

The Shakespeare Fellowship News-Letter

MARCH, 1946

*

President: (VACANT)

EDITORIAL NOTES

The Extraordinary General Meeting

With much regret we have to announce that the Presidency of the Fellowship has become vacant. On Saturday, January 12, 1946, took place the Special Meeting which was held to determine the question whether Mr. Percy Allen's avowed intention of bringing out a book of spiritualistic revelations on the Shakespeare Mystery was compatible with his retention of the Presidency and Editorship of the Fellowship News-Letter. Mr. T. L. Adamson presided and about 30 members were present.

After introductory observations by the Chairman, in which he emphasized the avowed objects of the Fellowship, Mr. Percy Allen made "a personal statement." He explained that he had for many years been deeply interested in Psychic Research, and had at length come to feel that a duty was laid upon him to seek a solution of the mystery of the authorship by psychic means. His prolonged Shakespearean studies had qualified him to adopt this course, and eventually, after long thought and hesitation, he had done so. As the result of communications made to him directly and personally at many spiritualistic séances, he was now sure of being in possession of the full solution of the question, and it was his firm intention to embody it in a book, which would, he hoped, be published in the course of 1946.

As, however, he had become aware of strong and widespread opposition, both from within the Fellowship and from the American Branch, he desired to obviate dissension and possible disruption by submitting himself to the judgment of the Fellowship, and he intimated that unless he received confirmation of his Presidency by a very substantial majority, he would forthwith resign that office and the editorship of the News-Letter. He then withdrew in order that discussion of the issue should be unfettered.

After a brief debate, all the members present, with one exception, voted for the acceptance of Mr. Allen's proffered resignation, adding as a rider that he be urgently requested to remain a member of the Fellowship.

When the result of the vote had been communicated by the Chairman to Mr. Allen, a vote of thanks for his long and distinguished services to the Fellowship was moved in graceful terms by Mr

J. Spera Atkinson, warmly seconded by Mr. W. Kent, and carried unanimously.

Dr. H. M. M. Woodward was elected to fill the vacancy in the Committee. The Presidency remains vacant till the Annual General Meeting in the autumn.

The new Editor, upon whom devolves the task of succeeding Mr. Percy Allen, has just two words to say. To our own members he appeals for active support in the useful form of articles and letters and expressions of *opinion*, so that the News-Letter may become a platform for discussion. To the American Branch he sends his hearty greetings, coupled with a renewed expression of gratitude for their splendid help throughout the war, and an assurance of his desire for the most cordial co-operation.

* * * * *

The English Fellowship has heard with deep regret of the bereavements sustained respectively by Mrs. Eva Turner Clark and Mr. Charles Wisner Barrell, and respectfully tenders to both its most sincere condolences.

Abstracts and Brief Chronicles

The Times of November 5, 1945, records the bequest by the late Edward Knoblock, the well-known dramatist, of an oil painting to the National Portrait Gallery. This picture is described as "being an early portrait of Shakespeare." If and when (as *Civil Servants* say) it is duly hung, we shall all be very much interested to see it.

Shakespeare and the Shaven Hercules

The *Burlington Magazine* for July, 1945, contains a very interesting article, so entitled, by Mr. Otto Kurz, accompanied by a full-page plate illustration. The point of departure is as follows:

Borachio: See'st thou not, I say, what a deformed thief this fashion is? how giddily he turns about all the hot bloods between fourteen and five-and-thirty? sometime fashioning them like Pharaoh's soldiers in the reechy painting? sometime like god Bel's priests in the old church-window? sometime like the shaven Hercules in the smirched worm-eaten tapestry where his cod-piece seems as massy as his club? (*Much Ado* III. 3.)

The author of the article explains that it has been "the shaven Hercules" that has "caused the worst headache" to the commentators, who appear to have assumed that Shakespeare was wrong and to have put forth differing interpretations, each based on the assumption that the words must mean something else. The Metropolitan Museum in New York has, however, a set of Hercules tapestries woven at Tournai in the first years of the sixteenth century, and the last of the four represents the *Death of Hercules on the Pyre*. The dying hero, it is pointed out by Mr. Kurz, is beardless and dressed in sixteenth century costume, and answers to Shakespeare's description in every detail. "It may well have been," he says, "another version of the New York *Death of Hercules* which amused Shakespeare."

I drew the attention of Mr. C. W. Barrell to this article, and in the course of his reply he made the bold and ingenious suggestion that "this is really a cartoon of François *Hercule*, Duc d'Anjou, whose career in Flanders in the 1580's brought so much trouble to that unhappy country," and he was even inclined to see a resemblance between the features of the tapestry Hercules and Anjou. Mr. Barrell then promised to inquire about the matter at the Metropolitan Museum.

If I may venture an opinion, I should say that I fully expect the date and provenance (Tournai, first years of XVI. Cent.) will be confirmed by the Metropolitan experts if they do not pronounce it somewhat older; so that if Shakespeare ever saw it, or a replica of it, very probably it would have been smirched and worm-eaten by that time.

