

THE Shakespeare Fellowship News-Letter

MAY, 1944

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EDITORIAL NOTES

The Editor apologizes for delay in the preparation of this issue—delay due, as will be well understood, to "the weight of this sad time."

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Members who may still be unaware of the fact, will be grieved, as we all are, to hear of the passing of Mr. J. T. Looney, on January 17 last. The Editor, with the approval of the President and Committee, decided to enlarge this issue of the News-Letter, from four to eight pages, in order to make room for the insertion of an illustrated biographical sketch of the author of "*Shakespeare Identified*." The Editor expresses his warm thanks to all who have helped to supply the necessary material—Dr. M. Gompertz, Mr. T. H. Elstob, and, particularly, Mr. Looney's daughters, Mrs. Evelyn Bodell and Miss Gladys Looney, who have been most kind and helpful in every way. The Editor is much indebted also to our member, Mr. H. Cutner, for valuable assistance and for supplying the drawing of Mr. Looney, made by Mr. Cutner himself from a photograph.

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Mr. Percy Allen's essay on *The Dark Lady and Fair Youth of the Sonnets* is sold out. His address to the Bacon Society, which was provisionally arranged for this spring, has been unavoidably postponed until the autumn. After correspondence with Mr. Valentine Smith, the Hon. Sec. of the Bacon Society, the scheme was found to be impracticable, under present conditions.

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The new Shakesporean Director, at Stratford-on-Avon, is Mr. Robert Atkins. It would, perhaps, be unfair to describe Mr. Atkins as an Oxfordian, or a Baconian; but members may take it as certain that

the present Director of the Festival Company does not believe that William Shaksper of Stratford wrote the Shakesporean plays.

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Our member, Mr. W. Kent, is conducting, under the auspices of W. and G. Foyle Ltd, a series of London tours during which the byways as well as the highways, will be explored. Mr. Kent has, no doubt, found opportunity, on these occasions, to enlighten his following concerning the close relations of the genuine "Shakespeare" with the City of London, a subject with which Dr. Rendall's new pamphlet very interestingly deals. See the review by our President in this issue.

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The Hon. Treasurer will be glad to receive donations or subscriptions for the current year; the more so in view of the extra cost of this double number. Those who have already contributed will kindly ignore this appeal.

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The Editor has written a long essay on the respective shares of Oxford and Bacon in the production of the Shakespeare Folio of 1623—a study that has never before been attempted. It is hoped, during the early summer, to print, or to type, in an abbreviated form, a number of copies of this essay, which will be available to members at 2/6 post-free, on application to Mr. Percy Allen, at 99 Corringham Road, N.W.11.

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The Editor is always glad to receive letters, articles, press-cuttings, information, etc., which may be of interest to our members, and useful for the next News-Letter. Articles should not generally exceed 500-600 words.

JOHN THOMAS LOONEY (1870-1944)

A Biographical Sketch by Percy Allen*

JOHN THOMAS LOONEY, the discoverer of Lord Oxford as author of the Shakespearian plays, and himself the author of "*Shakespeare Identified*," the pioneer among Oxfordian books, was born on August 14, 1870, at South Shields, the eldest of a family of six children of whom two only were boys. The Looneys were originally of Manx origin, and, as J. T. L. used to say, half jestingly, "were descended from the Kings of Man."

When the boy was about three years old, the family moved to Boldon, a few miles further along the coast, before returning later to South Shields. At those two places J. T. Looney's childhood and youth were spent. When out of school—where, even at an early age, he showed remarkable ability—the boy spent much of his time in the open air, climbing, skating in winter on the Boldon flats; and, in the summer, swimming and boating. The sea always attracted him strongly; and when he was about twelve years old he built himself a canoe, in which he used to venture beyond the piers. As a young man he loved to linger on the pier in the early morning hours. Sea-bathing was a regular habit with him, almost throughout the year. This love of the sea, and of the open country never left him, and thus it came about that a life-time devoted mainly to books, study, and meditation was coupled with leisure hours spent in intense enjoyment of the beauties of nature and the country-side. This passion helped to develop in him a fine grasp of detail, and unusually keen powers of observation. About the year 1919 he followed the line of the Roman Wall from Wallsend to Solway,

walking every step of the way, and there was little of Cumberland or Northumberland that he did not, at one time or another, explore. One spot, in particular, held always a very warm place in his heart. This was a little village called Giesland, on the border of Northumberland and Cumberland. It was a second home to him, and he passed several months of many years in this beauty spot well known to Wordsworth and to Sir Walter Scott. He felt, when there, "a wonderful feeling of rest and peace," and shortly before his death he expressed to his daughter a wish that his name should always be associated with Giesland.†

