomew Hales, and the vicar of Aston Cantlow were sent to examine her privately concerning the claim. Mr. G. R. French discovered the original subpoena summoning Adam Palmer, John Wager, John and Henry Shakespeare, to appear before a commission to take evidence for Thomas Mayowe before Sir Fulke Grevyle, Sir Thomas Lucy, Humphrey Peto, and William Clopton. The papers drawn up by this commission I was fortunate enough to find among the uncalendared papers of the Record Office. I read on, until turning the last page hoping to see details of John and Henry Shakespeare. I found they had been lost. Adam Palmer had made a mistake. He was old. He said that Joyce Arden had married Thomas Edkins, and had succeeded to the third part of the second half of Snitterfield. But it was Katharine Arden who did so. Of course, Joyce might have married Thomas Edkins after Katharine's death, but then we could not account for the share which came to Mary.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S MARRIAGE

The Ardens were confirmed in their possession before the death of Mrs. Arden. William Shakespeare must have naturally increased his father's difficulties by his premature marriage. But it must be remembered that there was *no contemporary scandal* about it. The Marriage Bond about William Shagspere and Anne Hathaway was not discovered until 1836, by Sir Thomas

[1] *Ancient Indictments,* 652.

Phillips at Worcester Registry. There is a strange tendency in some minds to take the worst possible rendering of biographical details and scandal arose on every point concerning it. Some spoke of the bond as a means to force William to marry Anne, instituted by *her friends.* She was older than he was, his love could not continue, and their first child appeared too soon to be respectable. Now the bond was merely signed to save the *Bishop* harmless, in case he granted a licence when either party had made a pre-contract. William Shakespeare could not sign it because he was a minor, and impecunious. His father could not sign it, because he was not then considered *sufficient.* Neither was his uncle Henry, neither was any *one* of Anne's friends. But *two* of them together, Fulke Sandalls and John Richardson, two of her dead father's most trusted friends, agreed to share the risk of satisfying the Bishop, and signed it on November 28th, 1582. The license had been granted on November 27th, to William Shaxpere and Anne Whately of Temple Grafton. The residence is easy to explain, but it took Mr. J. W. Gray's[1] knowledge of the Worcester papers to suggest that the Court had on that day been discussing ' the Whateley tithe question,' and the licensing clerk confused his remembrance of the name.

The censors of Shakespeare's character do not seem to know that in these days the betrothal was *the binding* contract. Authorities on the marriage customs write that where the contract has taken place, the church marriage is not necessary, but only *expedient,* i.e., for dower and inheritance. Another example of delay I can bring from his own family. Shakespeare's maternal grandfather married again after 1548 ; and settled all his estates in Snitterfield on 17th July, 1550, for the use of himself and his wife Agnes with the remainder to his daughters. 'A third part to my daughter *Agnes*

[1] Mr. J. W. Gray, *Sbakes-peare's Marriage,* p. 27, 200, 269.

Stringer, now wife of Thomas Stringer, formerly wife of John Hewins, defunct of Bearley.' But the critics did not go to the Register. The Bearley Register is now kept at Wooten Warwen, and the very first entry preserved is that of marriage, ' Agnes Hewins, Widow, to Thomas Stringer, I5th *October,* 1550,' which was *three months* after she was called by her own father, Thomas Stringer's wife, bearing his name, and probably residing with him. This illuminates the custom of the times, and shews how Shakespeare and his wife could have felt no wrong on the premature arrival of Susanna.