That there were Hercules tapestries in England in the sixteenth century is proved by an inventory of Kenilworth Castle. (Hist. MSS. Commission: *Report on the MSS. of Lord de l'Isle and Dudley*, Vol. I. 1925, p. 278).

Honest Ben Jonson

To our "Brains Trust" meeting on Oct. 27, 1945, the following question was sent in by Sir Henry Lawrence, K.C.S.L.:—

"How can you refute the evidence of 'honest Ben Jonson'? I have come across Dryden's lines in *Absolom and Achitophel*:—

Let Heaven, nay, let Hell produce a man
So made for mischief as Ben Jocanan:
A Jew of humble parentage was he
By trade a Levite, though of low degree.
His pride no higher than his desk aspired.
He could not live by God but changed his master:
Inspired by want was made a factious tool,
They got a villain and we lost a fool.

If it be questioned whether Jocanan is Jonson, please see Stevenson's quotations. . . . Dryden attacked his contemporaries in scathing satire, but in regard to Ben Jonson he had no personal animosity, for he was only six years old in 1637 when Jonson died. What knowledge, then, had he of Jonson? . . . What is the meaning of the charge that he was made a factious tool? By whom and for what? And why a villain?"

The following is the substance of the answer which was delivered by Mr. J. J. Dwyer.

Dryden's lines have nothing to do with Jonson's literary career; they refer to his behaviour around about the time of the Gunpowder Plot. That behaviour was exceedingly sinister, so much so that Ben Jonson's "honesty" was in reality very like that of "honest Jago." Dryden, speaking as a Catholic, is denouncing Jonson's treacherous conduct in acting as a Government spy. In 1598 Ben was in prison for the manslaughter of Gabriel Spenser, an actor of the Chamberlain's Company, whom Ben Jonson had killed in a duel at Shoreditch. While in prison he fell in with some priests and was received into the Roman Church. It should be realised at once that this was a very remarkable step for a man already in danger of his life, because, by the Act of 1581 (23 Eliz. Cap. 1), to be reconciled to the Church of Rome was *ipso facto* high treason. Jonson pleaded benefit of clergy, was branded in the thumb and released. In 1604, at the instance of Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton, he was called before the Council and accused by him "both of popperie and treason." On January 9, 1606, Jonson and nineteen others (among them Thomas Lodge, author of *Rosalynde* and Edmund Bolton) were indicted at the London Sessions as recusants, and in the course of the next year and a half he made four appearances before the London Consistory Court on the same charges. Yet he appears to have entirely escaped the heavy penalties suffered by his fellow recusants.

In the autumn of 1605, about September, Jonson was again in prison with Chapman and Marston—joint authors with himself of the play *Eastward Ho*—for rude things said about the Scots which gave offence to the Scottish King, James I. He and his companions were said to be in danger of losing their ears and having their noses slit. Obviously he was in a serious position with this fresh crime added to his liability to the penalties of treason. From prison he wrote letters to Cecil and others in high position protesting his innocence. Apparently he was released soon after, for on October 9, 1605, he is found as Robert Catesby's guest at a supper party given at a tavern in the Strand, just four weeks before the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot. Among the guests of Catesby there were—it should be noted—Thomas Winter and Francis Tresham and Lord Mordaunt. This is known from the report of one of Cecil's spies, for Catesby had been watched ever since the Essex insurrection in which he and some of his friends had been implicated.

What is the explanation of Jonson's presence at such a gathering? He did not belong to the same world as Catesby and his associates who were "gentlemen by name and blood." But he was pretty well known as a recusant. And why was he at liberty at all with such a record and with so much hanging over his head? It is impossible to doubt that he was there as a spy, and his subsequent conduct makes it quite certain. On November 7, two days after the arrest of Fawkes, and before Catesby and the others had been rounded up, Jonson was sent for by the Privy Council on the advice of Salisbury (Robert Cecil) who knew of him. "The proceedings follow—

ing discovery of the Plot incidentally show (says the *D.N.B.*) that he now possessed the full confidence of the Government." He was charged by the Council "to invite confidences from Catholic priests," and he was issued with a warrant from the Council offering safe conduct to "a certaine prieste that offered to do good service to the State." No such priest was ever found; but Jonson endeavoured to get into contact with the chaplain to the Venetian Ambassador who, he evidently imagined, could put him in touch with priests who were in hiding; but the Ambassador's chaplain also could not be found. "One hardly likes to conjecture it," says A. W. Ward (*Ency. Brit.*, 9th edition), "to have been some tampering with the secrets of confession." That is very obviously what it was, and that is the equally obvious reason for Dryden's indignation and contempt.

Jonson's mission was a failure. No priests came out of hiding to be "negotiated with," and Jonson reported his failure to Salisbury a few days later. In his letter he vents his annoyance by declaring, quite gratuitously, that "they were all enweaved in it, that it will make five hundred gentlemen less of the religion within this week, if they carry their understanding about with them." (*Ency. Brit.*, 9th edition.)