When the time came to select a career, young Looney chose naval engineering, and was about to enter the Naval College at Portsmouth, when, to the great disappointment of his parents and himself, family misfortunes compelled a sudden change of plans, and

the young man, at twenty years old, went, instead, to the Chester Diocesan College, with the intention of entering the ministry. He preached occasionally for the Methodist New Connexion. Later on, however, he again changed his plans, and settled down to what was to be his life's work, that of a school-teacher, first at Runcorn in Cheshire, and two years later in Gateshead.

One year after he had left college, he married, in 1893, Elizabeth Campbell of North Shields, and settled down to a happy married life with a companion whose interests centred round her husband and family, thus providing a restful and congenial



Mr. J. T. LOONEY

Drawn by H. CUTNER from a Photograph

* See also the Editorial note in this issue.

† At Giesland J.T.L. wrote a part of, and put the finishing touches to, the MS of "*Shakespeare Identified*."

home for scholar-husband, whose interests were wide and varied.

When he was about twenty five (ca. 1895), Looney came under the influence of Malcolm Quin, the Positivist, then the minister of the Church of Humanity in Newcastle-on-Tyne, wherein later the young man occasionally preached. By this time he was irrevocably converted to Positivism, and had become a close student of—later he became an authority upon—the works of Auguste Comte (1798-1857), the founder of the Positivist movement, and the thinker who, to the close of Looney's life, was his intellectual and moral inspiration, and "gave the impulse to his deepest and most generous emotions, and to the direction of all his pursuits."† When J. T. Looney was about twenty eight, the "Sacrament of Destination" was conferred on him in London by Dr. Congreve, with view to eventual service in the Positivist priesthood; but, while still in early middle age, several severe illnesses compelled him to abandon preaching, lecturing, and public-speaking; from which time forth he became increasingly the student-writer, and, to some extent, a recluse. J. T. L. despite his interest in Positivism and Methodism was a regular worshipper in the Church of England and a daily attender at the 5 p.m. service in Newcastle Cathedral.

Looney's scholarly work naturally brought him into contact with the plays of "Shakespeare" and the necessity of going through repeated courses of reading in "*The Merchant of Venice*," for several years in succession, gave him, in his own words, "a peculiar sense of intimacy with the mind and disposition of its author,"* whom Looney came thereby to conceive as an individual "altogether out of relationship" to the reputed author born at Stratford-on-Avon in 1564. The ultimate result, as all our members know, was the writing, ca. 1917-1918, of a pioneer book revealing the 17th Earl of Oxford as the genuine "Shakespeare." The opening of the world-war, in 1914, delayed publication for some years; but in 1920 "*Shakespeare Identified*" appeared, and slowly won its way to a large measure of acceptance; one of Looney's early converts being John Galsworthy, who remained an Oxfordian to the end of his life. The founding of *The Shakespeare Fellowship* in 1922 was a direct result of the appearance of "*Shakespeare Identified*," which Looney followed, in 1921, with the publication of "*The Poems of Edward de Vere*."

The later years of J. T. Looney's life were uneventful. When the present war opened in 1939, he left the dangerous vicinity of Newcastle, and went to live with his married daughter, Mrs. Bodell, at Swadlincote, in Staffordshire, near Burton-on-Trent. Some two years ago his health began to fail; and although, on September 23 last, he was permitted to celebrate the 50th anniversary of an exceptionally happy marriage, he was then already very ill. A few days before his death on January 17 last, he said to Mrs. Bodell:—

"My great aim in life has been to work for the religious and moral unity of mankind: and along

with this, in later years, there has been my desire to see Edward de Vere established as the author of the Shakespearean plays—and the Jewish problem settled."

He was anxious, too, towards the end, upon this point.

"Let every one know that my mind was clear and active right to the end, and that I retained my sense of humour."

Let no reader of this sketch suppose that the author of *Shakespeare Identified*, for all his seriousness and scholarship, was a sober-sided, to whom the lighter side of life had no appeal. Looney was, in his way, a wit, and could enjoy a joke with any man.

