

# The Shakespeare Fellowship News-Letter

SEPTEMBER 1949

## NOTICES

The Annual General Meeting of the Fellowship will be held at the Poetry Society's Room, 33 Portman Square, on Saturday, 1st October, at 3 p.m. A special item for discussion will be the arrangements for the celebration of the four hundredth anniversary of the birth of our "Shakespeare."

As the programme is being printed, to save trouble and expense—which the Fellowship can ill afford—monthly reminders of meetings will be discontinued. Will members please diary the dates.

It is particularly desirable to have a large attendance at the City Literary Institute on Saturday, 15th October, at 3 p.m., when there will be a debate between Mr. Wm. Kent, F.S.A., and Mrs. Helena Normanton, K.C., who will defend the orthodox theory of authorship. Mrs. Normanton kindly volunteered in response to an advertisement in *The Times* asking for a champion of the Stratfordian case.

## EDITORIAL NOTES

### PHYSICIAN HEAL THYSELF

The American writer, Bergen Evans, in 1948 produced a fascinating and most informing book entitled *The Natural History of Nonsense*. His shafts of wit sharply assail superstition after superstition—e.g. those about flying fishes, wolf-suckled babes, and a rabbit-producing woman. On the title page is a quotation from *King Lear* :

"Truth's a dog must to kennel; he must be whipped out, when Lady the brach may stand by the fire and stink."

He himself writes :

"Most of what is called thinking—even up to and including much of what goes on in the brains of college faculties—is actually a seeking for confirmation of previous convictions. The true scientific spirit that leads men to be particularly suspicious of all beliefs they hold dear is utterly incomprehensible to most people. To the naïve, scepticism often seems malicious perversity: only 'some secret enemy in the inward degenerate nature of man,' said Topsell, 'could lead anyone to doubt the existence of the unicorn.'"

How applicable this is to the professors of literature and their attitude to the authorship of the Shakespeare plays, e.g. Dr. Ifor Evans, writing that any unprejudiced person must believe that the man of

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Stratford wrote them, but not willing to maintain his position against any oppugner. "Nothing is more vital than error," writes Bergen Evans. "Controversies rarely if ever die. They merely sink beneath the surface of literate attention and continue a submerged existence in the dark unfathomed caves of the popular mind."

After all this no reader will be surprised that it occurred to the Editor that here was good ground for sowing the seeds of Shakespearean heresy. He sent Mr. Bergen Evans a copy of the pamphlet, and expressed a hope that some day he might find time to attack literary nonsense. No reply was forthcoming. Later an American correspondent informed the Editor that one of her compatriots who was an Oxfordian had endeavoured to interest Mr. Bergen Evans in her and our theory of the authorship of the "Shakespeare" plays. His reply was that he would never read a book by a man named Looney!

Could banality be more banal in a man of intellectual pretensions? Perhaps he would not see *The Importance of Being Earnest* because it was written by a Wild man. Yet this same Bergen Evans says: "The three great strategies for obscuring an issue are to introduce irrelevancies, to arouse prejudice, and to *excite ridicule*." When you are barren of arguments hide it with a joke! There is one allusion to Shakespeare heretics. "The theory that Bacon wrote Shakespeare... make their narrators seem very learned without putting them to the trouble of having to acquire knowledge." It is safe to say that Mr. Bergen Evans knows nothing of the Oxfordian, if anything of the Baconian case, and on literary matters is as gullible as some of those he attacks for credulity in other things. His opening sentences are as follows :

"We may be through with the past, but the past is not through with us. Ideas of the Stone Age exist side by side with the latest scientific thought. Only a fraction of mankind has emerged from the Dark Ages and in the most lucid brains, as Logan Pearsall Smith has said, we come upon 'nests of woolly caterpillars.'"

Yet Mr. Bergen Evans, without any enquiry, is prepared to believe that he is right up to date as regards Shakespeare. Should he not include his own brain as a possible repository for "woolly caterpillars"?