THE DEER-STEALING STORY

The date at which Shakespeare felt it necessary to leave Stratford, has always puzzled his biographers. Of the story one thing seems proved. The legend of the deer-stealing from Sir Thomas Lucy's Park is untrustworthy, because he had not an impaled Park at the time in Warwickshire, the circumstances are also impossible, and the satire by which Justice Shallow[1] was taken as the original of Sir Thomas Lucy is psychologically impossible He went to London some time after 1585, not at the first seeking to be a player. It is possible that the Court had been his first objective. Men of his name had held office there, and we have more than one assurance that Shakespeare was handsome enough to please critical eyes.[2] By 1587 the country was stirred by the Spanish preparations ; and it was possible that his heart was filled with patriotic enthusiasm in 1588, and that he *did* something. The first time that we *know* that his name was *heard* in London was when his father and mother associated it with theirs in their lawsuit against John Lambert.[3] His cousin had succeeded to Asbies when his father died

[1] See my *Shakespeare's Industry,* p. 125, Sir Thomas Lucy, not the original of Justice Shallow.

[2] *Shakespeare of the Court,* Athenaeum, March I2th, 1910.

[3] *Coram Rege Roll,* Mich. Term 31/32, Eliz. 1311, f. 515, 1588-9.

1st March, Eliz, 1587, but doubting the validity of his title, and disliking the notion of law, they said, by their Attorney John Harborne, that he had agreed to pay them *£20* more, to make a *sale* value of the place more equitable, and he had not paid this. John Lambert, by his attorney, John Boldero, denied that he had promised this *£20* and threw himself on the country : nothing followed then. But I think that Shakespeare would be present, and gain there some of his legal experience.

John Clayton incurred his debt of *£7* to Shakespeare on May 22nd, I592.[1]

JOHN SHAKESPEARE NOT A RECUSANT

A good deal has been written about his father being classed among the recusants in 1592, and afraid to go to church lest he should be arrested for debt. To me it seems evident that this did not refer to the father of the poet. I know they called the recusant ' Mr. John,' but the other John Shakespeare had been made the *Master* of the Shoemaker's, Company. And it may be noted that in Stratford, they always recognised the wives, as well as the husbands, as recusants. If our John had been entered as a recusant, his wife would have been classed as one.[2] The Corvizer's wife had died, and he himself shortly afterwards disappeared from the town, while our John lived on there till his fortunes turned. A later example may make this clear :

> Thomas Barker was removed from his office of Alderman, because his wife is an obstinate recusant, and not to be re-elected unless his wife deny or alter her religion.[3]

I think that I made it very clear from internal evidence in my edition of *The Sonnets,* also in my *Life of the*

[1] *Cor am Rege Roll,* Easter 42, Eliz. 1361, Membrane 293.
[2] Commissioners' Returns in Warwick Castle.
[3] Hall Book, Stratford-on-Avon.

Earl of Southampton that Shakespeare met the Lord of his Love in April I59I.[1] Also in the *Saturday Review.*

THE FIRST REVIEW OF SHAKESPEARE

The first dated literary notice of Shakespeare is allowed to be the satirical censure of Robert Greene in his *Groatsworth of Wit* 1592, as ' The only Shakescene.' ' With his Tiger's heart wrapt in a player's hide.' The first admiring recognition has not been duly recorded, *Venus and Adonis* was entered on the Stationer's Register on April 18th, 1593, and was published the same year, and Thomas Edwards' first entry of his poems *Cephalus and Procris-Narcissus* was on the 22nd day of October, 1593, six months and four days later. But Edwards was not so fortunate in his printer as Shakespeare was, his poem was delayed, and was again entered as to Wolfe in 1595, in which year it was published. It is only fair to give him as the composer the earlier date as a reference. Edward's book was not successful. But it shewed a careful study and appreciation of Shakespeare, and a few other contemporary poets. Edwards placed above all others his *Master Spencer,* whom he calls Colin. He uses for each the name of the subject of his chief poem, which is rather awkward when Daniel is treated as ' Rosamond.' Watson and Marlowe are mentioned as being dead, and then he treats Shakespeare as ' Adonis,'

> Had not Love herself entreated
> Other nymphs had sent him bays.

The Centre Poet, and Sylvester, the translator of Du Barton, are included.