J. T. Looney, at his own request, was buried at Saltwell cemetery, not far from his home.

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John Thomas Looney was, from early manhood, an unusual and very impressive personality‡; and a potent force working always for good. He was a genuine lover of his fellow-men, and especially of the young, whose society he always enjoyed, and who found in him a constant friend, and a wise counsellor. These characteristics explain, in part his success as a school master—one whose teaching, let me add, went always beyond the appointed curriculum.

The above words are true of him; but those deeper and larger qualities which, during the whole of his adult life, caused Looney to be so highly regarded, and so much looked up to as a man, were the range of his mind, his dispassionate outlook upon all subjects, his powers of logical thought and deduction, and an innate religious instinct, from which, conjointly with love for his fellows, sprang that reverence for truth and justice which dominated his life, and was the source of his courage and his strength. As his daughter, Mrs. Bodell, phrased it:—

"I have never known my father show weakness in any shape or form—he was strong in that strength given to one who knew the right path always, and stuck to it . . . his religious outlook was absorbing; it was his real life as far back as I can remember."

The ideal occupation for such a mind was, presumably, the church, but even if the limitations of Looney's physical strength had permitted entry into the active ministry, that profession would, in all probability, have entailed more publicity than his sensitive and retiring nature could have endured, apart from the fact that, devoted though he was to unity, his independent habit of mind might easily have brought him into conflict with established authority.

Looney was always, to many of us, a slightly enigmatic figure, much respected and admired, yet somewhat remote and shadowy—a being akin, in quality of mind, to Matthew Arnold's Scholar Gipsy. This picture of him, on our part, was natural enough; but I am assured by daughters that their father was not, at heart, quite the recluse that we supposed; and that his remoteness was due, at bottom, to physical

‡ Mr. T. H. Elstob, a fellow student with J. T. L., writes: "He was always impressive to me . . . a real personality . . . an impressiveness sprung from the dispassionateness he showed on every theme . . . His utterances were the result of thinking."

* Memorial sermon by the Rev. Otto Bauer.

† "*Shakespeare Identified*," page 16.

weakness only. One of Looney's great disappointments was, that he could not take the platform, and speak upon the Shakespeare problem, as he would certainly have done, as a younger man.

The above aspects of J. T. Looney's character support the Rev. Otto Baier's shrewd remark, that his friend's interest in Edward de Vere did not spring from mere idle literary curiosity, but was rather a part of his life-long "search after righteousness," and, let me add, after truth. Himself a just man, he was irked by the injustice—even after a lapse of three hundred and fifty years—of withholding recognition from qualities and abilities so transcendent as those of "Shakespeare." As a writer, Looney's methods were skilfully deductive, and always precise in expression. Our President put it well, when in a recent letter to myself he wrote, "Looney's literary work must have been self-inspired. His capacity for working out his hypothesis on clear and logical deductions from definite facts was unusual."

There is, however, this limitation to be remarked concerning "*Shakespeare Identified*" and its author, and touching the extensive Anglo-American researches to which the book gave rise—namely, that Looney, having, once for all, made out his case for Edward de Vere as "Shakespeare," did not it seems care to probe much further into the investigation: and it is my opinion that he hardly realized either the vastness or the importance of the implications which, upon a strictly modern and complete interpretation of the plays, followed inevitably upon the discovery of the true author. Looney had identified his man—and, for the time being, he was content to note the accumulation of confirmatory evidence. The reason for this attitude is clear enough. The author of "*Shakespeare Identified*" was averse from entering into the heated discussions which his own discoveries must necessarily arouse. He disliked controversy; and his disapproval of other men's conclusions was always shewn preferably by silence, rather than by counter-assertion and argument. This characteristic of the man held good in the fields of philosophical and religious, as well as of literary opinion. He could, nevertheless, and did, on occasion, write warm replies to his critics, and was always ready, when he felt it his duty, to take up his pen in defence of any argument.

Another memorable and important side of Looney's literary gift, was his quite exceptional charm and assiduity as a letter-writer—a faculty in which, as in certain other matters, J. T. L. always at heart a Victorian, was, perhaps, slightly old-fashioned. I have corresponded, during the last forty years, with many men distinguished in various forms of literary art: but few of them could match Looney as a letter-writer, nor were any so painstaking as he, nor so swift to win the esteem and affection of correspondents. Our valued member, Mr. J. W. Tierney, told me that J. T. L. was the only man *whom he had never met* for whom he acquired a genuine affection and regard. Mr. C. W. Barrell, Hon. Sec. of the American Branch of the Shakespeare Fellowship, wrote to me, on February 17, that "through our correspondence I had learned to respect and love the man sincerely." Yet

so strong was his dislike of any kind of publicity, that he remained usually content with literary friendship, and—though occasionally to their disappointment—was neither eager nor willing to meet his correspondents. J. T. Looney—for all his deep interest in, and love for, his fellow men—was, by nature, always a little bit the mystery-man and the scholarly recluse.