### A WINTER'S CAMPAIGN

During the winter 1948-49 the Editor of the *News Letter* lectured ten times on the subject "Who was Shakespeare?" Five of his engagements were at

libraries of the Wandsworth Borough Council. Great interest was shown and hardly any hostility. One gentleman at Clapham Library revealed the political trend of his mind by asking if a peer ever did anything great and kept it to himself? The answer was in the negative now, but the affirmative in Elizabethan times. There is a story relating to the late Sir Stanley Jackson that, after his success at cricket for Harrow against Eton, he said he was glad of it as it would give his lordly father a leg up! For a peer to play cricket in the Victorian era no excuse was needed, but if one in the days of good Queen Bess had been known to write for the "common players," it would have meant a kick down!

In each of the five lectures the chairman was a member of the Libraries Committee. It was revealed that, not surprisingly, there had been a lack of unanimity as to the propriety of fathering lectures which contradicted the teaching in schools. It appeared, however, that all the chairmen were gratified by the success of the experiment. On each evening questions kept the Editor in the hall to the utmost limit of time.

The largest audience—it exceeded a hundred—was at the Nottingham Cosmopolitan Society. Here one convert was at once made. In the discussion another man, evidently well versed in the stock arguments for Stratford, delivered himself of various animadversions upon the lecture, and the Editor suggested a debate under the auspices of the Nottingham Playgoers Club. The latter had previously lectured there and the chairman was a member. A pamphlet was purchased by the would-be orthodox champion. A few days later Mr. L. R. Fletcher wrote the Editor as follows:

"You may remember me as the rash young man who had a go at you in the Nottingham Cosmo. Since then I have studied your pamphlet and carefully thought over the points you raised in your address; and I must confess that I have been shaken in my rather naive belief that the man of Stratford was, in fact, the author of the plays.

We cling to our illusions even more tenaciously than to our convictions. The William Shakespeare of legend who has been with me since childhood, will not be driven completely out of my mind without further study."

A second letter announced complete conversion.

"I shall be returning *Seven Shakespeares* to you within the next two days. I kept it longer than I intended, for I found it so fascinating a survey of the whole problem that I had to go through it with a tooth-comb again and build up a pile of notes as a guide to further study.

Anyway, you win—hands down. The evidence you have provided has finally dissolved the Stratford Monument as far as I am concerned. . . . As far as time and work permits, I shall be beating my little kettledrum for Oxford wherever I can."

Subsequently Mr. Fletcher had letters in the *Observer* and *Radio Times*. In the latter he suggested a discussion over the air between the Editor of the

*News-Letter* and Mr. Ivor Brown. The Editor informed Mr. Fletcher that he had vainly endeavoured to get Mr. Brown to fight so that, if the B.B.C. was willing, he might decline the challenge.

Another successful meeting—attendance about a hundred—was at Conway Hall. Marjorie Bowen presided, and made an effective speech in support. A long report appeared in *The Record*, the organ of Conway Hall.

These lectures led to the sale of about seventy copies of the pamphlet.

The most unsatisfactory meeting was at John o' London's Literary Circle. Here the discussion was almost entirely confined to two individuals. One was a retired school teacher, perhaps the most hopeless to convince. It is beyond human nature to believe that what you have taught boys for forty years is wrong. He offered the Abracadabra word Genius as the solution of difficulties. Asked if he thought a genius could learn a language without a grammar and geography without maps, he had no reply. The other critic was the secretary of the Shaw Society. He had the audacity to say that it was no more difficult to understand Shakspeare of Stratford writing the plays than Bernard Shaw, a Dublin clerk, writing his. This, too, from a librarian who might be supposed to know the difference between cultural conditions in the Elizabethan and Victorian eras. Of course, both critics declined proffered debate.

In this number are contributions from one of our oldest members, Lieut.-Colonel Douglas, and one of our newest, Major Hunter.