It is significant that when two Jesuit priests, Garnet and Oldcorne, subsequently arrested for alleged complicity in the Plot, were under examination, each was told (falsely) that the other had confessed and each was likewise told that "five hundred gentlemen" had already renounced Catholicism out of horror at the Plot—Jonson's phrase in his letter to the Council. Nobody who is acquainted with the period could entertain any doubts as to the meaning of these facts.

Nothing more is known of his spying activities, and in 1610 he openly reverted to the Established Church. Dryden quite certainly knew the whole story and that is what he means by: "a factious tool" and "they got a villain and we lost a fool." That is the man whose testimony to Shakspeare's authorship is the impregnable rock of the orthodox Stratfordian story.

The Second "Brains Trust"

The second "Brains Trust" was held on Saturday, December 8, 1945, and was even more successful. Despite the inclemency of the weather, the Trustees had an audience of twenty. The questions ranged over wider ground, and those who have been desirous of a more literary approach to Shakespearean problems had some measure of satisfaction. The two principal questions perhaps were the authorship of *The Tempest* and of *I Henry VI*, and the closely cognate question as to the amount of work in the First Folio attributable to Marlow.

The latter questions elicited different but not contradictory replies, Messrs. W. Kent and J. J. Dwyer both being firmly of opinion that Marlow was virtually the sole author of *I Henry VI* and part author of a good deal more of the first historical tetralogy.

With regard to *The Tempest*, Mr. P. Allen assigned that play without hesitation to Raleigh, giving a number of reasons for his opinion. His colleagues were mainly negative, being ready to prove by a great

variety of tests that it was obviously not by the author of *Hamlet*, without, however, committing themselves to a positive ascription. One of the speakers reminded the audience that the late J. T. Looney's *Shakespeare Identified* contains in an appendix an admirable discussion of this question, and he might well have drawn attention to Lytton Strachey's masterly essay, "Shakespeare's Final Period," a remarkable paper developing an argument that is of intense interest to Oxfordians. It is to be found in *Books and Characters*, 1922.

An equally difficult matter, raised as one of a series of "interrogatories," was the much-discussed question of "Shakespeare's Hand in the MS. Play of *Sir Thomas More*." This alone would have filled the whole time of the meeting, and those who answered were content to point out that basically it is a question of palæography, and that there is nothing under the sun so treacherous and uncertain as the identification of handwriting, as has been shown many a time in the Law Courts. Members of the Fellowship will recollect that six "hands" have been "discovered" in this M.S. play, that of Antony Munday and five others. The verdict of the late Dr. W. W. Greg, after long study, was as follows:

A is probably Chettle; B possibly Heywood; E certainly Dekker; and D is supposed to be Shakespeare. C has been identified as Kyd's, though Greg rejected this. A, B, D, and E are the authors of the parts written in their respective hands. But C transcribes B and edits D's "three pages" slightly. One short passage in C's handwriting may well have been copied from something written by D; it is very good and very Shakespearean in tone.

This is all very complicated and obviously beyond argument in the course of a "Brains Trust." Members who may be curious about the matter will remember that the attribution of "D" to Shakespeare was vigorously rejected by the late Canon Rendall, while those who are less interested in the character of the script of "Hand D" than in the language of that portion of the play will find a masterly examination and discussion of the whole problem in *Man's Unconquerable Mind* (London 1939), by the late Professor R. W. Chambers. Up to the time of his lamented death during the War, Dr. Chambers, who possessed both expert knowledge of the Tudor period and a splendid command of the whole range of English Literature was Quain Professor of English Literature in the University of London.

He demonstrates in the brilliant essay devoted to this problem the strong and striking parallelism between the thoughts and the language of Sir Thomas More's speech to the mutinous London mob and the famous Degree Speech in *Troilus and Cressida*, the Jack Cade passages in *Henry VI*, passages in *Julius Caesar* and so on; and had time permitted some notes of that discussion could have been read to the meeting.

There was much reason why Shakespeare (the real Shakespeare) should have been interested in Sir Thomas More, whose wit is known to all who read English literature. Everybody knows More's immortal reply to Coverdale: "Brevity is the soul of wit and the essence of retort."

At the meeting on January 26, Mr. J. J. Dwyer read a Paper entitled "Italian Art in the Plays and Poems." The text of the discourse was the famous reference to Giulio Romano in *The Winter's Tale*, and the writer stated his reasons for believing (1) that the long description in *Lucrece* of pictures of the Taking of Troy was the result of Oxford's familiarity with Romano's work in the Castello at Mantua, and, equally, the description of the horse in *Venus and Adonis*, a reflexion of the Sala dei Cavalli in the Palazzo dei Te; (2) that *Love's Labour's Lost* contains a direct allusion to another work of Giulio Romano; (3) that numerous passages (quoted in the paper) were references to Renaissance mythological pictures seen by Oxford during his Italian travels. These pictures had impressed him, and were recalled by direct allusions in the early plays and poems, which were probably written soon after his return to England.