Let no reader of these lines suppose, however, that their subject was shallow in his friendships. On the contrary, as Mrs. Bodell wrote:—

"Friendship was to father a sacred thing, and perhaps the surest proof of the . . . sincerity of his friendships is that, during his two years of illness, letters came almost daily from men he had made his friends at college fifty years ago, and from others with whom he had come into literary contact through his writings."

Mrs. Bodell's sister, Miss Gladys Looney, added these words, in a letter to myself dated March 3.

"Friends came and listened to his quiet words of wisdom on practically any subject, and went away feeling that they had been helped . . . that they were welcome, and that he was personally interested in each one . . . I never heard father speak an unkind word of anyone . . . great as he was, he never boasted in any way . . . As a father he was just wonderful, in a quiet, unselfish way . . . his influence for what was good and right must be immeasurable, judging by the letters received since his death."

Happy the man whose passing can evoke from his children words such as those which, from among others, I have quoted above. Members of the Shakespeare Fellowship—in common with Mr. Looney's family—can be proud of the man whose character and abilities called their organisation into being.

The Symbolism of *Pericles* and *Winter's Tale*

By PERCY ALLEN

About the year 1630, Ben Jonson in his Ode, "*Come Leave the Loathed Stage*," suggested that "some mouldy tale like *Pericles*" might serve to "keep up the Play-Club," meaning thereby—as I interpret the words—the aristocratic "Club," or coterie, headed by the Pembrokes, the Derby-Oxford circle, and Francis Bacon, that had been behind the publication of the Shakespeare Folio of 1623, from which *Pericles*, as non-Shakespearian, had been deliberately excluded. Yet *Pericles*, though a non-Shakespearian play, contains a series of very clever imitations of scenes from genuine Shakespearian plays; and, in common with its companion plays, *The Tempest*, and *Winter's Tale*, is full of Shakespearian symbolism. With *Pericles* standing for Lord Oxford, and *Marina*, the lovely daughter of *Pericles* symbolizing the plays—precisely as do *Miranda* and *Perdita*,—this comedy reveals, as openly as the author dared to do so, some of the facts behind the Shakespeare mystery. I cannot here go into the whole symbolic story of this deeply interesting play, but I should like to of

my own explanation of Gower's speech at the opening of act five, in the first line of which he refers to those strange and much-discussed scenes in the fourth act, wherein the innocent Marina is captured, and taken to the brothel. *Gower*, as *Chorus*, speaks thus:—

Marina thus the brothel scapes and chances
 Into an honest house, our story says.
 She sings like one immortal and she dances
 As goddess-like to her admired lays.
 Deep clerks she dumbs, and with her needle
 composes
 Nature's own shape . . . pupils lacks she none of
 noble race
 Who pour their bounty on her, and her gain
 She gives the cursed bawd.

This passage is, to my mind, the most interesting, by far, in the play; and, remembering that the lovely maid, *Marina*, symbolizes the plays in their exquisite beauty, there can, I think, be no doubt whatever as to its meaning, nor any concerning the purpose of its insertion into the comedy of *Pericles*.

Marina has been pent forcibly in a house of ill-fame, whence she has escaped into "an honest house." These "houses" surely are the public and private playhouses of London—of which the first were, notoriously, the haunt of ill-doers, of both sexes, while the private theatres were far more decorous and respectable. The songs and dances with which *Marina* gives delight in her new abode are the music, verbal and other, of the plays, and such delightful dances as you get in *The Tempest* and *The Dream*. The "dumbness" of those "deep clerks" concerning her, means the silence which—though they knew the truth of the matter—was imposed upon scholars such as Jonson and Chapman who were in the secret. The "needle," with which the maid "composes Nature's own shape," is the pen which draws such lifelike pictures of humanity; and those many "pupils of noble race" are the high-born aristocrats of the Vere and Pembroke groups, who are already imitating the style of the Shakesperean plays, and who already, by this time, have got control of many of the Shakesperean MSS. These "pupils" are symbolizing the mysterious story of Perdita-Marina's adventures in *The Winter's Tale*, and in *Pericles* itself, a play often attributed to George Wilkins. The "bounty" which these imitators poured upon *Marina* was, I take it, the same bounty with which they financed the Folio of 1623, using—pretty much as Lord Oxford had done—the name, or names, of theatrical people, as a mask for the more exalted ones working in secret. The last phrase that I have quoted—"her gains she gives (to) the cursed bawd"—a phrase which is senseless, if *Marina* were a real woman, means that the plays were, nevertheless, still being played at the public theatres, and were providing those playhouses with rich profits.