In the next issue there will be, in addition to special items connected with the quartercentenary of Edward De Vere's birth, reports of the lecture by Mr. Percy Allen on *Much Ado About Nothing*, and by the late Sir Henry Lawrence—on the Countess of Pembroke.

The Editor of *Truth* published an article by the present Editor entitled "Shakespeare: My War with the Professors." A copy will be sent to any reader on application. In the issue of 15th July, Lieut.-Colonel Douglas had a letter on *Hamlet*, drawing comparisons between Polonius and Burghley.

## "THE BIRTHPLACE"

The origin of Henry James's story is given by Ernest Rhys (*Everyman Remembers*, 1931). Referring to a poet named Joseph Skipsey, Rhys says:

"Strangest episode of all, the Burne Joneses and other friends got him elected—unlucky choice as it proved!—to the post of custodian at Shakespeare's birthplace, Stratford-on-Avon. He was quite unfitted for it by his candour and his Doric dialect. He could have said with Shakespeare's Percy:

By God I cannot flatter; I do defy  
The tongues of soothers.

He only kept the post a few months. Henry James may have heard of the Stratford fiasco from

the Burne-Joneses, for he adopted the motive for a prose comedy . . . which he called *The Birthplace*. The hero is not the least bit like Skipsey, who suffered extremely in the post. He could not dissemble and play the showman's part or produce a hair of the Great Cham out of his waistcoat pocket. At times he was even rude to the inquisitive tormentors who put silly questions."

Rhys went too far in saying that James's Morris Gedge is not in the least like Skipsey, as until the end he displays great squeamishness about the story he is expected to tell. Surprisingly, however, we leave him reconciled to the necessity of furthering the fables. Henry James, in his preface to *The Birthplace*, was less explicit.

"A good intelligent man rather recently appointed to the care of a great place of pilgrimage, a shrine sacred to the piety and curiosity of the whole English-speaking race, and haunted by other persons as well; who, coming to his office with infinite zest, had after a while desperately thrown it up—as a climax to his struggle, some time prolonged, with 'the awful nonsense he found himself expected and paid and thence quite obliged to talk.'"

In the story Gedge succeeds two ladies named Putchin. The following are extracts:

"I don't, my dear, question anything, but if I should do so it would be precisely because of the greater advantage constituted for the Putchins by the simplicity of their spirit. They were kept straight by the quality of their ignorance—which was denser even than mine. It was a mistake in us from the first to have attempted to correct or to disguise ours. We should have waited simply to become good parrots, to learn our lesson—all on the spot here—so little of it is wanted—and squawk it off."

"Ah, 'squawk,' love, what a word to use about him.' 'It isn't about him. Nothing's about him. None of them care twopence about him. The only thing they care about is this empty shell—or rather, for it isn't empty, the extraneous preposterous stuffing of it."

"In the birth-room there, when I look in late, I often put out my light. That makes it better." 'Makes what?' 'Everything.' 'What is it that you see in the dark?' 'Nothing,' said Morris Gedge."

"Patience was needed for the particular feature of the ordeal that, by the time the lively season was with them again, had disengaged itself as the sharpest—the immense assumption of veracities and sanctities of the general soundness of the legend with which everyone arrived. He was well provided, certainly, for meeting it, and he gave all he had, yet he had sometimes the sense of a vague resentment on the part of his pilgrims at his not ladling out their fare with a bigger spoon.

"He was on his way to become two quite different persons. the public and the private, as to which it would somehow have to be managed that those persons should live together. He was splitting into halves unmistakably . . . one of the halves, or perhaps

even, since the split promised to be rather unequal one of the quarters, was the keeper, the showman, the priest of the idol; the other piece was the poor unsuccessful honest man he had always been."

"What they all most wanted was to feel that everything was just as it was: only the shock of having to part with that vision was greater than any individual could bear unsupported. The bad moments were upstairs in the birth-room, for here the forces pressing on the very edge assumed a dire intensity. The mere expression of eye, all-credulous, omnivorous and fairly moistening in the act, with which many persons gazed about, might eventually make it difficult for him to remain fairly civil."