OLD AND NEW

I lay down nothing. I suspend judgment. I weigh and consider.

Montaigne.

If a man will begin with certainties he shall end in doubts; but if he will be content to begin with doubts he shall end in certainties.

Bacon (*Advancement of Learning*).

Unsupported supposition should have no place in a biography.

B. M. Ward (*Life of Ed. de Vere*).

In dealing with works of art there is a very narrow space between commonsense and obtuseness, as there is between imagination and nonsense.

J. W. Mackail.

I am very little impressed by some of the arguments of the Baconians.

James Agate.

Oxfordians v. Baconians

A public Debate

As the result of a lecture on the Oxford authorship that I gave by request to one of the classes at the City Literary Institute, Miss Neill, B.A., an instructress at the Institute, organised a debate Oxfordians v. Baconians, for Saturday, December 15th, 1945, when an audience of about 150, largely composed of students, listened with rapt attention to Mr. Percy Allen, for Oxford, and to Mr. R. L. Eagle, for Bacon.

Mr. Allen rapidly and energetically outlined the Fellowship case with special emphasis on the Sonnets, the portraits, the importance of 1604 in connection with the Quartos, and the wealth of topical allusions with their characteristic Oxford background. He admitted that Bacon was almost certainly one of the group interested in the Shakespearean output, but maintained that Bacon made no literary contribution to it.

In his reply, Mr. Eagle admitted that some of the earlier plays were probably written by Oxford, but claimed that Bacon was the master mind responsible for the essential plays and all the poems,

and that the distinctive thoughts in them were Baconian thoughts. He considered the contemporary praise of Oxford was due to his rank, not to his ability. Mr. Eagle spoke at some length and read extracts from one of his own books on the compatibility of the same man writing Bacon's Essay on Love, and the Shakespearean *Romeo and Juliet*, a point on which Mr. Allen had expressed the opposite view. Mr. Eagle ended his opening speech with the announcement of the forthcoming publication of the whole of Bacon's Latin poetry, which would supply added proof of his ability to be "Shakespeare."

Question followed question with unabated eagerness until Miss Neill, an admirable chairman, was reluctantly compelled to close the meeting after 2½ hours of stimulating liveliness. No vote was taken.

It is 35 years since I studied the Bacon theory, only to return sadly to uneasy orthodoxy. I was, therefore, curious to hear the line taken by one of the most distinguished of modern Baconians, who, by the way, refused to be drawn into the question of cyphers. I noted that he made no real attempt to combat the precise main points of Mr. Allen's case, although a far-fetched interpretation of the "Canopy" Sonnet (CXXV.), aimed at destroying its plain Oxford origin, was interesting. Time was admittedly short, but Mr. Eagle devoted nearly half of it to minor points. His major points seemed to me far too vague. They had no reasonably well-defined "chapter and verse" to give them substance, and consequently did not carry conviction.

My faith in the Oxford authorship is unshaken.
T. L. A.

Elizabethan Plays and Players

By DR. G. B. HARRISON (Routledge 12/6, 1945).

As an authority upon Elizabethan literature and drama, Dr. Harrison has, probably, no superior in the world to-day, so far as documentary knowledge is concerned. He is extremely erudite, and is a

THE SHAKESPEARE FELLOWSHIP.

President: (Vacant).

Hon. Sec.: T. L. ADAMSON,
6 Upper Cavendish Avenue, Finchley, N.3.

Hon. Treas.: J. J. DWYER,
88 Kings Court Road, London, S.W.16.

Editor of News-Letter:
J. J. DWYER (Streatham 0248).

The Hon. Editor is always glad to receive MSS. newspaper-cuttings, letters, suggestions, etc., for publication, and he counts upon the active co-operation of members. Articles should if possible be typewritten. It is requested that subscriptions (10s. per annum) be sent to the Hon. Treasurer and *not* to the other officials.

master of the effective wielding of scissors and paste; his style is downright and uncompromising, and lit, occasionally—as also are his lectures—by a grim, somewhat lurid, humour. Dr. Harrison is wholly free from sentiment, and has no use for the goody-goody commentators of the 19th century, such as Sir Adolphus Ward, who is his pet aversion. There is little in this, his latest, work which is new; but there is very much that is interesting; and no careful reader can leave this book without having in his mind's eye a vivid picture of theatrical England, during the second half of the 16th century.

The lives—and sometimes the deaths—of Lyly, Greene, Marlowe, and others, are realistically handled; and so also are the fortunes of the players, the Chamberlain's men—Shakespeare's company—and their rivals at the Rose, the Admiral's men, headed by Edward Alleyn. Ben Jonson and his plays, the boy-players, Henslowe and his Diary, the Globe, and other theatres, come also into the picture, as also does the stage-war at the close of the century. Here is an excellently compiled, and very readable, book of reference for orthodox students of the period.