THOMAS EDWARDS' FIRST PRAISE OF SHAKESPEARE

The contemporary references to Edwards were not flattering. The book passed out of literary remem-

[1] *Saturday Review,* April I5th, 1922. ' The Lord of *Sbakespearis Sonnets,'* p. 385.

brance for more centuries than one. . A *part* of it was discovered by Mr. Edmunds in Lamport Hall in 1867 ; and some years afterwards a perfect copy was found by the Rev. W. E. Buckley in the Cathedral Library of Peterborough. He reproduced it in a scholarly edition in 1882 for the Roxborough Club. *The Centre Poet* was much discussed. No one has explained him as Ferdinand, Earl of Derby, whom I consider the most likely to be treated so. His early death was mourned by Spenser and Nash. I have also learned to consider Spenser's allusion to ' action,' as more justly to be applied to Edwards than to Shakespeare, for in return for Edward's fervent appreciation, he might very well draw attention to one

> Whose *muse,* full of high thoughts invention
> Doth like himself, heroically sound !

The *muse* of Edwards deals, not only with heroic deeds, but in a heroic way.[1] Spenser and all others spoke of poets as [c] shepherds,' Edwards treats them as Knights at a Tournament, and all references to them as drawn from the language of heraldry, Edwards was of Welsh descent. I sought the meaning of ' action ' in Welsh. I found Snowdon was called ' Eyrie,' or the Eagle Mountain and the Carnarvon Hills were the Eagle Hills. He might be son of the Eagle.

The year of 1594 was full of interest in Shakespeare's Life. He then dedicated his *Graver Labour* to the young ' Lord of his Love.' He saw that young Lord's mother marry Sir Thomas Heneage, and I believe, wrote the *Midsummer Night's Dream* in the first instance, in honour of that event. The stately figures of the central pair, Theseus and Hippolyta finely suggest Sir Thomas Heneage and Lady Southampton ; the artisan's play gave Shakespeare a chance of poking fun at his own

[1] See my article, ' Thomas Edwards, author of *Cephalus Procris, Narcissus,' '* Modern Language Review,' **XVI,** July-October, **1921,** Cambridge University Press.

company as he remembered them at Kenilworth, the wandering lovers seem to have had some contemporary prototypes ; but it was as poet he filled the stage with fairy lore, ' and gave to airy nothings, a local habitation and a name.' The first record of Shakespeare among the actors receiving payment among the Lord Chamberlain's servants appeared in the ' declared Accounts of the Treasurer of the Chamber,'[1] referring back to this year. The payment was for the two plays performed upon St. Stephen's Day and Innocent's Day. By the latter hangs a tale. After the day performance on the 28th December, it seems to me that the Earl of Southampton rode up to London, and made an appointment with the players to meet them at supper at some inn at Holborn after he had seen the device at Gray's Inn. The students there had had no Revels the previous year, because of the plague, and had made special preparations for Christmas, 1594-5. They had elected as Prince of the Revels, Mr. Henry Helmes of Norfolk as the most accomplished and personable member of their Inn, very active in dancing and revelling. Confusion arose and the *Comedy of Errors* was played by the *Common Players.* This was considered the crowning disgrace of the evening. An enquiry was made next morning. They did not ask, because they did not want to know, ' Who paid the players ? ' These could not have gained admission but through the influence of some one well known to the porter. Possibly the Earl of Southampton may have sent to the players, having supper somewhere, and got them to quell the tumult by performing the play they had used the same morning before the Queen at Greenwich. The Gray's Inn men made immediate plans for redeeming their characters. Spedding says that the selected plays bore Bacon's signature in every line. This was the first form of the Bacon-Shakespeare question.