"This was the greater complication that, with the return of the Spring and the increase of the public, her [his wife's] services were more required. She took the field with him from an early hour; she was present with the party above while he kept an eye, and still more an ear, on the party below; and how could he know, he asked himself, what she might say to them and what she might suffer them to say—or in other words, poor wretches, to believe—while removed from his control? Some day or other, and before too long, he couldn't but think he must have the matter out with her—the matter, namely, of the morality of their position. The morality of women was special—he was getting lights on that. Isobel's conception of her office was to cherish and enrich the legend. It was already, the legend, very taking, but what was she there for but to make it so? She certainly wasn't there to chill any natural piety. If it was all in the air—all in their 'eye' as the vulgar might say—that He had been born in the Birthroom, where was the value of the sixpences they took? Where the equivalent they had engaged to supply? 'Oh, dear yes—just about *here*;' and she must tap the place with her foot. Altered? Oh dear, no—save in a few trifling particulars. You see the place—and isn't that just the charm of it?—quite as *He* saw it. Very poor and homely, no doubt; but that's just what is so wonderful.' He didn't want to hear her, and yet he didn't want to give her her head; he didn't want to make difficulties and to snatch the bread from her mouth."

"We mustn't, you know, go *too far*' . . . 'Too far for what?'

'To save our immortal souls.' 'We mustn't, love, tell too many lies . . . You know we don't know anything about it.' And then, as she stared, flushing: 'About his having been born up there. About anything really. Not the least little scrap that could weigh in any other connection as evidence. So don't rub it in so.'

'Rub it in how?'

'That He was born—'

But at sight of her face he only sighed. 'Oh dear, oh dear!'

'Don't you think,' she replied cuttingly, 'that He was born anywhere?'

He hesitated—it was such an edifice to shake. 'Well, we don't know. There's very little to know. He covered *His* tracks as no other human being has ever done.'

" 'Couldn't we adopt a slightly more discreet method? What we can say is that things have been said; that is all we have to do with.' 'And is this really'—when they jam their umbrellas into the floor—the very spot where he was born?'—'So it has from a long time back been described as being.' 'Couldn't one meet them, to be decent a little, in some such way as that?' 'Do you consider it is all a fraud?' 'Well, I grant you there was somebody. But the details are nought. The links are missing. The evidence—in particular about that room upstairs, in itself our *Casa Santa*—is nil. It was so awfully long ago.'"

" 'I decline to let the place down,' and what was there indeed to say? They were there to keep it up."

" Since the least breath of discrimination would get him the sack without mercy, it was absurd, he reflected, to speak of his discomfort as light. He was gagged, he was goaded, as in omnivorous companies he doubtless sometimes showed by a strange silent-glare. They'd get him the sack for that as well if he didn't look out; therefore wasn't it in effect ferocity when you mightn't even hold your tongue? They wouldn't let you off with silence—they insisted on your committing yourself. It was the pound of flesh. They would have it."

" An American and His Wife arrive. The former says :

' The whole thing became a sort of stiff smug convention—like a dressed-up sacred doll in a Spanish church—which you're a monster if you touch.' 'A monster.' Gedge assented, meeting his eyes.

The young man smiled but he thought, looking at him a little harder : ' A blasphemer.'

' A blasphemer.'

" The man says :

' He escapes us like a thief at night, carrying off—well, carrying off everything. And people pretend to catch Him like a flown canary, over whom you can close your hand and put him back in the cage...'

" 'And don't They want also to see where He had his dinner and where He had His tea?' 'They want everything,' said Morris Gedge. 'They want to see where he hung up his hat and where He kept His boots and where His mother boiled her pot.'"

" The look to be worn at the birthplace was properly the beatific, and when once it had fairly been missed by those who took it for granted, who indeed paid sixpence for it—like the table wine in Provincial France it was *compris*—one would be sure to have news of the remark."