When, however, we come to consider *Elizabethan Plays and Players* from an Oxfordian view-point, we cannot conscientiously give it such high praise. Dr. Harrison's uncompromising orthodoxy, combined with a regrettable lack of sympathetic imagination, have blinded him to the inner significance of much that is staring him in the face. When, for example, he is discussing the pitiable close of Greene's unhappy life, he writes (p. 104): "Early in August [1592] he [Greene] and Thomas Nashe and one *Will Monox* (ital. mine) met together and gorged themselves on pickled herrings and Rhenish wine." True! But who was "one Will Monox"? Our author has, I think, failed to observe that *Will Monox* spells "*Willm. Oxon*"; and, further, Dr. Harrison has neglected to supply Nashe's significant words, in *Strange News*, concerning that same *Monox*: "Hast thou never heard of him and his *great dagger*?" (ital. mine). Is it not obvious that—not forgetting the Vere pun—*Willm. Oxon*, with the "great dagger," or "spear," means either Oxford—whose great dagger is thus the Lord Great Chamberlain's sword of state—or else William Shakespeare, of Stratford-on-Avon, who was Oxford's mask?

Dr. Harrison, moreover, in common with other Stratfordians, is all at sea with his dramatic chronology. For instance, he writes (p. 128): "When the playhouses again opened (after the plagues of 1593-94) the only writer of any standing was the new playwright William Shakespeare"; the demonstrable fact being, nevertheless, that William Shakespeare was *not* a new playwright, but an established one, who, under a pseudonym, had been writing plays for ten years or more. Dr. Harrison, for obvious reasons, ignores the writings of Admiral Holland and of Dr. Cairncross (a Stratfordian!), who, though by differing approaches, have both proved conclusively that *Hamlet* was written by "Shakespeare" during the 1580s, and we are told, instead, of "a pre-Shakespearean *Hamlet*," which, we may be quite certain, never existed. We are further told (p. 145) that, "by this time" (1597) "Shakespeare" had written, besides

Love's Labour's Lost, "the three parts of *Henry VI.*, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *Titus Andronicus*." This is true, so far as it goes; but Dr. Harrison does not add, as he well might, that many modern commentators, including the present reviewer, would give to "Shakespeare" only a part-hand in *Henry VI* and *The Shrew*, and no hand at all in *Andronicus*; this last monstrosity being nothing else than a kind of tragic burlesque of *Midsummer Night's Dream*—a trick which "Shakespeare"—whoever he may have been—would never have played upon his own exquisite fairy play. On p. 146 I read: "If the young Shakespeare ever wrote anything, it has disappeared!" Has it indeed?

This fine scholar, nevertheless, is beginning, at last, to understand—though most of it escapes him—that Elizabethan drama contains "far more personality than has been realized"; but it was not until I reached his comments upon the topical-satirical comedies of Chapman and Jonson, *A Humorous Day's Mirth*, and *Every Man Out of His Humour*, that one could see how completely he had failed to comprehend that the first of these plays is largely a satire upon *Love's Labour's Lost*—which attacks Chapman—while the second is aimed mainly at *Twelfth Night*, which was evidently then very popular: Puntarvolo in *Every Man Out* is Oxford himself. Nor has Dr. Harrison perceived that Lord Oxford is the original of *Verone** in Chapman's play, though the pun and the allusion are transparent to a careful reader.

We are also told that Sir Sidney Lee's identification of Virgil—in Jonson's *Poetaster*—with "Shakespeare" is "nonsense." Lee certainly wrote much nonsense about Shakespeare, but I have no doubt that he is, in this instance, quite correct. There is the usual *Ver* pun, as in *Verone*, and the comments upon Virgil by other characters in the play seem, unquestionably, to be aimed at the sonnets, as well as at the Shakespearean plays. Concerning Dr. Harrison's note on p. 69, I might add that *Christopher Marlowe*, by John Bakeless, is *not* the latest survey of Marlowe's life. The excellent book by Dr. F. S. Boas (Clarendon Press, 1940) is several years later—and much better.

It is as an *interpreter* that Dr. Harrison goes so far, and so frequently, astray. As a *chronicler* he is admirable; and it is upon a note of admiration for his assiduity and ability, along those lines of endeavour, that I would conclude this brief review.

P.A.