[1] Pipe Office, Vol. 542, f. 207h, *Declared Accounts of the Treasurers of the Chandas.*

His Masque quite took away the disgrace of the night of Errors, and restored the lost honour of Gray's Inn. The Prince of the Revels paid a visit to the Queen which was very well received, and the Revels lasted longer than usual. Mr. Henry Helmes was crowned with glory. But it is remarkable that we have never heard another word about him, even though the Malone Society has lately reprinted *Gesta Grayorum of the high and mighty Prince of Purpoole, who lived and died in* 1594. Some details concerning him, though of no special interest have lately come into my hands and may be mentioned. The chief friend of Mr. Henry Helmes was Mr. Edward Alleyn, not the player, but a gentleman attending Sir Edward Anderson, Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas. When Helmes required a plentiful supply of gold and silver lace for the Masque he was presenting in 1 594-5, he did not know where to go to get it. Alleyn proposed to go with him to a dealer whom he knew named Otho Manduit.[1] There Mr. Helmes selected gold and silver lace to the value of £46 145. for which Alleyn arranged with Manduit to pay down in ready money half of the cost and for the remainder to sign an obligation to pay £50 before the following February, Alleyn brought back this bond signed by himself, and witnessed by his servant Edward Derick. Helmes had paid £11 as part payment of the remainder and promptly forgot all about the transaction. He resolved to go with the Earl of Essex in his voyage to meet the West Indian fleet, and committed to the care of Alleyn some articles which he greatly valued, and some deeds and papers signed with his own hand. Henry Helmes' name was not among the Knights made by Essex on his last voyage. When he came home he found that his friend Edward Alleyn had died during his absence, most of his precious goods had been lost, and some of his papers.

James I knighted him in the garden at Whitehall in

[1] *Uncalendared Papers,* Court of Requests, XXXIII James I, Part 2.

1603. He succeeded somehow to the estate of Graveley in Hertford, lived the life of a country gentleman, and then Otho Manduit sued him for the remainder of the payment for the lace. He indignantly denied owing anything in the Court of Requests. But Manduit's answer was quite clear. He was very generous, asking no more than his due, without interest, and Helmes finally settled the full amount spent in lace for the great Masque in which he was concerned, and by which he was so much renowned at the date, but not until 19 years after 1594-5.

The story of the Danvers brothers and the Earl of Southampton and Florio I have fully treated in my *Life of the Earl of Southampton.*

SHAKESPEARE SUFFERS FROM SLANDER

As one of the causes of gossip alluded to in the Sonnets, the other, doubtless was the scandal against both Lord and poet in *Willobie his Avisa,* which was so virulent, that the book was at last suppressed.

Shakespeare alludes to this in the Sonnet 121

> No ! I am that I am, and they that level
> At my abuses reckon up their own ;
> I may be straight though they themselves be bevel
> By their rank thoughts my deeds must not be shewn.

Shakespeare lived at that time in Bishopsgate Street. Professor Hales solved the mystery of his non-payment of the subsidies there, and payment in Surrey. But he did not notice that Shakespeare was assessed more than either of the Burbages. That leads us to believe that his house may have been larger, so that possibly he had his family with him during these years.[1]

The D.N.B. describes Shakespeare's uncle, Henry, as a prosperous farmer.[2] This is very far from being the

[1] *Lay Subsidies,* 146,'369, October, 1598.

[2] Henry Shakespeare's Death, *Shakespeare's Environment,* p, 66.

case. He was a high-spirited and short-tempered man, always unlucky. He would not wear cloth caps on Sunday as had been decreed. He had a free fight with Edward Cornwall and he was fined for ' drawing blood,' He was always in debt. The night he died his creditors came, and asked his widow if he had made any arrangement for his debts. She said no, and they looked about for themselves and then left her alone in the night in her desolate home. He was buried on the 26th December, 1596. She lingered a little time, and then it was written of her :

Margaret Saxspiere being times the wife of Henry Saxpiere was buried IXr February 1596-7.

THE MISSING JOAN OF STRATFORD SEPTEMBER 13TH, 1558

I should have noticed before this, another burial in Snitterfield, 'Johanna Shakspeer,' without comment or connexion. She had not been married or she would have been described as Wife or Widow, she was not young or she would have been called 'the daughter of.' It seems to be probable that she was the lost ' Jone Shakspear,' daughter of John, christened September, 1558, and that she had gone to Snitterfield to help her Uncle Henry and his wife, and died before they did. No other register accounts for her.