Gedge owed his appointment to Grant Jackson—" a highly preponderant pushing person." Following " the slight sinuosity of a note," the latter calls. Talking to his wife, Gedge says : " The words he used were that ' I give away the Show.' " " Did he call it," Mrs. Gedge enquired, " a Show?" " Of course he did, the biggest on earth." Gedge thereupon decides that " If I cultivate it I perhaps can still lie."

The American visitors pay a second visit. They " had warned him of his original danger, their anxiety about which had been the last note sounded

among them. What he was afraid of, with this reminiscence, was, that finding him still safe, they would, the next thing, definitely congratulate him and perhaps no less cordially, ask him how he had managed it. It was with a sense of nipping some such enquiry in the bud that, losing no time and holding himself with firm grip, he began on the spot downstairs to make plain to them how he had managed."

" It is in the old chimney corner, the quaint inglenook of our ancestors just there in the far angle, where his little stool was placed, and where I daresay, if we could look close enough, we should find the hearthstone scraped with his little feet that we see the inconceivable child gazing into the blaze of the old wooden logs, making out there pictures and stories; see Him conning with curly bent head his well-worn hornbook or poring over some scrap of an ancient ballad, some pages of some such rudely-bound volume of chronicles as lay, we may be sure, in His father's window seat."

Grant Jackson then arrives and intimates that the Directors of the Trust have decided to double Gedge's salary. " The receipts speak—they tell the truth."

Gedge had learned, " as it had never yet been revealed, the happy power of the simple to hang upon the lips of the wise," and " the gluttony of the public for false facts."

## SHAKESPEARE'S SONNETS AND EDWARD DE VERE

(According to Canon G. H. RENDALL, B.D., Lit.D., L.L.D.)

By Lieut.-Colonel M. W. DOUGLAS

The Sonnets have been subjected to every kind of inquisition on the assumption that they are the work of William Shakspeare, but they assume a different aspect as presented by Canon Rendall and read into the life of Edward de Vere.

They were published in 1609 by T. Thorpe as " Shakespeare's Sonnets," without apparent permission or protest by the Poet. They were prefaced by the dedication :

" To the onlie begetter of these ensuing sonnets  
Mr. W. H. ALL happinesse, and that Eternitie  
Promised by our ever-living Poet."

Sir Sidney Lee identified " Mr. W. H. ALL " as W. Hall, a procurer, and friend in the trade of Thorpe. The reference to " Our ever-living Poet " refers to one who had passed on. Mrs. C. C. Stopes saw in the dedication a marriage congratulation. The Earl of Oxford had died at Kings Place in 1604, and was buried in St. Augustine's Church, Hackney.

Colonel B. M. Ward subsequently, with the aid of the verger, found in the church records that " William Hall and Margery Gryhym were joyned in matrimony on the 4th August, 1608," nine months before the publication of the Sonnets. This discovery carries conviction that Thorpe's dedication is an acknowledgement of his friend's good offices in

procuring the manuscript of the Sonnets. During 1608-9 measures were in train for the transfer of Kings Place to Fulke Greville, which coincided with the recrudescence in the output of Shakespearean literature. Not only the *Sonnets*, and *Lover's Complaint*, but *King Lear*, *Troilus and Cressida*, and *Pericles*, all Playhouse copies, made their appearance and it is reasonable to infer a definite connection.

The manuscripts were procured during the evacuation. The Sonnets came into the hands of Hall, and the 1609 edition was pirated by Thorpe. These incidents establish a chain of links between the Earl of Oxford, the Sonnets and Hackney.

The late Canon Rendall has shown that these autobiographical poems came from the master mind of the Earl of Oxford.

The Poet had passed the meridian of life as suggested in Sonnets 2 and 138 :

"When forty winters shall besiege thy brow,"  
"Although she knows my days are past the best."

The Sonnets were written during the last decade of the century 1590-1600 and Oxford was 40 in 1590. Shakespeare was then twenty-six.