The Fictitious Shakespeare Exposed

This book, by a member of the Bacon Society, Edward D. Johnson, has been brought into well-deserved prominence by Mr. James Agate in the *Sunday Times*. It traverses the so-called biographies of Shakspere of Stratford by the late Sir Sidney Lee even more thoroughly than Sir George Greenwood. Mr. Johnson lists a hundred mere possibilities and

*Lemot (the word) in the same play (*Day's Mirth*) is also Oxford—"Every word doth almost tell my name"—and both *Verone* and *Lemot* contain the Oxford initials, E.O.

conjectures introduced by "doubtless" and "probably," and notes flat contradictions, notably in Lee's theory about the sonnets. Perhaps the most amazing statement of the latter is the following: "The news of Shakespeare's death reached London after the dramatist had been laid to rest amid his own people at Stratford. But men of letters raised a cry of regret that his ashes had not joined those of Chaucer, Spenser and Beaumont in Westminster Abbey." Mr. Johnson is justified in saying that this was "a deliberate and calculated lie." The book, equally valuable to Baconians and Oxfordians, can be obtained for 3/9 from Hon. Sec., Bacon Society, Thatched Cottage, Knowle Hill, Virginia Water, Surrey.

W.K.

Mr. William Kent has published the fourth edition of his booklet on the last galleried inn in London, "The George," Southwark. Amongst the illustrations are two of performances of *Hamlet* and *Romeo and Juliet* in the courtyard. In a Foreword Mr Kent has written:

"I am no longer able to support the mayors of Southwark in their annual claim that our greatest English writer was one of its worthies. I have little doubt that William Shakspeare, of Stratford-on-Avon, resided in the district, but I regard the ascription of the authorship of the plays to him as a myth. I believe that the master mind behind them was that of Edward De Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford, and that he was assisted by William Stanley, the 6th Earl of Derby, his son-in-law, and the great Francis Bacon. This is no place to argue the point. Some years ago I challenged Canon Stevens, who so energetically and enthusiastically conducts a large party round Bankside on Shakespeare Day, to debate the issue, but with no result. I throw down the gauntlet to anybody else to pick up, and I offer my opponent the gate money. I am pleased to recall that from 1930 to 1939 inclusive I conducted my own party on the occasion of the annual celebration. As a prologue to the last three rambles I candidly confessed my heresies. The parties suffered no decline in numbers, and so as I know I lost no friends through my candour."

The booklet can be obtained from the author (71 Union Road, S.W.4) for a shilling.

Shakespeare and Contemporary Plays

By REAR-ADMIRAL H. H. HOLLAND, C.B.

I will start with the advent of Lyly, though before that there are short references to four earlier plays, in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Merchant of Venice*, and *Love's Labour's Lost*.

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING (1581)

Probably about 1580 Lyly wrote *Alexander and Campaspe*. In it Alexander wishes to find out if Apelles (who is painting Campaspe's portrait) is in love with her. So he starts a scare, that Apelles' studio is on fire, to see how the painter will react to

the possibility of the portrait being burnt.

In *Much Ado*, Beatrice, on being asked if Benedick is not in her books, replies: "No! an he were I would burn my study." "Books" is generally accepted as meaning "tables"; and these—*vide King John*:—

Drawn in the flattering table of her eye,
and sonnet 24:—

Mine eye hath played the painter; and hath steeled
Thy beauty's form in table of my heart—
were clearly used for painting. Beatrice's reply refers to the above incident, and means that, not loving Benedick, she would not only not mind if her study were burnt, but would burn it herself, if his portrait were found there.

ROMEO AND JULIET (1582).

About 1581 a play, now lost, was written called *Cupid and Psyche*. It is referred to by Gosson in 1582, and was probably by Lyly, as there is a reference to it in *Sapho and Phao*, and Lyly was in the habit of making connecting links for his plays about Cupid. The play would presumably be about Cupid's disguise as a monster. In *Romeo and Juliet*, Benvolio says:—

We'll have no Cupid hoodwinked with a scarf
... scaring the ladies like a crow-keeper.

THE WINTER'S TALE (1584-85).

In *Sapho and Phao* (1583) there is an exercise in logic which ends as follows:—

Therefore art thou the *devil*.

I deny that.

It is the *conclusion*, thou must not deny it.

In *The Winter's Tale*, Hermione, on Polixenes making excuses for having "tripped," he says:—

"Of this make no *conclusion*, lest you say your Queen and I are devils." In Peele's *Arraignment of Paris* (1583), the first scene is one where Flora presides over a meeting of the "Country Gods," as they are described, viz., Pan, Faunus, Silvanus, and Pomona.† Florizel, in *Winter's Tale* (iv.4.1), compares Perdita to
Flora

Peering in April's front. This your sheep-
shearing

Is as a meeting of the petty gods,†

And you the Queen on't.

Edward I was a play by Peele; nothing is known as to when it was written, but its strong anti-Spanish propaganda makes 1584 a plausible date. It is an atrocious libel on Queen Eleanor, accusing her, amongst other crimes, of faithlessness to her husband. Hermione—obviously, I think, referring to this play or one of a similar nature—says (iii.2.34):—

My past life hath been as continent, as chaste,
as true, as I am now unhappy, which is more than
history can pattern, though *devised* and *played* to
take spectators.

In one part of the play Eleanor increases a subscription of ten thousand pounds to a hundred thousand, by adding a cipher; and so we find Hermione saying:—

and therefore like a cipher.

* *Beatrice to Messenger*: 1.1.80.