John and Mary Shakespeare filed a Bill in Chancery on Nov. 2nd, 1597. The complaint was against John Lambert, for the restoration of Asbies. This has been printed in the calendar of the Chancery Proceedings[1] at the Record Office. What the conclusion was, does not appear, but no further lawsuits appear in the D. & O. The long list of Proclamations after the sale makes it difficult to contradict continual possession.

The year 1598 was another notable year in Shakespeare's

[1] See P.R.O., *Calenders of Chancery Proceedings.*

Life. Believers in the Herbert-Fitton theory must find it difficult to harmonize the dates. The young Lord William Herbert came to town in the spring, aged 18, and was welcomed there. But he specially affected warlike and political occupation. Francis Meres was then writing his book, *Palladis Tamia, Wit's Treasury* and he managed to get it licenced and set on the Stationer's Registers by September. The supporters of Thomas Tyler's theory ask us to believe that in six months Shakespeare could be introduced to Herbert, become intimate with him, and go through all the gamut of affection, that Meres should finish his great book, get it licensed and set on the Stationer's Registers ; that Herbert should have responded to him and taught him to write sonnets and praises, especially the 78th :

> For thou art all my art, and doth advance
> As far as learning my rude ignorance.

Meres' praises Shakespeare at a time when he had written both his poems, twelve of his plays, some of them containing sonnets. We are safer with the Earl of Southampton.

William Shakespeare in March, 1600, sued John Clayton for a debt of £7, incurred 22nd May, I592.[1] His attorney was Thomas Awdeley. (It may be remembered that John Awdeley was John Shakespeare's surety when he was fined). Clayton did not appear and judgment was found for Shakespeare.

There was a good deal of trouble about the settlement of New Place, owing to the tragic story of the previous owner. It is worth saying a word or two about the end of it. Sir Edward Walker,[2] whose daughter married Sir John Clopton, drew up his will after the death of the Barnards. He mentions :

[1] *Cor am Rege Roll*, Easter 42, Elig. 1361, Membrane 293.
[2] Somerset House, 36 Hale.

A yard land in Stratford Field which I bought of Mrs. Hall—worth *£12*—11 by the year. Fifthly land which I bought of Sir John Clopton of the yearely value of *£12.* Sixthly 4 yard land lying in Stratford and Bishopton Fields, which I bought of Mr. Bagley, and a house called The New Place situated in the town of Stratford upon Avon, the yearly value about fifty-five pounds, to my dear daughter and her husband Sir John Clopton. (Sole executor[1]), 30th June, 1676, proved 10th March, 1677.

It was often resold. One of the owners makes it interesting because he has entered, ' Things left in Mr. Talbot's house in Stratford-upon-Avon." These give us some notion of the size of the house then, and become valuable by adding :

> **In** ye Hall Shakespeare's Head ....
> In ye other rooms six family portraits

Afterwards Gastrell came.

A CORRECTION

One textual correction may be added.

Dr. Ingleby, in order to make clear Shakespeare's relation to the enclosures, photographed and printed from the original *Thomas Greeners Diary ,* Dr. Edward Scott supervised the edition. I found this very puzżling, and at last went to Stratford on purpose to see it, along with Professor Feuillerat. I discovered that the photographer had printed one of his pages out of order, giving two springs in one year and none in the next, confusing both. I pointed this out to Mr. Barwyck of the British Museum. He wrote a pencil note at the top of the page, ' this page should precede the previous one.' But it is important to be remembered. Not all Shakespeareans work at the British Museum, and this disordered page refers to the last week or two of Shakespeare's Life.

C. C. STOPES

[1] Lady Barnard's Executor, who died intestate.
[2] Loose Papers in Stratford Muninent Room.