Remembering that *The Tempest* is, by common consent, packed with allegory, and that another play of this period, namely, *Winter's Tale*, is even more symbolic, and has, for its ultimate purpose, the vindication of Shakesperean Truth by Time—it becomes evident that their author, or authors, in common with the writer of *Pericles*, wrote with an ulterior purpose

far greater than that of pleasing playgoers and readers, or filling the pockets of actors and theatre-men. Their basic intention was to reveal, as openly as they dared, the basic truths of the greatest literary mystery of all time: and it is *not* by chance that *The Tempest* and *Winter's Tale* are, respectively, the first and last comedies in the Folio. *The Winter's Tale*, in particular, just shouts the truth at you, when it tells you that the story is worth the attention of Kings and Princes, "since by such was it acted;" and the dialogue between the *Gentlemen* (V.2) is no less pregnant with meaning:—

The oracle is fulfilled: the King's daughter is found: such a deal of *wonder* is broken out . . . that ballad-makers cannot be able to express it . . . this news which is called *true* is so like an old tale . . . *most true* if *ever truth* were pregnant by circumstance . . . * there is such unity in the proofs . . . evidences proclaim her (Perdita, the lost plays) with all certainty to be the King's daughter.

A few moments later in the same scene there enter the old Shepherd—the former reputed father of *Perdita*—and his clown son: a pair who stand, obviously, for John and William Shakespeare. Both arrayed in burlesque finery, symbolizing the glory of the plays, and their new coat-of-arms (1598), they announce themselves to Autolycus (Oxford) the disguised nobleman, as "gentlemen born any time these four hours:" and shortly after vanish from the scene. *Perdita*, the lost King's daughter (the plays), is found: the "wonder" is made plain: and the "ever truth" is now made "pregnant by circumstance."

Thus considered, *Pericles* and *Winter's Tale*, apart from stage and literary values, become two of the most interesting plays in the Folio.

Elizabethan Miniatures

By J. J. DWYER

Members of the Fellowship may like to know of a handy, inexpensive and useful little book that will serve as an introduction to the interesting subject of Tudor miniatures. Mr. Carl Winter of the V. and A. Museum, has written, under the title, "*Elizabethan Miniatures*" (King Penguin Book, 1943, 2/-), a concise account of the work of Nicholas Hillyarde and Isaac Oliver (19 pages), with 32 examples excellently reproduced in colour and a *catalogue raisonnée*.

The following will arouse the interest, and probably the curiosity, of many of our members. Three miniatures of Queen Elizabeth; The Man clasping a hand from a Cloud, inscribed, "Attici Amoris ergo. Ano. Dm. 1588:" the Queen's Champion, George Clifford, 3rd Earl of Cumberland (1558-1605) in fancy costume, with lance and shield, the latter bearing the device of the sun and the moon; The Man Against a Background of Flames; The Youth Leaning Against a Tree Among Roses, inscribed, "Dat poenas laudata fides" (My praised faith procures my pain); the Portrait of a Young Man, said to be Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586), and Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex (1566-1601).

* Note the Vere puns.

As a revelation of the Elizabethan mind, Hillyarde's *Art of Limning* has been equated with Sidney's *Apologie For Poetry*. "It tendeth not to common mens use," as it was aristocratic and esoteric, not popular, and a contemporary declared that the artist painted.

"things which concealed in themselves many fine secrets . . . in order to make manifest his meaning to some but not to all."

Hence the many devices and mysterious emblems: the picture was nearly always more than a mere portrait and was meant to tell a story.

What, for instance, is the meaning of the clasped hand out of the cloud, and its untranslatable inscription? And the slim courtier leaning against a tree, the symbol of constancy, surrounded by roses and thorns which stand for the joys and torments of love.—Who is he? One would like to know more about these iconographic puzzles. Again the youth in Jacobean costume leaning against a tree, with a pagoda in the background (see "*Shakespeare Identified*," by J. T. Looney, page 294) is certainly not Sir Philip Sidney. Mr. Winter connects the latest of the three miniatures of Queen Elizabeth with Hentzer's oft-quoted description (1598):—

Her face oblong, fair but wrinkled, her nose a little hooked, her lips thin, her teeth black . . . she wore false hair and that red.