† The "petty" or "country" gods are the four mentioned above.

Yet standing in rich place I multiply
With one "We thank you!" many thousands more
That go before it.

TWELFTH NIGHT (1587-88).

The day of the next play, Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy* is also unknown, except that it was written between 1584 and 1589. In it the King's niece is in love with Horatio, a commoner, while her brother wishes her to marry the son of the Viceroy of Portugal. To prevent her being "so meanly accompanied," he hangs her lover in an arbour. In *Twelfth Night* (1.5.) the Clown says, "Many a good hanging prevents a bad marriage." Again, the public hangman says to his victim, "Thou art the merriest piece of man's flesh that ever ground at my door!" And so we find the clown saying to Maria (1.5.):—

"Thou wert as witty a piece of Eve's flesh as any in Illyria"—a remark which, with the other one in mind, is, by implication, a subtle "tu quoque" to Maria's, "my lady will hang thee."

Lyly's *Galathea* is thought to have been acted at court on January 1, 1588. In it, where two girls are disguised as boys, one says:—

"My father had but one daughter, and therefore I could have no sister"—thereby confessing her sex. So Viola, also disguised as a boy, says to Orsino, "I am all the daughters of my father's house"—also a confession of her sex, though Orsino does not recognise it as such. In the same play we find:—

The Ram governs the head, then the Bull for the throat, Capricornus for the knees. While in *Twelfth Night* (1.3.) we have: "Taurus, that's sides and hearts." "No Sir, it is legs and thighs!"

In a previous News-Letter I pointed out three incidents from *Tamburlaine* referred to in *Twelfth Night*, viz., his terrifying colours, his prisoners brought on in a cage, and the kings bitted to his chariot.

(To be concluded.)

The Shakespeare Monument

Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-on-Avon.

By J. Shera Atkinson

At a recent meeting of the Shakespeare Fellowship reference was made to the extraordinary discrepancies between the Monument as it now exists and certain early engravings purporting to show it as it was when they were made.

Members may be interested in the following very condensed notes by the writer who has given some time to the study of the facts and to the literature on the subject. Considerations of space and cost unfortunately make it impracticable to reproduce any of the engravings or a photograph of the Monument.

The representation of the Monument (1), about which most of the discussion has ranged, is the one in Dugdale's "Antiquities of Warwickshire," pub-

lished 1656, and the less well-known one by Vander-gucht in Rowe's edition of Shakespeare of 1709.

The best and fullest examination of the questions raised by them is that by M. H. Spielmann in "The Title Page of the First Folio of Shakespeare's Plays" (1924), which is profusely illustrated by photographs of the Monument and photographic copies of all the early engravings of it, including those just mentioned. Spielmann does not, however, deal with the important points arising on Dugdale's "copy" of the inscription on the Monument.

Sir Edmond Chambers on pp. 181-185 of Vol. II of his "William Shakespeare" (1930) summarises the position with a fair degree of accuracy, though in a somewhat too hesitating manner and without giving the detailed arguments, as Spielmann does, whereas Mrs. Stopes' theory, as set out in her "Shakespeare's Environment," is completely unacceptable, as will be shown.

These are the actual facts which, in the opinion of the present writer, emerge beyond all question on examination of the whole of the evidence:—

1. The Monument as it exists now is the one originally erected some time between the death (in 1616) and 1622. No material changes were made when John Hall repaired it in 1748. John Hall's painting (made before the alleged reconstruction in 1748) shows the Monument fairly accurately as originally erected and as it is now.
2. Dugdale's drawing is demonstrably a hopelessly careless piece of work, and a mere caricature of what the draughtsman purported to portray.
3. Vandergucht's drawing was merely "miscopied" from Dugdale's and was not a drawing made independently from the Monument.

We know that Dugdale and his assistants were careless and inaccurate. In this they were no better and no worse than was customary, as many contemporary instances show. Thus Dugdale's drawing of the Clopton Monument (also in Holy Trinity, Stratford), contains several considerable blunders. For instance, the helmet, on which the knight's head rests and which is carved out of one piece of alabaster with the figure, has its crown towards the side of the tomb instead of inwards, towards his lady's head. That drawing is rather a diagram giving a vague idea of the Monument and its effigies than even a moderately good representation. The drawing of the Carew Monument (in the same Church) is even more careless. The Monument has the heads of the figures to the left, with the lady outside, but in the drawing they face the other direc-

(1) Illustrations of the Monument at Stratford-on-Avon are to be found in scores of books about Shakespeare. A reproduction of the engraving in Dugdale's "History of the Antiquities of Warwickshire" (1656) appears as frontispiece to Miss Elsie Greenwood's Condensed Edition of *The Shakespeare Problem Restated* by the late Sir George Greenwood. Both versions are shown in *Shakespeare, Bacon and the Great Unknown* by the late Andrew Lang. This amusing book also gives the Carew Monument in Stratford Church as it is, and as it was represented in Dugdale's *Antiquities of Warwickshire*, 1656.

tion, and the knight is outside; while the side pillars of the Monument are surmounted by figures; those of the drawing have elongated pinnacles or spires: the panels within the "archway" of the Monument are three in number, while in the drawing there are two only, of differing shapes.