It was the privilege of the de Veres to bear the canopy over the sovereign on State occasions, and in 1588, at the Armada celebrations in St. Paul's Cathedral, the Earls of Oxford and Shrewsbury bore the canopy over the Queen.

In Sonnet 125 we find the seal of authorship in :

"Were't aught to me I borre the canopy  
With my extern the outward honouring."  
The Poet was lame (Sonnets 37 and 89) :  
"So I made lame by Fortune's dearest spite."  
"Speak of my lameness and I straight will halt."

In 1582 Oxford fought a duel with Sir Thomas Knyvet, uncle of Anne Vavasour, in which both were wounded, but Oxford received an injury from which he never fully recovered. In 1581, Anne Vavasour, the dark maid of honour, had given birth to his son, the brilliant Edward Vere. Her Echo Song is found in *Venus and Adonis* (L. 829, 34), and she would be the dark lady, the enchanting and faithless mistress of Sonnet 127 :

"In the old age black was not counted fair,  
My mistress eyes are raven black.

In Sonnet 59 the Poet would look back "even five hundred courses of the sun" and see his ancestors. "Whether we are mended, or whether better they." This was a reference to Aubrey de Vere in the Crusades in 1098, when "a Star" lit up his banner and became the pentagon star or mullet of the de Vere arms.

In 1588, owing to the death of Anne Cecil, coupled with political intrigue and "the loss of his good name," Oxford retired from Court and lived as a literary recluse until his death in 1604. This was the main period of the Shakespearean output, twenty-five plays, of which thirteen were published and, with the exception of *Othello* (1622), there were no more authentic publications until the Folio 1623.

Sir E. Chambers found "a soul side" in the Sonnets; "a perturbed spirit," "a brooding over

the loss of friends and thoughts of death." These reflections do not accord with the life of the young Shaksper on the rising tide of prosperity. In the case of Oxford they resemble biography and account for the Sonnets. The Earl of Oxford had expressed a wishful hope that his work should survive.

"My life hath in this line some interest  
Which for memorial still with thee shall stay"  
(S. 74).

But  
"My name be buried where my body is" (S. 72).  
"Do not so much as my poor name rehearse"  
(S. 71).

His relatives, "the Incomparable Paire," the Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery and the Earl of Derby, the two latter sons-in-law, apart from political and personal grounds, were bound to preserve his anonymity. Both plays and poems had been given to the world under the pseudonym Shàke-speare, and were accredited to Shakespears of Stratford, whose name and service as intermediary had been made use of.

Says Canon Rendall—finally: "The close of the Sonnets, like that of the finished and authentic plays, corresponds with that of the Earl of Oxford's life."

## THE EARLS AND SHAKESPEARE

By Major N. B. HUNTER

The 30th June, 1949, marked the 350th anniversary of an incident which has set a puzzling problem to historians of the drama. Two intercepted letters, long since calendared in the collection of State Papers Domestic of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, contain references to dramatic writings of which nothing else is known. On 30th June, 1599, the Jesuit agent, George Fenner, wrote to correspondents in Antwerp and in Venice, and in both letters reported that "the Earl of Derby is busied in penning comedies for the common players." A student in the 1890's saw significance in Fenner's item of news and undertook further research which he subsequently embodied in a couple of brief articles in the *Genealogist*. Might not the Earl of Derby be concerned with the authorship of the Shakespearean plays? Almost a generation later a French professor posed the same question, this time in a two-volume work entitled *Sous le Masque de William Shakespeare* wherein he staked a not inconsiderable reputation as a literary historian on the truth of his assertion that William Shakespeare (the author, not the actor-manager) and William Stanley, Sixth Earl of Derby, were one and the same person. It is not to be imagined that the chiefest glory of our language could escape the modern demand for a close linking of the creative artist and his work with the actual world from which they have emerged. During the last thirty years time and energy have been spent in attempts to prove or disprove the professor's conclusions. New material, seemingly pertinent to the question of Shakespearean authorship, has been brought to light of which the most that can, perhaps, be said is that it does not amount to a wholesale invalidation of