This portrait, however, is by no means realistic, and is much more likely to be connected with some such piece of Euphuistic flattery as Davies's *Orchestra* (1596): but readers will judge for themselves.

The Elizabethan Mind

The Editor, in his recent essay on the *Dark Lady and Fair Youth*, which some of our members have seen, refers, in his Foreword, to a recent and valuable little book by E. M. W. Tillyard, Litt.D., "*Elizabethan World Picture*" (Chatto and Windus 6/-), which contains, within 100 pages, the subtlest exposition of Elizabethan mentality which Mr. Allen has ever read. He recommends it strongly, as also does Mr. Dwyer, who has written an excellent review of it, too long, unfortunately, to print here. Below are some principal points therefrom.

The almost universally held 19th century view of the Elizabethan world, as one in which the human mind was delivered from the shackles of mediaevalism, is wholly false. Elizabethan writers, on the contrary, "hold with earnestness passion and assurance to the main outline of the world-picture as modified by the Tudor régime"—a world of which the normal and perfect order had been much deranged by the fall of man. That order is beautifully exemplified in the famous *Decree* speech in *Troilus and Cressida*, and by Isabella, in *Measure For Measure*.

This Elizabethan concept of the world was most complicated and intricate, with its *Primum Mobile*, or basic motive force, its "four elements" of "Shakespeare," and its "Cosmic Dance," the earthly centre of which was Queen Elizabeth, the "mortal moon," surrounded by the cosmic stars, who were the Queen's

principal subjects. It was a concept utterly fantastic to us, but natural to an educated 16th century mind.

Dr. Tillyard's book proves, though unknowingly and unintentionally, that "Shakespeare" must have been a man who, through education and inheritance, had absorbed this traditional, and quasi-mediaeval, view of the world, as modified by the Renaissance. Such a view, however, was far too complex and elaborate to have been acquired by a young countryman, through a few years of contact with the London theatres. "*Elizabethan World Picture*" is another *coup-de-grace* to the moribund orthodox case.

Shakespeare in Essex and East Anglia

By GERALD H. RENDALL, B.D., Litt.D., LL.D.

(Reviewed by Col. M. W. Douglas)

Under this Title are published two Articles expanded from notes for a Local Literary Society on the Plays, 2 *Henry VI*, and *Cymbeline*, showing that the scenes of both are set in the Stour Valley, on the borders of Essex and Suffolk, and contain passing allusions to the Earl of Oxford as author.

In *Henry VI*, the interest centres round Jack Cade, who is transformed from a Kentish squire into an East Anglian rebel; and the vocabulary "smacks of the Essex scene, alien, I suspect, to Kent, and certainly to Stratford and the Cotswolds," writes the author. We have the "village cage," "chines of beef," and the play on "salad and sallet," whereas "a cade of her-rings" is common in Yarmouth, Lowestoft, and "say," "serge," "buckram" are Essex textile fabrics.

Throughout, the Jack Cade rebellion of 1450 is dramatised in terms of the Peasant Revolt, voiced by John Ball of Colchester. From these topical surroundings the author passes to items drawn from the nomenclature of London streets or sites, in the play, foreign to Shakespeare of Stratford, but "within the immediate ken of the Earl of Oxford," and, in the vicinity of his residence, Oxford Court.

Canon Rendall finds it impossible to question the Shakespearean authorship of *Cymbeline*, containing two of the choicest lyrics penned even by Shakespeare himself, "Hark the Lark" and "Fear no more the heat of the sun."

He accepts Mrs. E. T. Clark's date 1578 as that of the Play, thus excluding William of Stratford as the possible author. In that year the Royal Progress started from Havering-atte-Bower, and, thence, to Cambridge and Saffron Walden. As public orator Gabriel Harvey submitted his congratulations, including the appeal to the Earl of Oxford to exchange "the useless script" for the "sharpened sword." The Royal Progress continued down the Stour Valley to Long Melford and Colchester, familiar ground to the Earl of Oxford.