It is clear that only rough and inadequate notes and sketches of all the monuments in question were made on the spot and the actual drawings were made sometime afterwards.

Spielmann shows a number of other contemporary illustrations of the carelessness with which engravings of statues, monuments, etc., were prepared. That the object should be accurately portrayed does not seem to have entered the mind of the draughtsman. The draughtsmanship was moreover frequently poor: proportions were often wrong and the perspective frequently distorted.

The more grotesque features in the drawing and the engraving of the bust (which forms the main feature of the Shakespeare Monument) are errors of draughtsmanship—errors of an unskilled "artist" trying to portray (in two dimensions) mainly from memory the appearance of a three dimensional object—a piece of sculpture. The shoulders appear dislocated: the elbows are right forward, so that the hands appear to be pressing a sack (of, presumably, wool) hard against the stomach of the figure. In the bust itself the arms hang naturally with elbows back and the hands rest relaxed on a tasselled cushion. The face and figure in the drawing are emaciated, the face being bearded and quite unlike the present one: there is no gown over the figure's ill-fitting and clumsy doublet. The two naked cherubs, which, in the Monument, sit securely on stone mounds, each carved in one piece with the figure, are placed well back against the urn or casket which surmounts the Monument. In the drawing, the mounds are omitted and the figures are perched precariously on the edges of the cornice with their legs hanging down: in a way no mason or sculptor would dream of placing them.

The Monument is on the chancel wall several feet from the ground resting on three shaped stone brackets let into the wall. The Dugdale drawing shows it resting on the ground, supported by two stone feet in front with one at the back, in the centre.

Vandergucht reproduces in his drawing all the above features of Dugdale's drawing, but gives the figure a head quite different from Dugdale's and from the one on the monument, and spreads the two Latin lines of the inscription over the entire tablet below the figure. The lines on the tablet of the Monument (two in Latin, beginning "Judicio Pylum," six in English beginning "Stay passenger," with at the end the date of death and age in Latin) are given by Dugdale at the side of his drawing since the latter was on too small a scale to show them clearly. They differ from the lines as they now appear, not only in spelling, but also in the fact that on the Monument the whole inscription is in capi-

tals, while Dugdale gives only initial letters of lines and proper names in capitals. Those who have argued that the lines were originally as he gives them and were recut by Hall in 1748 have failed to observe that the orthography on the tablet is older than that in Dugdale's "copy": in other words, he did not bother to reproduce archaisms and used the spelling current in his time. One cannot believe that if the spelling Dugdale gave were the original, Hall in 1748 would have recut the lettering in older form. Thus the Monument uses the letter V for U throughout, while Dugdale uses the U: PLAST on the monument is given by Dugdale as "plact": DIDE as "dyed": S and T* become "this" and "that": WITT becomes "wit." He gives "sith" in place of the SIEH on the Monument, which is generally regarded as a slip by the mason.

There is no sign whatever on the Monument of the alleged recutting. Mrs. Stopes' suggestion in her "Shakespeare's Environment" that the 1748 repairs built up the figure somehow either by skilfully inserted pieces of stone or by some plastic material, plumping out the hollow cheeks, filling up the sunken eyes, etc., is childish absurd. It does not need a sculptor to know that a sculptured figure cannot be "built up upon" in that way. How, too, could the gown be added in that way, and the arms altered to a natural position? After nearly 200 years, even if the suggested work had been possible, some sign of the building up would have become apparent: but there is none.

The entire fund available for the repair in 1748 was £12 10s. 0d.: those in charge were determined that Hall should be tied down to making the Monument "as like as possible to what it was when first erected." Even if Mrs. Stopes' "programme" had been feasible, that sum would have been completely inadequate to cover such elaborate work.

Sir George Greenwood's suggestion ("The Stratford Bust and Droeshout Engraving," 1925) that a new bust was substituted in 1748, would also be ruled out by the consideration of cost, and there is no evidence in support of it.

It is not easy to imagine the bust as we have it as a faithful portrait of the genius who gave the world the plays and sonnets of William Shakespeare: even some orthodox Stratfordians reject it. But to accept Dugdale's drawing—a face "narrow and melancholy, more like that of a tailor than of a humorist," as Sir Edmund Chambers puts it—apparently demands more credulity than even the orthodox can muster. To those who have accepted the evidence, which to most who have fully studied it is convincing, that the Stratford William Shaksper was a mask only, and was not the author, it is of secondary importance whether he was cadaverous, ill-dressed, and looked like a tailor (rather than a maltster!) or whether he was portly, prosperous and well-dressed, as the Bust now shows him.

* The "Y" in these abbreviations, of course, represents the obsolete double letter called "thorn" and pronounced "th."