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seized on the works of Looney, Greenwood, Ward, Douglas, Rendall and Slater, and read them in quick succession. These books convinced him that the master mind behind the scenes was undoubtedly de Vere, but in his opinion inspired and assisted by other members of the aristocracy. Sir Henry had known Dr. Slater in India and held a high opinion of his ability and integrity, so it was not surprising that he was much influenced by that wonderful résumé of the case for and against various possible authors—*The Seven Shakespeares*. Being convinced that the Pembrokes were deeply concerned in the publication of the Folio, he made a special study of this family and their connections, and came to the conclusion that Lady Mary Pembroke was really the inspiration of many of the works which are known as Shakespeare's.

Being a man of action, he then got the Oxford University Press to publish the pamphlet, *The Inspiration of Shakespeare*, and took great trouble to get this into the hands of influential people. He selected some two hundred names from *Who's Who*, including the heads of University Colleges, and prominent men and women in many walks of life. The results were a little disappointing, but Sir Henry must have introduced the Oxford case to a very large circle, and at least two of our journals, *Truth* and *The Manchester Guardian*, gave reviews of it, the former opening its columns to further articles on the subject. Since then our members will remember the lecture he prepared which was delivered so effectively by Mrs. Robins at the Fellowship meeting on 9th April, 1949.

Some of us may not accept his views in their entirety, but we must all agree that he did great service in stressing that scholars have paid far too little attention to the part Lady Pembroke may have played in the preparation of the plays as well as in their publication.

Let us hope that Sir Henry Lawrence's work on the Oxford case may act as an inspiration to some of our younger members.

T. M. AITKEN.

### SALVADOR DE MADARIAGA ON HAMLET

Probably some readers of the *News-Letter* have read the able and fascinating essay by the Spanish author now resident in this country. His close attention to the play was constrained by his translating it into Spanish verse. The Editor wrote to him and pointed out how well his depiction of the Prince of Denmark corresponded with the character of Edward de Vere. The following is his reply :

"I was very much obliged for your letter and interested in it. I have no very definite ideas as to the personality of Shakespeare, though I do consider it as practically certain that the works were not written by the Stratford man. I had already read the pamphlet you kindly sent me. While the matter does not seem to me proved I do think that the character of the author that one gathers from reading the play of Hamlet points rather to a grand *seigneur des lettres* as I have suggested in my essay."

A successful study circle has been formed. A scheme has been drawn up by Mr. H. E. Herlitschka. Particulars will gladly be supplied by the Hon. Sec. of the Fellowship, Mrs. H. M. Robins, 5 Rusham Court, Egham, Surrey.

In the Royal Academy there was an excellent portrait of Mr. H. Cutner, painted by his wife.

The Editor of the *NEWS-LETTER*, Mr. W. Kent, 71 Union Road, S.W.4 (Mac. 2007), welcomes articles and cuttings.

### GEMS OF MYTHOLOGY

Prevented from taking his rightful place, Bacon took all knowledge for his province, and circumstances of his birth compelled him to publish much of his work, using the names of others as authors. He used the names of Edmund Spenser, Christopher Marlowe, Robert Green, George Peele, Robert Burton, and William Shakespeare by private and secret arrangements. On occasion he used Ben Jonson's name, but Ben, his friend and co-worker, also wrote and published works of his own.

Haskell Bond (*Baconiana*, July 1947):

When Shakespeare wrote plays for the Globe Theatre on the Bankside, after the plays he wrote for North London audiences, he had to change his style. Life on the South Bank in those days was inclined to be bawdy and licentious. It was this that caused Shakespeare to dwell on human vices in his later plays, and especially on the frailty of women.

Martin Holmes (1949).

The body lay in state for two days.

J. Quincy Adams (*A Life of William Shakespeare*, 1923).

Shakespeare thanks to his father had spoken that tongue [German] from his infancy.

A. M. Leon Daudet (*Le Voyage de Shakespeare*, 1896.)

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