In these surroundings *Cymbeline* a "hasty but ingenious masquerade" was improvised and staged by Oxford, who possibly took the part of *Posthumus*, which abounds in his personal autobiographical

references. "Names, places and distances, even personalities are thinly disguised." *Cambria* is *Cambridge*, the Palace of Cassibelan or Cymbeline, King Coel's castle at *Colchester*, and Castle Hedingham, a conspicuous landmark, possibly the residence of Posthumus.

Such are, briefly, some of the impressive and convincing sidelights thrown on these two plays by Canon Rendall in these scholarly Essays. They should be read: and can be obtained for two shillings and sixpence, post free per copy, from Canon Rendall, Dedham House, Dedham, Essex.

Twelfth Night and Massinger's Believe As You List

On May 7, 1631, was acted for the first time Massinger's "*Believe As You List*," a title which recalls at once the subsidiary title of "*Twelfth Night*"—"What You Will." In the Mermaid edition of Massinger's play, Arthur Symons tells us that, though the play is nominally set in the time of the Roman Republic, it is really founded on the adventures of a claimant to the throne of Portugal, whose adventures aroused much interest in Europe about the beginning of the 17th century. This adventurer professed himself to be Don Sebastian, King of Portugal, commonly believed to have been killed at the Battle of Alcazar in 1578. Certain pamphlets favouring his pretensions were published in London in 1602-3, and it was from these that Massinger drew material for his play, and in his prologue made allusion to the Sebastian episode, as a "late and sad example."

Very interesting are the further historical topicalities linking this Sebastian with *Twelfth Night*, a comedy dating from 1578-9, and, as all the world knows, introducing two characters, Sebastian and Antonio, who are dramatized as an old sea-rover and his protégé. Historically considered, that Sebastian is the same King of Portugal whom the adventurer above mentioned purported to be. Antonio, historically, was the natural son of John II of Portugal, and, after Drake, was the most feared of all the great contemporary seamen. Upon the death of Sebastian, Antonio claimed the Portuguese crown, and in 1580 sent envoys, with rich presents, to Leicester who favoured his cause.

The Elizabethan dramatists, and the Jacobean who followed them loved to put topical allusions into their plays, and did so, however fantastically imaginative those plays, on first acquaintance, might seem to be.

A Note on John M. Robertson

By H. CUTNER

Most readers are aware that the late John M. Robertson was a doughty opponent of all "anti-Stratfordians"—though he himself did as much—

perhaps more—to "disintegrate" the plays of Shakespeare, than did any of his contemporaries. He wrote many books on the Shakespeare "Canon" and always felt very certain as to which part was written by the incomparable Master, and which showed the "inferior" hand of Fletcher, Marlowe, or Peele. This certainty gives added point to an early review of his—long before he was known as a Shakespearean scholar.

It will be found in the journal which he took over at the time of Charles Bradlaugh's death—the "National Reformer" for February 7, 1892. The titles of the two books reviewed are "Lyrics from the Dramatists of the Elizabethan Age" and "Lyrics from the Song books of the Elizabethan Age," both edited by A. H. Bullen. Here is the particular lyric from "*The Two Noble Kinsmen*"—which is acknowledged by almost all critics to be partly by Shakespeare—singled out by Robertson:—

Roses, their sharp spines being gone,
Not royal in their smells alone,
But in their hue:
Maiden pinks of odor faint,
Daisies smell-less, yet most quaint,
And sweet thyme true:

Primrose, firstborn child of Ver,
Merry springtime's harbinger,
With harebells dim;
Oxlips in their cradles growing,
Marigolds on deathbeds blowing,
Larks'-heels trim.

"Could Fletcher," cries the reviewer, "have composed that secure cadence, that thrilling rhythm, that electrical touch? It seems cruel to the lesser master to deny him a priori such a felicity; but who can miss the subtle presence of the greater? That "harebells dim," for instance, is it not the specific and peculiar impression made on the eye of him who wrote those incomparable lines:—

Daffodils

That come before the swallow dares, and take
The winds of March with beauty; *violets dim*,
But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes,
Or Cytherea's breath?

Our readers will, of course, note the certainty in Robertson's mind that this lyric is by Shakespeare—and they will not have failed to note the Earl of Oxford's well-known clue in it—the word "Ver." If it is, therefore, really by "Shakespeare" then it was written by de Vere who used "Ver" more than once, and, in particular, in his well known "Echo" poem.

One feels rather sorry that this early review of his was not shown to Robertson when he was trying to make fun of the word "Ver" in his attacks on the Oxford theory. But a lot of water has flowed down the Thames since then.

Francis Bacon's Share in the Shakespeare Folio of 1623

By PERCY ALLEN

Following upon the successful publication of Mr R. S. Eagle's recent Baconian book, and the comments which it drew from Messrs. Ivor Brown and James Agate, in *The Observer* and *The Sunday Times*, some correspondence has been passing between the President and the Editor; and Col. Douglas has suggested that the Editor might, as nearly as possible, summarize what seemed to be Bacon's share in the penning and production of the Shakespeare Folio of 1623. Mr. Allen acquiesced, and set himself, during the winter, to a close examination of that difficult problem. The result is an essay too long for complete publication, of which, however, during the coming summer, it is hoped to publish an epitome, somewhat similar in method to Mr. Allen's recent study of the *Dark Lady* problem. This Oxford-Bacon essay, probably the first of its kind to be written, will be available to our members, and to members of the Bacon Society.

Mr. Allen's conclusions, without supporting argument, are summarized below. The most important and conclusive single piece of evidence is Jonson's topical comedy, *The Staple of News* (1625), which will be analyzed in the forthcoming study.

* * * *

The bulk of the Shakesporean output, including nearly all the greater tragedies and comedies, and the sonnets, is from the pen of Lord Oxford, excepting *The Tempest*, which is by Walter Raleigh. Bacon inserted, or caused to be inserted, into several of the plays, episodes and signature-acrostics which, in most cases, seem to have been added shortly before the appearance of the Folio. Typical instances are the *Simpcox* scene in *2 Henry VI*, the *Francis!—Anon!* scene in *1 Henry IV*, and the *Cleopatra-and-the-Worm* scene in the last act of *Antony and Cleopatra*. Baconian signatures are usually on the first and last Folio pages of the plays, and on the first and last pages of the poems.

Oxford, though he wrote the two *Henry IV* plays, had much less to do with the Histories in general than he had with the Tragedies and Comedies. *Richard III* is Marlowean; *Henry VIII* is, in part, by Fletcher, though there are Baconian links with both *Richard II* and *Henry VIII*. *Cymbeline*,* in its present form, and *Pericles* are clever Shakesporean

* I agree wholly with Dr. Rendall that *Cymbeline*, in its original form, was an Oxford play of 1578.

imitation with which Bacon himself may have had something to do; but he himself wrote little in any of the plays. He was what Jonson calls him in *The Staple of News*—*Lickfinger*, the "Master Cook," who arranged and prepared the great feast (the Folio) from ingredients (plays) provided mainly by Oxford. *Venus*, *Lucrece* and *Lovers Complaint* are all, in their present form, either written or sponsored by Bacon, whose signatures they reveal. Collaboration and plotting between Oxford and Bacon began, it seems, about 1593, and was partly in the nature of a jest.

During the late 1590's, when Oxford's health was failing, he had an attack of something akin to madness, about the same time that he wrote *King Lear*, with himself, in its English allegory, as the demented monarch. At the same time (ca. 1598) Oxford's malicious rival, Chapman, engineered a mysterious plot, called "killing the dog,"† apparently with the purpose of obtaining possession of the Oxford plays—a conspiracy in which it seems likely that Southampton was somehow involved. Oxford's knowledge of this treachery against himself and his work was a part-cause of his madness, and helped to shape and colour *King Lear*. The Earl, I think, at this time, lost heart concerning his own future and that of his literary work—a mood which found expression in the line from his sonnet:—

"My name be buried where my body is."

The man who came to the rescue of the plays, and who finally acquired possession of some, at least, of the MSS., was Bacon, who realised their value, and knew that Oxford had lost control of, and possibly interest in them also. Drama, moreover, deeply interested Bacon, and formed part of his great scheme for the *Advancement of Learning*. He, accordingly, in collaboration with Lady Pembroke, and, no doubt, with others of the Vere-Sidney-Derby group, took over the plays, which he may have acquired from Southampton, for whom some of them were originally written. Bacon then arranged for their collection and publication with the signature "William Shakespeare," which, though originally Oxford's pen-name, was taken over by the group, and used also by Bacon whenever it suited his purpose. But for Bacon, no Shakesporean Folio would—in my opinion—have appeared.

That, at present, is the nearest that this Editor can get to the probabilities or truth of a deliberately mysterious and complicated plot for masking the real authorship of the plays.

† Oxford's plays are called "dogs" by Shakespeare in *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, and by Jonson in *Every Man Out of His Humour* and in *The Staple of News*.